



# Forest School Handbook



*This policy is due to be reviewed in January 2026 (to be reviewed annually).*

*Reviewed and updated January 2025 by Amy Wilson.*

*Agreed by Chair of Governors: Charlotte Eeles Date: 18.03.2025*

*Agreed by Headteacher: Vicky Wittich Date: January 2025*

*It is essential that all supporting adults with a regular role have read and understood the Forest School handbook. They must ensure they sign and date the attached form (see appendix 1) to confirm that they have read and understood the handbook. This handbook will also be shared with any additional adults which may be involved in the future.*

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### Forest School Vision Statement (and benefits of Forest School):

Forest School provides an enriching experience that supports children to develop their independence, self-esteem, confidence as well as their physical, emotional, cognitive and social skills through hands-on practical experiences in a natural environment. Forest School at Reed First School takes a holistic approach to foster the development of the whole child. Forest School sessions provide opportunities for children to develop their problem-solving and creativity skills. Through a hands-on approach, children are given the time to explore their environment, to make their own discoveries through child-led activities, play, and become knowledgeable about their natural world. Our aim is to develop children's understanding of the world around them as well as promote positive wellbeing of children in a stimulating outdoor environment.

In our Forest School sessions at Reed, we encourage the children to:

- Be inquisitive and curious about the world around them
- Be enthusiastic and have a willingness to learn more
- Develop personal and social skills
- Use their imagination during child-led play
- Use tools to create, make and manage their environment
- Make their own discoveries
- Develop practical skills
- Be resilient by working through challenges and solving problems
- Develop their communication skills
- Reflect on their experiences and learning
- Be passionate about wildlife and their environment
- Improve their physical motor skills
- Explore their world by using their senses
- Take appropriate risks
- Work effectively in groups (teamwork) and on their own (being independent)

### The Forest School Ethos and Principles:

The Forest School ethos has 6 principles (reviewed in 2011 and published by the Forest School association, and these are:

- Forest School is a long-term process of regular sessions, rather than a one-off or infrequent visit; the cycle of planning, observation, adaptation and review links each session.

Forest School sessions will be carefully planned for the different learners based on their needs and interests. Sessions will be adapted again based on their needs and interests. Sessions will be linked e.g. remember last week we made our bug hotels let's check on what has happened this week. Forest School sessions will run throughout the year on a regular weekly basis.

- Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.

Forest School sessions at Reed take place in a natural environment. Our site for Forest School has a number of species of trees, plants and animals which if requested can be shared by the Forest

School leader. When permission and insurance has been granted the local area (surrounding natural environment) may be used.

- Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for being, development and learning.

Forest School sessions at Reed will be centered around the individuals. Sessions may be directed by an adult e.g. making a shelter, child-initiated e.g. discovering bugs using magnifying glasses or play based e.g. creative mud faces on trees. There are a number of different types of play which will take place in Forest School such as creative play and role play.

- Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.

As previously mentioned, we aim for children to become the above we aim to achieve this in a number of ways some of these include using tools, encouraging children to take manageable risks and following their own interests.

- Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.

We encourage children to take risks this may be by using tools, challenging themselves to do something they haven't done before or doing something slightly differently.

- Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice

The Forest School leader will actively keep up to date with any relevant CPD, reflect after every session and during own directed time in a reflective journal/diary as well as attend any cluster sessions if/when possible.

Please click on the link to find out more about the Forest School ethos and principles:  
<https://www.forestschoollassociation.org/full-principles-and-criteria-for-good-practice/>

These principles underpin everything we do during Forest School at Reed.

At Forest School, all of our learners are recognised for being unique, valuable, and equal to the running of our sessions here at Reed First School. The Forest School Association (2020) defines Forest School as “an inspirational process that offers ALL learners regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees.”

### What happens at Forest School?

Forest School sessions are delivered to groups/whole class (depending on child/adult ratio). These will be held weekly (depending on extreme weather, see policy in the handbook) and last around 50 minutes. All Forest School sessions are designed and led by our Level 3 qualified Forest School practitioner (Amy Wilson). Sessions will be carefully planned around the group/classes needs and interests. We also encourage children to lead their own learning and follow their own interests and therefore individuals are given the freedom to direct their own learning. Children are encouraged to use resources around them to stimulate their own creativity such as using wood to create a den.

Activities that may take place during our Forest School sessions include:

Exploring and learning about wildlife	Learning different knots	Free play (child-led)
Telling, listening, and re-enacting stories	Bug hunts	Using tools to create (making jewellery, decorative items for example)
Creating artwork using natural resources	Shelter building	Identifying plants and trees
Planting seeds/trees	Creating new microhabitats and homes (bug homes, wormery)	Fire lighting/cooking
Team games	Drama	Create living books
Den building	Re-enacting their favourite tv shows such as bake off.	Using mud kitchens
Developing Geographical skills (orienteering)	Building on Science skills taught in class e.g. identifying deciduous and evergreen trees	Learning how to look after the environment

The welfare of the children:

To enable children to achieve the above and get the most out of our Forest School sessions at Reed, it is absolutely essential children are dressed appropriately for all weathers throughout the year. With our often-unpredictable weather in the UK, it can sometimes be hard to know what your child needs to come to school in for their Forest School sessions. Hence why I have created a list for you below. It is also important children are able to fully embrace Forest School hence please do not send your child to school in their best clothes they will most certainly get muddy and wet! **Any child who is not wearing appropriate clothing will not be able to participate in the Forest School sessions.**

It is important that children wear clothes that are warm and waterproof.

- Reed First School coat
- PE Kit
- Wellington boots, walking boots or snow boots
- Waterproof trousers (over the top of thick, warm trousers)
- Lots of layers (we can always remove layers if your child gets warm)
- Warm hat (preferably covering ears)
- Warm gloves (preferably more than one pair if they get wet)
- Extra pair of leggings/thermals under trousers in cold weather
- Warm thick socks (normal socks in wellies are not warm enough for cooler weather)
- Sun hat

- Sun cream (please ensure your child comes to school with sun cream on)

In winter and during cold weather: at least 3 layers under your child's coat for example a top, PE jumper, fleece, and coat. At least two lower body layers for example PE tracksuit trousers and waterproof trousers.

In summer and during hot weather : Light long sleeves are essential to minimize risk of stinging nettles and insect bites).

Your child must always bring with them a Reed First School coat, waterproof trousers, wellington boots in all weathers.

Adults will also be encouraged to wear the appropriate clothing.

#### Toileting:

Children will be encouraged to use the toilet before the Forest School session begins. If required children can use their classroom toilets as the majority of Forest School sessions will be on site. Children with additional needs will go to the toilet with their supporting adult.

#### Food and drink:

During some Forest School sessions food and drink may be shared with the children this will most likely be during cooking on the stove (fire). The Forest School leader will be fully aware of any children with allergies as well as certain foods that cannot be consumed due to religious and or cultural beliefs. The Forest School leader will share relevant information if appropriate to do so with supporting adults (e.g., when cooking sessions take place).

Pupils will be encouraged to drink some water prior to the session beginning to minimize the number of children leaving the session and entering the building. Pupils will bring their water bottles out during sessions.

#### Behaviour:

During Forest School sessions the Reed First School behaviour policy will be followed at all times by all staff members. To read our full behaviour policy please click on the following link:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/behaviour-policy/>

Part of the policy is: The children at Reed First School are encouraged to spend time outside whatever the weather making use of our large outdoor space. Having space to play and interact further supports our children in achieving a healthy therapeutic balance. Staff who are outside with the children have received full STEPS training and are therefore consistent in their expectations and approaches to encourage pro-social behaviours and interactions.

If the Forest School leader feels that a child who is displaying anti-social behaviours is not being safe the child may be removed from the session as a last resort. This is to protect and safeguard themselves, staff, and other pupils. If a supporting adult has to remove a child the rest of the group may be called back to an agreed meeting point if there is a low staff ratio to children.

#### Environmental impact (woodland management):

During Forest School sessions we strive for children to enjoy and explore their surroundings and take part in different activities as well as ensuring that we protect and preserve the environment for a

sustainable future. The Forest School leader will seek to teach as well as challenge children's ideas about their world and how to look after it. An example of this is removing litter, planting seeds, creating microhabitats, and having a discussion with children about the impact small acts like this can have on the environment.

Whilst the majority of Forest School sessions will take place within the school grounds some sessions may take place in the surrounding area. Permission will always be granted from the landowner prior to using the site.

#### Woodland Management Plan:

To ensure little to no negative impact is made on the environment a woodland management plan has been created. This woodland management plan is for the first three years and will be reviewed by the Forest School leader on a regular basis to ensure actions are being met and what needs to be added and updated.



3-year woodland management plan (Forest School) – Amy Wilson

Year One

Factor	Area	Current Situation	Action	Monitor	Resources needed/person responsible/timescale
Herbaceous plants/field layer  Nettles	The area behind the Early Years Classroom (to the left-hand side)	Overgrown nettles (could cause injury)	Remove nettles	Monitor if they regrow and cut back as necessary.	Secateurs  Forest School Leader  Routine check before each Forest School session.
Field Layer	Around field	New trees (some have been removed/eaten at the roots by rabbits).	Replant trees that can be replanted.  Purchase new trees and plant them to replace them.  Protect plants – rabbit proof (protective casing) and dig deep enough down.  Grass cutters to be made aware of new trees planted and to avoid cutting close to them.	Monitor new trees.	A weekly routine check by Forest School Leader
Ground layer	The base of trees/plants.	Soil erosion at the ground level of some trees.	Logs and branches are put around the base of trees and plants (where necessary).	Monitor location of logs and branches.	Children monitor logs/branches haven't been moved.
					Routine check before each Forest School session.
Ground layer	The area behind Early Years Classroom	No current path – will be used regularly in Forest School sessions.	The path was created with logs and twigs.	Monitor and assess if the path is working/move locations.	Monthly check by Forest School Leader.  Children are encouraged to stick to the paths if appropriate (not wet).
Herbaceous plants/field layer  Ground layer	Where necessary	Wildlife present	Habitats created (hedgehogs)	Assess if habitats are being used.  Monitor any new wildlife and create habitats.	Forest School leader  Children are encouraged to monitor habitats created.
Ground layer	Fire circle moved	Fire circle used by current Forest School leader in an unsafe location (under tree and haystacks used for seating).	Fire Circle created in a new location  Logs used to sit on.	Monitor new fire circle	Source logs
Ground layer	The area behind Early Years Classroom	Some places appear overgrown/neglected	Area tidied up and ground level assessed for any trip hazards	Monitor	Forest School leader  Routine checks before each Forest School session.
Herbaceous plants/field layer  Understory layer	Around field	Some branches are overhanging could result in injury.	Cut back any overhanging branches if necessary.	Monitor before each Forest School session.	Forest School leader.
Understory Layer  Ground layer	Hanging on trees/ground level	Deadwood on ground level and some hanging from trees	Remove deadwood from trees.	Monitor before each Forest School session.	Secateurs  Lopper

			Remove deadwood if deemed necessary.  Deadwood on the ground level is to be left unless a risk of injury.	A monthly thorough check  More thorough checking when storms/wind	Forest School Leader
Canopy layer	All trees	No	Monitor overhanging tree branches and remove them if required.	Monitor tree branches that may be overhanging/at risk of falling	Tree surgeons  Forest School leader – routine checks before each Forest School session and a thorough check monthly.
All areas	All areas	Only a few plants have diseases (these have been located).	Check wood and plants for diseases – remove if necessary.  Inform children – children informed to avoid areas with diseases.	Thorough month check	Forest School Leader  Children
N/A	All areas	List of birds to spot but not specific to the area.	To make a child-friendly guide of flora and fauna on the Forest School site.	Monitor use.  Add new flora and fauna when identified.	Forest School Leader  Children
Trees Herbaceous plants/field layer  Understory layer	Trees	Trees are surveyed once a year.	Trees are surveyed yearly by professionals.	Monitor trees throughout – routine checks before each Forest School session and monthly (thoroughly).	Headteacher/Tree surgeons
Canopy layer					
N/A	N/A	No Forest School equipment (outside Forest School agency currently using Forest School grounds).	Purchase Forest School equipment (tools)	Monitor any faulty equipment and remove and replace it.	Forest School Leader

### Year Two

Factor	Area	Current Situation	Action	Monitor	Resources needed/person responsible/timescale
Ground layer/ Herbaceous plants/field layer	Behind EY classroom	No wildflower area	Form wildflower area - Plant wildflower seeds with children	Water	Children/forest school leader Seeds Spade Soil
Herbaceous plants/field layer  Understory layer	By gate and fence	Willow is only in one designated area.	Form a second willow wood area by replanting some of the willow wood	Monitor growth and use.	Secateurs Spade Soil Forest school leader/children
Ground layer	Area to be identified	No minibeast hotel	Create a minibeast hotel	Assess new minibeasts and create new areas for different minibeasts.	Children Forest School Leader
Herbaceous plants/field layer  Understory layer	All bushes (where necessary)	Bushes around field	Trim hedging focusing on blackberry bushes and hawthorn bushes.	Monitor regrowth Remove branches sticking out at eye/head height.	Hedge trimmer Secateurs
Ground layer	Behind Early Years classroom.	No pathway – pathway to be laid in Year One.	Assess pathway and if necessary move pathway/extend pathway if needed.	Assess pathway behind Early Years classroom.	Forest School Leader
Trees Herbaceous plants/field layer  Understory layer  Canopy layer	Trees	Trees are surveyed once a year.	Trees are surveyed yearly by professionals.	Monitor trees throughout – routine checks before each Forest School session and monthly (thoroughly).	Headteacher/Tree surgeons

### Year Three

Factor	Area	Current Situation	Action	Monitor	Resources needed/person responsible/timescale
Ground layer	Fire Circle	Fire Circle in use	Remove logs and replace them if required.	Monitor mould growth on logs or splits in the wood and replace them if necessary.	Routine check before each Forest School session.
Trees Herbaceous plants/field layer  Understory layer  Canopy layer	Trees	Trees are surveyed once a year.	Trees are surveyed yearly by professionals.	Monitor trees throughout – routine checks before each Forest School session and monthly (thoroughly).	Headteacher/Tree surgeons
Ground layer Herbaceous plants/field layer	To be identified closer to time.	No herb garden	Introduction to a herb garden.  Plant herbs and children are encouraged to look after the herbs.	Monitor growth of herbs.  Protective netting is used if needed for protection.	Spade Watering can Soil Herbs Forest School Leader Children
Understory layer  Canopy layer	The area behind the Early year's classroom.  The area behind willow trees.	No birdhouses.	Create birdhouses to add to habitat development.	Monitor new bird species and create birdhouses for different bird species.	Children  Forest School Leader
Ground layer	Area to be identified.	No outdoor reading area.	Create an outdoor reading area.	Monitor use of the reading area.	Forest School Leader
Understory layer  Canopy layer	Willow trees Sycamore tree		Cut (coppice) willow and sycamore trees.	Monitor regrowth	Loppers

## Equality and Inclusion

During all Forest School sessions, the Equality and Inclusion Policy for Reed First School will be followed. For the full policy please click the following link:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/equality-and-inclusion-policy/>

Below are the aims we strive to achieve:

- We aim to act positively and have due regard for the need to challenge and eliminate unlawful discrimination – within our schools and local communities.
- We aim not to discriminate against anyone, be they staff, pupil or parent, on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, level of educational need or background.
- We aim to promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school. We recognise that doing this may entail treating some pupils differently.
- We seek to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by their school.
- We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups of pupils.
- We aim to ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training processes are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.
- We aim to challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.
- We value each pupil's worth, celebrating the individuality and cultural diversity of our school communities, and showing respect for all minority groups.
- We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are often caused by poor self-image and also aware of the relationship between that and ignorance. Through positive educational experiences, and support for each individual's legitimate point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all

All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. Any incidents drawn to the immediate attention of the Headteacher will complete a Prejudice Driven Incident form if required. Incidents may be referred to Herts Against Hate if further support of action is required. Any prejudice will be taken seriously and considered in conjunction with our Child Protection policy for the monitoring of potential safeguarding concerns.

## Health and Safety Policy:

Please click on the following link to read the full Health and Safety policy in detail:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/health-and-safety-policy-november-2020/>

Forest School is run by Amy Wilson who is our Forest School leader. She holds a Paediatric and outdoor first aid qualification.

Health and Safety is essential to everything we do during our Forest School sessions. The Forest School leader encourages children to actively take part in taking measurable risks which are

appropriate to them this includes their age. Risk Benefit Assessments will be completed where necessary. Risk Benefit Assessments will be regularly reviewed and updated by the Forest School Leader.

Accident and Emergency Policy:

Please read our Health and Safety Policy and ensure you have read Appendix 4 and 7.

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/health-and-safety-policy-november-2020/>

Off site visits: The destination's specific location will be located and provided on a piece of card for all participants to be aware of. In the case of an emergency, a participant(s) can contact the emergency services with the location clearly stated on the card. An example is seen below:

**Emergency Procedure Card:**

In the event of an emergency and you have been handed this card:

Call 999. Ask for the Emergency Services.

Speak slowly and clearly.

Describe the location:

What3words reference:

Grid Reference:

Nearest Postcode/Address:

How to find us:

Let them know who is hurt, and where they are hurt.

Listen to the instructions from the emergency services.

To call the school:

Call: 01763 848304 or mobile: 07518 133104

### Cooking including food hygiene:

During some Forest School sessions cooking may take place. Cooking is an enjoyable experience for all, but it is essential that good hygiene is practiced and followed.

Risk-benefit assessments will be completed by the Forest School Leader prior to cooking activities taking place. The Forest School Leader will cook the food on the fire. The children may be invited to be involved in the cooking process under close observation ensuring children are a safe distance away from the fire.

All participants including supporting adults will be expected to handle food safely and practice and follow good hygiene. Children and supporting adults (including the Forest School Leader) will wash their hands with warm soapy water prior to preparing, cooking and/or eating food. The stove will also be cleaned prior to it being used. Cutlery if used will be clean and washed after every use.

Food and drink served will be in date and as previously mentioned any allergies or foods/drinks that cannot be consumed due to a religious and or cultural reasons will be known to the Forest School Leader.

Children will be reminded by the Forest School Leader and supporting adults on how to keep themselves safe this includes not eating or drinking anything from trees, bushes and the natural environment unless told by an adult that it is safe to do so.

Below is a list of practices that should be followed during the preparation and consumption of food/drink:

- Hair to be tied or tucked back. Any jewellery/lanyards to be removed. Cover any cuts with a bright blue plaster.
- Hands to be washed thoroughly with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- All food and drink will be checked to ensure they are in date and safe to use.
- Separate chopping boards and utensils will be used if required.
- Food to be checked it is hot in the centre and cooked before consumption.
- A work surface will be created if required. No food/drink will be prepared on the ground/mud/soil.
- The area will be cleaned safely.
- Any food waste will be recycled where possible. Waste will be disposed of.

A list of things to avoid from doing:

- Handling food (where possible use cutlery and other cooking equipment to transfer food e.g., a spoon).
- Handling food if unwell (sickness or diarrhoea)

Practices to be followed:

- Food will not be reheated more than once.
- Food will be wrapped, put in clear food bags or containers if not consumed straight away (storage)
- Equipment to be checked it is clean and safe to use prior to use.
- Tea towels will be cleaned on a hot wash. Blue paper towel will be disposed of.
- Foods that need to be in the fridge/freezer to be kept at the correct temperature and taken out just before the session begins. Food will be stored in the correct place in the fridge/freezer.

- Cooked food and raw food will be kept separate.

## COSHH

Forest School Sessions are unlikely to use any hazardous substances. However, the Forest School Leader may use cleaning substances when cleaning equipment after use. Every attempt will be made to avoid or choose the least harmful of substances. Any cleaning substances will be kept locked in the cleaning cupboard where other hazardous chemicals are stored and are out of reach of children. Substances are kept in original packaging and labelled. Hazardous substances will also be regularly checked to ensure they are in date and safe to use. PPE such as gloves is available to use if required. For more information on how to keep safe when around hazardous chemicals and substances please see the following website:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/basics/index.htm>

Please click on the below link to find Appendix 11 as part of our health and safety policy in regards to COSHH:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/health-and-safety-policy-november-2020/>

## Extreme weather

Our Forest School Leader aims for all children to be outdoors in all weathers. However, during extreme weather protocols have to be followed to ensure the safety of those using the grounds. As part of the daily checks, Amy Wilson (Forest School Leader) will assess the weather conditions on the day and or where possible weather assessments will take place the day before. If the weather is deemed by the Forest School Leader to be extreme and unsafe the Forest School session will be cancelled or postponed.

### *High Winds*

During high winds and if the Forest School Leaders assesses that there is potential for branches, trees or debris to fall the children will be taken back into the school building immediately or an alternative outdoor area will be used (such as an area away from trees).

### *Storms*

If the weather forecast is for thunderstorms, storms, tornados the session will be cancelled by the Forest School Leader as it would be deemed too dangerous. If possible, the Forest School Leader will move the session indoors.

### *High rainfall*

The session may not take place if there was to be high rainfall. This would be deemed safe or unsafe by the Forest School leader. This may depend upon factors such as a slippery surface to walk on. If during a session there is a high amount of rainfall the children will be moved to a shelter area (such as the one located outside KS1).

### *Extreme cold*

The Forest School leader actively encourages all children to be dressed appropriately for Forest School. However, if the weather is very cold the Forest School leader will make a decision to whether the session can go ahead. It would be unsafe to carry the session on if children and supporting adults become too cold. Where possible spare clothing will be provided to children.

### *Extreme heat*

The Forest School leader is aware of the potential of children becoming over-exposed to the sun. To minimise any risks relating to this parents, will be reminded to provide their children with appropriate clothing this includes wearing sun cream, a sunhat, lightweight tops with long sleeves, and trousers. Where possible shade will also be used and shelters. Water bottles will also be available to use. If the weather conditions are deemed unsafe for example during a heatwave the Forest School leader will assess the conditions and may cancel or postpone the session.

### Fire policy

Forest School provides opportunities for children to experience, participate and be involved in gathering resources for a fire, lighting a fire, cooking food or drink on a fire, and stopping a fire.

The Forest School leader will only light a fire when they feel comfortable that the children would be safe around a fire.

The Forest School leader is responsible for completing a risk-benefit assessment prior to lighting a fire in a Forest School session. Fire safety and emergency procedures will be regularly reviewed by Amy Wilson (Forest School Leader). This is to ensure that best practice is followed.

It is essential that any supporting adults and volunteers read the handbook carefully and the fire policy to understand fire safety and the emergency procedures in place.

Fire can pose dangers such as that it can cause burns, scalds as well as breathing problems through inhaling fumes/smoke. The Forest School leader will take appropriate measures to reduce the likelihood of any fire-related injuries or incidents.

### *Area of fire pit*

The area for lighting a fire has now been moved to a different location. This area is located in our tepee. The fire pit is placed on top of 4 large concrete slabs to prevent a spark from igniting on the ground. The top of the tepee is opened when a fire is lit to allow smoke to escape. The side of the tepee is also open to allow for ventilation and an escape route if required. Benches are placed at least 2m away from the fire pit within the tepee.

Children will be taught how to move around the fire pit safely. The children will only be allowed in the middle of the fire pit if asked to do so by an adult.

### *Equipment*

The Forest School leader has taken precautions to contain a fire. A small standing fire pit which has a cover has been purchased. The cover will only be removed by the Forest School leader to add fuel, move fuel around (e.g., twigs), extinguish a fire or for another reason deemed safe and appropriate by the Forest School leader. The fire pit is standing so there is a smaller risk that the ground will become a lit. There is a smaller risk of anything falling out of the pit e.g., a lit twig. The Forest School leader will ensure their lanyard has





been removed as well as any jewellery, hair has been tied or tucked back. This also applies to any child or adult that is feeding the fire.

#### *Faulty or damaged equipment*

Prior to lighting a fire, the Forest School leader is responsible for checking the equipment is usable and safe to use. This includes checking the stove and fire-resistant gloves. Any equipment that is unsafe to use will not be used during the session. If the equipment can be checked and fixed it may be used in the next fire lighting session. However, if it is unable to be fixed or is faulty it would be disposed of safely.

#### *Lighting a fire*

As previously mentioned the Forest School leader will only light a fire when they feel it is safe to do so with the group of children they have.

Fire lighting sessions will only take place if there are at least 2 adults present.

Natural resources will be used this includes bark of a silver birch tree, cotton wool, twigs, branches, old man's beard which will be lit by a light my fire fire lighter. An alternative fire lighter (e.g., fire lighters) may be used if deemed appropriate by the Forest School leader. Fire lighters will be stored and removed carefully by the Forest School leader. Children may have access to fire lighters under the close supervision of adults. Fire lighters will be used as per the manufacturer's instructions. Light my fire and other fire lighters will be kept securely and safely. No flammable gases, liquids and materials will be used during the lighting of a fire.



Fire-resistant/safety gloves will be worn by anyone working with the fire this will usually be the Forest School leader. Any materials added to the fire will be placed into the fire pit carefully and from the side to avoid coming into contact with flames. Children may be able to feed the fire 1:1 with the Forest School leader under close supervision. This will be at the Forest Schools discretion on whether they feel they can be safe.

Children will remain seated during the fire unless instructed by an adult to move.

Any form of smoking or vaping is not allowed on site.

#### *Extinguishing a fire*

The fire must be extinguished when the session has ended. The Forest School leader will ensure that any flames have been extinguished fully. The fire will be hosed down with water. The Forest School leader will ensure that any flames, steam and smoke has stopped prior to leaving the site.

#### *Safety*

During any session of lighting a fire at least one bucket of water will be available. Alongside a First aid kit and burns kit these will be situated close to the fire pit. The Forest School leader will make supporting adults aware of where these are, as well as the children. The Forest School leader is trained in Paediatric and Outdoor First Aid. Where possible supporting adults will also be trained in First Aid.

Although all precautions would be taken to control a fire, fires can very quickly get out of control. In the event of a fire getting out of control the Forest School leader will ask all participants to exit the area and go to another area away from the fire with a supporting adult(s). The Forest School leader will use water to attempt to manage the fire. If the Forest School leader is unsuccessful the leader

will instruct a supporting adult to get a fire extinguisher (inside the school building). The Forest School leader will make another attempt to extinguish the fire. If the fire is unable to be extinguished the Forest School leader will phone the Fire brigade on 999 and make sure the headteacher is aware. The children will be moved to a place of safety. The fire alarm will be sounded.

Although precautions will be made to minimise the risk it is important to be aware that a participant may become a lit. These actions will follow:

1. Stop (participant stops what they are doing).
2. They drop to the ground.
3. They roll on the ground covering their face.



If the Forest School leader comes into contact with fire the supporting adult must direct the children away from the fire, seek help, ensure the fire alarm is on, provide first aid/support to the Forest School Leader. If a participant requires medical attention the emergency services will be contacted as soon as possible on 999 for an emergency or 111 for advice.

#### First aid policy

The Forest School leader holds a Paediatric First Aid and Outdoor First Aid qualifications. Supporting adults where possible will be trained to deliver first aid too. These qualifications remain for 3 years. A refresher course will be organised to ensure best practice is followed.

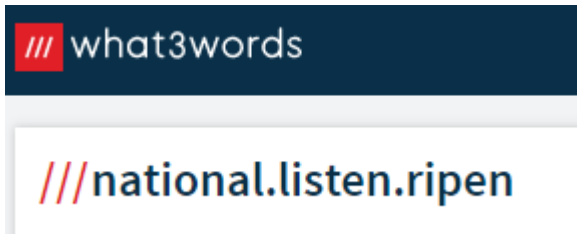
The Forest School leader will have an outdoor first aid kit and an emergency kit in all sessions. These will be placed accessible, and the supporting adults will be made aware of where these are located should they need to be used. A burns kit will also be available if a fire is being lit. Amy Wilson is responsible for checking the equipment is up to date and safe to use on a regular basis.

Additional first aid boxes can be found in the main school building if required. These are located in the staff room, Bysouth classroom, the hall and the corridor outside the offices. Danielle Haydon is responsible for regularly checking the First Aid kits in school.

AEDS (automated external defibrillator) is located in the phone box outside the village hall in Reed. Please see below for location. The location using the What3Words app/website is: national.listen.ripen

We now also have a defibrillator on site, this is located in the cupboard above the piano in the hall.

Location of AED in Reed Village hall:

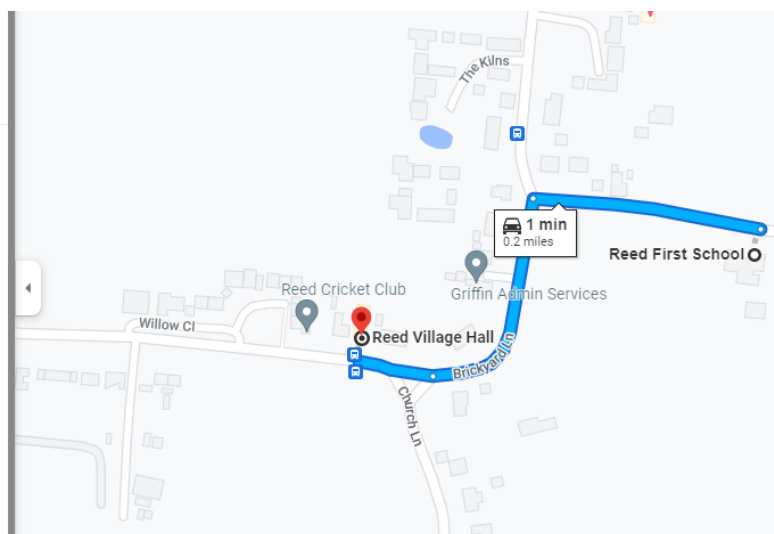


1 min (0.2 mile)  
via Jackson's Ln and Brickyard Ln  
Fastest route now due to traffic conditions

**Reed First School**  
2 Jackson's Ln, Royston SG8 8AB

- ↑ Head west on Jackson's Ln towards Brickyard Ln  
486 ft
- ← Turn left onto Brickyard Ln  
492 ft
- ↗ Slight right onto Blacksmith's Ln  
Destination will be on the right  
161 ft

**Reed Village Hall**  
Blacksmith's Ln, Reed, Royston SG8 8AX



### *Medication*

All non-emergency medication is kept in school is securely stored in lockable cupboard in school office, and refrigerated meds kept in clearly labelled container within the fridge in the staffroom with access strictly controlled. All pupils know how to access their medication.

Emergency medication and devices such as asthma inhalers, blood glucose testing meters and adrenaline pens are always readily available to children and not locked away. These are kept in in classroom cupboards and are clearly labelled. During Forest School sessions inhalers and adrenaline pens are to be brought outside by the classroom teacher to be kept securely in the Emergency bag of the Forest School leader.

### *Administration of medicines*

All medication will be administered to pupils in accordance with the DfE document Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions. Detailed arrangements are provided in a separate school policy.

No member of staff will administer any medication (prescribed or non-prescribed) to children under 16 without a parent's written consent except in exceptional circumstances.

### *Transport to hospital*

Where a first aider considers it necessary, the injured person will be sent directly to hospital (normally by ambulance). Parents / carers will be notified immediately of all major injuries to pupils. No casualty will be allowed to travel to hospital unaccompanied and an accompanying adult will be designated in situations where the parents/carers cannot be contacted in time.

Where there is any doubt about the appropriate course of action, the first aider will consult with the Health Service helpline (NHS Direct 0845 4647) and, in the case of pupil with the parents/carers.

Employees must report all accidents, violent incidents and near misses. Where HCC is the employer then all employee incidents must be reported to HCC using the online accident/incident reporting system hosted on Solero.

Employee accident / incident forms are to be retained for a minimum of 3 years. Accidents to pupils and other non-employees (members of public / visitors to site etc.)

A local accident book located in the staff room and outside the headteacher's office is used to record all minor incidents to non-employees, more significant incidents as detailed below must also reported to HCC using the online accident reporting system hosted on Solero.

- Major injuries.
- Accidents where significant first aid treatment has been provided.
- Accidents which result in the injured person being taken from the scene of the accident directly to hospital.
- Accidents arising from premises / equipment defects.

Parents / carers will be notified immediately of all major injuries.

Pupil / student accident forms are to be retained for a minimum of 3 years after their 18th Birthday.

### *All Accidents*

All major incidents will be reported to the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors and the Health and Safety Governor.

Accidents will be monitored for trends and a report made to the Governing Body as necessary.

The Headteacher, or their nominee, will investigate accidents and take remedial steps to avoid similar instances recurring. Faulty equipment, systems of work etc. must be reported and attended to as soon as possible. Any relevant learning points will be communicated to relevant staff and pupils / students.

### *Reporting to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)*

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring all RIDDOR reportable incidents are reported.

Incidents resulting in the following outcomes must be reported to the HSE via their online reporting system <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/> within 15 days of the incident occurring.

- A pupil or other non-employee being taken directly to hospital for treatment and the accident arising as the result of the condition of the premises / equipment, due to the way equipment or substances were used or due to a lack of supervision / organisation etc.

Please click on the following link for the Health and Safety Policy in full:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/health-and-safety-policy-november-2020/>

## Insurance Certificates:

Below you can find a copy of our insurance certificate.

### Your Zurich Municipal Insurance

**Our Reference** AS/IND  
**Policy Number** QLA-19AA02-0043  
**Customer Name** Hertfordshire County Council

To Whom It May Concern

This is to confirm that Hertfordshire County Council have in force with this Company until the policy expiry on 31 August 2025 Insurance incorporating the following essential features:


Limit of Indemnity		
Public Liability	£50,000,000	any one event
Pollution/Products Liability	£50,000,000	for all claims in the aggregate during any one period of insurance any one event inclusive of costs
Employers' Liability	£50,000,000	any one event inclusive of costs
Excess		
Public Liability/Products Liability/ Pollution	£500,000	any one event
Employers' Liability	£500,000	any one event
<b>Indemnity to Principals</b>	Covers include a standard Indemnity to Principals Clause in respect of contractual obligations.	
<b>Full Policy</b>	The policy documents should be referred to for details of full cover.	

Yours sincerely




Zurich Municipal


02 August 2024





### Contact Details


 **Call us on**  
0800 232 1927

We may record or monitor calls to improve our service.

 **Email us at**  
[tom.hopkins@uk.zurich.com](mailto:tom.hopkins@uk.zurich.com)

 **Visit us at**  
[www.zurich.co.uk/municipal](http://www.zurich.co.uk/municipal)

 **Write to us at**  
Zurich Insurance Company Ltd  
PO BOX 4937  
SWINDON  
SN4 4PP



## Manual Handling

Manual handling is something that where possible should be avoided. Please click on the following link and see appendix 15 for the lifting and handling policy.

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/health-and-safety-policy-november-2020/>

## Risk Management

“Play is great for children’s well-being and development. When planning and providing play opportunities, the goal is to not eliminate risk but to weigh up the risks and benefits. No child will learn about risk if they are wrapped up in cotton wool” (Health and Safety Executive, HSE, 2012).

“HSE fully recognises that play brings the world to life for children. It provides for an exploration and understanding of their abilities; helps them to learn and develop; and exposes them to the realities of the world in which they will live, which is a world not free from risk but rather one where risk is ever-present. The opportunity for play develops a child’s risk awareness and prepares them for their future lives” (HSE, 2012).

As mentioned above by the HSE, it is important children are provided with the opportunities to take risks. Activities that pose risks will be managed by the Forest School Leader through a carefully thought-out risk assessment. When/if Forest School sessions take place off-site risk assessments will be uploaded to Evolve (Herts). Permission will need to be granted by the Headteacher or another agreed adult.

Please click on the following link to read the document:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/childrens-play-july-2012.pdf>

### Risk benefits assessments

“Those providing play opportunities should focus on controlling the real risks, while securing or increasing the benefits – not on the paperwork” (HSE, 2012). As outlined in the HSE document it is important to focus on managing the real risks and increasing the benefits of an activity. Risks are absolutely essential to the development of a child. The purpose of risk-benefit assessments is that once the risks and benefits have been outlined and assessed a judgement can be made as to whether there are more benefits than risks. It is important to consider that if children do not learn skills like using a hammer, lighting a fire, and creating a shelter what will they do when they come across needing to use these skills in their future lives.

Below are some completed risk-benefit assessments that may be used during Forest School sessions. It is important to note that these may be adapted for the group of children, or individuals, updated due to new risks and/or benefits identified. The risk-benefit assessments will be regularly reviewed by the Forest School Leader. The aim is for in the long run children will start to identify risks in an activity but the benefits too.

It is important to note that the Forest School Leader’s overall risk rating whether that be low, medium, or high is based upon their own judgement as to whether there are more benefits than risks.

A dynamic risk assessment can be seen in Appendix 2 which may be used if required.

### *Fire lighting/cooking*

Activity	How will children benefit from this activity?	Possible Hazards	Who is at risk?	Precautions in place to reduce the risk of injury.	Overall risk rating: L/M/H
Cooking (fire)	Learn and develop cooking skills.  Understand the importance of food hygiene.	Burns  Damage to environment	Forest School Leader  Children  Supporting adults	Burns kit close to fire pit.  First Aid kit  Fire pit away from any plants/buildings that could then cause further harm.	Medium

	<p>Children learn how to cook food properly.</p> <p>Understand how to light and manage a fire.</p> <p>Know how to be safe around a fire.</p> <p>Understand what a fire needs (fuel, oxygen, heat).</p>			<p>At least 2 adults present.</p> <p>Fire to only be lit when Forest School Leader feels it is safe with the group of children.</p> <p>Moving around a fire (see fire policy).</p> <p>Water available.</p> <p>Drop and roll (see fire policy).</p> <p>Mobile phone/walkie talkie available if further support is needed.</p> <p>Adult supervision.</p> <p>Children to keep a distance of 2m from fire unless asked to cook something (see fire policy).</p> <p>Children to be taught the correct and safe way of lighting a fire as well as how to conduct themselves around a fire.</p> <p>Forest School Leader holds an up to date Outdoor First Aid and Paediatric First Aid.</p>	
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Activity	How will children benefit from this activity?	Possible Hazards	Who is at risk?	Precautions in place to reduce the risk of injury.	Overall risk rating: L/M/H
Using tools	<p>Develop physical motor skills.</p> <p>Learn how to create things and manage woodland and the environment.</p> <p>Children understood what tools are used for their purposes).</p> <p>Develop communication skills (e.g. when using a bow saw).</p> <p>Enjoyment.</p> <p>Develop self-confidence.</p>	Injury – cuts, scrapes, amputation, deep cut/wound, puncture, grazes.	<p>Forest School Leader</p> <p>Children</p> <p>Supporting adults</p>	<p>Forest School Leader is trained and qualified in Outdoor First Aid (which and Paediatric First Aid.</p> <p>Gloves to be worn for certain tools were deemed appropriate for the children.</p> <p>Tools talk delivered by Forest School Leader.</p> <p>Children will learn how to use tools safely.</p> <p>Tools checked before use by Forest School Leader to ensure they are safe and in working order.</p> <p>Under close supervision from a trained adult (see tools policy for ratios).</p> <p>Tools locked away and stored safely away from children.</p> <p>A First Aid Kit and Emergency/Welfare Kit carried at all times.</p> <p>Appropriate footwear and clothing worn.</p>	Medium

Activity	How will children benefit from this activity?	Possible Hazards	Who is at risk?	Precautions in place to reduce the risk of injury.	Overall risk rating: L/M/H
Ropes	<p>Learn different knots specific to Forest School.</p> <p>Create shelters.</p> <p>Use their imagination.</p> <p>Develop physical motor and fine motor skills.</p> <p>Develop social and communication skills.</p> <p>Learn how to work well as a team.</p> <p>Develop resilience.</p> <p>Enjoyment.</p>	<p>Rope burn</p> <p>Tripping</p>	<p>Forest School Leader</p> <p>Children</p> <p>Supporting adults</p>	<p>First Aid kit</p> <p>Fire pit away from any plants/buildings that could then cause further harm.</p> <p>Forest School Leader holds an up to date Outdoor First Aid and Paediatric First Aid.</p> <p>Where possible rope will be brightly coloured so it is clear.</p> <p>Where possible a specific area will be marked off (all participants made aware) of ropes being used.</p> <p>Children to be aware of their surroundings.</p> <p>Ropes to be collected at the beginning and end of session.</p> <p>Gloves to be worn if deemed appropriate when transporting rope e.g. from one tree to another.</p> <p>Children reminded to give others space.</p>	Low

### Tools policy

Using tools provides children with a whole host of benefits. Children learn how to handle tools, store them safely, use them safely, know what they are used for and why. It enables children to take appropriate risks as well as develop their physical skills.

Tools will be used for a variety of purposes this may include managing the natural environment such as using loppers to trim trees and bushes down.

A list of tools that may be used in Forest School sessions include:

- Bow saws
- Palm drills
- Peelers
- Secateurs
- Loppers
- Hammers

#### *Ratio of adults to children for using the tools*

When the children use the tools, they will be under close adult supervision of the Forest School leader. Tools will be used on a 1 adult: 1 child ratio for under 5 years old or a 1 adult: 2 children for children aged 5 years old and over. However, the skill level of a child and other factors will be considered e.g., if a 9-year-old is finding using a tool difficult the ratio would change to 1:1. If a child is deemed unsafe to use the tools by the Forest School Leader, they will not be able to use the tools at that time as they are not ready. If a child has a 1:1 adult at all times it may be deemed appropriate for that supporting adult to support that child whilst the Forest School Leader oversees and is also supervising.

#### *Management of tools*

To ensure no tools are left e.g., on the ground the Forest School will count each tool back into the tools bag at the end of the session.

#### *Storage of tools*

Tools will be stored carefully in a locked shed on site. The Forest School leader will ensure that when not needed or Forest School sessions are not taking place they are kept in a locked area e.g., a shed and out of reach of children when Forest School sessions are not being run. Where a tool has a safety feature e.g., a safety catch these will be put on.

#### *Safety of the equipment*

The Forest School leader is responsible for regularly checking the tools this includes before use. Any faulty equipment such as tools will be removed and replaced if unable to be fixed. Tools will be checked to see if they are safe to use, clean and in working order. Tools will also be checked for any missing or damaging parts.

#### *Introducing tools and using them*

The Forest School leader will share the 'tools talk' with the children prior to introducing a new tool as well as using tools previously used. This is for children to understand what the tool is, why they are used and how to use them safely and correctly.

The Forest School Leader will carefully model to the children how to use appropriate posture and have an awareness of other children and adults around them. The Forest School leader will also carefully model the safe way to transport a tool, store it and use it. Children will be made aware that they are only to walk with a tool when carrying them to put away/to pass to the Forest School Leader.

Children will wear a glove on the helping hand and/or both if deemed appropriate. Gloves will be worn for certain tools depending on the tool such as bow saws.

An area where tools may be used would be made aware to all participants in some cases this may be cornered off. This is to ensure no one is near the child when using a tool. The children will be reminded to be two arm's length and a tool length away from anyone except their partner (e.g. if they are using a bow saw).

Children will only be able to use tools once the Forest School Leader is confident and deems a child to be safe and able to take appropriate risks.

### *Risk Benefit Assessments*

Risk benefit assessments will be completed by the Forest School for the use of a tool. They will be regularly reviewed, updated, and checked by the Forest School Leader.

Tool talks will be delivered to the children for the introduction of using a new tool and when using a tool that has already been used. Please see below for some examples of tool talks for different tools:

### *Loppers*

What is said:	Actions/modelling:
These are my loppers.	Hold up tool.
I use the loppers to cut wood no larger than a 20 pence piece.	Hold up finger and thumb to demonstrate width.
When I use the loppers, I use them two arm lengths and a tool length away from anybody but my partner.	Hold tool at arms length and stretch arms out to demonstrate.
No gloves on hands when using loppers.	Hold hands up.
These are the handles.	Point to handles.
This is the blade.	Point to the cutting blade from above – do not put fingers towards the edge – ensure you distinguish between cutting edge and blunt edge.
This is the cutting edge.	Point down toward the edge – do not put fingers under the blade or near the cutting edge.
I hold the loppers like this.	Hold firmly with one hand on the lower half of the handles, keeping them closed – blades facing forwards, handle tucked under arms.
I walk with the loppers like this.	Walk holding it as above – do not let them swing.
I pass the loppers like this.	Hold with two hands on the lower half of the handles keeping them closed, blade facing towards you, handles towards receiving person.
When I am not using the loppers, I put them down with the blade facing backwards and the handle facing forwards like this.	Demonstrate – this is sensible as, if a person falls, they normally reach out forwards from the body and thus away from the blade.
When I have finished using the loppers I put them back in the designated place or the tool box (bag).	Point, explain at certain points that the tool box (bag) is not the most sensible place if it is away from the working area.

### Bow Saw:

What is said:	Actions/modelling:
This is a bow saw.	Hold up tool.
I use the bow saw to cut wood no anything bigger than a 2 pence piece.	Hold up finger and thumb to demonstrate width.
When I use the bow saw, I use them two arm lengths and a tool length away from anybody but my partner.	Hold tool at arms length and stretch arms out to demonstrate.
I use a glove on the non-sawing hand.	Hold hands up.
This is the handle.	Point to the whole of the handle, not just finger guard.
This is the blade cover I take the cover off like this.	Point to it and remove it.
This is the blade.	Point to the blade from above – do not put fingers towards the edge.
This is the cutting edge.	Point down towards the edge – do not put fingers on the blade edge.
When I have finished sawing, I put the blade cover back on like this.	Place the blade cover on – highlight that it is easier if it is folded down.
I hold the bow saw like this.	Hand in centre of the handle like a handbag.
I walk with the bow saw like this.	Walk holding it with two hands – do not let it swing.
I pass the bow saw like this.	Hold with two hands, blade facing downwards, handle facing up.
When I am not using the bow saw, I put it down with the blade facing in and the handle facing out like this.	Demonstrate – this is sensible as, if a person falls, they normally reach out forwards from the body and thus away from the blade.
When I have finished using the bow saw, I put them back in the designated place or the tool box (bag).	Point, explain at certain points that the tool box (bag) is not the most sensible place if it is away from the working area.

### Drill

What is said:	Actions/modelling:
This is a drill.	Hold up tool.
I use drills to make holes.	Hold tool.
When I use the loppers, I use them two arm lengths and a tool length away from anybody but my partner.	Hold hands.
No gloves on hands when holding the drill.	Hold tool at arm's length and stretch arms to demonstrate.
This is the handle.	Point to the whole of handle.
This is the blade.	Point to the blade (drill bit).
This is the cutting edge.	Point down towards the bottom of the drill bit.
I hold the drill like this.	Tuck under arm and point bit downwards.
I walk with the drill like this.	Walk holding it as above – do not let them swing.
I pass the drill like this.	Hold with two hands.

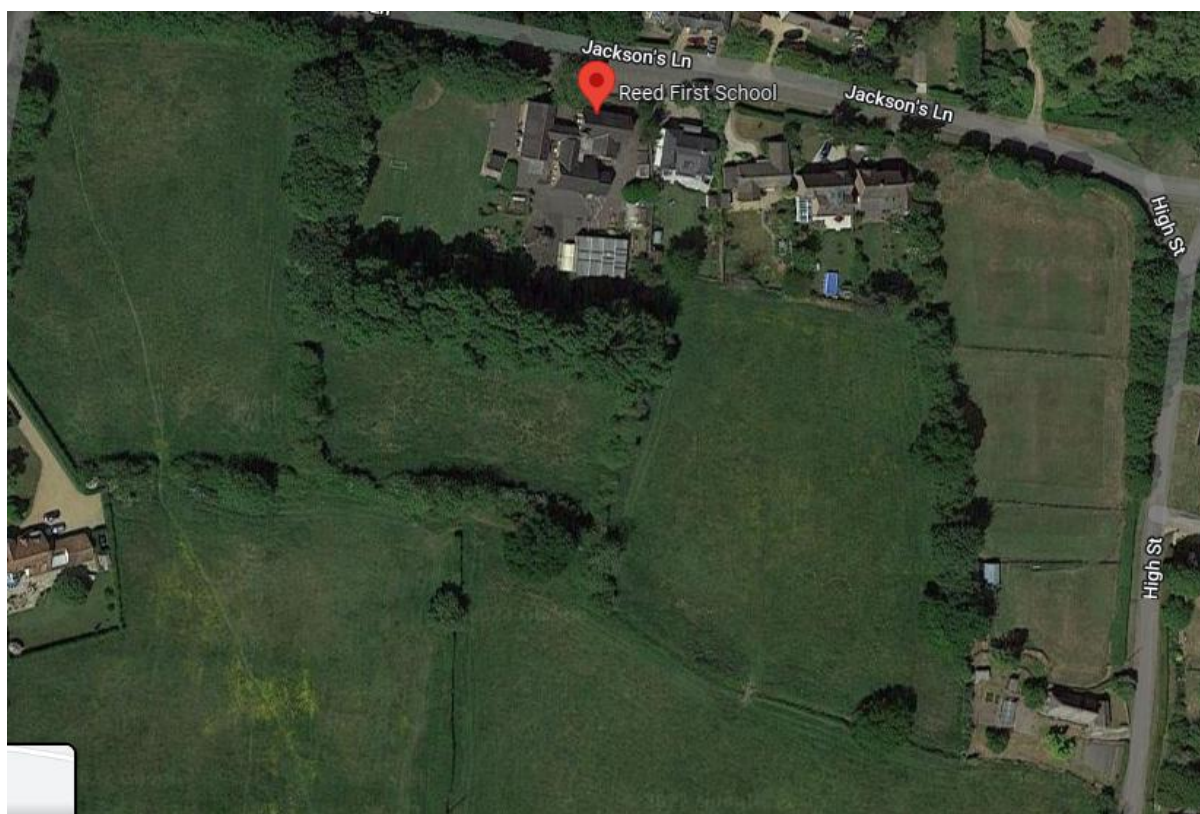
When I am not using the drill, I rest it on a glove.	To protect the drill part.
When I have finished using the drill I put them back in the designated place or the tool box (bag).	Point, explain at certain points that the tool box (bag) is not the most sensible place if it is away from the working area.

### Transport policy

As previously mentioned, the majority of sessions will take place within the school grounds. When/if permission is granted to use surrounding fields/areas for Forest School this transport policy will be in place.

All activities taking place off-site will need to be granted permission from the Headteacher and/or the other designated staff member for off-site visits. Risk assessments will be completed on Evolve.

Where possible Forest School sessions off-site will be as close to our site at Reed First School as possible. We aim to stick within this area (see map below) if possible, this is to ensure we are close to the school should further support be required.



The appropriate ratio will be followed in alliance with the school's off-site ratios. A charged school and personal mobile phone will be taken by the Forest School Leader and other adults will be encouraged to bring their mobile phones too. A First Aid Kit will be taken to the site. The route to the site and site will be risk assessed (risk-benefit assessment) and will also be checked the day before and where possible on the day before the session begins.

Transport will be on foot to different locations. Where possible we will stick to paths. Children will walk next to an appropriate peer. One adult will be at the start of the group and one at the end.

Where there are more adults supporting the session, these adults will be positioned to be in the middle of the group or equally apart. If a vehicle (moving hazard) is identified the adults will ask all children to stop what they are doing, where possible using a stop hand signal as well. If they are on the edge of a road they will be asked to step onto the bank/verge.

Reed Village is generally a very quiet place with little traffic. Where roads have to be crossed. One of two strategies will be followed. The appropriate strategy to be used will be deemed appropriate by the Forest School Leader depending on the road and other circumstances.

1. Cross altogether in one go.
2. Cross in pairs.

### Safeguarding

It is fundamental that all supporting adults have read and understood the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022' document by The Department For Education. It is also essential you keep up to date with any Safeguarding updates.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1080047/KCSIE\\_2022\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1080047/KCSIE_2022_revised.pdf)

As well as the above document, it is important that supporting adults have read and understood the Whistleblowing Policy. Please click on the below link to read this.

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/whistleblowing-policy-2018/>

Supporting adults also need to read and understand the Child Protection Policy. Please click the link below:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/child-protection-policy-2020/>

Any concerns relating to safeguarding must be reported immediately to the DSL or DSP.

Our DSL is: Mrs Vicky Wittich (Headteacher)

Our DSP: Miss Amy Wilson (Class Teacher and SENCO)

Our Safeguarding Governor: Mr Alan Blower

A Record of Concern Form must be completed. These can be found in the staff room.

If a child is in immediate danger call 999. If the DSL or DSP is unavailable or it is out of hours you must contact 0300 123 4043 (Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership).

### Anti-bullying

At Reed First School we seek to prevent bullying by:

- Having a code of behaviour that sets out how everyone involved in our organisation is expected to behave, in face-to-face contact and online, and within and outside of our activities
- Holding regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families who use our organisation about bullying and how to prevent it

- Providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic and sexual bullying
- Putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place as a school which listens and responds  
Our regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people, and families will focus on group members' responsibilities to look after one another and uphold the behaviour code
- Practising skills such as listening to each other
- Respecting the fact that we are all different
- Making sure that no one is without friends
- Dealing with problems in a positive way
- Checking that our anti-bullying measures are working well

Please read our anti-bullying policy:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/anti-bullying-policy/>

### Confidentiality

Private information such as individuals with a medical conditions will only be shared with supporting adults if deemed necessary by the Forest School Leader. At all times privacy and confidentiality will be maintained by all supporting adults and staff.

### Child/vulnerable adult protection:

Please read the below policies. Please also read the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 document and Whistleblowing Policy (see Safeguarding section in the Forest School Handbook).

Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Policy:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/children-looked-after-policy-january-2020/>

Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/supporting-pupils-with-medical-conditions-policy-2/>

Equal Opportunities and Accessibility Policy:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/equality-and-inclusion-policy/>

Child Protection Policy:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/child-protection-policy-2020/>

### Data protection

We will always ensure data is protected. Please read the following Data Protection Policy and the Data Breach Response Plan.



Data Breach Response Plan:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/data-breach-response-plan/>

Data Protection Policy:

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/data-protection-policy/>

DBS:

All supporting adults including volunteers will be DBS checked prior to joining a session.

<https://reed.herts.sch.uk/download/safer-recruitment-policy-march-2021/>

Lost or missing child

When a Forest School session begins the teachers will inform the Forest School Leader of anyone that is not present (as well as anyone that needs to leave early e.g. a dentist appointment). The majority of Forest School sessions will take place within school grounds in which the site is secure. When the session starts the adults will make it clear to the children where the meeting place is. If the meeting place changes it will be a clearly identifiable place.

**On-site**

If it is discovered that a child or adult is missing the following steps will be followed:

1. Everyone will be called back to the meeting place.
2. The Forest School leader will conduct a headcount.
3. The child or adult that will be missing will be identified (the Forest School Leader will have a list of children if not identified)
4. Children will remain with the supporting adult(s) in the meeting place.
5. The Forest School leader and any other supporting adults will search the site for the child. If the child has not been found within 7 minutes the Headteacher or another staff member will be contacted.
6. A second search will take place of the site (and if appropriate the surrounding area) with other adults from the main school building.
7. If the child or adult has not been found the Headteacher will make an appropriate decision to call the police on 999.
8. All remaining children will be taken back into their classroom and the Forest School session would be cancelled or postponed.
9. An incident form will be completed.

**Off-site**

If it is discovered that a child or adult is missing the following steps will be followed:

1. Everyone will be called back to the meeting place.
2. The Forest School leader will conduct a headcount.
3. The child or adult that will be missing will be identified (the Forest School Leader will have a list of children if not identified)
4. Children will remain with the supporting adult(s) in the meeting place.

5. The Forest School leader and any other supporting adults will search the site for the child. If the child has not been found within 7 minutes the Headteacher or another staff member will be contacted. If they are able to get to the location within a timely manner.
6. A second search will take place of the site (and if appropriate the surrounding area) with other adults from the main school building if able to do so.
7. If the child or adult has not been found the Headteacher and/or Forest School leader will make an appropriate decision to call the police on 999.
8. All remaining children will be taken back to the school site.
9. An incident form will be completed.

The Forest School leader will always have a charged mobile phone (or walkie talkie) on them during each Forest School session. The phone or walkie talkie will be used to make contact with the Headteacher or school office if required.

### Social media

The Forest School leader will take photographs of children (those with parental consent) during the session and activities. The Forest School will not share any pictures of children in them on social media this includes Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media sites. This is also the case for any supporting adults. Any supporting adults who share pictures of the Forest School sessions on social media will be reported to the DSL, DSP or Headteacher. Photos of the children during Forest School may be shared on the school website and the Google Classroom pages (only pupils in the class have access to this).

### Staff, ratio, roles, and responsibilities

The Forest School leader will ensure that all supporting adults have read and understood this handbook prior to supporting a session. All supporting adults must sign the attached appendix (appendix 1) to confirm this.

The roles of those supporting Forest School sessions are listed below.

#### *Roles and responsibilities of Forest School Leader:*

- To conduct checks prior to a Forest School session. Amy Wilson to use a checklist.
- To ensure the environment is safe to use.
- To regularly review the woodland management action plan.
- To manage the woodland.
- To keep up to date with any paperwork.
- To ensure tools are safe to use.
- To ensure risk assessments have been created, reviewed, and updated where necessary.
- To share with supporting adults any important information e.g., allergies.
- To ensure children know how to use tools safely – tools talk.
- To store tools safely and away from children when not in use.
- To ensure a First Aid Kit and Welfare Kit are at every Forest School session and a Burns kit for when the Fire pit is in use.
- To plan and deliver stimulating sessions for the children including directed activities, child-led and play.

- To review policies when appropriate to do so.
- To ensure a charged mobile phone/walkie-talkie is brought to every Forest School session.
- To keep up to date and attend any Forest School CPD including cluster groups.
- To ensure every three years Outdoor First Aid and Paediatric qualifications have been updated (training).

#### *Roles of supporting adults:*

- To promote a love and wonder during Forest School sessions.
- To support the Forest School leader (carry out any tasks asked by the leader).
- To ensure children and yourselves are being safe at all times.
- To support children in taking appropriate risks for their age and ability.
- Ideally hold a First Aid qualification. Where possible to ensure you are up to date with First Aid.
- Not compulsory but where possible research the benefits and purpose of Forest Schools.
- Any hazards that have been identified need to be reported to the Forest School leader. The Forest School leader will then make an appropriate decision e.g. a verbal instruction to children to avoid a area, corner it off or fix it.
- To have read, understood and signed this handbook.
- To report any concerns to the Forest School Leader (safeguarding to DSP/DSL – inform Forest School leader if you need to leave the session).
- To hold a current and up to date DBS.
- To follow instructions from the Forest School leader at all times.

#### *Roles of parents:*

- To ensure children are dressed appropriately/have spare clothing and appropriate footwear (see clothing policy).

#### *Roles and responsibilities of volunteers:*

- To have read, understood and signed this handbook.
- To hold a current and up to date DBS.
- To follow instructions from Forest School leader at all times.
- Ideally hold a First aid qualification.
- To report any concerns to the Forest School Leader (safeguarding to DSP/DSL – inform Forest School leader if you need to leave the session).

#### Ratios

Reed First School has smaller class sizes than the average class. Forest school is for all children aged 3 years old and over. The statutory staffing ratio for 3-year-olds for Forest School is 1 adult: 8 children. When on-site if tools or a fire is being used there must be at least two adults present.

Where a Forest School session is deemed safe in regards to the group of children and activities taking place a supporting adult may not be required.

All off-site visits will need at least 2 adults present. Please see the below staff to pupil ratios. These ratios may change for example if the majority of the class are aged 4 and above or on other factors.

1 adult: 3 children (For children aged 3 years old)

1 adult: 4 children (For children aged 4 years old)

1 adult: 5 children (For children aged 5 years old)

1 adult: 6 children (For children aged 6 years old)

1 adult: 7 children (For children aged 7 years old)

1 adult: 8 children (For children aged 8 years old)

1 adult: 9 children (For children aged 9 years old)

#### Visitor protocol

We are always on the look out the volunteers. The more adults we have available the more Forest School activities can be planned such as using tools. If you would like to offer some of your time to support a session(s) please do make contact with Amy Wilson who is our Forest School Leader. She can be contacted at: [a.wilson@reed.herts.sch.uk](mailto:a.wilson@reed.herts.sch.uk)

Prior to starting a session, you must provide an updated copy of your DBS, a medical form, emergency contact details. This is to safeguard you and others during Forest School sessions.

Please ensure you have read and understood the Forest School handbook and any questions you have are answered. Please complete the attached form Appendix 1.

Appendix I:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Role within Forest School: \_\_\_\_\_

*I confirm I have read and understood the Forest School Handbook.*

*I confirm that I have and read understood the policies within the Forest School Handbook.*

Signature:

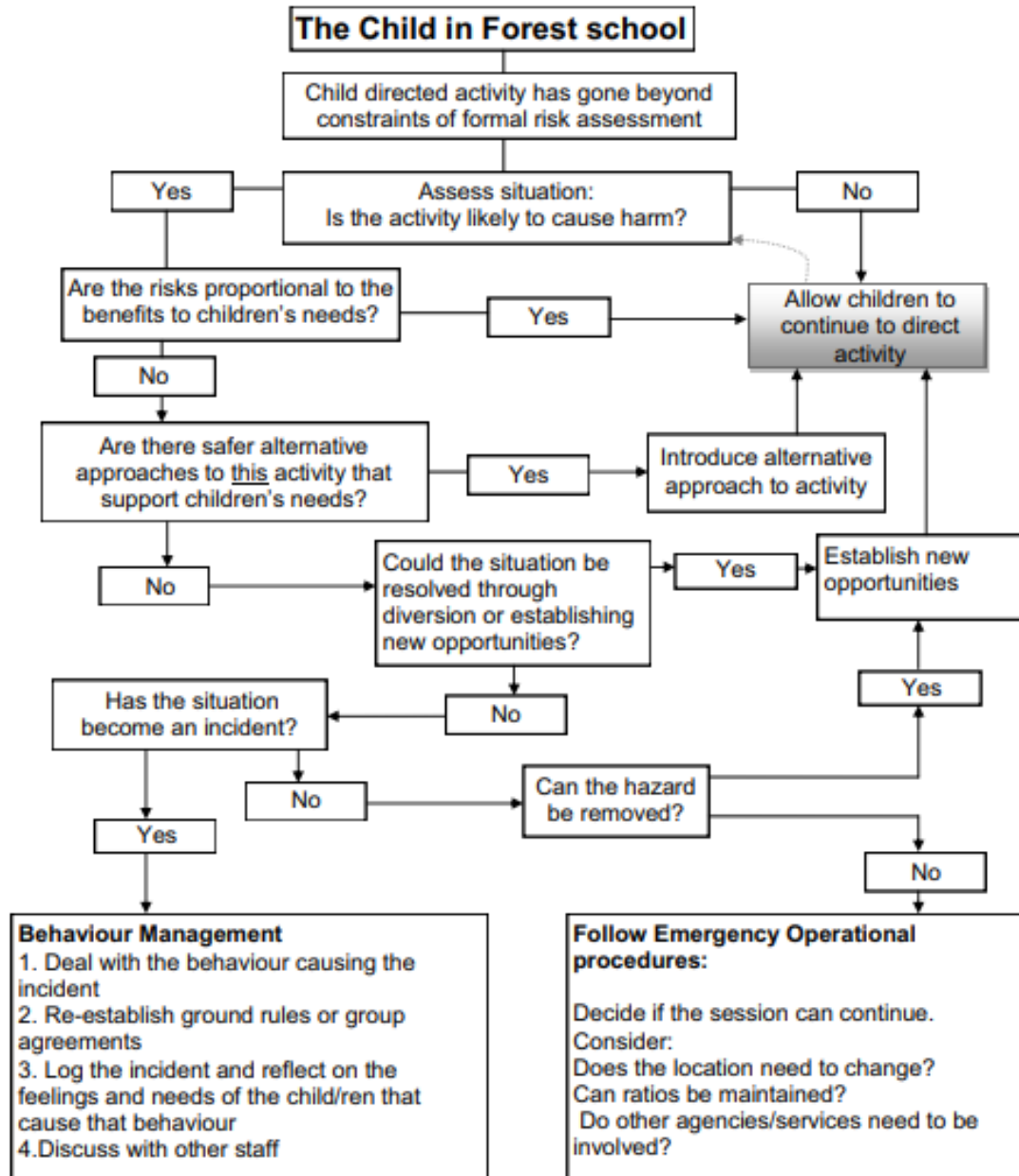
Date:

*Please return the form to Amy Wilson.*

*Thank you.*

Appendix 2:

## Forest School Dynamic Risk Assessment



Original document by Dan Rees-Jones Playwork Partnerships 2008  
Adapted by Lily Horseman and BEYCP Play Team July 2008

Adapted for Forest Schools by Kindling [www.kindlingplayandtraining.co.uk](http://www.kindlingplayandtraining.co.uk) 2011