



SINGLETON C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Forest Schools



Handbook



The Forest School Ethos

Forest School is a unique educational experience and process that offers children the opportunity to succeed and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland environment.

Children engage in motivating and achievable tasks and activities throughout the year and in almost all weathers, with the appropriate footwear and clothing. Children will work with tools, play, learn and begin to understand the boundaries of behaviour, both physical and social. They will grow in confidence, self-esteem and motivation whilst developing an understanding of the natural world.

The Forest School concept originates in Denmark, originally aimed at pre-school children, where it was found that children who had attended forest school then arrived at school with strong social and communication skills, having the ability to work in groups effectively, generally had high self-esteem and a confidence in their own abilities. These foundations helped them to raise their academic achievements.

A Forest School encourages children to:

- learn about, and understand nature and the environment
- develop personal and social skills
- develop teamwork
- work through practical problems and challenges
- use tools to create, build or manage
- discover how they learn best
- pursue knowledge that interests them
- learn how to manage failures
- build confidence in decision making and evaluating risk
- develop practical skills
- understand the benefits of a balanced and healthy lifestyle
- explore connections between humans, wildlife and the earth
- regularly experience achievement and success
- reflect on learning and experiences
- develop their language and communication skills
- improve physical motor skills
- become more motivated
- improve their concentration skills
- improve their communication
- and explore the world through all the senses available to them

What happens at Forest School?

Typically, small groups of individuals (depending on child/adult ratio) take part in a programme of six weekly sessions lasting for about an hour. The sessions involve practical hands-on activities which aim to build up participants' skills, abilities and confidence week by week.

All sessions are designed and led by our trained staff, with the help and direction of our Forest School practitioner. However, Forest School strongly encourages participant-led learning, so as the weeks progress, learners are given more freedom and responsibility to explore their interests and therefore initiate and direct their own learning. Forest School uses natural resources to stimulate imagination, creativity and investigation.

Activities can include:

- Shelter building
- Natural art
- Using knots and lashings
- Fire lighting

- Animal tracking
- Bug hunts
- Tree investigations
- Climbing and balancing
- Woodwork using tools, e.g. making musical instruments, jewellery, decorative items
- Creating bug homes and bird feeders
- Collecting, identifying and sorting natural materials such as leaves
- Team games

Most activities are curriculum-linked and span a number of subjects, including Maths, English, Design & Technology, Science, Music and Art. Forest school sits wonderfully in the topic based skills curriculum that we have at Singleton.

The benefits of Forest School

Forest School is suited to all ages and abilities. The aim of Forest School is to develop the person as a whole. It is particularly suited to people who have a low sense of self-worth and who struggle for various reasons to learn in a traditional classroom setting.

Completing small achievable tasks, coupled with genuine praise from Leaders, helps to boost confidence and self-esteem.

For children at school, attitudes to learning are improved as they find that learning can be fun and enjoyable. This new positive outlook is then transferred to the classroom where they are found to be more motivated and able to concentrate better.

Forest School can also:

- Develop physical abilities and help participants to stay active and healthy.
- Heighten self-awareness and improve emotional and social skills.
- Promote co-operative and group working.
- Encourage participants to take care of themselves and others.
- Foster care, appreciation and respect for wildlife and wild places.
- Broaden knowledge and understanding of the natural world.

Forest School Staff

Our Forest School is organised and run by Lisa Rund who is working towards her Level 3 Award for Forest School Practitioners.

All sessions are staffed by a qualified first aider and all staff have access to a recommended first aid kit.

The Forest School site

Our Forest School takes place in a small woodland area leading off the Foundation Classroom and in a larger woodland area next to our quiet garden. It is made up of mixed deciduous trees such as Sycamore, Elderberry and hedgerows of Hawthorn and Privet. The site is within school grounds and is not accessible to the public.

Children taking part in Forest School will also be encouraged to minimise their impact on the site.

This will include:

- Finding out about the different animals and plants that live in and amongst the trees
- Learning to respect animals' homes
- Careful observation of live animals
- Leaving lying deadwood in place
- Taking all materials and litter with them when they leave

- Ensuring that the site is left like they found it

Our Forest School Code of Conduct

Entering the Woodland

We will enter the Woodland respectfully and know that when at Forest School specific expectations are in place. We will explore, investigate, learn and play in a manner that will not damage our Woodland environment. We understand that we share our Forest School with plants and animals and that when we are in our Forest School we are sharing the environment with the

Boundaries

Before each session begins children are made aware of how far that they can explore. We do have lots of fun beneath the trees.

Lighting a fire

When lighting a fire the Forest School leader will take control of the operation and all accompanying adults will be briefed before we start. The person in charge of the fire safety and management will wear a clear and visible symbol as a visual cue to the children, we suggest a high visual jacket. A lit fire will not be left unattended at any point. A fire may not be lit until it has been confirmed to all that our fire safety equipment is in place. Open fires will be built within a fire square.

At the Fire Circle

An open fire will be lit within the fire square. A fire circle using logs and square sitting stools has been established around the perimeter, 2.0m from the fire square. No one may enter the fire circle perimeter unless invited to do so by an adult. There is no running past the fire circle. No items must be carried and placed within the fire circle unless by an adult. If you wish to move around the fire to a new stool you must step out of the circle and walk around the outside of the log circle. Even when the fire is unlit we will treat it as if it is lit.

Using Tools

All tools have their own clear code of conduct for correct use which will include consideration of specific personal protective equipment, correct use of a specific body posture, and consideration of the appropriate types of activity that each tool may be used for.

Picking up and playing with sticks

Children can carry sticks shorter than their arm's length but are encouraged to think about how close they are to other children. Longer sticks may be dragged or carried with the help of another person when each person is at either end. Sticks must not be thrown. Sticks must not be pulled from living tress.

Picking up and playing with stones

Stones may be picked up and transported. All staff should be aware of PICA issues and monitor these children carefully. Children often like to make patterns and pictures with them. Stones may not be thrown. They may be dropped but thought must be given to whether it is safe to do so, i.e. what is beneath where I am dropping it?

Digging

Digging large holes is not encouraged. Children may carefully move soil to look for insects and their habitats using fingers or small sticks found within the forest but deep holes should not be made.

Collecting wood

Wood is collected for fire lighting purposes. It is collected in four thicknesses – matchstick sized, pencil sized, thumb sized and wrist sized. This is a good mathematical activity involving sorting and matching. Sticks may be collected for creating pictures and patterns but should be collected sparingly so as not to disrupt creature habitats. Sticks should not be removed from the site and there are resources available within school in the Forest School area for activities where natural resources cannot be found on the site.

Eating and Drinking

Nil by mouth policy (No lick, no pick) for anything found in the area, unless this activity has been specifically planned for during the session. Children must be reminded not to put their fingers or hands in their mouths or noses. When having drinks and snacks children will use wipes & water to clean their hands before consumption.

Rope and String Use

We encourage the collection and transportation of materials. We do not allow children to tie up each other. If a child has a good idea and wants to tie up something, for example a tarp or a swing, an adult should help them as needed, modelling appropriate knot tying and modelling how to talk through ideas and decisions.

Carrying and Transporting Materials

Children are encouraged to roll, lift, drag and to pull materials, either by using their hands or by using ropes. We encourage safe lifting by bending our knees and keeping our back straight. Safe lifting should always be modelled by adults. Heavier objects should be rolled, lifted or carried by more people working together.

Toileting

Children are invited to use the toilets before we leave the school buildings. Children will be allowed to return to the school building with an accompanying adult. The nearest toilets are to be found in the Foundation Classroom for the small woodland area and in the Foundation foyer area for the large woodland area.

Leaving the Site

We work according to the ethos 'leave no trace' that we were in the wood as much as is reasonably possible. Shelters should be taken down, imported materials need to be removed. All equipment is carefully counted out and back in again, especially when using tools and tent pegs. Very occasionally large items may be left between sessions. All rubbish will always be removed. If artefacts have been found or made these may be taken off the site with the consent of an adult.

Tree Climbing

An adult must be present when children climb trees in the Forest School. The ground cover should be checked for 'sharp objects' and the tree marked as suitable for climbing. A visual check must be made for loose and rotten branches. Children are permitted to explore to their own limits or to a maximum height of 1.5m. Adults should be near enough to catch if a child should fall but far enough away to not be invasive to the children's exploration

Suggested Activities for Forest Schools

Activities for Forest Schools are diverse and numerous but it should be reminded that we are trying to create independent learners who are inspired to try out their own ideas, explore their own interests and to attempt new ideas.

Some activities might include:

- Shelter building
- Fire lighting
- Tool use
- Studying wildlife
- Playing team and group games
- Sensory activities
- Tracking games
- Cooking on an open fire
- Using a Kelly Kettle
- Rope and string work
- Art and sculpture work
- Woodland and traditional craft
- Developing stories and drama, and meeting imaginary characters
- Physical movement activities

A typical Forest School session

Each Forest School session follows a simple routine. The session starts with participants getting ready to go outside by putting on appropriate clothing – waterproof coats, trousers and wellington boots. We go through rules and routines whilst still in class and children help gather any resources we need to take out with us.

The group then walks to the Forest School site and gathers around the 'Forest School' circle. The circle is central to everything that happens at Forest School. It is a focal point where the group assembles and socialises. At the start of the session, participants and Leaders sit together and talk about what they did and particularly enjoyed doing at the last session, and what they are planning to do during the current one.

Many activities take place in or around the circle, such as natural art and woodwork. Half way through or at the end of each session participants may gather together to have a drink and a snack. This often includes helping to light a fire at the base of a Kelly Kettle to heat water for warm drinks.

Early sessions involve participants getting to know the site and learning basic safety rules. They then move on to more complex and detailed tasks and are given more "free time" for personalised learning.

At the end of each session, participants help Leaders to pack away the tools and materials they have been using and help to return the woodland to the state in which they found it.

Equipment for Forest School

In addition to tools suited to the planned for activities, the Forest School leader will take an emergency bag with them.

The contents of the emergency bag will vary depending on the time of year and weather conditions, the site being used, and the planned for activities according to the relevant risk assessments and daily risk assessment. There are also a range of other items that may be carried out for every session.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Set of spare clothes -Spare clear plastic bags and bin liners -Wet wipes -Tarpaulins & tent pegs -Penknife -Whistle for use in emergencies -Insect repellent (summer) -Washing up bowl & antiseptic hand wash gel -Kelly kettle -Gloves -Drinking water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sit mats –carpet tiles -Firestriker / cotton wool / kindling -Squash, hot chocolate powder and biscuits -Plastic beakers -Plastic plates -Disposable gloves -String and rope -Pen and paper -Fire blanket and bucket -Facial tissues and kitchen towel -Spare water for extinguishing fires
Emergency procedure information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Staff handbook and emergency procedures in water-proof folder -School walkie talkie 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -At a glance sheet - children's medical and contact information -Risk assessments
First Aid Kit	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -First aid guidance booklet -Walkie talkie -Sterile non-medicated dressings -Triangular bandages -Cleansing wipes -Disposable gloves (latex free) -Plasters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clean water for potential burns -Microporous tape -Paramedic scissors
Activities equipment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wood – ash, hazel, elder, willow Wool, ribbon, string -Scissors -Wood glue -Cotton sheet -Clay, wooden boards & modelling tools -Pestle and mortar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Beads -Felt pens and charcoal -Paint brushes -Masking tape -Pots for mixing natural dyes -Sieves

	-Bug pots, spoons, paintbrushes, ID sheets
Tools	
-Tool bags and tool box -Bow saws -Potato peelers -Tent pegs (blunt ended) -Pruning saws	-Knives - in lockable box -Loppers -Work gloves - adult's: 4 & children's: -Rope – various sizes inc. poly prop. -Billhooks

The Forest School Day

Forest School is a unique educational programme run by trained Leaders. It helps children and young people to develop their confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in the outdoor natural environment.

Forest School provides:

- A safe, supportive and positive environment for learning and discovery.
- Session plans and risk assessments for all activities.
- Activities that link to the National Curriculum and the Coppice skills based curriculum and cater for different learning styles.
- High adult to child ratios, enabling individual one-to-one and small group work.
- Monitoring and reporting of individual children's progress and development.
- Greater involvement of parents in their children's education through the invitation to take part in a Forest School session with their children.

Responsibilities

Discipline

It is our responsibility to discipline and manage participating pupils. It is good practice for the same member of staff to attend each of the six sessions, to maintain continuity for the children.

Safety and First Aid

The Forest School Leader (Lise Rund) is a qualified first aider and carries a recommended first aid kit. Activities are thoroughly risk assessed and staff continuously monitors the safety of the group as activities progress. An emergency plan has been drawn up, which will be followed in the unlikely event of an accident.

All staff and volunteers have undergone an appropriate selection process to assess their skills and suitability for working with children and have been subject to enhanced DBS.

Forest School follows the same high staff to pupil ratio as all areas of the curriculum and activities at Singleton CE Primary School.

Clothing

It is our responsibility to ensure that children are appropriately dressed for Forest School sessions. Any child not wearing appropriate clothing will not be able to participate.

Clothing list:

Summer weather – Sun hat; long length trousers/leggings; a long sleeved top and shoes which are ok to get muddy.

Autumn, Spring & Winter weather - a warm jumper; a top underneath the jumper; long length trousers/leggings; thick socks - thermal if possible or two pairs of thinner ones and wellies or walking boots.

Long hair should be tied back.

No person will be permitted to go to Forest School without appropriate clothing that will protect them from extremes of heat or cold, keep them covered to reduce the likelihood of cuts and scrapes, that fits appropriately for comfort.

Children and parents are encouraged to think about the usefulness of their clothing for outdoor activities, and to be aware they are likely to take some of our mud home with them after a session. In the forest it can often be cooler than expected under the shade of the trees.

We work on the principle that “there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing”.

Using and Storing Tools

All tools are counted out and back in at the beginning and end of each session in which they are used. When not in use in the Forest they are kept secured away in a locked area. Before each tool is to be used it will be checked for damage and working order.

Each tool type is kept in their own suitable containers, many of which are also lockable. Children must never be allowed to help themselves and will always have adult supervision when collecting, transporting and using tools. Tools are only used for a specific purpose. All adults should model correct and safe tool use, storage and transportation at all times. When using a tool, they are used well away from others in the group, (two arm’s length and the tool length) and ensuring that others are aware that a tool is in use. Only walking is permitted when transporting a tool.

Risk assessments

Food safety and cooking procedure

Food and drink preparation and sitting together whilst eating and drinking are important parts of Forest School. This procedure has been devised using advice in Preventing Food Poisoning - Good Hygiene at Home published by the Food Standards Agency and 10 Ways to Prevent Food Poisoning on the NHS Choices website. We will provide hand washing facilities at each session where food and/or drink is prepared and will ensure that all staff, volunteers and participants follow the Forest School food hygiene rules.

Forest School food hygiene rules

Everyone involved in Forest School should be involved in food safety and follow the food hygiene rules below. If you spot a problem, please point it out to the Forest School Leader.

When involved in food and drink preparation you should:

- Wash hands before and during cooking.
- Not handle food if they are ill with stomach problems, such as diarrhoea or vomiting.
- Cover sores and cuts with a waterproof dressing.
- Avoid handling food when possible, and instead use spoons, tongs or other suitable implements.
- Tie hair back.
- Keep food that is waiting to be cooked separate from food that is ready to be eaten.
- Use separate chopping boards for preparing different foods, especially raw and ready-to-eat food.
- Prepare food on a suitable surface, e.g. chopping board, cup, saucepan and not on the ground.
- Ensure food is cooked thoroughly before serving. Food should be cooked right through and piping hot in the middle.
- Not reheat food more than once.
- Keep utensils clean and regularly wash tea towels and cloths.
- Store food in clean plastic containers with non-leaking lids.

- Take all rubbish and food scraps away with them at the end of the session to avoid attracting vermin to the site.

Food allergies and special dietary requirements:

Participants are asked to state any food allergies and special dietary requirements they may have on their Parental Consent and Medical form. This information will be used to plan what food and drink to provide during sessions, ensuring that the food and drink provided is suitable for all.

Safe use of tools

General

- Keep tools in good, clean order.
- Check tools are safe to use before the start of each session.
- Carry out tool maintenance (cleaning and oiling) once a week.
- Do not use tools with damaged blades or handles or with loose bolts or fixings.
- When transporting tools do not carry more than can be held securely.
- A blunt blade is more dangerous than a sharp one.
- Count tools in and out.

Bow Saws – use for cutting wood with a diameter greater than a 2 pence piece

- Wear a glove on the non-sawing (helping) hand, not on the tool.
- Use the saw to the side of you and not in front.
- Keep your non sawing hand away from the blade when sawing.
- Saw with easy relaxed strokes using the full length of the blade. Let the blade do the work – don't force it, especially if it sticks.
- Carry with the frame at your side with the blade facing down, like carrying a handbag.
- Keep the blade covered when not in use and especially when transporting.
- Ensure the item to be cut is firmly held.
- When using with children – Leader and child to kneel on floor with Leader on one side of saw and the child on the other, both in the 'respect position'. The Leader guides the saw and the child follows.

Billhooks – use for cleaving wood

- Never wear a glove on the hand holding the tool - it makes the handle hard to grip safely.
- Keep a safe distance from other people and be aware of those around you while you work. Stop if anyone comes too close.
- Hold billhook away from your body and cut away from yourself.
- Stop if you get tired.

Loppers

- Loppers – use for cutting wood with a diameter smaller than a 2 pence piece
- Always carry with blades closed (and locked if applicable).
- When not in use leave with blades closed (and locked if applicable).
- Do not exceed the cutting capacity of the tool.
- Use away from your body and keep hand not holding tool away from blades.
- Children only to use when sitting or kneeling.

Knives – use to whittle small sticks, peel bark and cut string

- Never wear a glove on the hand holding the tool - it makes the handle hard to grip safely. Wear a safety glove on your other helper hand.

- Keep a safe distance from other people and be aware of those around you while you work. Stop if anyone comes too close.
- Hold the knife away from your body and cut away from yourself. Potato Peelers – use to peel bark
- Rest the wood you are peeling on the ground or on a bench and not on your leg.
- Hold the potato peeler away from your body and peel away from yourself towards the ground.
- Keep the hand not holding the tool away from sharp end of potato peeler.
- Keep a safe distance from other people and be aware of those around you while you work.
- Children only to use when sitting or kneeling – remind them not to move around when using the peeler.

Tent Pegs – (when used to hollow out elder piths)

- Rest the wood you are working with on the ground or on a bench and not on your leg.
- Poke out the piths away from your body towards the ground, and not towards you.
- Keep a safe distance from other people and be aware of those around you while you work.
- Children only to use when sitting or kneeling – remind them not to move around when using the tent pegs.

There are specific risk assessments for a range of Forest School activities. (See school risk assessments)

Forest School SITE risk assessment

Hazard	Risk	Safety Measure
All Forest School learners will be dressed appropriately for the range of Forest School activities on offer. They will also have their hair tied back.		
Trip hazards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uneven ground / holes • Wet slippery surface • Muddy ground • Icy ground 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal/visual instruction to walk carefully and look where they are walking • Wear appropriate footwear • Mark off area if necessary • Remove obvious trip hazards on pre-visit site check if possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low branches causing eye injuries 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point out location of low branches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brambles, prickly or thorny plants and stinging nettles 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show location of any brambles and stinging nettles and ask children them to avoid them
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insect bites and stings 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal/visual warning not approach or try to catch bees and wasps • Monitor site for nest activity and avoid nest sites • Keep arms and legs covered • Check anyone with severe allergies has their epi-pen and is able to administer it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasty looking fruit/berries and fungi 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal/visual instruction that some fruit/berries and fungi are poisonous, and should not be eaten • Ensure hands are washed before eating and verbal instruction to keep hands away from face



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nuts, e.g. horse chestnut, hazel, acorns 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be aware of children with allergies Check anyone with severe allergies has their epi-pen and is able to administer it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harmful litter, e.g. metal, glass 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove harmful litter during pre-visit site check Point out location of any harmful litter as activity progresses and remove
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact with harmful substances – soil 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure hands are washed before eating and verbal instruction to keep hands away from face
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposure to the elements – rain, wind, snow, ice 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure that children are wearing appropriate clothing Use tarpaulins for shelter In extreme cases work indoors and have alternative activities plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposure to the elements – sun 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in shade Wear hats Check sun screen is being worn Provide regular drinks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High winds 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid areas with trees – work in playing field In extreme cases work indoors and have alternative activities plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural damage to trees 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check branches during pre-visit site check If area's unsafe, work in meadow or work indoors and have alternative activities plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal faeces 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look out for faeces during pre-visit site check and remove Point out location of faeces during session so it can be avoided Wash hands thoroughly if anyone comes into contact with faeces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fencing perimeter 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre session checks to assess any gaps in the school fence.

Fire Policy

As part of the Forest school experience it is desirable to have an open fire at times within the woodland to allow the children to enhance their learning and development with some risky activities. Encounters with risk help children to manage their coping strategies and discover and explore the world through real experiences. This policy sets out the guidelines to follow to ensure safe practice is a thread throughout the activity.

Aim

To use fire safely as part of the Forest School experience.

Method

Fires must only be lit after a risk assessment has been carried out and they must only be within the fire circle area. This includes the use of Kelly Kettles. There must always be a trained adult present within the fire circle when a fire is lit or hot embers remain, never leave a fire unattended.

Prior to the fire pit being built the soil or bedrock must have been assessed to avoid a fire being lit on a flammable surface such as peat. The fire should be surrounded by a 1 metre square of logs or bricks. Fires should not be lit close to overhanging branches or on a really windy day.

There must be an adequate supply of fire water close to the fire pit to ensure there is enough water available to extinguish the fire if it gets out of control. A fire blanket must be brought into the woodland to wrap round someone if their clothes become alight. Fire proof gauntlets should be kept at the fire area to allow adults to pick up hot items.

Before visiting the area the children should have had the opportunity to ask questions and be given information about fire safety. When at the fire circle the rules should be demonstrated for the children to see. There should be no more than 2 people, adults and children, within the fire circle next to the fire at any one time. The best position for cooking is on one knee (the respect position) so you can move backwards easily and remain stable. Long hair should be tied back, tassels and ties tucked away and scarves removed.

Kelly Kettle

The Forest leader may use this to heat water. When lit, do not stand directly over, or look straight down the chimney. Never blow into the top. When pouring out the water support the base by holding the bung chain in one hand and the handle with the other. To put the fire out, pour the remaining water into the base. When not in use all tools will be securely locked away in the tool shed. Tools should be checked and cleaned before they are put away.

Health and Safety Policies & Procedures

All activities are thoroughly risk assessed before the start of each session and Leaders continue to monitor the safety of the group as activities evolve. There is always a trained first aider present at each session and a written emergency plan to follow.

Boundary setting

In the first Forest School session, both physical and behavioural boundaries are agreed with the children. At each subsequent session, these boundaries are revisited and reinforced.

Developing routines – Sessions 1 and 2

- When they arrive at the Forest School site, children are shown how to sit round the Forest School circle (step over sit mats/tree stumps and sit down).
- The need for, and principles of, fire safety are explained. This will include the rule that when kelly kettles or a fire are being used in the centre of the circle, only one child at a time is permitted to approach the kelly kettle or fire, on instruction from the Forest School Leader.
- The children are shown how to move around the circle (step out of circle and walk around outside).
- For young children (Foundation and KS1), a game is then played to reinforce this – Leaders call out different statements that will relate to certain children in the group. E.g. “Everyone who has brown hair step outside and move around the circle” and so on.

In subsequent sessions, children will be asked to recall how they should behave at the Forest School circle. Depending on the behaviour and ability of the group, the use of kelly kettles and/or lit fires will usually be introduced in much later sessions.

Engendering responsibility

Through practicing these established routines, the children at Forest School will be able to enforce/remind others how to behave. Peers expect responsible behaviour and to a degree will be self-policing.

Forest School Leaders' daily campfire and use of kelly kettle and camp fire procedures

To ensure that everyone stays safe on site and that risk is managed effectively, Forest School Leaders will follow a daily campfire and kelly kettle procedure.

Forest School Leaders will:

- Keep igniters in a safe location.
- Ensure there is a supply of water/soil/sand to douse the fire.
- Always carry a fire blanket.
- Ascertain the location and size of the fire to be built and plan accordingly including fuel stocks.
- Carry out a pre-visit site check and risk assess the site and the activity.
- Be prepared to abandon the activity in the event of unforeseen circumstances rendering the activity unsafe and have another activity on standby.
- Douse fires at completion and check them after 30 minutes to ensure that they have not spread.

When lighting fires, Forest School Leaders will:

- Not wear loose clothing and tie long hair back, and ensure that children have their hair tied back and also have no loose clothing.
- Wear gloves if necessary.
- Allow only one child at a time to help with fire construction / approach the fire.
- Try to keep away from the smoke.
- Put out the fire with water when finished.

When using Kelly Kettles, Forest School Leaders will:

- Only light a fire in the tray of the Kelly Kettle in the centre of the Forest School circle.
- Kneel on one knee for ease of moving backwards.
- Never place the kettle on the fire without containing water.
- Only fill the kettle with water when cool.
- Place the tray of the kettle on a flat surface.
- Keep the spout on the opposite side to themselves and others.
- Remove the kettle from fire when the water starts to boil.
- Remove the kettle from the fire with the handle held vertically, using the chain to support it in an upright position.

Litter and Waste Water Procedure.

All waste/litter created by Forest School, and any waste/litter will be collected for appropriate disposal.

- The Forest School Leader will provide waste containers.
- All waste produced or found on site during the Forest School session will be placed within the waste containers
- At the end of the Forest School session the Forest School Leader will remove the waste containers for appropriate recycling/disposal.

A small amount of waste water is created at Forest School, from hand washing and washing up. Solid debris is removed from the water for disposal in the waste containers. The waste water is then disposed in the woodland over a wide an area as possible, so it will evaporate quicker.

Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Forest School

The mission statement of Coppice School emphasises the value placed on the individuality of all our children. We are committed to giving each child every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual children or groups of children. We aim to provide all our children with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement.

We will:

- Ensure equality of access for all children
- Employ a range of styles, including collaborative learning, so that children can value working together
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Take account of the performance of all children when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of children.
- Our teachers ensure that our children:
 - feel secure and know that their contributions are valued
 - appreciate and value the differences in others
 - take responsibility for their own actions
 - participate safely, in clothing that is appropriate to their religious beliefs
 - are taught in groupings that allow them all to experience success
 - use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, learning styles and linguistic needs, without stereotyping
 - have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles
 - have challenging targets that enable them to succeed
 - are encouraged to participate fully, regardless of disabilities or medical needs.

Forest School does mean Forest School FOR ALL. We do have a stock of extra all weather clothing but ask that both parents and children think about the usefulness of their clothing for outdoor activities, and to be aware that they are likely to take home muddy and wet clothes after a Forest School session. We encourage a level of risk-taking, always under close adult supervision, and actively foster friendships and collaboration between all children and adults. Forest School activities are always designed to produce success and enjoyment, even when this appears to be of a transitory nature. The Forest environment is an environment to which we are all entitled and we strongly believe that the experiences we will have there will linger in the memory for years to come. Children with medical needs or disabilities will be helped so that they can take part fully in each Forest School session.

- Those children with challenging behaviour will be risk assessed and may need one to one supervision, but their entitlement to participate in Forest School remains the same.

Risk Assessment Guidelines

A SITE risk assessment is undertaken prior to every Forest School session at our Forest site.

In addition, an ACTIVITY risk assessment will be established prior to any activity that may require it. These will include: whittling, cutting wood, shelter building, fire lighting and cooking on an open fire, and palm drilling. Specific additional risk assessments will be undertaken for children whose medical condition or whose behaviour requires them.

The risk assessment process is detailed below:

- We look for potential hazards.
- We decide who might be at risk of harm.
- We think about how harm may occur and the worst outcome that we could face.
- We evaluate the current level of risk.
- We decide on a course of action or set of precautions that will be put in place to minimise the potential risk.
- We then re-evaluate the level of risk once our course of action and precautions have been put in place.
- We create a risk assessment and collate them in the Forest School file.
- We inform all adults with accompanying the group and require them to sign each relevant risk

- assessment to show that they have read and understood the assessments
- We regularly monitor and review each risk assessment, half termly and as an action is needed.

Poor Weather Procedures

We will not go to Forest School if the conditions are deemed dangerous such as in high winds, during thunder storms, or during periods of extreme cold. We will use the BBC weather online forecast to make judgments about the expected conditions.

The Forest School Leader will make the decision to continue with Forest school or postpone due to bad weather. When it is wet a shelter will be built immediately by a trained adult so that there is a sheltered area that is available from the start that can be used.

Designated Person Responsibilities

Forest School Leader: Lisa Rund

First Aider 1: Lisa Rund

First Aider 2: Additional First Aiders in the school include: JA, JS

Letter To Parents

Forest School at Singleton CE Primary School

Dear Parents,

We are now in a position to run a Forest School within the school grounds. It is planned that all children should have a 'Forest School experience' during their time at Singleton CE Primary School

The Leader of our Forest School Programme is Lisa Rund.

Please read the following important information, fill in the Parent School Agreement and return it to your child's class teacher.

Information about Forest School

Forest School is run by trained Leaders and aims to build up children's skills, abilities and confidence week by week through practical hands-on activities in the outdoors. It gives them the chance to explore, learn and discover at their own pace in a safe and supportive space.

Forest School uses natural resources to stimulate imagination, creativity and investigation. Activities can include:

- Woodwork using tools, e.g. making musical instruments, jewellery, decorative items
- Natural art
- Fire lighting
- Using knots and lashings
- Shelter building
- Bug hunts

There are many benefits to Forest School. For example, it can:

- Develop physical abilities and help participants to stay active and healthy.
- Heighten self-awareness and improve emotional and social skills.
- Promote co-operative and group working.
- Encourage children to take care of themselves and others.
- Foster care, appreciation and respect for wildlife and wild places.
- Broaden knowledge and understanding of the natural world. Safety at Forest School

There is always a high adult to participant ratio at Forest School. All activities are thoroughly risk assessed before the start of each session and Leaders continue to monitor the safety of the group as activities progress. There is always a trained first aider present at each session and a written emergency plan to follow.

Who will be running the Forest School sessions?

Sessions will be overseen by Forest School leader Lisa Rund They will be assisted by Singleton CE Primary School staff.

What your child needs to wear for Forest School

The Forest School sessions will take place entirely outside in the wood whatever the weather. We will provide a shelter from the elements, but it is still important that your child wears clothes that are waterproof and warm and that are OK to get wet and muddy.

Your child should wear:

- Waterproof coat

- Waterproof trousers (if they own a pair)
- Wellington boots (or sturdy walking boots)
- Comfortable long trousers
- Comfortable, warm long sleeved top/fleece (Cold weather)
- Long sleeved T-shirt.
- Thick socks if the weather's cold - thermal if possible or two pairs of thinner ones

Long hair should be tied back.

School Parent Agreement

The School	The Child
We will aim to work in partnership with parents and careers to:	I will aim to follow the rules of the forest:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality teaching & learning through a broad and balanced curriculum • Value each child as an individual • Understand that each child has their own learning style • Encourage each child to achieve their personal best in all areas • Provide opportunities for children to learn and practise new skills • Encourage collaborative learning • Provide a high ratio of adults to children • Ensure all adults working with our children are fit to do so 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will be gentle • I will be kind • I will try my best • I will be honest • I will listen to others • I will look after living things
Signed: _____	Signed: _____
Dated: _____	Dated: _____