

Risk Assessment for: **Forest School**

Location: **Forest Area**

Assessment Date: **15/09/2026**

Name of Assessor(s): **Ryan Day & Danielle Elkin-Ranger**

Assessment Ref No:

Note: if assessing a task/activity/event, please give detail here: (outline the activities, tasks, work practices, equipment/materials used, environment, people involved etc)

This risk assessment covers the general use of the school Forest School area for supervised outdoor learning activities. Activities may include exploring the natural environment, den building, use of natural materials and other age-appropriate Forest School activities. The area will be checked prior to each session and activities will be appropriately supervised and adapted according to weather conditions, individual pupil needs and any changes identified within the environment.

Is any of the following required due to the high-risk nature of the task/activity/event?

Method Statement/Safe System of Work Yes ☐ No ☒

Permit to Work Yes ☐ No ☒

If you've answered **Yes**, please provide a link in the body of the RA and/or here, as to where this/these can be located: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Risk Matrix scoring guide:

Likelihood	
1	Very unlikely
2	Unlikely
3	Likely
4	Very likely
5	Certain

Severity:	
1	No Lost time
2	Under 7-day injury or illness
3	Over 7-day injury or illness (RIDDOR)
4	Specified injury or illness (RIDDOR)
5	Fatality, disabling injury or illness

High (15-25)	These risks are unacceptable; significant improvements in risk control are required. The activity should be halted with immediate effect until risk controls are identified/implemented that reduce the risk to an acceptable level
Medium (5-12)	Additional control measures should be identified and implemented to reduce the risks associated with the activity or workplace so far as reasonably practicable
Low (1-4)	Minimal control measures are required to be implemented to satisfy the level of risk. Maintain current arrangements for risk control

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When?	Residual Risk rating			Date completed
					L	S	R	
Boundaries – fencing damaged	Children Children escaping, intruders.	Boundary fencing to be checked by the supervising adult prior to using the site on the morning of their forest school session. Daily checklist to be completed and signed prior to use of the area.	Report any damage to fences to site manager for repair upon return from site check.	Supervising adult/class teacher	2	1	2	15/09/2026
Ground layer – uneven ground, hidden roots on the ground, broken glass.	Children and adults Slips/trips, falls, cuts, grazes.	Site area to be checked for uneven ground, hidden roots, broken glass by the supervising adult prior to using the site on the morning of their forest school session. Daily checklist to be completed and signed prior to use of the area. Participants to wear appropriate footwear. Children to be well supervised and made aware of the potential hazards. Adults to give reminders to the children throughout the session. First Aid Kit/bag to be carried and available on site at all times. At least one first Aider to attend each forest school session.	Report any maintenance issues to site manager for repair upon return from site check.	Supervising adult/class teacher	4	1	4	15/09/2026
Deadwood in overhead trees, falling branches, uprooting.	Children and adults Head injuries, cuts, grazes.	Supervising adult to complete a site check for deadwood, falling branches etc. before use of the area on the morning of the session and all adults in attendance to conduct continuous monitoring during sessions.	Report to site manager if you are unable to remove this safely.	Supervising adult/class teacher	3	2	6	15/09/2026

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When?	Residual Risk rating			Date completed
					L	S	R	
		Adults to remove any hanging deadwood.						
Nettles, brambles, shrubs and broken branches at eye level.	Children and adults Stings, allergic reactions, rashes and grazes	Site area to be checked by the supervising adult for nettles, brambles, shrubs and broken branches prior to using the site on the morning of their forest school session. Educate participants on common allergens. Daily checklist to be completed and signed prior to use of the area. Children/adults to wear trousers and long-sleeved tops. First Aid Kit/bag and any necessary medication to be carried and available on site at all times. At least one first Aider to attend each forest school session.	Report any maintenance issues to site manager for maintenance upon return from site check. Regular maintenance to be conducted by site manager. Pathways are to be cleared, low level branches to be cut back/removed and shrubs/nettles/brambles cut back.	Supervising adult/class teacher Site manager	4	1	4	15/09/2026
Poisonous plants, mushrooms and fungi.	Children Poisoning, stings, allergic reactions, rashes, anaphylaxis	Site area to be checked by the supervising adult for poisonous plants, mushrooms and fungi prior to using the site on the morning of their forest school session. Daily checklist to be completed and signed prior to use of the area. Children to be made aware of hazards ensuring they do not consume anything they find, keeping hands away from their mouths and hands thoroughly washed after session. Hand sanitiser to be made available on site. First aid kit and any	Report any obvious mushrooms/ poisonous plants to site manager for removal upon return from site check.	Supervising adult/class teacher	3	2	6	15/09/2026

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When?	Residual Risk rating			Date completed
					L	S	R	
		necessary medication to be carried and available.						
Debris/litter	Children Contamination, trips, falls.	Site area to be checked for litter and debris by the supervising adult prior to using the site on the morning of their forest school session. Daily checklist to be completed and signed prior to use of the area. Supervising adult to remove any litter. Children to be told not to touch/ pick up any litter/glass etc. and if they find anything to report to an adult to be removed safely.	Any sharps e.g., needles to be reported to site manager upon return from site check.	Supervising adult/class teacher	3	1	3	15/09/2026
Animals on site, dens, animal faeces	Children and adults Slips, trips, falls, cuts and grazes. Contamination/ poisoning	Site area to be checked for animals, dens and animal faeces by the supervising adult prior to using the site on the morning of their forest school session. Daily checklist to be completed and signed prior to use of the area. Children to be made aware not to touch or pick up any animal faeces. Participants to be educated on potential wildlife they may encounter/how to respond/the importance of not disturbing or feeding. Have a clear communication plan in event of unexpected encounters. Hand	No further action.		3	1	3	15/09/2026

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					L	S	R	
		sanitiser to available on site at all times.						
Bees, wasps and other insects	Children and adults Bites and stings	Site area to be checked for nests by the supervising adult prior to using the site on the morning of their forest school session. Daily checklist to be completed and signed prior to use of the area. First Aid kit available on site at all times. At least one first Aider to attend each forest school session. Children with allergies – see allergies (below)	Report any nests etc. to site manager for removal/checking upon return from site check.	Supervising adult/class teacher	3	1	3	15/09/2026
Allergies / medical conditions	Children and adults Rashes, anaphylaxis, asthma attack etc.	- All staff in attendance to be aware of staff and children with allergies or ongoing medical conditions. All supervising adults must be aware of and carry a copy of the care plan/treatment required in the medical bag. Items such as epi pens, inhalers and any other treatment to be on site during session. First Aid kit available on site at all times. At least one first Aider to attend each forest school session. - Grass is not to be cut whilst children are in attendance at	School Allergy Safety Policy to be followed at all times. - Staff to be aware of known allergies and follow individual IHPs/Allergy Action Plans where applicable. - Emergency medication must remain readily accessible throughout the Forest School session - Potential allergens within activities/natural materials to be considered before use.		4	2	8	15/09/2026

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					L	S	R	
		Forest School due to airborne allergies to grass.						
Den building and other activities – using sticks/branches	Children Trips, falls, grazes, cuts, splinters.	- Children to be made aware of dangers and how to carry/transport sticks and branches around the site. This should be reinforced each time they enter the forest area as a reminder. Adults to closely supervise and reminded the children of safety when doing an activity. - Sticks/branches not to be carried at face height or pointed towards others. - Large/heavy branches only moved with adult approval/support. - Structures checked by an adult b// Unsafe or unstable structures dismantled.	No further action.		3	1	3	15/09/2026
Individuals – SEN / disabilities / behavioural needs	Children and adults Increased likelihood of other risks to children and adults	Adults in attendance to be made aware of any SEND, conditions, disabilities and behavioural difficulties prior to the session. Class teacher to consider separate risk assessment where needed. 1:1 support (if applicable) to be used supervised the child(ren) at all times.	Speak with SENDCO/Phase lead to discuss this prior to the session.	Supervising adult/class teacher	4	1	4	15/09/2026

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Other use – grounds maintenance. Adults and children in the vicinity of the person operating the equipment.	Children and adults Physical injury	Timetable and communication between adults to time slot when landscaping, grass cutting and equipment is to be used in the forest area. No persons (adults or children) will be in the vicinity when carrying out the task.	No further action		2	1	2	15/09/2026
Weather Conditions	Children and adults Injury /illness	- Monitor weather forecasts before and during the session and be prepared to amend plans. Ensure appropriate clothing is worn. Ensure participants stay hydrated in extreme heat. Establish a designated shelter area during adverse weather - Sessions to be postponed, relocated or stopped where conditions become unsafe, including thunderstorms/lightning, high winds, extreme heat, snow/ice or other severe weather. - Forest area not to be used during high winds where there is an increased risk from falling branches. - School Sun Safety Policy and Extreme Hot Weather Risk	Weather checks to be completed by staff member before each session. Staff member to note down weather on daily check list for records.	Supervising adult/class teacher	2	3	6	15/09/2026

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		Assessment followed where applicable.						
Owl's nesting in the trees	Owls – Disturbance could lead to nest abandonment or stress, particularly during breeding season. Pupils and staff – Possible health risks from owl droppings (e.g. bacteria, parasites), risk of owl defensive behaviour (very rare), or disruption to learning activities.	- Forest School staff to conduct pre-session site checks for signs of active nesting (white droppings, feathers, pellets, calls, nest cavities). - Known or suspected nesting/roosting areas to be cordoned off with signage and marked as no-entry zones. - Activities to be redirected away from roosting/nesting trees. - Avoid loud activities or climbing in proximity to these areas. - Staff to be briefed on signs of owl disturbance or presence. - Wildlife officer or local conservation group may be contacted for assessment and guidance if nest is confirmed.	- Confirm presence of owls via observation - Install signage and cordon off affected area. - Update risk assessment if nest confirmed. - Notify local ecology/conservation group if needed	Forest Lead/SM SM Forest Lead SBM/SM	2	3	6	
WALKIE TALKIE (LOCATED IN GREEN BLOCK KITCHEN) TO BE CARRIED BY RESPONSIBLE PERSON AT ALL TIMES TO MAINTAIN CONTACT /IN EVENT OF EMERGENCY								

Assessment reviewed [Date]:	Reviewed by [Name]:	Comments:
15.09.2026	Danielle Elkin-Ranger	Reviewed and Signed Off

Assessment reviewed [Date]:	Reviewed by [Name]:	Comments: