



*Beechnut Forest School*

# *Handbook of Policies and Procedures*

*For staff, volunteers and visitors.*

October 2024

# Contents

What is Forest School? p 2
Aims of Forest School p 2
How is Forest School delivered at Beechnut p 2
Forest School rules p 3
Examples of Forest School Activities p 3
What Do I Need ? p 4
Role of Forest School Leader p 4
Role of Forest School Assistant p 4
Role of Forest School Volunteer p 5
Daily Operation Procedure & Session structure p 5
Health and Safety p 6
Staff & Training p 6
Risk Management & Assessments p 6
Covid-19 Risk Assessment & Guidelines p 7
Behaviour p 7
Child Protection and Safeguarding p 7
Staff & Volunteers p 8
Code of Conduct p 8
Complaints p 8
Whistleblowing p 9
Welfare p 9
Confidentiality p 9
Principles of Information sharing p 10
Tool Use Policy p 11
Fire Safety p 12
Food Hygiene in the Outdoors p 13
Accident & Emergency action plan for Forest School p 13
Reporting and 'near miss' procedures p 13
Parental Consent, Photos & videos p 15
Unwanted visitors p 15
Confidentiality p 15
Cancellation p 15
Equal Opportunities p 16
Appendix A: Covid Advice to parents p 17
Appendix B: Volunteer/Freelance Induction Agreement p 17
Appendix C: Safer Recruitment Induction Progr. Policy p 17
Appendix D: Incident log sheet p 19
Appendix E: Definition of abuse and neglect p 20

## **What is a Forest School?**

Forest School is a long term learning approach set in a natural outdoor environment.

Children are supported to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially and creatively through child-initiated play, exploration, observations and skill-based learning.

Forest School builds on the interest shown by children, matching activities with preferred learning styles and small manageable tasks which sets children up to succeed. This develops ownership of learning, self-confidence and promotes self-esteem.

## **Aims of Forest School**

- To give children a rounded education, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.
- To give children the opportunity to take supported risks, appropriate to the environment and to themselves.
- To give children time, skills and awareness.
- To support lifelong wellbeing.

## **How is Forest School delivered at Beechnut?**

Beechnut runs weekly sessions all year round in a mature wildlife garden in Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich. The sessions are run by Inger, a primary school teacher and Forest School practitioner, together with other trained forest school practitioners as well as volunteers. The sessions are aimed at 1-8 year olds and their parents. When booking, parents will fill in an information & consent form, receive the Terms and Conditions and a link to this Handbook with policies and procedures. When new members arrive, the Forest School Leader introduces the site and procedures.

Parents/carers remain responsible for their children throughout the Stay & Play and Home Ed sessions. For sessions aimed at children without parents/carers present, Beechnut staff and relevant professionals are responsible for the children. Safety advice will be given and tool work will be demonstrated and supervised 1:1 by the Forest school leader till the accompanying adult is competent to take on this task with their child/en.

Sessions may begin with an introductory activity, then a variety of activities are offered for children to choose between and adapt themselves.

During the free choice time, the adults observe and support the children in their learning, scaffolding behavior and skills when necessary. The adults create a safe and trusting environment and use observation to build on and extend children's interests for future sessions. Sessions endorse child-initiated choosing and play and may include the use of tools, fire, games and creative activities.

When practical, the session ends with a reflective circle time, to review the session.

## **Why review?**

Reviewing the session is a good way to aid learning and to build confidence. By reflecting on the session we can help children think and talk about activities they like doing, might continue to do/ learn about . It is also key to building self-esteem as it is a chance to share experiences and ideas, use speaking and listening to extend thought, vocabulary, description, imagination and explanation, all valuable tools for literacy, writing and life!

## **Forest School Rules**

- We do not eat anything we find unless advised by adults
- Our hands must be kept out of our mouth during Forest School.
- We stay within the given Forest School boundary.
- We do not go near the pond unless with adult supervision.
- Climbing is supervised, and the safety is assessed according to each child's ability and weather conditions. We don't help children to climb, they have to build up confidence and self-reliance climbing up and down.
- We come straight back to 'base' when called.
- We do not walk through the fire circle.
- We dress appropriately for the time of year.
- We care for all living things, our special site, our tools and equipment.
- We share.

## **Example of Forest School activities**

- Den/ shelter building
- Pond dipping\*
- Nature and wildlife discovery, identification and appreciation
- Learning about the code of conduct and respect for the countryside
- Problem-solving activities
- Physical challenges (e.g. obstacle courses, climbing, swinging)
- Team-building activities
- Child initiated play
- Nature Art and Craft
- Music-making
- Singing

- Storytelling
- Campfire building and lighting\*
- Making hot food and drinks on the campfire\*
- Bushcraft – Working with Forest school tools\*

\*Under close adult supervision

## **What do I need?**

Bring appropriate clothing for the weather, such as waterproofs, Wellington boots, hat, gloves, scarf, sun cream, sun hat. Prepared to get messy and wet!

## **Role of the Forest School leader**

The Forest School leader plans for and is responsible for running the sessions in accordance with Beechnut Forest School CIC policies. They give instructions to and facilitate children and groups of children. The leader is responsible for the safety and wellbeing of the group and risk assesses the site, daily conditions and all activities before and during the session. The Forest School leader has up-to-date Forest School first aid training. The leader, together with the Forest School Assistant develop the role of a 'significant other' with children over a period of time promoting self-esteem by matching tasks and activities to individual children. This process develops through observations, evaluations and trust.

## **Role of the Forest School Assistant**

To assist with Forest School groups in accordance with Beechnut Forest School CIC policies, working with the FS leader on site. The role includes:

- Help children wear clothing and footwear appropriate for the weather and time of year (mainly school setting)
- To alert the Forest School leader immediately if a child is missing, seriously hurt or misbehaving in a way that could lead to others – or the child - getting hurt. (mainly school setting)
- To support and allow children the freedom to explore and play, letting the child lead, whenever safely possible.
- To risk assess during the sessions and assist keeping the children healthy and safe by helping them to recognise and avoid hazards such as harmful plants and trip hazards.
- To support children's learning, and scaffold skills and behaviour, inc tool use when assistant is trained and confident.
- To support children's learning and development through answering and asking questions and responding to activity cues without 'over influencing' the activity.
- To develop the role of a 'significant other' with children over a period of time, promoting self-esteem.
- Practical support in sessions with drinks/food and tidying/cleaning up.

## Role of Forest School volunteer

To assist with Forest School group activities in accordance with Beechnut Forest School CIC policies, working with and under supervision of the FS leader on site. This includes:

- To support and allow children the freedom to explore and play, letting the child lead, whenever safely possible.
- To assist keeping the children healthy and safe by helping them to recognise and avoid hazards such as harmful plants and trip hazards.
- To support children's learning, and scaffold skills and behaviour.
- To support children's learning and development through answering and asking questions and responding to activity cues without 'over influencing' the activity.
- Practical support in a session, such as helping with drinks/food and tidying/cleaning up.

## Daily Operation Procedure

### Equipment:

First Aid kit and First Aid book, Incidence log, Handbook, charged mobile phone, hand washing kit, drinks, spare clothing, emergency contact list, tools, (fire blanket and fire lighting kit, if used).

### Forest School Session Structure:

#### Before session (done by Forest schools leader)

- Check weather forecast
- Carry out site and activity risk assessments and act accordingly
- Set up site and collect the necessary equipment
- Brief other adults
- Check and count tools
- Check mobile signal
- (If not on Beechnut site: Meet and register children, ensure suitable clothing, snacks and toilet visit before the session starts.)

#### Session (All adults to support with the following)

1. Walk to Forest School area, observe changes in nature/trees/weather/animals/ safety issues.
2. Discover clue for focussed activity.
3. Choosing time and free play. Adults to support, observe, respond to ongoing risk assessment and pastoral needs of children.
4. Snack and fire-circle together time.
5. Last play or group game, followed by circle time; Review today's activities and wishes for next time. Goodbye song.

#### After session:

1. Check site is cleared.

2. If fire is used, ensure it is extinguished properly.
3. Ensure the gate is closed.
4. Evaluate session and outcome. Incorporate points of interest into subsequent planning.

## Health and Safety

Beechnut Forest School accepts the responsibilities of the 1974 Health and Safety Act. Beechnut FS is insured by Birnbeck Insurance.

### Health and Safety Policy

The welfare and safety of all children at Forest School is paramount. Hazards and risks are assessed on a daily basis and control measures are in place to minimise risk. To minimise risk, we follow appropriate procedures for activities, such as tool use and fires, and carry out risk assessments covering the main hazards that children encounter at Forest School.

### Staff & Training

The Forest School leader is responsible for health and safety during sessions and will have the relevant qualifications and experience, with up-to-date outdoor First Aid training and certification. We provide informal training and support and ensure volunteers are confident and competent when following the policies and procedures in this handbook. All staff and volunteers have current Enhanced DBS checks and we follow the Safer Recruitment Policy.

### Risk management and assessment

The aim is not to avoid risks, but to manage risks appropriately. We believe it is important for children's development to teach them how to assess and manage risk for themselves in a secure and supportive environment so they experience what an appropriate risk is. It is important to think and talk about the question; how much risk is ok?

For the Forest school practitioner the existent risks need to be assessed. That happens on different levels. The Forest School Practitioner carries out 5 types of risk assessments: a *seasonal site* risk assessment; a *daily* risk assessment before every Forest School session; an *activity* risk assessment which will be in place for any activity that may require it, such as stick whittling, wood cutting, shelter-building, and fire-lighting; ongoing risk assessments during the sessions; and for children whose behaviour or medical condition demands them, an individual risk assessment.

#### **1) Seasonal site risk assessment**

For every season and reviewed when necessary, The Forest School Leader will identify any site hazards present and implement the necessary controls. This includes; looking for the hazards, (eg. deadwood in the canopy, slippery ground or poisonous fungi); assessing who is at risk of being harmed and how; evaluating the risks and whether existing precautions are sufficient or more needs to be done; record the findings.

#### **2) Daily risk assessment**

The Forest School leader will perform a risk assessment prior to activities taking place. This includes: identifying any hazards, risk factors associated with infectious diseases, weather, site and group attending, and implementing the necessary controls. Also, check for mobile phone coverage and access in case of emergency; ensuring adult helpers are provided with a copy of the risk assessment prior to a session. All adult helpers will have access to this information in case the leader is unable to attend to an incident.

#### **3) Activities risk assessment**

These take into account all the aspects of specific activities, such as tool use, campfires and tree climbing. Once correct procedures have been established, these generic activity risk assessments become part of the standard operating procedures.

#### **4) Ongoing risk assessment**

This involves professional judgements during the session in response to changing situations.

#### **5) Individual risk assessments for children with specific needs / in Alternative Provision.**

Identifying hazards and implement safety precaution for children, whose behaviour or medical condition may require further action. Beechnut staff are not required to administer any medicine. Under exceptional circumstances, with carer's written permission, documented medication from a clearly labelled medication box can be supervised and will be stored safely in a locked cashbox. Staff will document medication and dosage, signed and dated.

### **Covid-19 Risk Assessment & Guidelines**

Beechnut Forest School takes advice from Government guidelines, Local Authority Environmental Health & Early Years team, as well as the Forest School Association, to ensure its practise will minimise the risk of infection and keep children and parents safe in the outdoors.

## **Behaviour**

It is our responsibility to ensure all children feel safe, respected and valued. Praising and drawing attention to good behaviour will be used as the primary behavioural management strategy. Rules and expectations will be made clear at the beginning of the first Forest School session and main points recapped thereafter. As a preventative measure and as a core value of Forest school all adults should be positive role models for the participants, respecting each other and the environment. We expect children to look after each other, care for the wildlife and our special site. Forest School will not tolerate bullying of any kind. Parents are responsible for their child/rens behaviour. If a child's behaviour puts themselves or other children at risk, we may have to ask them to stop and reflect on what happened, the reason for the behaviour and the impact it had on everyone, so that there is a positive outcome. We will only restrain a child if they are ignoring verbal communication and putting themselves or others in immediate danger, but we are not trained to restrain. Forest School's ethos is to develop children's self-worth, self-motivation, independence and positive behaviour without external targets and rewards/sanctions.

## **Child Protection and Safeguarding**

### ***Safeguarding Policy***

For any concerns of the welfare of children or the conduct of staff and volunteers please contact the Safeguarding person at Beechnut Forest School: Inger Mak-Pearce, contact mb number 07931 526494 .

Beechnut Forest School takes the safeguarding of children and young people very seriously and will act accordingly. The Forest School leader has a duty of care to promote the wellbeing and security of the children attending Beechnut.

Appropriate steps will be taken where concerns arise regarding the safety of a participant. Any disclosures will be responded to sensitively and appropriately, in line with current best practices, following guidance provided by local authorities.

- Any concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon immediately
- Positive action will be taken to ensure the protection of participants subject to any concerns
- The safety of the rest of the group will be secured before taking further action if on site – if a crime has taken place call 999 and report this to the Police
- Implicated adult(s) will need to leave the group until the disclosure is officially cleared/action taken
- All appropriate staff will be informed



- Relevant information/evidence will be recorded in an appropriate and cooperative manner
- In all child/vulnerable adult protection situations, confidentiality will be maintained at all times by disclosing information only to those who need to know
- NSPCC helpline can be used for children 08088005000

Beechnut Forest School will follow guidance provided by local authorities.

If we are concerned that a child or children is experiencing or likely to suffer significant harm we will telephone (CADS) immediately on 0344 800 8021.

When considering whether to contact CADS we will consult the CADS Flowchart and the Norfolk Continuum of Needs Guidance 2023 produced by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) We will gain consent from the parent to contact CADS, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm or undermine a criminal investigation.

CADS will advise us of the action required to resolve the concerns either directly or with the support of partner agencies, not necessarily Children's Services. Or a formal referral, recording the level of need. Depending on the level, the referral will be processed into either a Family Support Team or Social Work Team. A consultation feedback letter will be provided as a record of all conversations and provide a clear audit trail of the outcome agreed.

We will not investigate and will be led by the Local Authority and/or the Police.

We will keep written dated records of all conversations with CADS.

We understand if we are unhappy about a decision made by CADS we can use the Resolving Professional Disagreements policy on <https://norfolkscp.org.uk/>

Members of the public or parents can contact CADS on 0344 800 8020.

Safeguarding records and personal information will be kept in a locked cabinet at Beechnut Forest School. Electronic communication will be kept in a password protected folder.

### **Staff & volunteers**

The Forest School leader and volunteers in regulated activity with children at Beechnut Forest School will have up-to-date enhanced DBS checks for the child work force and the leader has child safeguarding training from the local authority which is updated every three years.

### **Code of Conduct**

Beechnut's Code of Conduct policy sets out acceptable standards of behaviour for all staff and volunteers at Beechnut Forest School CIC, and of our duty of care to safeguard the children we work with. All staff and volunteers are made aware of the Code of Conduct policy during their Induction Programme. The Code of Conduct Policy is a separate document, please click the link [here](#).

### **Complaints Policy**

Beechnut Forest School encourages communication and cooperation between parents ,staff and directors, to share a sense of purpose and good atmosphere in our forest school. If Parents/carers and children are dissatisfied with our provision, we will take your complaint seriously. We ask those making a complaint to follow the procedure below.

### *Complaints Procedure-Stage One - Informal*

Parents, carers, or guardians should, in the first instance, make an appointment to speak to the Forest School leader about their concern. It is best to resolve issues at this point. This should ideally be within 5 working days. You will be offered an appointment to discuss the issue as quickly as possible, as this will give both parties time to talk about the issue calmly and politely, and both parties involved should be encouraged to offer their view of what would be a realistic resolution to the problem.

### *Investigation -Stage Two - Informal*

If all involved in Level 1 are unable to resolve the issue, then it may be necessary to ask for support from the co-director, Lisa Bicker. Please send a note of complaint with your contact details to Lisa Bicker at 1 Rockland Drive, Norwich NR7 0BL. If the investigator needs to meet with the complainant, they will do so within 15 working days of receiving the complaint.

Complaints will be fully investigated. It is in everyone's interest, particularly to the child or children, for concerns and complaints to be sorted out quickly and smoothly. The aim should be that discussions end on a positive note with no bad feelings. It is good practice for the Co-director to write a letter to parents, guardians or carers summarising what has been agreed regarding the issue within 28 working days.

It is hoped that most problems will have been solved by now. However, if the complainant remains unsatisfied with the outcome from Stage Two, they can appeal within 5 working days of the date of the outcome and progress to Stage Three.

### *Appeal -Stage Three - Formal*

If the complaint cannot be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction at Stage Two, then the parents/carers, or guardians wishing to move to level 3 must write a formal letter of complaint to one of the Co-directors at 1 Rockland Drive, Norwich NR7 0BL. The letter will need to set out clearly the issues which have previously been discussed and why the complainant considers the issue to be unresolved. The co-director will acknowledge receipt of this complaint to the complainant within 5 working days. They will review the stage 2 investigation and recommend one of the following actions within 15 working days:

-Uphold the decision made at Stage Two

or -Make changes to the Stage Two recommendation/actions

The complainant will be informed in writing of the outcome of Stage Three. The decision reached about this complaint will then be final. There may be a need to identify a third party or higher authority to approach if the person making the complaint is unhappy with the outcome to their complaint. Any external complaint should be done within one month of receiving the outcome from the appeal.

### **Whistleblowing**

If you have a serious concern and wish to make a confidential report as a whistleblower about Beechnut

Forest School, please refer to our policy for our full whistleblowing procedure.

### **Welfare Safeguarding**

Children have access to toilet facilities at 1 Rockland Drive. There will be fresh water and soap on-site for hand washing. During Forest School, drinks and snacks are normally provided. Unless guided by an adult there is a 'no eating in Forest School' rule. Children will need to be dressed appropriately for the seasons, weather and forest school activities in order to stay safe. Parents/carers will be asked to provide children with appropriate clothing and footwear.

### **Information Sharing and Confidentiality**

Parents/carers, children and young people have the right to know that their information is kept securely and in what circumstances it can be shared. Staff and volunteers need to understand what their role is in information sharing. The effective sharing of information between organisations and agencies is essential to keep children safe.

### **Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations)**

Data protection law is not a barrier to sharing information when it is necessary, proportionate, and justified to do so. The most important consideration is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child.

The Data Protection Act 2018 allows all organisations to process data for safeguarding purposes lawfully and without consent where necessary for the purposes of:

- protecting an individual from neglect or physical and emotional harm; or
- protecting the physical, mental or emotional wellbeing of an individual.

This covers situations where a child may be at risk of significant harm due to neglect or abuse and applies to referrals made to the local authority for any child considered to be a 'child in need'.

### **Circumstances when we will share information**

All personal information will be treated as confidential. However confidential information may be shared to other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

In some circumstances, seeking consent from a person we believe is neglecting or abusing a child may undermine safeguarding procedures and may increase the risk of harm to the child or another person. In these situations, we will share this information without consent.

If a child makes a disclosure, we will never promise the child confidentiality, instead we will explain that the information will need to be passed on to the appropriate person to help keep them safe.

Our organisation is responsible for lawfully sharing the information we hold, and we must not assume that someone else will pass on information that may be critical to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child.

### **Principles of Information Sharing**

Our organisation will adhere to the following principles of information sharing:

- Information sharing must be necessary and proportionate to the circumstances of the child or young person.
- The information must be shared quickly and securely.
- Use clear and precise language.
- Identify how the information is to be shared.
- Record exactly what has been shared.
- If information is withheld, then that should also be recorded.

When sharing information with any organisation, we will first consider the principles outlined by Government Guidance. We will consult the 7 golden rules for information sharing from 'Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners'

### **Storage of Information Records**

Personal and medical data provided by parents when processing on-line bookings for course participants will be kept out of sight of participants and stored at the end of the same working day in the filing cabinet in the Beechnut office.

Participants paperwork must not be left unsupervised during the working day or left unsecured during out of work hours.

Participants' paperwork information is destroyed after the course is finished. Email addresses are saved to a Beechnut mailing list if participants agree, in order to send updates about Beechnut activities.

Staff and participants online information is keyword protected.

In case of child protection records, according to the Information and Records Management Society (IRMS)2019, any confidential notes should be kept in safety at Beechnut until the child is 25 years of age.

### **Tool use policy**

Learning to **use tools** is integral to **Forest School** practise to extend children's learning. It develops skills, common sense and self-esteem. It builds up children's fine and gross motor skills, concentration skills, determination, self-reliance - and it is fun and confidence-boosting.

Learning safe, controlled practice, being aware of yourself and others around you, and using appropriate tools is an essential part of Forest School tool training.

The Forest School ethos is to build on skills in small steps, once the children and leader have developed a trust and the children have shown they are ready, the leader will introduce more advanced skills and tool use. Only tools appropriate to Forest School practise will be used.

**Tools available for use are:**

#### **Hammer, loppers, saw, fixed blade knife, hand drill**

- All tools are cleaned, maintained and stored securely by the Forest School leader.
- Prior to use, the Forest School leader will check the tools for any damage or instability and check for sharpness.

- Tools are transported to Forest School in a secure container.
- Only the Forest School leader's tools can be used at Forest School.
- How to use all tools will be demonstrated on a 1:1 basis and then supported on a 1:1 basis.
- Only the Forest School leader will decide if the individual child is ready for a particular tool by assessing for competence on a 1:1 basis

## **Fire Safety**

### Fire policy

Fires in Forest School not only provide warmth, a social/reflective space and cooking opportunities, fires also teach children about managing appropriate risks, personal and environmental responsibility and organisation skills, such as gathering suitable materials, building the fire up, organising food.

Fire session will only take place after the leader has assessed the group's understanding of fire safety and expected behaviour which will be considered over a period of weeks of fire training.

- To be used in conjunction with fire risk assessment.
- Create fire pit and seating circle 1,5m from inner fire log surround
- Engage group
- Why we use fires (warmth, cooking, making
- Give the fire a purpose (it's a tool not a toy)
- Leader to handle tinder ball and ignite fire, children can attempt to use striker under very close supervision
- Fire must be attended/supervised at all times by a designated person
- All hot items to be kept within the inner 1m square fire area
- The fire must be extinguished at the end of the session; children can participate under close supervision. The leader is responsible for checking the fire is properly out.
- It is preferable that the fire pit is cleaned out upon leaving the site
- 1<sup>st</sup> aid accidents will be dealt with by attending first aider and recorded in an accident book. ● Safety equipment: first aid kit, cling film, lavender oil, clean water, water buckets, fire blanket, fire extinguisher, burns kit, eyewash
- Clean water and bucket available for immersion of minor burns (5 mins minimum)

### **Expected behaviour:**

1. Children approach fire circle and and sit down on logs
2. Only approach the fire when permission is given to do so by an adult
3. If wind can be detected, approach the fire with the wind in children's back, away from the direction of the flames and smoke.
4. Children assume the safe kneeling position when placing sticks/cooking on the fire
5. Offer wood to fire one piece at a time.
6. Lighted sticks must not be taken away from fire

## Fire Circle Rules

- We do not run around the Fire Circle.
- We walk around the **outside** of the Fire Circle to get to the other side.
- We only enter the inner Fire Circle when instructed by the Forest School Leader.

## Food Hygiene in the Outdoors

If campfire cooking takes place, the activity and location will be risk assessed and control action will be followed. Permission from parents/carers will be requested prior to cooking. Information about allergies and food intolerance will be adhered to. Food will be kept in storage containers and litter which can't be burned will be collected in a waste bag. Children will be provided with soap and water and encouraged to wash their hands before eating. Food will be checked by adults to make sure it is properly cooked before consumption.

## Incident, Accident & Emergency Action Plan for Forest School

Before a Forest School session, it is essential that prior medical issues are known to the Forest School leader and enclosed in a medical form, which the leader keeps, confidentially, in an emergency bag. In the event of an accident, the child will be assessed by a trained Forest School First Aider and treatment given as appropriate either by the leader.

### In the event of a *minor injury*, this procedure follows:

- 1) First Aider to attend to injury as necessary on-site.
- 2) Secure rest of group is managed by an assistant.
- 3) Treatment given as appropriate.
- 4) Accident log to be filled in on-site.
- 5) Adult responsible for child to be briefed. (If necessary, form to be given.)

### In the event of a *more serious accident*, this procedure follows:

- 1) Secure the safety of the whole group.
- 2) First Aider to attend to any casualty/ies and assess the seriousness of injury:
  - In case of a 'walking wounded' incident, such as a broken arm; First Aider to give treatment as appropriate, parents to take child to A&I at the N&N. Record changes in casualty's state and anything administered to them, if possible.
  - If the injury is serious, ie a concussion, First Aider to give treatment as appropriate. Record changes in casualty's state and anything administered to them, if possible.
- 3) Delegate an adult to call 999 – location: NR7 0BL, 1 Rockland Drive.
- 4) First aider to stay with child & parent
- 5) Volunteer to direct Emergency service.

6) Incident report to be filled in on-site.

## Reporting and 'near miss' procedures

- Document, sign and date an incidence report. Include all facts, times and circumstances. Keep a copy and give one to the parent of the child involved.
- Ensure that all equipment involved in an accident or incident is retained in an unaltered condition in case it is required by the police. Photograph, if possible.
- Incidents leading to admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours or resulting in an injury preventing a person working for three or more days afterwards need to be registered with RIDDOR within 24 hours Tel 0845 300 9923 (HSE - Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm).
- First aid kits must be restocked after use and a stock check carried out every 6 months.
- Any 'near miss accident' must be reported to the Forest School leader who will review existing controls and procedures.

## Reporting an incident for a child in Alternative Provision

- Contact school/commissioners without delay in case of a concern/First Aid incident/accident. Incident form (Appendix A) will be scanned and emailed to the school/commissioners.

## In the event of a lost child:

The Forest School leader has ensured the following *preventative* measures:

- Boundaries are clearly marked and made known to the group.
- Children will be instructed that they have to stay within the agreed boundaries, in eyesight of parents.
- Children will be trained to follow a call to immediately to get back to the fireplace.
  - The Forest School area is within the garden ground, which is only partially fenced. It remains the responsibility of the parent/carer to prevent the child from getting lost.

## Fire

In the unlikely event of an out of control fire:

- Remove children to open space
- Count in
- Never use water to extinguish an oil fire, if necessary, use red fire blanket above cooking table.
- If safe, use watering can to extinguish log fire
- Call 999 if necessary

## Essential equipment

First Aid Kit containing:

- ● disposable gloves
- ● wound dressing
- ● triangular bandage

- ● hypoallergenic plasters
- ● hand gel
- ● antibacterial wipes
- ● an eye pad
- ● scissors
- ● adhesive medical tape
- ● face shield

**Other essential equipment:**

- ● Any necessary individual medication (inhalers etc)
- ● cold running water & cling film
- ● a working mobile phone and available contacts to ring in case of an emergency (available to all adult helpers in case of a serious accident involving the Forest School Leader)

**Parental consent**

Parents/guardians are required to fill out a consent form before the start of Forest School covering the use of tools and fire with close supervision, administration of first aid/ medications, emergency contact details and the use of photographs taken at Forest School.

**Photos & Video**

Permission will be requested to take occasional photographs of children for evaluation purposes and for publicising Beechnut forest school activities, including on Beechnut’s Facebook and Website. Where permission is refused, we avoid photographing that child unless the parent grants permission to feature an unidentifiable photo.

**Unwanted visitors**

The Forest School area is on a private site and not open to intruders.

**Confidentiality**

Information on consent forms are treated confidentially and kept securely between Forest School sessions. Any information given on a child will be kept confidential unless the information conflicts with safeguarding procedures.

**Cancellation**





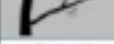







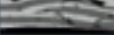
Forest School will continue in most types of weather with the exception of:

- Extreme weather, such as high winds, lightning, floods. The Met Office “Beaufort Scale’ will be consulted and used as a measure of high winds. Beechnut sessions are likely to be cancelled or indoor provision added, if the mean wind speed is Gale force 8 or above. Where the mean wind speed is less than gale force 8 but there may be strong gusts, the decision will be based on ground conditions.
- Absence of Forest School leader
- Acute, unforeseen circumstances, which endangers the safety of the group, during a Forest School session

Under these circumstances, sessions may need to be cancelled at short notice. Parents will be notified, initially via email and Facebook, or followed up by individual texts. Every effort will be made to reschedule or refund if rescheduling is not possible.



# Beaufort Scale

Beaufort number	Wind Speed (mph)	Seaman's term		Effects on Land
0	Under 1	Calm		Calm; smoke rises vertically.
1	1-3	Light Air		Smoke drift indicates wind direction; vanes do not move.
2	4-7	Light Breeze		Wind felt on face; leaves rustle; vanes begin to move.
3	8-12	Gentle Breeze		Leaves, small twigs in constant motion; light flags extended.
4	13-18	Moderate Breeze		Dust, leaves and loose paper raised up; small branches move.
5	19-24	Fresh Breeze		Small trees begin to sway.
6	25-31	Strong Breeze		Large branches of trees in motion; whistling heard in wires.
7	32-38	Moderate Gale		Whole trees in motion; resistance felt in walking against the wind.
8	39-46	Fresh Gale		Twigs and small branches broken off trees.
9	47-54	Strong Gale		Slight structural damage occurs; slate blown from roofs.
10	55-63	Whole Gale		Seldom experienced on land; trees broken; structural damage occurs.
11	64-72	Storm		Very rarely experienced on land; usually with widespread damage.
12	73 or higher	Hurricane Force		Violence and destruction.

## Equal Opportunities

We do not tolerate discrimination towards anyone on the basis of their race, gender, sexuality or beliefs. Our Forest School is committed to giving each child unique, valuable and equal opportunities. The Forest School leader will aim to make the sessions as inclusive as possible for each individual if given notice of any disabilities or difficulties prior to the start of Forest School. There might be certain activities, such as tree climbing, which will be inaccessible for children with certain physical disabilities. We will adapt activities according to the needs and interests of the learner, ensuring children with special requirements will be supported by adults and by their peer group, so that everyone can enjoy, participate in and grow through the Forest School experience.

Date: May 2024

By: *Inger Mak-Pearce*

**Beechnut Forest School**

Review Date: May2025

## Appendix A:

Covid - 19 guideline for parents

- Please only come if you and your child are well and are not testing Covid positive. Thanks so much for your cooperation. Keep Safe.

## Appendix B: Volunteer/Freelance Induction Agreement

This agreement states that you have undertaken a suitable induction process by Beechnut Forest School and are familiar with relevant policies and risk assessments relating to the work you are undertaking on behalf of the Beechnut Forest School.

Volunteer/subcontractor name:	Signature of volunteer/ subcontractor:	Date:


**Appendix C: Safer Recruitment: Induction Programme Policy**

Recruitment will be either advertised on the Forest School Association website or by word of mouth. Proper induction of all volunteers and staff takes time and needs careful planning to ensure that everyone understands both their roles and responsibilities. If successful, induction will ensure that new volunteers or staff feel appreciated and remain happy giving their valuable time to the organisation.

**We will make sure that induction includes:**

- Any specific information as provided by any governing body or umbrella group

- A clear job or role description including tasks, times and responsibilities
- All procedures in place, including incident recording, health and safety and first aid arrangements as per our organisation's procedures
- Information about future or necessary training needs, including, in the first instance, the Safer Programme's Safeguarding Children Training.

In addition, volunteers and workers need to sign that they have received and understood the following

- Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality Statement
- Complaints Procedure
- Managing Allegations and "Whistle Blowing" Statement
- Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure

We agree a probationary period with clear goals and then identify a suitable monitoring and support process. This may be peer support or more formal supervision, as necessary to the work of the group.

## **Appendix D: Incident log sheet**

Complete the form for every accident leading to injury, violent or aggressive incident, ill health, disease or near miss.

<b>Incident date and time:</b>	<b>Location:</b>
<b>Person injured or subject of aggression:</b>	
<b>Relationship to Beechnut Forest School:</b>	
<b>Was the incident:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> a near miss <input type="checkbox"/> ill health/disease <input type="checkbox"/> an accident leading to injury <input type="checkbox"/> a violent or aggressive incident	

**What happened (describe below including the nature of any injury/illness):**

Was anyone else involved (note names if so)?
Was anything damaged (e.g. vehicle)?
What action has been taken to prevent a recurrence?
Name of person completing form & relationship to Beechnut Forest School:

### **Appendix E What is abuse and neglect?**

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

### **Physical abuse**

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### **Emotional abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in

20 | Page

danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children**

Defined for the purposes of this guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances

consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

**Child protection**

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.