

Coastal School Handbook

To be read by all Coastal School leaders, assistants, helpers and visitors.

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Site address: *Caister-on-Sea, Beach Road, Great Yarmouth NR30 5HD*

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2 AN INTRODUCTION TO COASTAL SCHOOL

2.1 COASTAL SCHOOL PRINCIPLES

Our Coastal school is part of a wider Coastal School ethos which is based on six principles (updated 2025): The ethos and principles align with those of Forest School and sessions are set in a natural environment at the coast, which can include beaches, lakes, estuaries or rivers. In short, the sessions aim to develop a community, they take place in nature over the long term, ie for more than one season; they are learner led and reflective utilising observation of learners to inform future pathways of development; the learning is holistic, supporting the learner to develop physical, social, cognitive, linguistic, emotional and nature (spiritual) connectivity; participants have the opportunity to take supported risk, and the sessions are run by qualified practitioners. For further information please visit:

<https://Coastalschoolassociation.org/full-principles-and-criteria-for-good-practice/>

In order to best practise these principles we will have a high adult to child ratio in our sessions.

2.2 COASTAL SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Example activities for Coastal School sessions

(note: activities will be on an invitational basis to fit with Coastal School ethos):

- Flora/ Fauna-ID / exploration- bioblitz
- Cloud watching- ID/ shape/ form creations
- Watercolours/ Wax resist/ salt
- Shadows/ Sundial/ sun clocks
- Rock exploration - *to include properties of rocks via splitting, vinegar, scratching etc*
- Stone/rock balancing/ structures- jenga, pictures
- Stone skimming
- Transient art- *using beach materials: mandalas, mosaics, large pictures, abstract*
- Digging/ building structures *eg with sand- boat, castles/ towers etc*
- Sand sketching/ 'painting', silhouettes (*use diff colour/ textures/ wet/ dry and transport*)
- Kites *different kinds, other things on windy day- tarp flying, windsocks, windmills etc*
- Streamers/ Flags (*can include hapa zome*)
- Beach games *Large e.g with ball, spinning, Small: tic tac toe, chess etc*
- Stones- *story stones, pet stones etc*
- Lashing poles, tripod/ other. *For: structures/ dens/ shelter/ tippy tap stand etc*
- Imaginary/ small world creation/ play
- Drawing on rocks *with charcoal (found/ bought in), pencils, make 3 part bodies etc*

- Clay (wild/ natural)
- Beach kitchen/ cafe
- Headwear/ clothing/ crowns etc from beach finds
- Beach sounds & rhythms, making pebble music/ instrument/ beach band
- Looking at ocean waves and sea level - eg: impact of tide & wind, making a mini-model & coastal corrosion experiment with different soils and sea defences

2.3 VISION STATEMENT

To increase learners' exposure, experience and awareness of the coastal environment and to aid their holistic development and learning. We strongly feel that if participants don't get the opportunity to connect with the natural world today, they may not be inclined to care for and protect it in the future.

"In short, we need to expand the horizons of childhood." Tim Gill Rethinking Childhood (rethinkingchildhood.com)

3 SITE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Caister-on-Sea is on the East Coast of the UK in the county of Norfolk, bordered by the North Sea. It features a wide sandy, unspoilt expanse with pebbles encountered mainly at the tideline, backed by grassy sand dunes and sea defences. The winds are predominantly west-south-westerly.

3.2 SITE INFORMATION

Beach Road , Caister-on-Sea, Great Yarmouth NR30 5HD

What3Words: [pinks.pose.vocab](#)

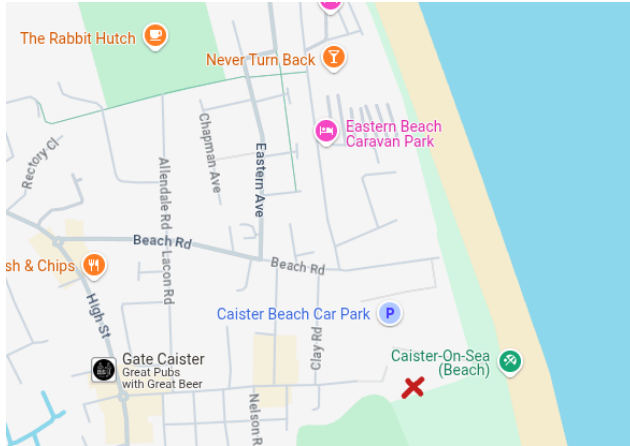
Grid Ref: TG 539 122

Longitude 52°38.730N

Latitude 001°44.195E

In an emergency call 999, ask for coast guard

Access point for emergency vehicles is carpark ([What3Words: pinks.pose.vocab](#))



contact RNLI on 01493 722001

Additional note: the nearest seasonal coastguard, in situ, is at Sea Palling, Norfolk.

3.3 TIDES

At high tide, the beach and dunes are accessible at all times.

For up-to-date tide times see: <https://www.norfolk-tides.com/caister-on-sea-tide-times>

Before each session the tides will be checked and adjustments made accordingly, e.g. sessions might change if there is a high spring tide.

Spring tides at Caister-on-Sea will occur roughly 36- 48 hours after the full or new moon. (For example, on April 15th 25 a Spring tide will occur with a high tide of 2.3 metres at 10.26 BST and a low tide 0.7 metres at 16.46 BST)

See: www.bbc.co.uk/weather/coast-and-sea/tide-tables/1/143

3.4 TRANSPORT

Participants will make their own way to the site.

For those arriving by car, car sharing is encouraged. Parking is available locally and at the on site car-park.

Public transport options are available, via bus from Norwich bus station to Great Yarmouth, then to Caister-on-Sea X1/X11 Coastlink bus.

See:

www.firstbus.co.uk/norfolk-suffolk/routes-and-maps/coastlink-x1x11x2x21x22-norwich-gr eat_yarmouth-lowestoft

3.5 ENVIRONMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Activity	Impact	Mitigation
Fire	Fire could make sand hot/ change habitats Any flammable materials cause uncontrolled fire (driftwood, other) Corruption of ground flora	Dedicated sacrificial area for fire & seating during session Use a fire pit, ensure suitable for environment (stable etc) Make sure fire is extinguished with sufficient water. Check area for flammable material, avoid/ remove. Check flora at chosen fire area, minimise corruption in choice of area.
Collecting natural material	Depletion of species/ habitats Damage to flora/ fauna/ habitats	Operate a minimal removal approach, considering the following: is it rare, endangered, poisonous, fragile, common, invasive, seasonal etc Educate learners to make informed decisions.
Climbing	Damage to dunes/ sea defences: potentially making them vulnerable Disturbing nesting birds (in dune/ heath land area) or other fauna.	Stick to sacrificial areas. Assess areas that are appropriate for this activity. Encourage participants to observe and assess for themselves. Monitor bird activity during nesting season and select areas that are not inhabited by nesting birds.

Shelter building	Potential loss or disturbance of habitat for fauna.	<p>Stick to allocated/ pre- decided area.</p> <p>Do not take material from habitat piles.</p> <p>Show participants how to spot signs of habitation so they can identify and select uninhabited deadwood.</p> <p>Where possible, return the materials to where you found them afterwards</p>
Campfire cooking	The presence of food waste attracts animals which could increase their numbers causing adverse change in biodiversity.	<p>Burn any organic waste in the fire, if appropriate (eg. banana skins, eggshells, teabags) before extinguishing or take away for composting.</p> <p>Take any non-organic waste away at the end of the session & recycle or dispose of.</p>
Recycling and	Litter could be a hazard to wildlife, chemicals from waste	We will separate our rubbish into recycling, compost and landfill waste.

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Waste	<p>could affect flora and fauna</p> <p>Waste materials have a negative ecological impact</p>	All types of waste are then removed from site for appropriate disposal.
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We will exercise sustainable procurement to mitigate single use plastic, upcycling and recycling materials whenever possible. We model a caring attitude to nature. All of our on-site activities aim to minimise environmental impact.

4 DAILY PROCEDURES

Our pilot sessions will be run at Caister-on-Sea by three Coastal School Leaders: Lisa Bicker, Inger Mak-Pearce and Sarah O'Flynn.

The sessions are aimed at home educated 6-8 year olds and their parents/carers. When booking, parents/carers will fill in an information & consent form, receive the Terms and Conditions and a link to this Handbook with policies and procedures.

Parents/carers remain responsible for their participants throughout the sessions.

4.1 PRE- SESSION

On the day of each session, carry out a site check, including walking-route to site, to identify and mitigate any hazards.

(See risk assessments in appendix.)

Pre session checks and procedures:

- ☐ Weather check (please see section 5 for more details)
- ☐ Tide check (please see section 3 for more details)
- ☐ Ensure all equipment is clean, safe for use and in good working order.
- ☐ Resources to take to site/ are available on site (if in environment)
- ☐ Have a session plan and specific risk assessment available and pack to take to site.
- ☐ Ensure that ratios are correct.
- ☐ Ensure any helpers have read the handbook, session plan, risk assessments and any other relevant documentation
- ☐ Check the first aid kit and emergency bag for supplies/ pack them in kit.
- ☐ Letter sent home to parents to inform about Coastal School content, consent and clothing required etc.

4.2 SESSION

We will start by gathering at the picnic table on the grass/heathland adjacent to the RNLI cafe at Caister-on-Sea beach, with a short welcome and focus introduction before we walk together to the designated beach area where our sessions will take place. We will jointly share local nature-based observations, ideas and introduce activities for participants to choose between and adapt themselves, before we outline the parameters of our physical areas and safety rules.

- Introduce participants to session
- Talk about the areas in use and any out of bounds.
- Discuss rules of Coastal School:

We look after; ourself, each other and the environment (the '3 cares')

- Brief outline of session
- Make ongoing assessment on weather conditions
- Ensure all participants are accounted for during session
- Observe participants and activities that are being used

4.3 END OF SESSION

- Check resources back in
- Finish with a circle time for example with simple questions eg: what did you enjoy? What would you like to do next time?
- Advise handwashing after the session, if necessary.
- Parents/ carers to leave site with their child(ren)
- Leader to ensure no rubbish is left on site
- Debrief with the other Coastal School facilitators

4.4 POST – SESSION

Reflect on the session

- Record any observations and notes
- Record any incidents
- Plan follow up/ next session based on observations and participants interests, taking into account other factors such as weather, hazards, etc

5 WEATHER

5.1 FOG POLICY

Procedure for extreme weather.

Pre-session weather check: Families to be informed in the morning of the session, in case of extreme fog. If persistent heavy fog is forecast, the session will be cancelled.

If extreme weather occurs during session and emergency evacuation is necessary, blow a whistle:

1 whistles = freeze and listen

2 whistles =gather immediately at basecamp flag

explain exit procedure, to include holding hands/ back/ shoulder of each other so not to get separated/ lost.

The Coastal School leader does a headcount and leads families back to a designated area of safety, e.g. car park.

5.2 TEMPERATURE POLICY

The following serves to mitigate and or minimise the harmful effects from extremes of temperature:

- ★ *Shade shelters will be available in hot weather.*
- ★ *Appropriate clothing must be worn in hot and cold temperatures.*
- ★ *Activities on offer should be appropriate to the temperature.*
- ★ *Participants to apply sunscreen before the session if required.*
- ★ *Participants should bring their water bottle to each session and drinking water will be available*
- ★ *Session time will be adjusted for extreme temperatures (both hot & cold)*

At our sessions, parents/ carers will be present and will be briefed in advance about the above, and will be responsible for their own children) during the sessions, for such as sunscreen application. The Coastal School leader will provide support and prompts/ reminders when necessary.

5.3 THUNDER AND LIGHTNING POLICY

Sessions will be cancelled if thunder and lightning is forecast.

Session will be immediately cancelled if thunder and lightning begin, with reason.

Storms will be measured using observation and counting between lightning and thunder, where 1 second represents 1 mile away, to assess storm proximity. If a storm appears to be moving away, an informed choice will be made about evacuation.

The above will be used alongside monitoring of official forecasts and local weather warnings.

See section 6 for emergency evacuation procedure.

5.4 RAIN/SLEET/HAIL/SNOW POLICY

In the eventuality of the above conditions, an appropriate shelter will be made available e.g– 4 tarpaulins can be hung for both rain and sun protection, sloping for snow.

Appropriate clothing should be worn, participants will be briefed in advance of sessions. The session will be cancelled if excessive weather is forecast, and the emergency evacuation procedure, as seen in section 6, if in situ.

Cancellation could also occur if adverse effects from the weather are observed / experienced in the group: e.g. early hypothermia signs, distress etc.

6 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

6.1 IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT, INJURY OR ILLNESS

Incident, Accident & Emergency Action Plan

Before a Coastal School session, it is essential that prior medical issues are known to the Coastal 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 Coastal School First Aider and treatment given as appropriate either by the leader or other suitably trained member of staff.

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 the nearest Accident and Emergency Department (The James Paget Hospital) 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
- 4) First aider to stay with child & parent
- 5) An adult volunteer to direct the Emergency service to site of accident

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

Reporting and 'near miss' procedure:

- 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 Coastal School leader who will review existing controls and procedures.

Any Emergency Evacuation Situation the following procedure applies:

1. Whistle is blown:
2. 1 whistle = freeze and listen
3. 2 whistles =gather immediately at basecamp flag
4. explain exit procedure
5. The Coastal School leader does a headcount and leads families back to the area of safety, e.g. car park.

Emergency Bag Contents:

- ☐ Register
- ☐ Medical forms
- ☐ Mobile phone
- ☐ Newspaper (for fire lighting)
- ☐ Matches (for fire lighting)
- ☐ Wet wipes
- ☐ Antibacterial gel
- ☐ Protective gloves
- ☐ Sun cream
- ☐ First aid kit and handbook
- ☐ Water: drinking and washing
- ☐ Map of local area
- ☐ Containers for medical equipment
- ☐ Reusable bag for dirty/wet clothing

6.2 FIRST AID

First aid procedure:

In accordance with **Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981** – Coastal School leaders/ assistants and helpers are required to provide adequate and appropriate equipment, facilities and personnel to enable first aid to be given to participants that are injured or become ill

A first aid kit will be carried to all Coastal School sessions. It will be contained in an obvious first aid bag and will be kept in an easy to reach place that is known to all supporting adults.

The first aid kit will contain the following:

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 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 Coastal School Leader)

*In accordance with **Reporting or Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995** – the Coastal School leader/ assistant will report of any work-related death or injury lasting over three days, diseases or dangerous occurrence that may not have resulted in reportable injury, but which clearly could have near misses*

First aid will be delivered by qualified practitioners. Accident/incident forms are in the appendices. At least 2 Coastal School staff, to include the leader will have up to date outdoor first aid training.

6.3 LOST CHILD PROCEDURE

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

- Boundaries are clearly marked and made known to the group.
- Participants will be instructed that they have to stay within the agreed boundaries, in eyesight of parents/ carers and Coastal School practitioners.
- Participants will be trained to follow a whistle call to immediately get back to the Coastal School basecamp flag.
- The Coastal School Site is in a public place, ensure risk of public are minimised, e.g: by selecting a less busy area, briefing participants on actions to be taken, have adequate procedures for recall of participants etc

In the event of a lost child:

1. All the group will be immediately called back in, by the whistle being blown, and counted and the missing member identified. The time will be noted.
2. The Coastal School Leader must ensure the safety of remaining participants. At least two adults must always stay with them.
3. One or more adults should immediately start searching for the missing group member – calling and whistling as appropriate.
4. If the missing group member is not found within 10 minutes, the Coastal School Leader must contact 999 and give an exact location grid reference or what3words. This will result in the emergency procedure - detailed above - coming into action.

Leaders must recall and write down a description of what the missing person was wearing and any distinguishing features. Any information on their last known location

and time should be noted. Also, if they have any special medical or learning needs then these need to be noted down. All information then must be passed to police or other relevant agencies.

7 HEALTH & SAFETY

We understand that in accordance with Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 - Coastal School leader and staff have a duty to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment with risk assessments and procedures laid down for serious and imminent danger.

All staff will be familiarised with the provisions contained within the Health and Safety (H&S) policy and be expected to act in accordance with them at all times.

The steps below will be actioned as a matter of course:

- ★ Create an environment that is safe and without mitigated risk to health.
- ★ Prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
- ★ Use, maintain, and store equipment safely.
- ★ Ensure that all staff are competent in the work in which they are engaged.

Coastal School Leaders will ensure that adequate arrangements exist for the following:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of the H&S policy and authorising any necessary revisions to its provisions.
- Providing adequate resources
- Providing adequate health and safety training for all staff.
- Ensuring that all accidents, incidents, and dangerous occurrences are adequately reported and recorded (including informing the H&S Executive, and other relevant bodies, as appropriate)
- Reviewing all reported accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences, and the Coastal School's response, to enable corrective measures to be implemented.

The Coastal School leader is responsible for the day-to-day implementation, management and monitoring of the H & S Policy. The Coastal School leader will ensure that:

- Regular safety inspections are carried out and the reports accurately logged.
- Any action required because of a H&S inspection is taken as rapidly as possible.
- Information received on health and safety matters is distributed to all members of staff/ other adults as appropriate.
- An investigation is carried out on all reported accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that the provisions of the H&S policy are always adhered to.

In an effort 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 participants encounter at Coastal School, both preemptively and dynamically as necessary.

7.1 Risk Assessments

The Coastal School leader manages the risk assessment, procedure of risk assessment. A risk assessment will be created and signed off before any new activity is started, where preemptive, the risk assessments can be found in the appendices, to include risk benefit and analysis. Some risks are assessed 'dynamically', as not all risk is predicted in advance, all activities will be risk assessed before undertaken, either in advance, or in the moment.

- Each activity will be risk assessed, where possible, prior to the Coastal School session and introduced before the activity
- Activities repeated do not need to be reintroduced
- Where activity occurs spontaneously, a risk assessment will happen in situ, with the participant(s) input.
- participants who become proficient in a skill can guide other participants to learn the skill
- We will use the Coastal School ethos to suggest activities and allow participants the choice of participation.

We accept the responsibilities of the 1974 Health and Safety Act. Our coastal sessions are insured by Birnbeck Insurance, details on request.

Health and Safety Policy

The welfare and safety of all participants at Coastal 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 participants may likely encounter at Coastal School.

Staff & Training

The Coastal 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 .

Risk Management and Assessment

The aim is not to avoid risks, but to manage risks appropriately. We believe it is important for participants' 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 Coastal school practitioner the existent risks need to be assessed. That happens on different levels.

The Coastal School Practitioner carries out 5 types of risk assessments: a *seasonal site* risk assessment; a *daily* risk assessment before every Coastal 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 participants whose behaviour or medical condition demands them, an individual risk assessment.

1) Seasonal site risk assessment

For every season and reviewed when necessary, The Coastal School Leader will identify any site hazards present and implement the necessary controls. This includes; looking for the hazards, 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 Coastal 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 etc. 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.

7.2 FIRE RULES & REGULATIONS

Fires will not be a feature of every session but if they are, the following rules will be followed:

Participants will be asked questions about fire safety to enhance their understanding and will be taught what is needed to light a fire for eg: **permission, fuel, air, ignition and water!**

Fire Checklist

Fire to be in a suitable fire bowl/ stable fire pit.

Site:

- Sheltered area, from direct wind blow.
- Permission to have fires granted, where appropriate
- Ground below the fire bowl is bare and flat.
- The surrounding area is free from trip hazards.
- Correct seating area, minimum 1.5 metres from fire bowl.

Kit:

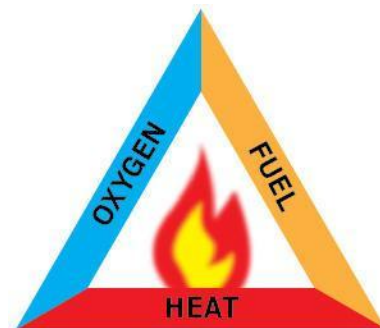
					
Fire Bucket	Bucket Cover	Clean Water	Burns Kit	Fire Blanket	Fire Gloves

Personal Safety:

- Loose, long hair tied back
- Sleeves rolled up
- Loose clothing and jewellery secured
- Fire gloves are worn for handling hot objects.

Essentials to light the fire:

- Ignition: Fire striker
- Tinder: Cotton wool, newspaper
- Kindling: Small match-stick width twigs. Silver birch ... etc
- Fuel: Pencil thickness, thumb thickness, wrist thickness.



Rules of the fire area:

- Enter and exit the seating area by walking outside the seating circle
- Ensure adult to participants ratios are adhered to
- Safe stance – kneel in front of the fire (one knee up, one knee on the floor).
- water next to fire
- Ensure the fire is full extinguished at the end of the session – by fully dousing the fire bowl with water
- Leave no trace.

7.3 CLOTHING AND PPE

At sessions where fires will be present less flammable clothing will be worn.

Weather appropriate clothing will be advised, to mitigate the effects of such as sun, wind, cold/ wet temperatures etc. eg: to have shoulders covered and sun hats during sunny weather, waterproof clothing for wet weather etc

- Personal protective equipment (PPE) is an additional control when other controls don't minimise the risk adequately
- In accordance with **Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992** – *'personal protective equipment is to be supplied and used whenever there are risks to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled in other ways'*.
- Risk assessments will inform what PPE is needed
- PPE can include waterproof clothing, wellies, hats, gloves, work gloves, sunhats, long trousers and sturdy footwear
- Spare sets of waterproofs will be available.

7.4 MANUAL HANDLING

Policy Statement:

At Coastal School, we are committed to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of all participants, including staff, volunteers, and participants during sessions.

This Manual Handling Policy outlines procedures to reduce the risk of injury from lifting, carrying, pushing, or pulling loads at Coastal School.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Prevent manual handling injuries.
- Promote safe and effective lifting and carrying techniques.
- Ensure all staff and participants are aware of their responsibilities.

- Support a culture of risk assessment and safe practice in outdoor environments.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff, volunteers, and facilitators.
- All participants: participants and adults participating in sessions.
- All manual handling activities during travelling to, set-up, delivery, and pack-down of sessions.

4. Definitions

Manual Handling: The transporting or supporting of a load (including lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying, or moving) by hand or bodily force.

Load: Any object, person, or animal being manually handled, including tools, equipment, logs, or personal belongings.

Responsibilities

Staff and Volunteers:

- Complete manual handling training where required.
- Assess risks before undertaking any manual handling task.
- Encourage safe practices among participants.
- Use mechanical aids or team lifting when appropriate.

Participants: parents/carers and participants:

- Will not be asked to carry heavy or awkward loads.
- Will be supervised and guided in safe lifting and carrying practices appropriate to their age and ability.
- Will be encouraged to communicate if something feels too heavy or unsafe.

Risk Assessment

Before each session:

- A dynamic risk assessment will be conducted on site.
- The environment will be checked for uneven terrain, tripping hazards, and weather conditions that may affect manual handling.
- Loads to be moved (e.g. wood, equipment) will be assessed for size, shape, and weight.

Manual Handling Procedures

For Adults (Staff/Volunteers):

- Plan the lift: Know where the load is going and remove obstructions.
- Check the load: Test weight before lifting.
- Use proper posture: Bend knees, keep back straight, hold the load close.
- Use mechanical aids: Trolleys, wheelbarrows, sledges, or drag systems when available.
- Team lift: For heavier or awkward items.
- Rest when needed: Avoid fatigue-related injury.

For participants:

- Only age-appropriate and light loads to be carried (e.g., buckets).
- Always supervised when lifting or carrying.
- Encouraged to work in pairs for larger but safe items.
- No overhead lifting or twisting movements.
- Use of child-friendly equipment where necessary.

Equipment and Tools

- All manual handling aids will be maintained in good condition.
- Staff will be trained in the safe use of handling tools (e.g., barrows, buckets).

- PPE (e.g., gloves) provided where appropriate.

Training

- participants will be briefed at the start of each session on safe carrying techniques in an age-appropriate way.

Incident Reporting

Any manual handling injury, near-miss, or concern must be reported immediately and recorded according to the Coastal School's incident procedure. Follow-up actions will be taken to prevent recurrence.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or after a significant incident or change in legislation or practice.

7.5 TOOL PROCEDURES

Using a range of tools will be necessary in many activities and is important in developing new practical skills that help develop self-confidence.

The following guidelines are to be followed:

- Tool use will be outlined to the participants, including parent/carers in a “tool talk” prior to starting the activities.
- Tools should all be kept in a separate place that is not accessible by unaccompanied participants
- Tools should all be used in a designated area
- Sharp tools should be kept in a suitable container and counted out and back in at the end of the session
- Only adults who have been trained by the leader and shown to be competent should support participants using tools.
- Hand tools e.g. knives should be used in the correct position – sitting down, knees bent and apart, elbows on knees, or to one side and cutting away from the body.

- Blades should never be moved towards any part of anyone's body when tools are being used.

Details of individual tool use can be found below to include those that will be part of the Coastal School programme.

It is not anticipated that this tool will be used in sessions, but if it is, the below will be followed:

Bowsaw/Pruning Saw/Hacksaw

- *Saws should be kept in a tool bag.*
- *1:1 ratio*
- *Only to be used after being shown how*
- *If using a bowsaw to cut up a branch, use a cutting horse to stabilise the wood. Draw the saw towards yourself a couple of times, to create a groove, then use the whole length of the blade to smoothly cut back and forth. The adult can support by holding over the child's hand if using a pruning saw or by holding the other end of the bow saw to help the child push and pull the blade.*
- *Bow saw/pruning saw to be carried at hip height with blade covered or folded away*
- *Maintenance- clean after use and ensure blade is folded away or covered by guard. Replace blades when required.*

Mallet:

- Explain what a mallet is used for (e.g., driving pegs, assembling shelters, light woodworking).
- Always check the mallet for damage (cracks in the handle or head) before use.
- Always have a clear working space — arm's length plus a little more around you (blood bubble).
- Use the mallet on a stable surface (e.g., ground, stump, brick)
- Hold the mallet with a firm grip, using two hands for better control if necessary.
- Keep your focus on the target.

- Use controlled, steady strikes — no wild swinging of the mallet!
 - Always position your body safely to the side of the swing path, not directly behind it if using big swings.
 - Only one person in the working space
-
- Maintenance after use::
 - Inspect the mallet for any new damage.
 - Clean off dirt, sand etc if necessary
 - Return it to the designated tool bag/area
 - In case of minor injury (e.g., bruised finger), follow the site's first aid procedures
 - For more serious injuries, get appropriate help immediately (see emergency procedure).

Again, It is not anticipated that this tool will be used in sessions, but if it is, the below will be followed:

Knives (permissible)

- *Participants must be supervised 1:1 when handling a knife unless stated otherwise, and with a Coastal School leader, at least initially.*

- *Wipe clean the knife after use and place in cover and lockable bag*

The action should be to peel away from the body. The child should sit on a log/ similar with knees at a right angle and with elbows resting on knees. They then strip away from their body ensuring they have enough working space to carry out this activity safely (the 'blood bubble' principle).

To comply with UK law and tools with blades, the only blades someone can legally carry in public in the UK are folding, non-locking pocket knives, like Swiss Army knives, with a blade that is less than 3 inches long.

The laws which cover this area are:

- 1. Section 139 (A) of the Criminal Justice Act 1988*
- 2. The Knives Act 1997*
- 3. The Offensive Weapons Act 1996*
- 4. The Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006*

Legislation states that 'It is illegal to carry any sharp or bladed instrument in a public place (with the exception of a folding pocket knife, which has a blade that is less than 7.62 cm (3 inches). Without lawful authority or reasonable excuse.'

'Blades of more than 3 inches long' include fixed blade carving knives, billhooks, and any other tools like axes, froes, draw knives etc. The legislation includes any straight (non-folding) knife, of any length and any locking knife of any length.

To comply with the law there are some steps you can take:

- Choose tools that are suitable for the 'job of work'*
- Avoid totally illegal implements. A list of knives banned in the UK can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/buying-carrying-knives> .*
- Choose tools that are brightly coloured or high vis, these are less likely to be treated as a concealed weapon.*
- Put covers on tools or keep them wrapped up to cover the blades.*
- Store in a lockable tool bag or box.*
- Store tools together – this demonstrates that they are for use with groups rather than as a personal item.*
- When travelling in a vehicle put tools in the boot or an area that isn't easily accessible by the driver or passengers*
- When travelling on foot, put tools in the bottom of your bag or rucksack to make them as inaccessible as possible.*
- Ensure you only carry your tools when going directly to or from your 'reasonable excuse'. Having used them the day before or earlier in the day, or planning to use them later may not be interpreted as 'reasonable excuse'.*

- *Ensure anyone carrying tools is over the age of 18.*
- *Carry a copy of our FSA Coastal School Practitioner knife law disclaimer in your tool box or tool bag*

Coastal School tool transportation of knives statement:

To whom it may concern,

This person (*insert your name and address*)

uses the following tools: sheath knife, bill hook, (*insert tools*)

for carving and green woodworking, conservation work and for teaching these skills to participants and young people.

This work is carried out in the following places (*insert locations*).

This person has been trained and is qualified in the safe use of tools.

<https://Coastalschoolassociation.org/>

The above statement will be modified according to the tools and practice in use during session(s).

Loppers

Coastal School leader to supervise use on a 1:1 ratio to begin with. The following advice to be followed:

- Loppers can be used to cut branches from finger size to 50p diameter
- Loppers must be carried closed at hip height and by holding the lower arm, so the blades stay closed whilst moving around the site
- The branch should be placed firmly as far as possible into the back of the blades (beak) both hands are then used to close the handles and to cut the branch. Gloves do not need to be worn as both hands will be on the end of the handles away from the cutting blades

- participants can be helped to cut branches by the adult placing their hands on top of the child's hands and helping then the cut the branch
- Loppers will be stored in the tool bag and locked away after each session
- Maintenance: clean after use and use a diamond file to sharpen blades, use in a circular motion at a 20-degree angle. Check all moving parts and handles for general wear and tear.

Palm Drills/ Gimlets (for making holes)

- Before use, examine the drill bit, pinch between your fingers and give it a wiggle to check that it is securely attached to the handle. Check it is not corroded. Check the handle for cracks.
- These will only be used after a demonstration from an appropriate adult
- participants should not run when carrying palm drills
- Drills should be used whilst seated or standing still
- A glove can be worn on the nonworking hand
- An adult can assist a child to apply pressure, using a piece of flat wood for example may also assist here.
- Drills will be stored in the tool bag/box, counted in at the end of each session and locked away after session finishes
- Maintenance with a diamond file

Secateurs

- Secateurs should be kept in a tool bag and only used after a demonstration by an appropriate adult
- Secateurs can be used to cut branches and twigs up to finger size in diameter
- They must be carried with the blades facing down and locked shut
- The twig should be placed firmly as far into the blades as possible and cut using a scissor motion. If deemed necessary, a glove must be worn on the non-working hand

- The safety lock must be used when the tool is not in use
- The secateurs must be stored away in the tool bag / box after use and counted in at the end of the session and locked away.
- Maintenance- the same as loppers, using a diamond file.

7.6 COOKING AND FOOD HYGIENE PROCEDURE

Consumption of food

- participants will wash hands with water and soap before consuming any food item
- participants must identify food with adult before picking/touching
- Food allergies and intolerances to be declared in advance and catered for.

Cooking

Below are some suggested appropriate foods that could be cooked on a campfire:

- *bread/toast*
- *Marshmallows*
- *Crumpets*
- *fruits*

At Coastal School sessions that involve campfire cooking, we will ensure safe procedures are undertaken, as highlighter below:

- Foods will be stored in cool bag with cool blocks/ other
- Participants will wash hands with water and soap
- Food to be prepped on raised surface
- Max of 4 people including adults at fire
- Participants will kneel when cooking on fire- strong stable stance
- Gloves will be worn when using tongs
- Participants must not walk around eating

7.7 TOILETING/ SANITATION AT COASTAL SCHOOL

To mitigate the need for toileting during sessions: toilets to be used before session

Toilets nearest to site (What3words-directions to be given)

For emergencies, a temporary windshield and bucket with lid will be set up.

Hand washing facility will be available on site- via tippy tap or similar. We will also carry hand sanitisers and wipes as an additional aide.

7.8 DOGS, & MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Dogs are allowed at Caister-on-Sea beach all year round. Area chosen for site away from busier dog walking areas. Participants to be briefed on what to do if this happens. Coastal School leader to ask parents/ carers in advance of any fears/ phobias of dogs.

- Example advice: If a dog approaches, try to ignore it, remain calm, don't run or raise your voice. Call for a Coastal School leader to help.
- In the event of unwanted attention from a passer-by occurs, the leader will step in and address the member of public.
- If they member of public wish to raise concerns, please ask them to email the Designated Safeguarding Person (Inger Mak-Pearce or Lisa Bicker) at beechnutforestschool@gmail.com

7.9 THE SEA

After the initial group session, an agreement about safe paddling to ankle height be decided, always to include adult supervision (n.b: parents/ carers are with their own child) . At low tide to be aware of deeper ridge near by water edge (water suddenly getting deeper)

7.10 MARINE HAZARDS

Part of the risk assessment will be to identify any hazardous marine hazards and point them out to the group so that all members are aware of the dangers

Coastal School leader will identify common hazards wildlife for participants and teach them how to identify them and to avoid them.

Common hazardous organisms that can be found eg: weaver fish, jelly fish washed up.

Bites and stings from marine wildlife may occur, and usually cause only minor irritation

In rare cases participants can have a serious reaction -refer to relevant risk assessments.

8 SAFEGUARDING

8.1 ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding schools' response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils.

At Coastal School, we will follow this guidance, alongside the below policy:

Anti-Bullying Policy

Fostering Respect, Empathy, and Belonging in Nature and Community

1. Purpose

At Coastal School we are committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment for all. We believe that learning in nature fosters respect for all living beings and that everyone has the right to feel secure, accepted, and valued. Bullying, in any form, is not tolerated and will be addressed with care, consistency, and restorative practices.

2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is any deliberate and repeated behavior—verbal, physical, social, or digital—that causes harm or discomfort to another person. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Name-calling, teasing, or spreading rumors
- Exclusion or intimidation
- Physical aggression or threats
- Cyberbullying via digital platforms
- Damaging another's belongings, including nature-based materials or projects

Bullying may be motivated by differences in race, gender, ability, appearance, family background, beliefs, or any other personal characteristic.

3. Our Guiding Values

- Empathy & Compassion: We teach and model understanding for others' feelings and perspectives.
- Respect for All: We honor diversity and treat every person and living creature with care.
- Community Connection: We learn together in nature, supporting each other as part of a shared ecosystem.
- Responsibility: Practitioners and participants are accountable for their actions and their impact on others.

4. Prevention Strategies

- Embedding kindness and inclusion in our practice
- Community circles and conflict resolution practices
- Outdoor team-building and cooperative learning activities
- Ongoing staff training in restorative practices and trauma-informed education
- Open communication with participants; families, and caregivers

5. Reporting and Responding

Everyone is encouraged to report bullying incidents to a trusted adult. All reports will be taken seriously and handled confidentially.

Response Steps may include:

- Immediate intervention to ensure safety
- Discussions with those involved to understand all perspectives
- Restorative dialogue and problem-solving
- Support for the person harmed and guidance for the person who caused harm

6. Support for All

- Ongoing emotional learning and self-regulation support
- Opportunities for reflection, growth, and making amends

8.2 CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT/ GDPR

Parents/carers, participants 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 participants 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 participants.

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' .

8.3 PROTECTIONS: CHILD/ VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECT, DBS, DISCLOSURE

Child Protection

In accordance with **The Protection of participants Act 1999** – all Coastal School leaders/ assistants/ helpers will be DBS checked dated within 5 years and at the current home address and must sign and date a form to show they comply with this Handbook

Disclosure

Appropriate steps will be taken where concerns arise regarding the safety of a participant. Concerns will be reported to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and we will ensure that disclosures are responded to sensitively and appropriately, in line with current best practice.

Vulnerable adult:

Our Commitment

We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable adults who take part in our activities. Everyone has the right to live free from abuse and harm.

Who is a Vulnerable Adult?

A person aged 18 or over who may need extra support to protect themselves due to age, illness, disability, or other circumstances.

Our Responsibilities

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Create a safe, supportive environment.
- Act immediately if we have concerns about someone's safety.

Types of Abuse

Includes physical, emotional, sexual, financial abuse, neglect, discrimination, and self-neglect.

If You Have a Concern

- Report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- Listen, don't judge.
- Never promise to keep it secret.
- Record facts clearly and accurately.

Emergency

If someone is in immediate danger, call emergency services (999).

Inger Mak-Pearce and Lisa Bicker are DSL trained staff, all staff will have at least the foundation Safeguarding training, kept up to date in accordance with advice.

Please see appendices for the CADS referral flow chart for practitioners to utilise, Appendix 12.7

DBS

All Staff will have enhanced DBS checks.

8.4 VISITOR PROTOCOL

Before your visit: schedule and approval. All visits must be scheduled in advance with the Coastal School leader. Approved visitors will receive confirmation email with visit details. Health and safety requirements will require visitors to wear appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear for coastal school. Upon arrival visitors must report to the coastal school leader who will provide safety guidelines and a brief orientation, to include respecting the natural environment. Visitors must not record or photograph participants without prior permission. In case of an emergency follow the instructions from the leader. To report any hazards or incidents to the Coastal School leader.

8.5 CONSENT FORMS

At our sessions parents/ carers will be present, however, where this is not the case, we acknowledge the below:

We have 'In loco parentis' - Duty of care for those responsible for the care, custody and control of the participants to take the same care that a reasonable, prudent and careful parent/ guardian would take in the same circumstances.

Note: Parents will be present and if anything is required we will ask their consent in situ. General consent to participate in Coastal School sessions will happen in advance of sessions commencing.

8.6 EQUALITY STATEMENT

At Coastal School, we are aware:

*"Under the **Equality Act 2010** it is illegal to: discriminate against someone on the grounds of any of these characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation. These are often referred to as protected characteristics". – Coastal*

School leaders/ assistants have a duty of services to work to together to ensure that every child, whatever their background or circumstances, to have the support they need to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve through learning, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being.

We are committed to ensuring the above is considered and employed in our actions as an organisation and individuals representing Coastal School

9 INSURANCE

All participants and activities that are undertaken at our Coastal School sessions are covered by Birnbeck Insurance, details are available on request.

10 DESIGNATED PERSON RESPONSIBILITIES

Lisa Bicker, Sarah O'Flynn and Inger Mak-Pearce are qualified Outdoor First Aiders and their specific responsibilities will be outlined in each session plan. DSL are outlined above.

11 HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

I confirm that I have read a copy of this Handbook and agree to abide by the policies and procedures it contains.

[illegible]

