



Phoenix Forest Schools Handbook of Policies and Procedures 2023-2024

To be read by all Leaders, Assisting Staff and Visitors attending Phoenix Forest Schools sessions.

Introduction

Since its introduction in the United Kingdom, Forest School is proving a powerful tool for developing personal, social and emotional, physical and life-long learning skills in young people.

Forest School is an approach to outdoor education, which originated in Scandinavia, where outdoor living and learning are totally embedded in society. In Scandinavia, there is a strong belief that nature and movement are essential to a young person's overall development and well-being. Most young people, through their school years, spend one day per week engaged in learning activities outdoors, appreciating how to care for and respect the environment, while also looking after themselves and others.

Forest School is delivered by qualified staff at Phoenix Infants School. We hope that its inclusion into the school's activities will help our young people overcome some of the difficulties they face on a day-to-day basis.

Our Forest School Ethos

At Phoenix our Forest Schools focus on the social, emotional, spiritual, physical and intellectual development of their learners. The nurturing environment encourages children to develop a positive relationship with the outdoor, natural world. The ethos of Phoenix Forest School is based on a fundamental respect for children and the encouragement of their curiosity in the world.

Phoenix Forest Schools believe in:

- A child's right to play.
- A child's right to access the outdoors.
- A child's right to access the natural world.
- A child's right to experience a healthy range of emotions.

Phoenix Forest Schools aim to build resilience to encourage a learner's creative engagement with other people, their environment, and their own potential. They aim to encourage self-reflection and build strong social and emotional skills that will follow them into adulthood.

Forest Schools have six guiding principles. These principles are approved by the UK Forest School Community.

- **A Forest School is a long-term process with regular sessions in a natural environment** – Practitioners should aim for Forest Schools to take place regularly, with sessions occurring at least once every two weeks over an extended period of time. Ideally, the same group of learners should attend the sessions. Planning, adapting, observing and reviewing are integral. The structure of the programme should be based on collaboration between learners and practitioners. The progression of learning should be clearly demonstrated.
- **The Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural wooded environment** – This helps to support the relationship between the learners and the natural world. If a woodland setting is not available, an environment with a small number of trees can still support good Forest School practice. The woodland environment should provide learners with the space and environment to explore and discover. Forest Schools should constantly monitor their ecological impact and help to develop long-term environmentally sustainable practices in learners, staff and the community.
- **The Forest School should promote the holistic development of all those involved** – Forest Schools should foster learners that are resilient, confident, independent and creative. Forest Schools should also aim to develop the physical, social, cognitive, linguistic, emotional, social

and spiritual development of the learner. Learning and Forest School experiences should be linked to home, school, work and other life experiences where possible.

- **The Forest School should encourage supported risk-taking** – Experiences should follow a Risk-Benefit process that is managed by both the practitioner and the learner. Risk-taking can include physical, emotional and social risks. The Risk-Benefit process should be in line with the developmental stage of the learner. Activities should focus on overcoming risks, challenges or problems. Learners' innate motivation and positive attitudes should be nurtured. If appropriate, Forest Schools can use tools, such as knives, or fires, in their activities. However, the activity must be appropriate to the learners and a risk assessment must be completed initially.
- **Forest School practitioners are qualified** – Forest School practitioners must meet certain criteria. All practitioners are required to hold a minimum of an accredited Level 3 Forest School qualification. Checks should be conducted, such as enhanced DBS checks, and practitioners need to hold up-to-date first aid qualifications. Additionally, there should be a high ratio of practitioners to learners. All practitioners should work reflectively and see themselves as learners who can adapt, change and grow. Forest Schools should also have the appropriate policies and procedures required to run the school and establish the roles and responsibilities of the staff.
- **The Forest School should be learner-centred and should create a community for learning and developing** – The learner-centred approach should be responsive to the needs and interests of learners. Learning should be cooperative and should include teaching, observation, appropriate dialogue, relationship building and reflection. Reflection ensures that both learners and practitioners understand their achievements. It also helps to develop their emotional intelligence and their future planning. Play and choice are integral to learning and development and all learning preferences and dispositions should be considered. Each unique learner should be included in the learning system.

Our Phoenix Forest School Aims

To foster the young person's well-being and motivation, natural curiosity and interest through the provision of a happy and stimulating learning environment within a outdoor setting.

To acknowledge how young people need to develop as individuals - to play, to learn, to move and to communicate with each other.

To encourage autonomy, independence and confidence.

To provide a range of activities stemming from weekly observations, which give young people opportunities for exploration, investigation, imagination and creativity.

To take full account of the young person's interests, family and culture - building on previous experience.

Objectives for Our Young People

To enjoy outdoor activity in nature throughout the seasons, exploring both by themselves and with others.

To investigate and experiment, with a variety of natural resources.

To make discoveries using senses.

To use language to describe, explain, predict, ask questions and develop ideas.

To develop an appreciation of natural beauty and a sense of wonder.

To care for personal safety, as well as that of others.

To care for the woodland environment and create an awareness of wider environmental issues.

Play in the Forest School

All freely chosen play is based on the following principles:

Play encompasses young people's behaviour, which is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated.

Play is performed for no external goal or reward - so young people choose what they do, how they do it and why they do it.

Play is something that is created and developed by those who take part in it.

Good social play involves creativity, innovation and the ability to set aside your own wishes to perpetuate the game.

Play is about navigating real and imaginary worlds through pretence - relating external things to the internal world of the imagination.

Play is integrating - it allows young people to bring together ideas they have and things they know and to organise them through imagination and creativity.

Play is the most important activity that young people take part in at Forest School, as it is the means through which they find motivation, well-being and happiness, in order to grow physically, emotionally and intellectually. Free choice outdoor play, in our woodland environment, gives children the opportunity to experience 'loose unstructured dreamtime' (Richard Louv), doing their own thing and freedom from the watching eyes of adults. At these times they can:

- be in control.
- be on their own.
- collaborate with others.
- re-create events.
- make their own props.
- make sense of their experiences.
- move freely using a range of motor skills.
- work to the limits of their skills.
- make their own choices, decisions and rules.
- manipulate materials.
- use and explore language freely.
- test out knowledge.
- explore how to risk assess and keep safe from dangers.
- express themselves and be creative.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

At Phoenix Infants staff are responsible for:

Planning and delivery of Forest School programmes and sessions from pre-school, EYFS – KS1.

Phoenix Infants school staff delivering forest school will have all obtained the following qualifications:

- Level 3 Forest Schools Practitioner
- Level 3 Outdoor First Aider including Catastrophic Bleed.
- Certificate in food hygiene & Safety for Primary schools & Academies

All staff at Phoenix Infants school have DBS Enhanced Disclosures. The certificates are held with office manager

Please note that either school staff or parent/carers must provide the supervision for those learners who require 1:1 support throughout their activities on site.

Insurance

Phoenix Infant and Nursery School hold full insurance

Insurer: RPA

Forest School Code of Conduct

Pupils and staff should embrace our Code of Conduct, which will be revised with the young people at every session.

- Look after your Forest School. Respect the fact that it is living.
- Check with your Leader about cutting or picking living things
- Do not put your fingers or anything else in your mouth unless told otherwise.
- Stay within the boundaries agreed - we do not go beyond them.
- Stay outside of the fire circle, unless invited in.
- Look above, below and around for hazards.
- Use tools safely and with regard to others around us.
- Show respect, care and co-operation for people around you.

Weekly Site Management

The site is to be checked before every session in accordance with Risk Assessment Procedures. Any risk outside of these, should be noted on the Daily Site Assessment Sheet.

To minimise danger to young people - shelters, fire pit and seating are always checked for security, before or during each session, dependent on session objectives.

Trees on site, are inspected termly by one of the Leaders, or after inclement weather/observations by staff.

The contact names regarding site safety and general site management is:

- Adam Harper – Site manager
- Lisa Harper – Head Teacher

Impact on Our Environment

We aim to care for the environment and to minimise our impact on the site and surrounding woodland. We ask Leaders, young people and staff to consider the following:

- Instil concepts of responsible actions in the environment, by giving young people practise in decision making and helping them to formulate a Code of Behaviour about issues concerning environmental quality.
- Wherever possible, environmentally friendly products and recycled materials are used and woodland arts and crafts are made by using natural woodland resources.
- Adults model good practice by showing young people that the world we live in should be cared for. Involving young people in site checks, discussions and decisions about sustainability and managing the wood and playing environmental games support this.
- Ensure any equipment, such as tarps and rope, are cleared from the wood after a session.
- Always light a fire within a fire circle or fire bowl and disperse burnt ash.
- When collecting firewood, ensure large pieces of dead wood are left in situ for wildlife.
- Encourage young people to report anything on the site which they are unsure of or feel unsafe with - e.g. poisonous plant, rubbish, dead branches.

Forest School Routine

1. The Forest School Leader, developed from observations in the last session, will have prepared a Session Plan.
2. Activity/Risk Benefit Forms are completed for each planned activity. See Appendix 1.
3. A thorough sweep of the site will be done before each session, to check for any litter, glass, animal faeces, etc.
 - a. A written record will be kept of each sweep on the Daily Site Assessment Sheet. This shall state if any hazards were found and how they were dealt with.
 - b. Trees will be checked for any broken or dead branches, which may fall.
4. Check of weather conditions. If it is unduly windy - e.g. trees leaning or a thunderstorm is imminent or has commenced, then it will not be advisable to carry out a session. If there is fallen snow, we will assess if the session goes ahead or not, due to hazards below foot and the cold.
5. The Forest School Leader will outline the session with any assisting staff and go through any Risk Assessments/medical issues.
6. Any equipment is prepared and collected, with the help of some young people and staff, from the school.

A Forest School Session

Session Outline:

1. Go to the toilet.
2. Put on outdoor clothes and wellies (see Clothing Requirements). Leader to count/register the group.
3. Walk to Forest School classroom using designated trail.
4. Sit down and revise daily safety issues.
5. Revise the boundaries/identify potential hazards.
6. Revise the call signal – shout of 123 back to me.
7. Time to explore or a warm up game
8. Provide instructions for the session, identifying resources, opportunities and session focus.
9. Main session.
10. At the end of the session, gather back at the circle and discuss session, allowing young people to feedback if they wish too. Whilst having hot chocolate and a biscuit.

Procedures to be carried out at the end of each session:

1. Collect resources/attend to fire if appropriate and ensure Forest School area is tidy.
2. Do a head count.
3. Young people to walk back to class, using trail designated by the Forest School Leader
4. Remove outdoor clothing. Wash hands.
5. The Forest School Leader will complete a Session Evaluation Sheet and records kept in the Forest School Planning Folder located on school OneDrive

Appropriate Clothing

The following clothing should be worn, as dictated by weather conditions:

- Woolly hat/sun hat if weather dictates.
- Jacket/waterproof coat.
- Fleece/jumper.
- Waterproof trousers/long trousers.
- Long socks
- Sturdy footwear - trainers/wellies/boots
- Gloves if cold weather.

There will be extra clothing available within school, should young people not have adequate clothing.

Toileting

The young people are requested to use the toilet prior to leaving the school building.

When using the onsite classroom, a member of staff, to use a facility for all toileting requirements, will escort young people.

Equipment

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT:

A safety bag will be taken out to Forest School every session.

The safety bag is always within the Forest school trolley on site and every member of staff is familiar with this location.

The safety bag will contain the following equipment, which will be checked and updated as necessary:

- Emergency Procedures – laminated card.
- Risk Assessments pre read by all staff
- Mobile phone
- Clean drinking water
- Whistle
- Emergency Life Blanket
- Medication for individuals (if not appropriate for the individual to carry the medication for themselves, it should be clearly labelled – staff must have been trained to administer it and parental consent must have been received)
- Wet wipes, hand gel
- Cling film
- Plastic bags
- First Aid Kit
 - Latex Gloves
 - Bandages – small, medium, large, triangular bandage
 - Plasters
 - Burns gel
 - Burn dressing
 - Dressings
 - Eye wash and eye pad dressing
 - Scissors and tweezers
 - Cotton wool
 - Antiseptic cleansing wipes
 - Medication for individual children
 - Tick removers
 - Sterile water
 - Adhesive tape

If a fire lighting activity is to take place:

- Fire lighting kit – cotton wool, fire steel.
- Fire blanket
- Large containers of water
- Emergency fire kit/burns kit – burn gel, burn cream
- Fire retardant gauntlet gloves

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

School Health and Safety Policy - sets out a clear statement of intent regarding the School's approach to the Health and Safety of its students, staff and visitors to the School.

The following is a list of additional measures relating directly to Forest School sessions:

1. However, many members of staff accompany Forest School sessions, the person in charge is always the trained Forest School Leader.
2. The Forest School Leader has overall 'Duty of Care' for the children in his/her charge, but all members of staff are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure children are safe.
3. All attending members of staff must sign and date a form to show they have read this Handbook and appropriate Risk Assessments and understand and agree to comply with the General Operating Procedures for Forest School.
4. Whenever sessions are being carried out, the Forest School Leader will inform class teachers of the group's whereabouts and for how long we intend to stay.
5. The Forest School Leader or Assistant will carry the Emergency Bag and it is always positioned in an agreed location.
6. The Forest School Leader will ensure that the Emergency Bag contains all essential equipment.
7. In the event of an emergency, the Forest School Leader will ensure that the School contacts the emergency services.
8. The Forest School Leader will prepare and review the Risk Assessments before every session.
9. The Forest School Leader will ensure that any assisting members of staff are fully briefed regarding any planned activities available and relevant risks/hazards. All members of staff MUST read and understand the Risk Assessments appropriate to the session in which they are helping
10. When tools are used, the staff/student ratio will always be 1:1 to begin with, until confident.
11. The Forest School Leader is responsible for the maintenance and checking of all tools and equipment to be used at Forest School, prior to their use.
12. The Forest Leader is responsible in training students and staff in how to use the tools and equipment safely and appropriately.
13. The Forest Leader will be responsible for the pre-visit check of the Forest School site prior to a Forest School session.

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Phoenix's Forest School aims to develop young people's self-esteem, independence and motivation to learn in a safe environment. In order that these aims can be met, the Forest School Leader will:

1. Consistently apply the five-step approach to risk assessment for all Forest School activities:
 - Look for hazards.
 - Decide who may be harmed and how.
 - Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing controls are adequate or whether more should be done.
 - Record findings, including daily amendments to standing Risk Assessments, based on site visits or observations.
 - Review Risk Assessments on a regular basis (or if circumstances change, which may affect the rigour of the Assessment) and revise if necessary.
2. Ensure all members of staff have read the relevant Site and Activity Risk Assessments prior to a session.
3. Move activities indoors if, in the opinion of the Forest School Leader, weather conditions such as high winds or the threat/occurrence of electrical storms, make work outdoors unsafe.
4. Inform members of staff and young people of potential hazards and methods of working in order to minimise their risk further.
5. Involve members of staff and young people in the Risk Assessment, as appropriate, as part of learning.
6. Ensure legal guidelines regarding off-site activities, such as adequate insurance and parental permission, are met.

7. Ensure that all members of staff and young people are aware of the Emergency Procedures for the Forest School site.
8. Be responsible for teaching young people adequate skills in order to keep themselves safe, particularly in relation to the use of hand tools and fire.
9. Ensure members of staff and young people will have access to drinking water during sessions.
10. Ensure a nil-by-mouth policy is adopted in all Forest School sessions, except for food cooked as part of a fully Risk-Assessed Forest School activity.

TOOL POLICY

Phoenix Forest Schools uses the following tools with pupils:

- Loppers
- Palm Drill
- Hand drills
- Sheath knife
- Secateurs
- Rubber/wooden mallets
- Peelers
- Scissors

The Forest School Leader uses a sheath knife and axe for woodland tasks.

Tools are used with 1-1 supervision initially, until proved competent and confident in use. All use of tools is to be at designated cutting stations

Forest School leaders are responsible for overseeing safe use and maintenance of all tools, providing Risk Assessments for tool usage and guiding any support staff in their usage.

All tools are kept in a lockable storage box that is kept in a central location within the woodland, in sight of leaders at all times. In addition, sheath knives are kept in a separate lockable 'Pelicase', which is kept locked in accordance with the UK Knife Law.

Tools are counted out and then counted in at the end of a session to ensure that all items are returned safely. The Forest School Leader supervises tool usage by all young people and supporting staff.

The Toolbox, which contains sharp tools such as knives and axes, is kept locked with a combination lock at all times.

Activity Risk/Benefit Assessments are completed for all activities involving the use of tools. These are readily available on the school OneDrive..

Tool Safety Information Sheets and Risk Assessments are included in Appendix 3.

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

Phoenix Infants Forest School aim to ensure that all young people and staff participating in Forest School sessions with fires - will do so safely and with as little risk to their health as possible.

Location

- Only previously agreed areas will be used for fires. The same fire sites are always to be used.
- The Leader will assess the forest floor (re. dry/damp material) and general weather conditions for suitability for having a fire safely.

- Campfire areas are enclosed and defined by logs to contain the fire area and discourage any young person from accessing the fire directly.

Positioning of young people and members of staff

- Fire areas are surrounded by secure (i.e. wedged to prevent rolling) seating logs or stools, at least 2 metres from the fire pit – these are to be checked prior to fire lighting.
- When the campfire is in use, young people are not permitted to access the area without permission.
- When allowed to access the campfire, young people must walk around the outside of the seating logs/stools and wait for permission to step over. Once permission has been given, they must sit, ensuring legs are drawn into the log/stool and not outstretched.
- Once seated around the campfire, the young people must remain seated until directed by a member of staff to move.
- Young people will be taught how to change seats by standing, stepping over the log and then walking around the outside of the seating area. They must never cross the inner area.
- Long sleeves and trousers must always be worn.
- Any young person or member of staff with long hair should have it tied back (spare bands are in the Forest School kit bag).
- Young people are not permitted to throw anything onto the fire, but may add fuel under the direction of the Forest School Leader.
- Advice on the appropriate way for dealing with smoke will be given to the young people - they are advised to turn their head to one side, placing their hand across the face, to close their eyes or ask permission to move.
- If there is a clear wind direction, seating in the line of smoke is to be avoided.

Safety and Responsibility

Lighting and keeping fires burning

- The fire will be lit under the direct supervision of the Forest School Leader.
- Other members of staff (who have been fully briefed and read the Risk Assessment) may supervise the fire area and attend/feed the fire.
- Fires are lit using a strike stick, natural tinder or cotton wool.
- No flammable liquids or firelighters are to be used to light or accelerate fires.
- If sessions involve young people adding fuel to the fire, this must be done with 1:1 staff supervision and they are shown how to kneel safely (with one knee on the ground) and how to sideways feed the fire.
- Hands should never go over the fire.

Safety Equipment

The following kit will be taken out to Forest School when lighting fires:

- Fire blanket
- Bucket
- Fire gloves
- Jerrican containing drinkable water
- First aid kit (with burn gel, dressings)

Extinguishing fires

- All fires must be extinguished at the end of a session.

- Water should always be to hand during campfire sessions.
- Whenever possible, all fuels should be burnt off to ash.
- The Forest School Leader should ensure that any large remains of wood are separated from one another.
- At the end of the session, the fire must be doused down with water and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased.
- Large build-ups of potash, from several fires, need to be dispersed. This must only be done when it has totally cooled, preferably the following day. It should be finely scattered throughout the woodland to enable natural decomposition.

Fire Safety Information Sheet is included in Appendix 4

Emergency Procedures

Accident and Emergency

All members of staff and participants will be briefed on what to do in case of an emergency:

1. A verbal shout of 1,2,3 back to me is the signal to stop what you are doing, gather with a member of staff at our designated base and be silent and wait for instructions.
2. The Forest School Leader will assess the situation, the nature and extent of the injury/accident.
3. They will ensure that the rest of the group are safe from danger and are adequately supervised.
4. They will attend to any casualties, giving First Aid as necessary.
5. An Accident Form will be completed later by staff.
6. If the Forest School Leader is injured or becomes ill, a supporting member of staff will take charge of the situation.

In the event of Serious Injury:

If anyone sustains an injury or illness which cannot be treated by First Aid on-site and requires medical assistance Phoenix Infants and Nursery Policy will be followed.

Accident and Emergency Scenarios

First aid

1. Ensure the rest of the group is safe – where appropriate delegate responsibility.
2. If appropriate, remove the danger or people from the danger.
3. Qualified First Aider called to check A-B-C, administer First Aid and if necessary call for further assistance (999).
4. Inform Parent via online platforms.
5. Record full details through School Incident Procedure back at school.

Lost or missing student

1. As soon as the young person is found to be missing, make the 1,2,3 call once again, make an immediate search of vicinity and use 1, 2, 3 procedure again.
2. Assemble rest of the group and ensure they are safe.
3. After 5 minutes call Emergency Contact to alert.
4. Continue to search for lost or missing student with all available personnel.

Death or serious accident

1. Follow First Aid procedure
2. Stay with casualty but ensure rest of group is removed from the situation and is safe.
3. Staff to call parent/guardian/next of kin ASAP.
4. Gain advice on follow up from police.
5. Prepare report, using guidance from RIDDOR.

Irregular occurrence, uninvited person/stranger

1. The young persons will be taken to Priory school via the field gate, made to feel safe, the key is located with the emergency bag
2. Inform Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Poor weather conditions

1. If trees blowing more than 20 degrees, or if group leader feels uncomfortable, take emergency 'safe' route out ASAP.
2. Use indoor areas as alternative.

Behaviour problems

1. Trained members of staff to use de-escalation strategies.
2. Remove other young people from area of risk (if deemed necessary).
3. Subsequent meeting to discuss the individual's access to future sessions or how to integrate them back into sessions.

Please be aware than in cases of minor individual disruption or non-engagement, the session will not be stopped.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

All staff are responsible for keeping children safe. A copy of the Safeguarding Policy is available to all Phoenix Infants School staff at all times.

All young people have a safe environment at Forest School in which to learn and develop:

- We continually raise awareness of child protection issues and equip young people with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- We develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- We establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

In addition, staff working within Forest School need to appreciate, that when young people feel comfortable and content, when their instinct to trust and risk take is encouraged, they may be moved to disclose information which they might otherwise keep to themselves. Any member of staff who finds that a young person is telling them something which concerns them, should follow these simple steps:

- **Listen**, but ask NO leading questions. Remember that you must not promise to 'keep a secret'. The general rule is that adults should make it clear that there are limits to confidentiality at the beginning of the conversation.
- **Comfort** the young person if appropriate.
- **Inform** the Designated Safeguarding Officer (Hollie Holland), as soon as possible and make a record for subsequent investigation by Social Services.

INCLUSION POLICY

Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Forest School

Phoenix Forest School is committed to the idea that there should be equal opportunity for all. Our policies help to ensure that we promote the individuality of all our students, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

We undertake to ensure that all our students:

- feel secure and know that their contributions are valued.
- appreciate and value the differences they see in others.
- take responsibility for their own actions.
- are able to participate safely in clothing that is appropriate for the task or connected to religious belief.
- are taught in groupings that allow them all to experience success.
- have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles.
- are set challenging targets that enable them to succeed.
- participate fully, regardless of disabilities or medical needs.

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Learning and Development in Forest School

At the heart of our Forest School, is the ethos that we aim to develop the ‘whole’ student and that its very inclusive nature, means that young people of all abilities can gain a measure of success. Working with peers, we aim to develop self-confidence and reliance, development of language, decision-making, judgements and problem solving.

Planning and Observing

The sessions are very much guided by the desires and interests of the students themselves and skills are developed over a period of time, as Forest School is an on going and regular part of our week. The Forest School Leader is very much a ‘facilitator’ as much as a teacher in a traditional sense.

A Session Plan is completed each week by the Forest School Leader and takes into account the feedback, desires and needs of the group as observed by themselves and staff during the session. The planning will also be guided by the time of year, staffing and the weather conditions etc. Observations are recorded after a session with annotated photos and written recordings.

See Observation Sheet Example in Appendix 5

Any learning needs or social issues are noted and certain students may be closely monitored, such as those with severe Special Educational Needs or low self-esteem. The Forest School leader briefs staff beforehand about the activities, their role and any Risk Assessments are noted.

A typical planned session will be structured as follows:

- Head count and walk to Forest School base carrying kit.
- Safety revisions of our Forest School rules/boundaries and tool/fire use.
- A choice of planned activities available with the necessary resources/or free choice.
- A circle time with hot drinks and chat/feedback/comments.
- Head count/tool collection/walk back to school.

During the main session, staff are encouraged to work with the students and to initiate talk with questioning and encouragement. The Forest School Leader notes any feedback from the staff on the Weekly Observation Forms.

Appendix 1: Forest School Check Sheet

Phoenix Forest Schools Ltd

ACTIVITY OUTLINE RISK ASSESSMENT

Description of activity: Whilst on site members of the public will be involved in outdoor activities which, if led incorrectly, could lead to injury. All activities are to be carried out safely and all equipment is to be physically inspected prior to use and placed to one side if damaged. Team building activities are to be risk assessed on a daily basis as the weather will impact on how these activities are carried out. Woodland assault courses which are purpose built by PFS will be physically checked prior to commencement of activity – all rope related obstacles will have knots checked and ropes conditioned if damaged. Water based activities will require closer supervision than others with respect to ages of learners and abilities. Learners with additional needs will be individually assessed either prior to arriving or on the day – the leader will have the final word in these matters should a problem arise.

<i>Hazard Or Activity</i>	<i>Harm</i>	<i>People at risk</i>	<i>Probability</i>	<i>Severity</i>	<i>Risk Rating</i>	<i>Preventative measures in place or identified</i>	<i>Further measures to be taken</i>	<i>Action – by whom and when</i>
Ground based team building activity	Falls, blows to body from materials	All	2	4	8	All participants provided with kit list outlining minimum clothing requirements. Area used for activity to be cleared as necessary. Staff fully trained in Level 3 FAW	Leaders to assess suitability of clothing prior to start of activity. Full brief to all participants prior to starting– stop activity if likelihood of injury to self or others.	FS LEADER.
Off ground team building activity.	Falling from ropes, logs – impact injuries, collisions	All	2	3	6	Any equipment that is roped off ground to be checked prior to use. Any additional equipment that is roped together by users to be checked visually during construction.	Ensure that personnel are placed in such a position to support a fall where possible	FS Leader - all
People with additional needs	Physical limitations on activity	All	2	2	4	Leader to look at task and adapt where possible. i.e. make the individual the leader on the activity.	Ask individual if able to make decision – allow them to stand out if need be.	FS Leader and individual if able to make informed decision.
All activities	Accident or injury during activity	All	2	4	8	Staff trained in outdoor first aid (L3), risk management and hazard perception. First Aid kits carried by trained and competent staff, emergency action plan to be rehearsed during staff training sessions. Mobile phones carried and signal checked.	Leader will take control of any accident /health situation. Consent forms for the day to be carried at all times with emergency contact numbers	FS LEADER FS LEADER
Uneven ground /dead wood causing slips trips and falls	Potential bruising, potential broken bones, though ground relatively soft	All	3	3	9	Verbal briefing given prior to session start. Reinforce no running within the setting.	Reinforce ground rules.	
Water based activities – looking at water borne life	Cold related injury due to getting wet, drowning in	All	2	4	8	Pond dipping is not possible due to great crested newts however it may be possible to look at the areas.	Adult supervision required at all times.	All adults in attendance.

	deeper areas of pond.							
Shelter building	Injury from lifting, moving heavy wood, cuts and bruises from swinging branches.	All	1	3	3	Briefing on lifting and safe carrying procedure. Ensure shelters are safely constructed throughout activity.	Intervene if shelter building is unsafe. All timber used for shelter building to be assessed and retired to fire wood if no longer strong enough to support weight.	FS LEADER ensure safe lifting techniques being used. Connect collecting natural resources RA.
Collapse of shelters	Pressure related injuries.	All	2	2	4	Group to have practiced knots and lashings before use on human size constructions. If using natural shelter building techniques then timber is checked prior to session to ensure it is useable.	Leaders to ensure that everyone in the group can effectively knot and lash as instructed. Leaders to check that children have used correct lashing technique	FS LEADER at the time of construction. Connect use of natural materials RA

Review – annually unless incident occurs.

Appendix 2: Forest School Check Sheet

Phoenix Forest School

CHECK SHEET FOR TERM

Date/Time	Name	Area Checked	Observations	Signature

Appendix 3: Tool Safety Sheet

Phoenix Forest School

TOOL SAFETY SHEET

ALL USE OF TOOLS IS STRICTLY UNDER CLOSE 1:1 SUPERVISION

Tools used	Folding saw	Bilhook
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	<p>Bow saw</p> <p>Mallet</p>	<p>Sheath Knife</p> <p>Forest Axe</p>
General Rules	<p>All tools to be kept in lock box when not in use.</p> <p>All tools to be used from the kneeling position.</p> <p>Cutting stations to be used.</p> <p>2 arms and a tool length must be enforced when using tools.</p> <p>Gloves to be worn when using all tools.</p> <p>All tools must be maintained and sharp.</p>	
Bow Saw	<p><i>Used for cutting large diameter timber and hard wood</i></p> <p>Saw blade cover kept attached when not in use.</p> <p>Only to be used as a pruning/coppicing tool by instructor.</p> <p>Supporting hand kept away from cut.</p> <p>Use cross hand support if necessary.</p>	
Folding Saw	<p><i>Used for cutting smaller diameter timber and harvesting working timber</i></p> <p>Saw blade kept folded when not in use.</p> <p>Supporting hand kept away from cut.</p> <p>Use cross hand support if necessary.</p> <p>Assistance must be provided if pruning/coppicing.</p>	
Mallet	<p><i>Used for batoning firewood and driving pegs</i></p> <p>May be stored and transported out of the lock box.</p> <p>Ensure care is taken when starting the drive.</p> <p>No assisting hands as the start of the drive.</p> <p>Hands to be free of the drive area when completing the drive.</p> <p>If Instructor holds knife for batoning, gloves must be worn.</p>	
Sheath Knife	<p><i>Used for firewood prep and whittling</i></p> <p>Users aware of critical triangle.</p> <p>To be re-sheathed when not in use.</p> <p>Blade edge never to be touched.</p>	

	Knives may never be passed to another user. Knives never to be forced into the ground. Cuts made away from the body.
Forest Axe	<i>Used for firewood prep and timber shaping</i> Only to be used at a cutting station. Head cover to be fitted at all times when not in use. Only to be used as a splitting tool by instructor. Supporting hand above axe cut at all times when used for shaping.

Appendix 4: Fire Safety Sheet

Phoenix Forest School

FIRE SAFETY SHEET

ALL FIRES SET BY STUDENTS ARE STRICTLY UNDER CLOSE 1:1 SUPERVISION

Mandatory equipment	Safety	Fire Bucket	Fire Blanket
		Fire proof Gloves	Burns Kit
		Water Container and Water	

<p>General Rules</p>	<p>All fires are set on designated areas.</p> <p>All fires set under the direct supervision of the forest school leader</p> <p>No accelerants are to be used.</p> <p>The fire must never be larger than necessary.</p> <p>All students and staff must wear long sleeves and trousers.</p> <p>Students are not permitted inside the fire circle unless invited to add fuel to the fire.</p> <p>All movement must be around the outside of the fire circle.</p>
<p>Fuel and Tinder</p>	<p>Fuel used for the fire must be collected from approved areas or provided.</p> <p>Acceptable tinder are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cotton Wool ● Char Cloth ● Birch Bark ● Pine resin “Fat Wood” ● Grass nest
<p>Fire Lighting</p>	<p>All fire lighting by students must be under strict 1:1 supervision</p> <p>Jute twine or grass nests must be held by the Leader only.</p> <p>Ferro rod and flint/steel use must be from the kneeling position.</p> <p>Gloves to be worn if practicing friction fire methods.</p>
<p>Adding fuel to fire</p>	<p>Fuel may only be added to the fire by students only when invited to do so and under strict 1:1 supervision</p> <p>Only approved fuel is to be added to the fire.</p> <p>Fuel must be added from the kneeling position.</p> <p>Gloves must be worn.</p> <p>Hands must not go over the fire.</p>
<p>Smoke</p>	<p>Place students in the fire circle away from smoke drift.</p> <p>Brief correct smoke procedure.</p> <p>Close Eyes – Turn Head – Cover Mouth and Nose</p>
<p>Extinguishing the fire</p>	<p>All fire trays/fire bowl must be doused to extinguish fires.</p>

	<p><i>If possible burn fuel to ash.</i></p> <p><i>No movement from the fire circle until the fire is extinguished.</i></p> <p><i>The Forest School leader must dispose of all ash only.</i></p>
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Appendix 5: Session Observation Sheet

<i>Session date & number</i>	
<i>Class & Leader/s</i>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Session Delivery • Activities undertaken by group • Factors effecting delivery 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning & Development Outcomes for the group – observations and comments from leaders and learners 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations relating to learning, behaviour and development for individuals being followed 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Examples of play occurring in the Group that supports holistic learning and development</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Examples of interventions where leaders provided additional support or guidance aimed at encouraging appropriate behaviour and promoting learning and development</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>General feedback from group</i>● <i>Input & ideas for next session</i>● <i>Changes to following sessions</i>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Safety issues that arose during the session or near misses● How issues were dealt with● Recommended changes to policy or procedure to ensure issues are mitigated	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● First Aid Kit used● Accident Log made● What needs re-stocking	
Date:	Signed: