



Constantine Preschool Forest School Handbook



An information pack for staff, parents and volunteers.

By Elfie Carson (September 2018)

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All adults with a regular role in the Forest School programme at Constantine Preschool must sign and date this sheet to confirm that they have read and agree to all of the policies and procedures detailed within this booklet (and that they have read any relevant additional information, including the extended policies referenced):

Date	Name	Signature

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 History of Forest School

The Forest School movement originated in Denmark: it has been an integral part of early years education since the 1980s, when it was introduced as part of an expansion of nursery provision. It is based on the idea that young children can develop enthusiasm for education through an appreciation of nature. Across Scandinavia, learning through outdoor play has been found to boost pupils' confidence and improve their behaviour and social skills. Bridgwater College, Somerset, established the Early Excellence Centre, the UK's first forest school, in 1995, after a group of teachers visited Denmark.

Back in the UK, pupils were given access to a woodland area and allowed free exploration of the environment while participating in activities similar to those observed in Scandinavia. The success of the project led to its expansion and in 1997 Bridgwater College devised a forest school training course, and a national outreach team was set up in 2000 to train leaders across the UK. This has led to the expansion of the Forest Schools programme throughout the UK. After its initial success and receiving recognition of its value in the education and personal development of young people, providers began developing training courses for Forest School leaders and practitioners, enabling Forest Schools to spread.

The Forestry Commission have recognised the potential importance of Forest School stating, "Access to green space is not just about the environment. For young children there is perceived to be great benefit in teaching most subjects in a natural environment". They continue to raise awareness of the importance and potential of Forest Schools in the whole of the UK.

1.2 What is the Forest School approach?

Forest School provides regular access to a woodland environment, throughout the seasons and weather changes. Children are given clear geographical boundaries and expectations about

looking after themselves, others and the environment. They are provided with opportunities to make natural crafts, explore their surroundings and engage with rooted activities, such as a mud kitchen or hammock. They may learn outdoor skills, such as fire lighting, tree identification and den building. However, the freedom they experience is their greatest learning tool - they are able to 'learn through doing' and develop a wide variety of skills including, team-building, independence and problem solving. Forest School has been proven to build children's self-esteem by giving them ownership over their learning choices and providing opportunities to think and act creatively in response to their environment. Through Forest School children are also given an opportunity to interact in a very different way with their peers and adults, the emphasis being exploring and learning together. The child who attends Forest School will also learn to love their local environment and understand how it changes across the seasons.

1.3 Forest School Guiding Principles

The Forest School ethos has six guiding principles, which were agreed by the UK Forest School community in 2011.

1. Forest School is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions in a woodland or natural environment, rather than a one-off visit. Planning, adaptation, observations and reviewing are integral elements of Forest School.

- Forest School takes place regularly, ideally at least every other week, with the same group of learners, over an extended period of time, if practicable encompassing the seasons.
- A Forest School programme has a structure which is based on the observations and collaborative work between learners and practitioners. This structure should clearly demonstrate progression of learning.
- The initial sessions of any programme establish physical and behavioural boundaries as well as making initial observations on which to base future programme development.

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

- Whilst woodland is the ideal environment for Forest School, many other sites, some with only a few trees, are able to support good Forest School practice.
- The woodland is ideally suited to match the needs of the programme and the learners, providing them with the space and environment in which to explore and discover.

- A Forest School programme constantly monitors its ecological impact and works within a sustainable site management plan agreed between the landowner/ manager, the forest school practitioner and the learners.
- Forest School aims to foster a relationship with nature through regular personal experiences in order to develop long-term, environmentally sustainable attitudes and practices in staff, learners and the wider community.
- Forest School uses natural resources for inspiration, to enable ideas and to encourage intrinsic motivation.

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

- Where appropriate, the Forest School leader will aim to link experiences at Forest School to home, work and /or school education
- Forest School programmes aim to develop, where appropriate, the physical, social, cognitive, linguistic, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of the learner.

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

- Forest School opportunities are designed to build on an individual's innate motivation, positive attitudes and/or interests.
- Forest School uses tools and fires only where deemed appropriate to the learners, and dependent on completion of a baseline risk assessment.
- Any Forest School experience follows a Risk-Benefit process managed jointly by the practitioner and learner that is tailored to the developmental stage of the learner.

5. Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners, who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.

- Forest School is led by qualified Forest School practitioners, who are required to hold a minimum of an accredited Level 3 Forest School qualification.
- There is a high ratio of practitioner/adults to learners.
- Practitioners and adults regularly helping at Forest School are subject to relevant checks into their suitability to have prolonged contact with children, young people and vulnerable people.
- Practitioners need to hold an up-to-date first aid qualification, which includes paediatric (if appropriate) and outdoor elements.

- Forest School is backed by relevant working documents, which contain all the policies and procedures required for running Forest School and which establish the roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers.
- The Forest School leader is a reflective practitioner and sees themselves, therefore, as a learner too.

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

- A learner-centred pedagogical approach is employed by Forest School that is responsive to the needs and interests of learners.
- The Practitioner models the pedagogy, which they promote during their programmes through careful planning, appropriate dialogue and relationship building.
- Play and choice are an integral part of the Forest School learning process, and play is recognised as vital to learning and development at Forest School.
- Forest School provides a stimulus for all learning preferences and dispositions.
- Reflective practice is a feature of each session to ensure learners and practitioners can understand their achievements, develop emotional intelligence and plan for the future.
- Practitioner observation is an important element of Forest School pedagogy. Observations feed into 'scaffolding' and tailoring experiences to learning and development at Forest School.

1.4 Vision for Forest School at Constantine Preschool:

Regular visits to our community-owned woodland will enable each learner attending Forest School sessions to develop an inquisitive and positive relationship with the natural environment. Through child-led learning we will build confidence, self-esteem and resilience in preparation for an ever-changing world.

1.5 Aims of Forest School at Constantine Preschool:

1. To provide access to the natural environment, with opportunities for self-calculation of risk and the learning this entails.
2. To enable children to feel proud of themselves and recognise their own strengths and successes, through child-led learning and free choice.
3. To build resilience and emotional self-awareness, through a reciprocal relationship with the natural world.
4. To strengthen team-working skills and model collaborative behaviour.

5. To develop a greater understanding of, and respect for, the natural environment and how to care for it.

Section 2: Forest School at Constantine Preschool

2.1 Prior to a Forest School session

Permission from Parents

Before any child is allocated to a Forest School session, permission from the parent/carer will be sought along with any additional information regarding the child's welfare/health needs applicable to a Forest School session. Permission from parents will also inform them that children need to be appropriately dressed for a Forest School session. This includes appropriate footwear (e.g. wellies or covered shoes) and clothing (shoulders covered, wet weather gear if necessary, gloves and hats in colder months).

Additional Adults

For each Forest School session taking place there will be a minimum ratio of **1:5**. Each adult assisting in a Forest School session will have been briefed on what a Forest School session looks like, as well as having received any additional training by the Forest School leader regarding fire and tool work if they are being used in the session.

Checking of Site

A detailed risk assessment has been carried out at the intended Forest School site. We have also surveyed the site with a local tree surgeon and the Bosahan Woods Management Team to identify any potential natural hazards. The site will also be checked on arrival at each session, an onsite risk assessment carried out and recorded, and the boundaries will be adapted as appropriate.

Equipment

As the BWMT operate a 'leave no trace' policy, we have arranged to leave the majority of our equipment in a secure, outdoor storage box, sourced and sited by ourselves, in the land bordering the community woodland (please see appendices for the Landowner's agreement). Any additional equipment will be transported for the sessions appropriately by the responsible adults and Forest School leader. The equipment will include an outdoor first aid kit and a kit bag.

First Aid Kit:

- Plastic tweezers and tick remover
- Scissors
- 2x instant ice packs
- 10x antiseptic wipes
- 2x eye irrigation solution sachets
- 4x finger and thumb plasters
- 32x medium plasters
- 12x small plasters

- 2x triangular bandages
- 3x medium non-adherent wound dressings
- 3x large self-adhesive wound dressings
- 1x crepe bandage
- 2x medium bandages
- 2x small bandages
- 3x pairs of protective gloves
- 2x eye dressings
- roll of micropore tape
- 1x foil blanket

Kit Bag:

- First Aid Kit
- Emergency phone and contact details for parents/carers
- Fire blanket
- Permanent marker pen and map
- Hand-washing kit
- Bin Bag
- Toilet roll
- Baby wipes, changing mat, nappies bags and nappies
- Fresh water in containers
- Spare socks, waterproof jacket and hat (size appropriate depending on the group)
- Whistle
- Torch
- Copy of the Emergency Procedures Policy

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the Forest School Leader

The role of the Forest School Leader is to plan and lead all Forest School activities by:

- Providing a learner-centred approach to sessions and activities; modelling pedagogical approach and appropriate learning dialogues.
- Ensuring that the session has inclusivity at the heart of all the activities; based on observation and review of learner's interests and learning schema, the FS leader will tailor activities to learner's needs.

- Supporting the learners' developing relationships with the natural environment and working with the BWMT to secure a sustainable working relationship with the environment.
- Ensuring that planned activities are age appropriate and within the capabilities of the children taking part; the FS leader will work with the Preschool and parents/carers to link the learning taking place at Forest School to the setting and home environment.
- Using a detailed risk assessment (including Covid-19 secure procedures) to support the management of the risk-benefit process for all learners and staff, enabling the learners to engage in supported risks and the learning that follows.
- Providing opportunities for reflective practice in sessions, to develop emotional intelligence and plan for future sessions.
- Taking responsibility for behaviour during a Forest School session (see Behaviour Policy).
- Having a Level 3 Forest School Leadership Qualification and reflecting on and reviewing their practice regularly.
- Ensuring that they have an up to date First Aid Qualification in Outdoor First Aid and Paediatrics.
- Being DBS checked.
- Ensuring that participants are appropriately dressed (see Clothing Policy).
- Carrying out risk assessments and site visits prior to a session (see Risk Assessment).

Responsibilities of Accompanying Staff

- To take responsibility for a small group of children at a ratio of 1:5, making regular head-counts and monitoring behaviour, as well as supporting learning.
- To take an active role in Forest School sessions and assist with any discipline issues within the group (see Behaviour Policy 3.1).
- To assist with the walking of children on roads to off-site locations (see Health and Safety Policy 3.4.10).
- To have read and understood the Accident and Emergency Policy procedures (3.4.1) and know its location in the Kit Bag.

Responsibilities of the Children

- To take responsibility for their own safety as well as the safety of other members in their group and the environment.
- To listen and follow safety information given to them.
- To bring appropriate clothing and footwear to Forest School sessions.

2.3 Forest School Site

Our Forest School sessions will be taking part in the community-owned section of Bosahan Woods, local to the village. We have completed a detailed risk assessment of the lower site, alongside the stream by the wooden bridge close to the Nanjarrow Farm track. Bosahan Woods are located 0.6 miles from Constantine Preschool and about a 20 minute walk away. The entrance is located on Trebarvah Lane, just opposite the entrance to the village park and recreation ground. The site is well sheltered and provides a quiet and peaceful setting in which to carry out sessions. Potential risks in this area are that it can become waterlogged in rainier months, although there are opportunities for children to sit on higher ground away from the wet ground. The trees and woodland which surround the clearing provide a natural boundary in which the children can roam freely yet still be seen by adults. During sessions, clear boundaries and expectations will be communicated with staff and children. We will also use temporary signs to notify members of the public about the location of Forest School sessions.

Unless there is an electrical storm or the weather risks are severe, Forest School will take place in most weather conditions. Exceptions include: strong winds of 30 mph or more (risk of falling trees or branches), very heavy rain (the children can get very wet on the walk to the woods in this case), ice, sleet or extreme snow.

2.4 Forest School and the Curriculum

Forest School is child-led not curriculum driven, nevertheless there are bountiful opportunities in which forest school can be integrated into the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and enhance the learning which is taking place in setting. Below we outline some example opportunities for exploring the characteristics of effective learning:

Characteristics of Effective Learning	
Aspect	Forest School Learning Opportunities
Playing and Exploring (Engagement) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Finding out and exploring</i> • <i>Playing with what they know</i> • <i>Being willing to 'have a go'</i> 	Exploring the natural environment, taking risks, repeated tasks, physically challenging activities, trying activities involving different textures, mess, tools, fire.
Active Learning (Motivation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Being involved and concentrating</i> • <i>Keeping trying</i> • <i>Enjoying achieving what they set out to do</i> 	Choosing their own tasks, group games and discussions, foraging or exploring group tasks, problem solving tasks, like den building or making natural crafts. Physical resilience - the walk down.

Creating and Thinking Critically (Thinking) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Having their own ideas</i> • <i>Making links</i> • <i>Choosing ways to do things</i> 	Coming up with ideas for games or activities, den designs or creating natural crafts. Making links between our actions and consequences on the natural environment, their actions and immediate response from nature, making links with home.. Freedom of choice in child-centred learning environment.
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Areas of Learning and Development

Prime Areas

	Aspect	Forest School Learning Opportunities
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Building relationships	Working in groups to forage, explore, build dens etc. Exploring the natural environment, gaining confidence through growing understanding and ownership of the space. Consideration of others and the natural world, environmental empathy.
	Self-regulation	
	Managing self	
Physical Development	Gross motor skills	Physical resilience and confidence in moving on uneven ground, climbing trees, using tools etc. Craft activities. Responsibility for and independence with clothing for the outdoors, toileting in a different environment. Awareness of safety in the outdoors.
	Fine motor skills	
Communication and Language	Listening, attention and understanding	Exploring a new space, understanding different expectations and boundaries, listening to the natural world and engaging with the language and range of vocabulary involved.
	Speaking	

Specific Areas

	Aspect	Forest School Learning Opportunities
Literacy	Comprehension	Exploring new vocabulary, using natural objects to make letters, writing with chalk, charcoal, clay, matching pebble letters to natural labels, fine motor skills, using tools. Mark making with natural materials. Making up stories about our space.
	Word reading	
	Writing	
Mathematics	Number	Counting objects, collecting and grouping, foraging and recognising items. Measuring, binding, building dens and other creations. Matching colours and shapes, such as leaves or bark.
	Numerical patterns	
Understanding the World	Past and Present	Using tools and looking at the consequences of change on materials. Using the preschool camera to document activities and creations. Awareness in the community and past history of the environment. Understanding of seasons and recognising change in our space. Exploring ways to look after the natural world and evaluate our relationship with it.
	People, culture and communities	
	The natural world	
Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with materials	

	<p>Being imaginative and expressive</p>	<p>Using natural materials to create, exploring with different natural textures in the mud kitchen or with wood or clay. Exploring material change, planning use and effect (dens etc.), using tools competently. Choosing activities and coming up with activities themselves. Using materials for imaginative purposes. Exploring sound and rhythm and song in the natural environment.</p>
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Section 3: Policies

Please Note: All our policies are available on the Constantine Preschool website and will have been viewed and signed off by parents and staff on their induction into the setting - https://www.constantine-preschool.co.uk/?page_id=303. This information is intended to be additional in nature, in reference to the specifics of the Forest School setting.

3.1 Health and Safety Policies

3.1.1 Calling the Emergency Services

Dial 999 and ask for the emergency service required. Give the following information:

- The nature of the incident (if an injury don't give a diagnosis just what has happened).
- The number you are calling from
- Details of your location

- State that the crew will be met by _____ at the entrance to the location of the site

Site Address:

Bosahan Woods, Constantine, TR11 5QB (approx.) Grid Ref: SW 7317 2973

At the bend in the track to Nanjarrow Farm from Ponjerevah. By the wooden bridge.

A copy of these procedures will be in the Kit Bag at all times and the accompanying adults will have read and know the location of these emergency procedures prior to any session.

Emergency Numbers

Ambulance/Emergency Services	999
Royal Cornwall Hospital	01872 250000
Falmouth Minor Injuries Unit	01326 430000
Mullion and Constantine Group Practice	01326 340666
Non-emergency Police Enquiries	101

3.1.2 COSHH Policy

Cleaning materials and other dangerous substances are clearly labelled in their original containers and stored out of children's reach. Children do not have unsupervised access to the fire, toilet and cooking areas.

3.1.3 Extreme Weather Policy

In cases of extreme weather, such as high winds or storms, with risk of flooding, the Forest School session will be cancelled prior to taking place. Parents will be informed via email and social media sites linked to the Preschool and a normal session in setting will be offered instead.

In such cases, when extreme weather develops when we are already on site, the Forest School leader will assess the situation and make a judgement about bringing the session to an early conclusion. The equipment will need to be packed away safely, whilst the children are briefed and prepared for the walk back to Preschool. This will need to be carefully supervised and support from local volunteers sought, if necessary.

3.1.4 Fire Policy

Camp fires and the use of Kelly Kettles are an important part of Forest School and will be used in sessions. Constantine Preschool will ensure that any sessions involving the use of fire and the use of Kelly Kettles will be done in a calm and safe manner, posing minimal risk to children and adults taking part in the session.

Location:

- Campfire areas will use a fire bowl and will be marked out by a boundary to ensure safety.
- A fire blanket and bucket of water for emergencies will always be available.

Positioning of Children and Adults

- A clear boundary will be demarcated before the fire is lit and seating will be at least 1m from the fire pit.
- When the fire is lit children are not permitted to enter the area without being invited in and when entering the fire area the children must walk around the outside of the seating area and sit down.
- Their legs must not be outstretched but tucked in towards the logs.
- The children will change seats by walking on the outside of the seating area and walking around to their new seat.
- They must be wearing long sleeves and trousers at all times.
- They are not allowed to throw anything onto the fire.
- In the event of smoke the children will be instructed to turn their heads away from the fire circle and close their eyes and count to 20. If there is severe wind then children will sit opposite to the wind direction.

Lighting the fire:

- Only adults are allowed to light the fire, unless children are being directly supervised.
- Fires will be lit using cotton wool, a striker and kindling.
- At the end of the session the fire will be completely extinguished and any remaining ash disposed of and all traces of the fire will be removed.
- Children can feed the fire with one to one supervision and must be shown how to feed the fire.
- The Forest School Leader will be responsible for any cooking on the fire and for taking pans or kettles off the fire and pouring the water into cups etc.
- The cups will always be placed on the ground and never poured with a child holding a cup.

3.1.5 Insurance Policy

Constantine Preschool holds valid and up to date insurance through the Preschool Learning Alliance. All Forest School activities are covered through this insurance. This is reviewed annually. The landowners have the necessary Public Liability Insurance to enable the public to use the site. A copy of Constantine Preschool's insurance certificate can be found in the Appendix (6.2), along with the details of the landowner's insurance, detailed in the landowner's agreement (6.1).

3.1.6 Manual Handling Policy

As part of the preschool staff induction programme, all staff are provided with guidance about the safe storage, movement and lifting and erection of large pieces of equipment. The same guidance applies within the forest school setting.

The preschool staff may be required to carry rucksacks of equipment down to the woodland site. Equipment will be appropriately packed, within a reasonable weight limit in a suitable sized rucksack, purchased for this purpose. If staff are required to carry any children, such as those with additional physical needs, this will only be done using appropriate equipment and with consent of the parent/carer of the child.

The erection of temporary shelters, tarpaulins, hammocks and swings will be undertaken by the Forest School leader, using appropriate knots and safety equipment.

Any incidents or accidents involving manual handling will be recorded in accordance with Preschool policies. Please see Constantine Preschool Manual Handling Policy for further details.

3.1.7 Risk Assessment and Risk-benefit Analysis

Please see section 7.

3.1.8 Tools Policy

The use of hand tools is a key part of Forest School; the children are able to develop new, practical skills that increase self-confidence and self-belief, as well as a sense of responsibility. Hand tools will be safely locked up in the Forest School Leader's tool box and will be kept in good working order by the Forest School leader. They will be checked at the beginning of each session to ensure they are in good working order.

Adults will be using a folding saw, secateurs and/or loppers to occasionally cut up firewood or to make safe an area in use in the session. In this case, they will use appropriate PPE equipment and ensure that the children are at a safe distance or are closely supervised if they are helping with this task.

When working with hand tools the following guidelines will apply:

- A staff to child ratio of 1:1 when training children. Only when the FS leader feels that the child is competent with tools will they be allowed to use them in a greater ratio (1:2 or 1:3 when working with bow saws, bill hooks, hacksaws, pen knives and peelers).
- Tools will be kept in the Forest School Tool box and only removed when being used.
- No tools shall be left lying around during a session and if not being used will be returned straight away to the tool box.
- Penknives will be opened and closed by Forest School staff.
- Running with tools is strictly prohibited.
- Tools must be kept pointed towards the ground.
- When the bow saws are not being used they must have a guard on them. They must be taken on and off by Forest School staff.
- Wood being sawn must be supported on a cutting block and hands kept at a safe distance from the blade.
- Any whittling must be carried out away from the body, within a safe working circle and blood-bubble distance from the body.
- All tools will be counted back in at the end of the session and returned to the tool box.
- Additional adults will be sufficiently briefed about the use of individual hand tools before assisting in a session.
- Any children who do not follow the above guidelines and the behaviour policy will be asked to stop using the tools and only allowed to return once they can follow the guidelines.

3.1.9 Transport Policy

The group will be given a safety reminder before leaving the preschool site and before returning at the end of a session. They will be reminded of safety expectations on the roads and also the uneven nature of the paths in the woods. A minimum of 1:5 adult to child ratio will apply. Each adult will lead a small group of children, being responsible for head counts and child safety.

Walking on pavements

- The group will walk in pairs on the inner-side of the pavement
- The adult at the front of the line will ensure that other pedestrians are kept safe, stopping the line if necessary to allow others to pass safely.
- The group will stay together. If the Leader senses the group is getting too spread out, (s)he will stop the group. The Leader will then give instructions on how the group should close the gaps in the line. When the Leader is satisfied that the group is back together again, (s)he will give the instruction to move on.

Crossing the road from pavement to pavement

- On approaching the place to cross the road, the adult at the front of the line will stop the children and ensure they are all paying attention and are ready to cross.
- When it is safe to cross, the adult at the front of the line will move to the other side of the road. A second adult will move to the middle of the road in order to stop any traffic and signal for the children to cross. The Leader at the rear of the line will ensure the children cross quickly but without running.

Walking to and from the woods

- The path into the woods is single-file. Each group-leader will lead their group, making sure that children are aware of dog poo and natural hazards, such as brambles and stinging nettles.
- The leader of each small group will open gates, count the children through and pass the gate on to the leader of the next group, before proceeding with their route to the woods..
- It is the responsibility of the last group leader to make sure that the gates are closed behind the preschool group.
- The groups will need to be counted before leaving preschool, at each pause en-route and on arrival at their destination.

3.1.10 General Welfare Policies

Consent Forms

All pupils taking part in a Forest School session will need to fill in a consent form signed and returned by a parent or carer.

Toilet Facilities

There is no public toilet available at Bosahan Woods. We will take a portable potty down to the woods with us, with toilet paper and a temporary toilet shelter for privacy. Children will be

accompanied by a member of preschool staff to use the portable facilities. If they need a wee, they will be supported in finding a quiet and secluded area of the woodland in which to relieve themselves. The potty will be cleaned according to manufacturer's instructions on our return to preschool.

We will take with us the necessary nappies, bags and wipes for children who require these and have purchased a travel changing mat for this purpose. Children in nappies will be changed in sight of another member of staff, whilst maintaining their dignity at all times. Staff will use gloves and appropriate materials when changing nappies. The same applies to children who have soiled or wet themselves and need to be changed into fresh clothes. Nappies and waste will be bagged up and removed from the area and wet or soiled clothes will be bagged up and sent home with the relevant child.

There will be handwashing facilities (a bucket of water, soap and paper towels) available.

Food and Drink

All adults and children will have a mid-morning snack prepared at Forest School. This will be done by the Forest School leader or a member of preschool staff, who all have their Level 2 in Food Safety and Hygiene. In the case of food being prepared on the fire, this will be done by the Forest School leader and will be served at an appropriate temperature. Fresh drinking water will be available at all times. The Preschool already has a Healthy Eating policy in place, which means that foods with a high-sugar content are not permitted. Foods containing nuts are not permitted, due to allergies and any grapes, cherry tomatoes or large berries must be cut in half to avoid choking risk. All of this information has been communicated to parents already, via the registration procedure. For any further information, please refer to the Constantine Preschool Food and Nutrition Policy.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Clothing

When using hand tools, the hand holding the wood will have a gardening style glove on it; this applies to adults and children. If appropriate, safety goggles and ear defenders will be provided. We have 2 fire gloves for use with the fire bowl and any cooking equipment. These will be used by the Forest School leader and preschool staff only.

All staff will have been provided with waterproof clothing and appropriate supportive footwear. All visitors and volunteers will be advised about appropriate clothing. Children will be provided with waterproof clothing by the preschool, which also has a supply of spare wellies in a range of

sizes. Parents have received a letter detailing appropriate clothing for all weathers: *"long sleeved tops and trousers. Please make sure your child is wearing warm socks! Please note that it is cooler in the woods, so lots of layers are useful. They will need to be dressed and ready to go when they arrive at preschool."* In the colder months, adults and children will be advised to wear scarves, hats and gloves to Forest School sessions. In warmer weather, adults and children will be advised to bring sunhats and suncream.

Safety Procedures

It will be ensured that the policies and procedures as stated in this handbook will be fully implemented. Sufficient information will be provided to additional adults and children taking part in a Forest school session. It will be ensured that the legal adult-child ratio is maintained. The preschool office will be alerted when a Forest School session is taking place and the contact details of the Forest School leader and the emergency mobile phone will be left with the preschool office in case they need to contact the group. Parents will be provided with the mobile number of the emergency phone we will have with us on-site and the Preschool staff will ensure they have a list of all contact details for parents/carers in the kit bag.

The Forest School Leader assumes responsibility for the checking and maintenance of the First Aid Kit, Kit Bag and any tools used during a Forest School session.

3.2 Food Safety and Nutrition Policy (including food hygiene)

Our staff with responsibility for food preparation have all completed Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene certificates. They understand the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as it applies to our setting and the preparation of food in the woodland setting.

All our staff follow the guidelines of Safer Food, Better Business:

The person responsible for food preparation and serving ensures standards are met consistently. (See Safer Food, Better Business).

We use reliable suppliers for the food we purchase.

Food is stored at correct temperatures and is checked to ensure it is in-date and not subject to contamination by pests, rodents or mould.

Clean food preparation areas are available and are cleaned on returning from a session.

There are separate facilities for hand-washing and for washing-up.

All utensils, crockery etc. are clean and stored appropriately.

Waste food is disposed of daily.

We use cooking as an opportunity for the children to learn about simple hygiene and healthy eating, as well as fostering independence and self-care. When the children are cooking in the Forest School setting, they:

- Are supervised at all times.
- Understand the importance of hand-washing and other simple hygiene rules.
- Are kept away from hot surfaces, hot water and do not have unsupervised access to the fire area.

In the unlikely event of food poisoning, where it seems possible that the source of an outbreak of food poisoning in adults and/or children from the setting, the preschool manager will contact the Environmental Health Department and comply with any investigation, Where any cases affect two or more children looked after on the premises, we will notify Ofsted.

Please refer to the Constantine Preschool Food and Nutrition Policy, including Food for Play and Cooking Activities Policy.

3.3 Health Policy

All members of Preschool staff hold current paediatric first aid certificates. The Forest School Leader will hold an outdoor first aid certificate, including paediatric first aid. We have ensured due diligence when choosing first aid training providers. A first aid kit will be available at all times during Forest School sessions and will be kept well-stocked and out of the reach of children. It is the responsibility of the Forest School Leader to check this before each session. A list of equipment in the first aid kit is detailed in 2.1.

In the case of minor injuries or accidents, first aid treatment is given by a qualified first aider. In this event, the accident is documented in our accident record book and parents are informed on collection and sign an accident record detailing any action taken. Where applicable, the Health and Safety Executive, Ofsted and/or local child protection agencies will be informed, in line with our Recording and Reporting of Accidents and Incidents Policy.

If the child is unduly upset or we have concerns about the injury, we will contact the child's parents/carers for clarification of what they would like to do, for example take the child to the GP etc. In the case of serious injury, an ambulance will be called for emergency treatment (see 3.4.1). On registration at the setting, parents/carers sign a consent form allowing a member of

staff to take or accompany their child to the nearest Accident and Emergency unit to be examined, on the understanding that they have been informed on the way to hospital.

Any necessary medication will be documented in the Preschool setting and this information will be made available to all preschool staff, including the Forest School Leader. If medicine needs to be administered before, during or after a session, this will be done in accordance with our Administering Medicines policy and documented accordingly.

3.3.1 Accident and Emergency Policy

NB: Please refer to the policies available on the Constantine Preschool website for further details.

In the case of an emergency or incident, all participants will have been briefed on the following guidelines: It is the Forest School Leader's responsibility to assess the situation, check the nature and extent of the injury/accident. The Forest School leader will determine whether the session needs to be ended or paused. If so, a whistle will be blown twice as a signal that all members of the group need to stop what they are doing and to gather in the designated meeting point (the fire circle). All the group must be silent and await further instructions.

The setting provides care for children and promotes health by ensuring emergency and first aid treatment is given as required. Parents consent to emergency medical treatment consent on registration. At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFS) certificate is on site and available at all times when children are present or all staff are paediatric first aiders, who regularly update their training; First Aid certificates are renewed at least every three years. All members of staff know the location of First Aid boxes.

In case of minor injury, the casualty will be administered first aid as necessary and an accident report will be completed at the end of the session.

In case of serious injury

- In serious cases an ambulance will be called by dialling 999 on a mobile carried by the Forest School leader. The preschool will also notify parents.
- The rest of the group will be moved away from the incident into safety by the additional adults.
- One member of staff will meet the ambulance at the site entrance and direct the crew to the site of the incident.

- If the injured child is taken to hospital then one member of staff will go with them and the child's parents will be informed by members of staff from preschool.
- In minor cases, the Forest School leader will arrange to contact the parents and explain the nature of the incident so the child can be collected and taken to hospital, the doctors or home.
- An accident report should always be completed at the end of the session.

3.4 Promoting Inclusion and Valuing Diversity Policy

When planning and delivering a Forest School programme, one must be mindful of the impact of the outdoor space on inequalities, particularly with relation to disability. One of the fundamental values of Forest School is inclusivity and promoting access to the outdoors for all. We recognise that oppression and discrimination can prohibit an individual's, or a group's, access to the outdoors. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice, which takes into account individual difference and we aim to overcome any barriers, which could prevent involvement in these sessions. In addition to this, we will ensure differentiation of the environment, resources and curriculum to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory needs.

Please see the current Constantine Preschool Promoting Inclusion and Valuing Diversity Policy for further information: we adopt all of the policies and procedures therein, including the valuing of diversity and British values.

3.5 Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

NB: For all information on our safeguarding procedures, including the reporting of concerns or allegations against staff, please see the Constantine Preschool Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy on the Constantine Preschool website.

3.5.1 Missing Child Policy

If it is discovered that a child is missing this will be taken extremely seriously and the following protocol will be implemented:

- The Forest School Leader will be informed immediately.
- Activities for the rest of the group shall be suspended so that two adults are free to conduct a thorough search of the area.
- The rest of the group will be counted and will be given a low risk activity to carry out so as not to raise any anxiety in the group. Members of staff return the children to the setting as soon as possible if it is safe to do so. According to the advice of the police, one

senior member of staff should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.

- If the child has not been located, the designated person will phone 999 and alert the police following the instructions detailed below. If it is suspected that the missing child may have been abducted, the police must be informed.
- A description of the child and, if possible, a photo should be provided to the police.
- The designated person will contact the child's parents/carer to inform them of the situation.
- The designated person contacts the designated officer, who attends the setting.
- A record is made on 06.1a Child welfare and protection summary and 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form. The manager as designated person completes and circulates 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form to the designated officer on the same day that the incident occurred.
- For any further information, including investigation and support of staff and parents, please refer to the Preschool Missing Child Policy.

3.5.2 Social Media and Photograph Policy

Only ICT equipment, including cameras, phones and tablets, belonging to the setting is to be used. Personal mobile phones and other equipment belonging to staff are not to be used during sessions. Visitors will be requested not to use mobile phones or electronic equipment during sessions.

A preschool mobile phone will be used for emergencies and preschool staff will ensure that the number is known to parents/carers in case of emergency.

3.5.3 Staff ratios, roles and responsibilities

In accordance with Forest School ethos and guidelines, we will ensure a high staff to child ratio during Forest School sessions. Including the Forest School leader, we will have 5 members of preschool staff on duty each session, for a maximum of 25 children. This is well within our legal guidelines and allows us to have a minimum 1:5 ratio. For additional information on staff roles and responsibilities see section 2.2. Please also refer to the Constantine Preschool Staff, Volunteers and Students Policy.

3.6 Record Keeping policy

Please refer to the Constantine Preschool Record Keeping Policy found on the Constantine Preschool website.

3.7 Childcare Practice Policy

3.7.1 Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy

The roles and responsibilities of the Forest School Leader, additional adults and the children are laid out in Section 2. It is the responsibility for each party to adhere to these guidelines.

The Forest School Leader and all staff will be inducted in the Promoting Positive Behaviour strategies and programme which apply to the Preschool setting. The use of visuals, registration and now and next boards, as well as the recording of incidents will also apply to the Forest School setting.

At the beginning of each Forest School session, the geographical boundaries and expectations of behaviour will be made clear to all participants: the focus will be on looking after ourselves, each other and the natural environment. If a child's behaviour runs counter to these expectations or if they move beyond the boundaries marked out for the session, they will be reminded of our expectations and a member of staff will use a problem solving intervention with the child. The same practice applies in the preschool setting. If the behaviour has been significant or may potentially have a detrimental effect on another child, the parents of the child who has been the victim of a behaviour and the parents of the child who has been the perpetrator will be informed. An incident form will be completed.

Given the outdoor setting and the child-led nature of the learning environment, there may be an adaptation of the implementation of behaviour policy approaches, when framing responses to children. It is important for the children to experience risk-calculation, in order to develop their sense of confidence in the natural environment; they may be asked to consider the potential outcomes of certain actions or perhaps choose a different location to try out certain activities. We will aim to positively re-frame or re-direct challenging behaviours, without shutting down the curiosity or exploration they may be stemming from.

If a child's behaviour is directly placing the group in danger or risk then the child will be asked to spend the rest of the session in the company of a preschool staff member. If their behaviour continues to be dangerous or to put others and themselves at risk, their parents/carers may be contacted and asked to collect them from the Trebarvah Lane collection point at an agreed time. In this instance, two members of staff will walk the child out of the woods. If a child's behaviour

repeatedly puts themselves or others at risk in Forest School sessions, the Preschool management will contact their parents/carers and discuss further intervention and next steps.

For further details please see Constantine Preschool Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.

3.8 Environmental Policy

3.8.1 Ecological Impact Assessment

Please see Appendix 6.4

3.8.2 Landowner's Agreements

Please see Appendix 6.1.

3.8.3 Woodland Management Plan

Please see Appendix 6.5

Section 4: Proforma

The following proforma are strictly for the preschool's use in connection to Forest School Activities:

Dear Parents/carers,

I'm writing to you to inform you of our exciting Forest School that will be starting on _____ at Bosahan Woods in Constantine. This will be a fantastic opportunity for the children at preschool. The sessions will be run by Elfie Carson, our Forest School Practitioner and outdoor First Aider.

What is Forest School?

The Forest School ethos encourages the development of children's emotional and physical development through outdoor play, activities and exploration in a forest environment. The philosophy of Forest School is to inspire and encourage individuals to participate in achievable and positive experiences in a natural environment. Our planned activities will foster:

- Independence
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Communication skills and team-work
- Physical competence

These sessions will take place every Wednesday 9:00 - 12:00. All children will need to be in setting for 9:00 am prompt, as we will leave shortly after this. A mid-morning snack will be provided, as usual. Children going home for lunch at 12pm will need to be collected from the Preschool as usual woodland entrance.

Please help your child to dress appropriately for Forest School: long sleeved tops and trousers. Please make sure your child is wearing warm socks, as wellies do not keep small feet very warm! Please note that it is cooler in the woods, so lots of layers are useful. They will need to be dressed and ready to go when they arrive at preschool.

Forest School aims takes place in all but extreme weather conditions. Waterproof clothing and wellies can be provided for your child. We will be doing activities such as bug hunting, den building, plant printing, plant/tree identification, foraging, knot tying and other educational and creative activities. Many activities will be child led and spontaneous, based upon the children's interests.

All activities will be checked for safety and extensive risk assessments carried out to ensure a safe environment for the children. You are very welcome to read through these and our other policies and frameworks: please speak to a member of staff for a copy or see the Preschool website. If you are happy for your child to participate in Forest School then please complete the attached consent form and return it by

_____.

Please note that Forest School will involve all the children in setting on these days so please speak to a member of management if would like to change your child's sessions. If you have any questions then please schedule an appointment with a member of staff at preschool.

Yours sincerely,
Constantine Preschool

.....

Please sign and return the below form by _____ showing you agree to the following:

I agree to my child taking part in Forest School activities.

I agree to my child being photographed during Forest School activities for my child's or the school's own use.

Yes No

I agree to my child having supervised access to a stream and muddy puddles.

I agree that my child may be getting dirty during Forest School.

I confirm that the medical information I have supplied to the school is up-to-date. As an additional precaution, we are required to ask you in more detail about allergies and insect stings.

Forest School

I agree to _____ (name) taking part in Forest School can confirm the school is aware of my child's medical requirements.

Please tick which applies:

My child has been stung by a wasp/bee before and had no reaction

My child has never been stung by a wasp/bee before

My child has been stung by a wasp/bee and had a reaction

Allergies _____

Signed: Date:



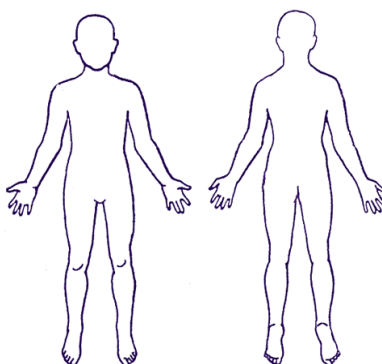
Constantine Pre-School
& Forest School

INCIDENT FORM

Child's name	
Child's date of birth	
Date & time of incident	
Exactly where incident occurred	

Description of incident	
Signature of person who dealt with incident	
Signature of witness, if one	
Signature of parent/carer	
Further action to be taken, if any	
Description of injury, if one, care given and by whom	

Mark the area of the body which had the injury:



Front

Back



Constantine Pre-School
& Forest School

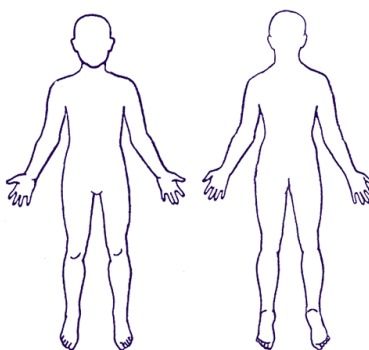
ACCIDENT FORM

Child's name	
Child's date of birth	
Date & time of accident	

Exactly where accident occurred	-
Description of accident	

Signature of person who saw and dealt with accident	
Signature of witness, if one	
Signature of parent/carer	
Action to be taken, if any	
Description of injury, care given and by whom	

Mark the area of the body which had the injury:



Front

Back

Section 5: Useful Contacts

Constantine Preschool	Trebarvah Road Constantine TR11 5AG 01326 341444 hello@constantine-preschool.co.uk
Bosahan Woods Management Team	Part of Constantine Enterprises Company Ltd.

	The Tolmen Centre Fore Street Constantine TR11 5AA 01326 341353
Bridgwater College	Bath Road Bridgwater Somerset TA6 4PZ info@bridgwater.ac.uk

Websites

Woodland Trust: Useful resources for teachers and parents

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

www.naturedetectives.org.uk

Muddy Faces: Ideas and equipment for outdoor education

www.muddyfaces.co.uk

Forestry Commission: Support for Forest School and background information

www.forestry.gov.uk

Forest School Association: Details of local Forest School practitioners

www.forestschoolassociation.org

Section 6: Appendix

6.1 Landowner's agreements

Please note that the insurance details (such as provider and policy number) on all documents remain the same, with the exception of the expiry dates, which are all now in 2023.

Bosahan Woods Management Team
The Tolmen Centre
Fore Street
Constantine
Falmouth
TR11 5AA
19th September 2018

Constantine Preschool Management
Constantine Preschool
Trebarvah Road
Constantine
Falmouth
TR11 5AG

Dear Rosie and Kate,

We, the undersigned, confirm that Constantine Preschool has permission to use the community owned land within the agreed boundaries in Bosahan Woods, Constantine. You have been shown the area belonging to the community, via the Constantine Enterprise Company Ltd., and have agreed to stay within these boundaries for your sessions. Use of the other areas of woodland, including the public footpaths which give you access to the woods, will be at your own risk.

The Boshan Woods Management Team holds current public liability insurance with Leisure Link; our policy number is UMB:B6991SCO2016S01/003541/0 and it is paid for the period 30-03-2018 to 29-03-2019. We have contracted a qualified tree surgeon to survey the area intended for use and to carry out any necessary work to trees at risk. We understand that Constantine Preschool holds its own insurance for the purposes of these sessions and has also ensured that all the relevant policies and risk assessments are in place.

The Forest School sessions will take place on Mondays and Wednesday mornings during term time until March 2019, when they will change to Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

We look forward to hearing how the project develops.
Yours faithfully,

Adrian B. Roberts 20th September 2018

Name: DR ADRIAN ROBERTS

Signed on behalf of the Bosahan Woods Management Team

Nanjarow Farm
Constantine
Falmouth
TR11 5PY
7th January 2019

Constantine Preschool Management
Constantine Preschool
Trebarvah Road
Constantine
Falmouth
TR11 5AG

Dear Rosie and Kate,

We, the undersigned, confirm that Constantine Preschool has permission to erect a metal storage box on the agreed site near the Bosahan Woods wooden bridge, close to the boundary with the community-owned section of woodland. You have been shown the area where you are able to site the storage and have agreed to clear a path through the brambles so that the box can be hidden from public view from the access lane. You have also been advised to seek your own insurance to protect the box and its contents, as well as been warned that there have been incidents of vandalism in this area previously. Use of the other areas of woodland, including the public footpaths which give you access to the woods, will be at your own risk.

We hold current public liability insurance with Cornish Mutual Assurance Co. Ltd
: our policy number is FC 3153/24 and it is paid for the period
29/3/18 to 29/3/19. We understand that Constantine Preschool
holds its own insurance for the purposes of these sessions and has also ensured that
all the relevant policies and risk assessments are in place.

The Forest School sessions will take place on Mondays and Wednesday mornings during term time until March 2019, when they will change to Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

Yours faithfully,

L. Evans

Name: L. EVANS

Signed on behalf of the owners of Nanjarow Farm

6.2 Constantine Preschool Insurance certificate



“CERTIFICATE OF EMPLOYERS’ LIABILITY INSURANCE (a)

(Where required by regulation 5 of the Employers’ Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (the Regulations), one or more copies of this certificate must be displayed at each place of business at which the policy holder employs persons covered by the policy)

Policy Number: RTT209837
Reference Number: 30244
1. Name of policy holder: Constantine Pre-school
2. Date of commencement of insurance policy: 05/02/2018
3. Date of expiry of insurance policy: 04/02/2019

We hereby certify that subject to paragraph 2:-

1. the policy to which this certificate relates satisfies the requirements of the relevant law applicable in Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Island of Jersey, the Island of Guernsey and the Island of Alderney; and
2. (a) the minimum amount of cover provided by this policy is £10 million any one Event (excluding liability arising directly or indirectly out of Terrorism) and £5 million any one Event arising directly or indirectly out of Terrorism (c)

Signed on behalf of Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance plc (Authorised Insurer)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Steve Lewis', is written over a horizontal line.

Steve Lewis
Chief Executive, UK & Western Europe
Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance plc

6.3 Communications Strategy

For our communications strategy with the stakeholders in Constantine Preschool Forest School Sessions, please see the plan laid out below:

Who	What is to be communicated	When	How will you communicate?
Landowner / manager	Changes to planned FS days and schedules, general idea of planned activities, any unusual activity on the land or changes to the area, including hazards	When appropriate	By email to the BWMT and in person with landowners at Nanjarrow Farm
Management Team (if you're in a setting)	Planning for the sessions, number of children expected, number of adults, medical information and SEND information, cancellations of sessions due to adverse weather	Daily, weekly	In person, by email or by phone
Neighbours: businesses and individuals	FS timings, use of access paths	Weekly	Signs up, preschool website, Constant Times (community magazine)
Other site users (formal and informal)	FS session timings, when a session is in progress, changes to session days, progress of FS	Weekly, additionally when appropriate	Signs up in the woods, reports published on the Bosahan Woods website, preschool website, Constant Times (community magazine)
Participants	What they need to wear, where we are going, what to bring, what we will be doing	On FS session days	In person
Parents/carers/guardians Support workers	Timings and location of sessions incl. meeting and pick up point, appropriate	Daily, weekly	Via Preschool Management Team: website, Facebook posts, emails to parents,

	clothing, activities, changes to sessions incl. cancellations, policies and risk assessment		written letters, noticeboard at school and in person
Your team: Paid staff Volunteers	Planned activities for sessions and their role, number of children and adults expected policies, risk assessment, changes to planned sessions, medical and SEND information, where appropriate	Before each session, weekly planning meetings	In person, by email, staff roles noticeboard at school, by phone
Other interested parties (local community members)	Progress of FS sessions, activities, FS session timings and location, risk assessment and policies	As required	Constant Times (community magazine), preschool website, Bosahan woods website (see reports)
Other practitioners	Volunteering/work opportunities, best-practice and skill-sharing	As required, regularly	CPD workshops, social media forums, email, in person, FSA get-togethers

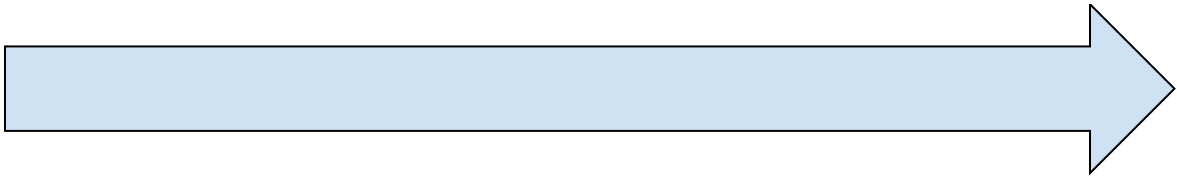
6.4 Ecological Impact Assessment

Ecology of Bosahan Woods		Factors impacting on the site		Impact of Forest School over time
Layer within ecological structure	Description	Non-human impacts	Human impacts	
Ground Layer	Decaying leaf litter and fallen trees / branches. Some well-used footpaths and old quarry paths. Soil is often very moist due to proximity to stream and position at the bottom of a valley.	<p>Biotic: Invasive species or soil depletion due to overpopulation of a particular Field Layer species may impact on the ground layer.</p> <p>Abiotic: Climatic factors including freeze/thaw cycle, air temperature and rainfall will impact on the rate of decomposition of biological detritus.</p> <p>Edaphic factors including moisture level in the soil and balance of acidity and nutrients will impact on the ground layer.</p>	<p>Litter (and dog faeces) which is not picked up.</p> <p>Overuse of the site and the paths leading through the site may increase erosion or displacement of soil.</p> <p>Forest School fire.</p>	<p>Over time the FS site risks becoming ever more heavily used, with a cumulative impact on the quality and density of soil and the biodiversity on the Ground Layer.</p> <p>The forest school fire may degrade a specific area of the Ground Layer, with cumulative impact over time.</p>
Field / Herb Layer	Heavily overgrown areas of brambles, ferns, honey-suckle, ivy and holly saplings. Areas with steeper inclines carry primroses, bluebells and wood anemones. Large granite boulders covered with moss. Fallen tree branches house various	<p>Biotic: Invasive species or overpopulation of a particular Field Layer species may impact on the biodiversity of the Field Layer.</p> <p>Abiotic: Climatic factors including freeze/thaw cycle,</p>	<p>Walkers, dogs or forest users not keeping to paths may impact on Field Layer habitats.</p> <p>Children climbing trees risk impacting on moss/lichen and fungi species.</p> <p>Maintenance and</p>	<p>Over time, the traffic of children walking to and from the site increases the risk of degradation of the Field Layer next to the main paths in and out of the site.</p> <p>Children exploring and interacting with the site risks further accidental</p>

	fungi species.	air temperature and rainfall will impact on the rate of growth and the seasonal variation in the Field Layer. Significant tree fall may obliterate localised habitats at the Field Layer.	accessibility work to paths may impinge upon Field Layer habitats.	degradation of previously undisturbed habitats at the field layer.
Understory / Shrub Layer	Holly, Beech, Ash, Oak and Sycamore saplings. Mature honey-suckle. Tree trunks bearing moss.	<p>Biotic: Invasive species or overpopulation of a particular Shrub Layer or Canopy species may impact on the biodiversity of the Shrub Layer.</p> <p>Abiotic: Climatic factors including freeze/thaw cycle, air temperature and rainfall will impact on the rate of growth and the seasonal variation in the Shrub Layer. Significant tree fall may obliterate localised habitats at the Shrub Layer.</p>	<p>Walkers, dogs or forest users not keeping to paths may impact on Shrub Layer habitats.</p> <p>Children climbing trees risk impacting on moss/lichen and fungi species.</p> <p>Forest management practices may reduce natural spread of Shrub Layer species.</p>	<p>Over time, the traffic of children walking to and from the site increases the risk of degradation of the Shrub Layer next to the main paths in and out of the site.</p> <p>Children exploring and interacting with the site risks further accidental degradation of previously undisturbed habitats at the Shrub Layer.</p> <p>Cutting saplings or small branches to provide resources for Forest School activities may impact on the resilience of local Shrub Layer species.</p>
Canopy	Mature Holly, Beech, Ash, Oak and Sycamore trees.	<p>Biotic: Invasive species, disease or overpopulation may impact on biodiversity at the Canopy layer.</p> <p>Abiotic: Climatic factors including freeze/thaw cycle, air temperature and rainfall</p>	Forest management and tree felling will shape the distribution and diversity of the Canopy.	Soil/Ground Layer degradation in highly localised spaces (e.g. the main FS site) may have some impact on the Canopy through the interrelation of the Ground Layer and Canopy. In particular, soil

		will impact on the rate of growth and the seasonal variation in the Canopy		displacement and degradation may impact on the roots of established trees.
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6.5 Woodland Management Plan

	Management plan						
	Year 1				Year 2		Year 3
Likely Impact	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	First Half	Second Half	
Footfall on the main site - impact on Ground Layer through soil displacement and erosion.	Establish clear boundaries to localise and minimise any degradation.						
	Regular reminders of boundaries at start of each session						
	Quarterly review of boundaries and site impact assessment. Consider re-drawing boundaries if necessary, or take temporary measures to protect specific areas.	Bi-annual review of boundaries and site impact assessment.		Bi-annual review of boundaries and site impact assessment.		Annual review of boundaries and site impact assessment.	
Footfall on the paths to and from the site - impact on Ground and Shrub Layer	Regular reminders of importance of sticking to paths each session.						
	Quarterly review of access routes and site impact assessment. Consider re-routing access if necessary.	Bi-annual review of boundaries and site impact assessment.		Bi-annual review of boundaries and site impact assessment.		Annual review of boundaries and site impact assessment.	

Impact of the forest school fire on the main site.	Fire to always be lit in a fire bowl, placed above ground with appropriate airflow underneath to prevent scorching. Remove all combustible material from the fire site before setting up fire.			
Exploration of and interaction with the site, and gathering resources, impacting on species at the Ground and Shrub Layers.	Each session to begin with a reminder of the principles of Forest School and specifically how to protect the site.			
	Quarterly review of site impact assessment. Consider protecting specific site areas if necessary.	Bi-annual review of site impact assessment.	Bi-annual review of site impact assessment.	Annual review of site impact assessment.
	Every session to have an appropriate staff:learner ratio to allow for appropriate supervision of learners interacting with the site			

Section 7: Risk Benefit Assessment

The Benefits of General Forest School Activities:

- **Confidence**
This was characterised by self-confidence and self-belief that came from the children having the freedom, time and space, to learn, grown and demonstrate independence.
- **Social skills**
The children demonstrated an increased awareness of the consequences of their actions on other people, peers and adults, and acquired a better ability to work co-operatively with others.
- **Language and communication**
The children developed more sophisticated uses of both written and spoken language prompted by their visual and sensory experiences at Forest School.
- **Motivation and concentration**
This was characterised by a keenness to participate in exploratory learning and play activities as well as the ability to focus on specific tasks for extended periods of time.
- **Physical skills**
The children developed physical stamina and their gross motor skills through free and easy movement round the Forest School site. They developed fine motor skills by making objects and structures.
- **Knowledge and understanding**
Increased respect for the environment was developed as well as an interest in their natural surroundings. Observational improvements were noted as the children started to identify flora and fauna.
- **New perspectives**
The teachers and practitioners gained a new perspective and understanding of the children as they observed them in a very different setting and were able to identify their individual learning styles.

- **Ripple effects beyond Forest School**

The children brought their experience home and asked their parents to take them outdoors at the weekend or in the school holidays. Parent's interest and attitude towards Forest School changed as they saw the impacts on their children.¹

Benefits of being outside in a natural environment:

- **Stress relief**

Being outside in a natural environment has been shown to relieve stress by reducing the levels of the stress hormone, cortisol, in the brain. Children are increasingly assaulted by stressful environments (media, increasing emphasis on targets and testing, screen time, ever busier urban environments), being out in the woods gives them a much needed time to relax, enjoy themselves and have some stress free time.

- **Connection to nature**

Children are increasingly being kept indoors because of the understandable problems of traffic and concerns over safety while being unsupervised. As a result some are missing out on the opportunity to get out and connect with nature on a personal level. Forest school gives them the time and opportunity to do that. Connecting with nature will allow our future generations understand and value the natural world.

Benefits of using tools and fire:

Children will be introduced to tools and fire in a controlled and progressive way so that they learn about managing risk for themselves. They will learn to ensure the safety of both themselves and for others by learning simple safety procedures under the close supervision of the Forest School leader. They will benefit from improved fine and gross motor skills, confidence from achieving something from using tools, communication skills, teamwork, coordination and designing and planning skills.²

Further Benefits for the Preschool Community:

- Rich supply of resources and materials for use in other curriculum areas.
- Opportunities to involve parents and wider community.
- Chance for staff to observe students in a different setting.
- Opportunities for staff to learn new skills, and enjoy the benefits of Forest School too.

¹ <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/research/forest-schools-impact-on-young-children-in-england-and-wales/evaluation-of-forest-school-phase-2-england/> accessed on 11/02/16 at 20:33

² <https://nestinthewoods.co.uk/risk-benefit/> accessed on 11/02/19 at 19:51

- Offers an alternative to our over reliance on digital and electronic sources for recreation, learning, socialising.
- Offers an opportunity to become fitter and healthier.
- Participants learn to recognise and assess risks for themselves.³

Hazard Identified and location	Level of risk before precautions taken (likelihood and severity of potential harm)	Precautions to be taken	Level of risk after precautions taken	Who is responsible for taking the precautions?
General risk of injury through using tools on site	Harm is likely due to the nature of teaching children to use tools which may be sharp. The severity of harm is likely to be low, due to the nature of the tools. Overall the risk is MEDIUM.	Ensure all children are shown how to use all tools before use, they should be taught on a 1:1 ratio when using tools for at least the first two times. Adults to supervise all use of tools and to check all tools prior to each session. All tools to be appropriately maintained and stored. Adults to ensure they are appropriately trained in first aid.	Overall the risk is LOW .	FS leader and preschool managers. All staff.
Children with additional needs (who present behaviour which challenges or experience atypical developmental) may find it harder to follow guidance about the safe use of the environment	The likelihood of harm is increased by the potential impact of behavioural difficulties, but the severity of harm is not because the nature of the environment is the same. Overall the risk is MEDIUM.	Additional behavioural support needs of any relevant children to be made clear to all staff. Staff team to exercise additional vigilance in the event of higher-risk activities.	Overall the risk is LOW .	FS leader and preschool managers. All staff

³ <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/research/forest-schools-impact-on-young-children-in-england-and-wales/evaluation-of-forest-school-phase-2-england/> accessed on 11/02/19 at 20:33

<p>Specific injuries: Sawdust/grit/mud in eyes on site</p>	<p>The likelihood of harm is low (there are not many sawing activities) and the severity of harm will be low (likely to involve dust in eyes). Overall the risk is LOW.</p>	<p>Goggles to be made available for sawing activities. Activities involving wood waste to be carried out on a 1:1 ratio at first and then 1:2, when learners are proficient. Adults to be appropriately trained in first aid.</p>	<p>Overall the risk is LOW.</p>	<p>All staff</p>
<p>Specific injuries: Hit fingers with hammer on site</p>	<p>The likelihood of harm is low (infrequent use of hammer) and the severity of harm also likely to be low (using precautions as specified). Overall the risk is LOW.</p>	<p>Demonstrate how to tap the nail lightly first, before moving hand out of the way. Complete this task at a ratio of 1:2. Use a peg to hold the nail.</p>	<p>Overall the risk is LOW.</p>	<p>All staff</p>
<p>Specific injuries: Splinters on site</p>	<p>The likelihood of harm is high but the severity is low. Overall the risk is LOW.</p>	<p>Demonstrate how to use sandpaper to finish work. Gloves to be made available.</p>	<p>Overall the risk is LOW.</p>	<p>All Staff</p>
<p>Walking from Preschool site to Forest School site</p>	<p>The likelihood of harm is low (only one road crossing on a quiet road) and the severity of harm is low (trips, slips and falls). Overall the risk is LOW.</p>	<p>Children to be supervised by adults walking alongside, highlighting hazards. Potential hazards and rules for safe walking reiterated each session. Route will be checked prior to each session by the FS leader and any major hazards removed and dog poo marked with powder paint. Ensure children are wearing suitable footwear. Younger children or those with physical support needs will walk holding hands with an adult. Older children will walk in pairs, to support each other. If the route from Trebarvah Close is too overgrown, becomes impassable or has hazardous flowering plants (like deadly nightshade), then the alternative route through the village and up Well Lane will be used and agreed beforehand between all staff.</p>	<p>Overall the risk is LOW.</p>	<p>FS leader and preschool managers. All staff Preschool parents</p>
<p>Hazards linked to working next to streams and near</p>	<p>The likelihood of harm is low in summer (the stream is not deep) and medium in winter (when the stream</p>	<p>Adults to set and communicate clear boundaries to children, which are altered according to the weather, season (the river is high and fast in the winter) and the</p>	<p>Overall the risk is LOW.</p>	<p>All staff</p>

mud on site	becomes faster flowing and deeper) and the severity of harm is medium, with the possibility of hypothermia increasing in the winter, if a child falls in the stream and the possibility of drowning or severity injury increasing in the winter months (trips, slips and falls). Overall the risk is MEDIUM.	level of risk or harm increasing. These boundaries are supervised and clearly marked, with one adult stationed by the bridge throughout the free-play section of a session. One adult is always stationed in the water, if children are playing in the stream, with a maximum ratio of 1:5. The children are given clear boundaries to play in, all equipment is checked by the FS leader. An adult will then check all children for damp clothing before snack time and, if necessary, change them.		
Fire hazards: scalds and burns (incl. campfire cooking) on site	The likelihood of harm is medium (access to the fire being closely monitored), but the fire is central to the setting and the severity of harm is potentially high (burns). Overall the risk is HIGH.	The fire to be continuously supervised by an adult to ensure it does not grow too big and fire circle boundaries reinforced (at least 1.5m from the fire bowl). All rules and expectations relating to the fire to be reiterated regularly. Water bucket and fire blanket always available. If children are involved in cooking on the campfire, this is clearly modelled and supervised on a 1:1 ratio. No hot liquids to be handled by children – all hot drinks to be left to cool before being given to children.	Overall the risk is LOW .	All staff
Injuries linked to carrying and collecting wood for the fire on site	The likelihood of harm is low, as children cannot carry large logs or amounts of wood. The severity of harm is medium – splinters or sticks or branches in the eye.	Children to be instructed how to carry wood safely. Adults to ask them to collect small twigs for the fire, nothing larger than their wrist and wood that is visible on the ground and not in bushes or trees.	Overall the risk is LOW .	FS Leader and all staff.
Hazards linked to foraging - infection or poisoning during session	The likelihood of harm is medium (children likely to eat things which may be inedible) and the severity of harm is potentially medium (poisoning). Overall the risk is MEDIUM.	Clear rules – e.g. never eat mushrooms due to complexity of identifying edible species. Children are advised never to put anything in their mouth, apart from designated snack at snack time. All foraging activity to be supervised. In the Summer months there are some areas where hemlock grows along the river bank. These will be cut back by the FS Leader, using gloves and secateurs and identified to other staff and volunteers.	Overall the risk is LOW .	All staff and FS Leader

Injury from selecting and carrying natural materials on site	The likelihood of harm is low, given the availability of harmful fungi and plant life in the specific setting. The severity of harm is also low.	Instruct group of appropriate materials for use – e.g. from forest floor, appropriate size, not living plants, avoid prickles etc. Avoid injury by demonstrating safe handling of any materials selected.	Overall the risk is LOW .	All staff
General environmental risks on site – e.g. exposure to dog poo, sharing space with public and their dogs and/or horses	The likelihood of harm is low (children using the setting likely able to identify faeces and seek help) and the severity of harm is MEDIUM, given that horse and dogs are unpredictable animals and their owners may not adhere to the requests made in the FS signage. Overall the risk is MEDIUM.	FS leader to check the route down and the site prior to each session and remove any visible dog or horse poo. Members of the public will be informed about the FS sessions by notices at the main entrance to the woods and at all entrances to the FS site. These notices will request for dogs to be kept on a lead. Supervision by an adult at all times. Adult to ensure appropriately trained in first aid.	Overall the risk is LOW .	FS Leader and all staff
General environmental risks on site – e.g. falling tree branches, tripping over roots etc.	The likelihood of harm is high as pre-schoolers will be learning to adapt their behaviour to the new environment, tripping and falling will occur, however, the severity of injury is likely to be medium at most. With regard to falling branches, surveys and work have been completed by the landowners. Overall the risk is MEDIUM.	Children to explore the site boundaries with adults and discuss the consequences of falling and what to do if this happens. Adult to ensure appropriately trained in first aid. There is one dead tree branch above the site, which has not developed fungal decay and does not seem at immediate risk of falling. After severe weather, a pre-session site visit will be completed to assess this.	Overall the risk is LOW .	FS Leader and all staff
Hazards linked to exploring undergrowth, den building and climbing trees e.g. twigs in the eye or falling on site	The likelihood of harm is medium: there is a large area of low undergrowth, with brambles and low level shrubs. The severity of harm is high (scratches to the eye, grazes or broken limbs) Overall the risk is HIGH.	FS Leader to check the area covered by the session, prior to children visiting. Any major hazards will be pointed out to children if they approach a particular area. Supervision by an adult at all times. Adult to ensure appropriately trained in first aid.	Overall the risk is LOW .	FS Leader and all staff
Weather in the local area	The likelihood of harm is low, given the proximity to preschool and the	Appropriate clothing to be provided and worn by all. Spare clothing to be available. In wet weather, a tarpaulin	Overall the risk is LOW .	FS Leader and preschool

	nature of the environment and also the preparation of preschool staff and parents in dressing children appropriately. The severity of harm is likely to be low, increasing to medium in the winter months. Overall the risk is LOW.	will be erected to provide shelter. Close supervision of children for signs of hypothermic/hyperthermia. Pre-session weather checks and planning to be undertaken and, if appropriate, sessions cancelled. Adults to ensure appropriately trained in first aid. Appropriate clothing for all weathers to be provided for the children by parents.		managers All staff Preschool parents
Ropes and guy ropes on site	The likelihood of harm is medium; in wet weather we will need to erect a tarpaulin shelter, which uses low guy ropes. The hammock and balancing ropes may also be in use. Severity of harm is low, due to proximity to soft ground. Overall the risk is LOW.	Guy ropes to be marked with high-vis material. Children to be briefed on ways to enter and leave the shelter. Adults to supervise and enforce boundaries with verbal instructions.	Overall the risk is LOW .	All staff
Setting up the preschool session and using the storage box on site	The likelihood of harm is low, given the experience of the adults involved and the well-trodden nature of the environment. There are some areas which are overgrown with brambles, including the site of the storage box. There are also some large boxes of equipment stored in the container. The severity of the harm is low, given that there is not a lot of equipment to be set up and it will usually be in the same place each session. Overall the risk is LOW.	The Lead adult is to be FS trained and any volunteers closely supervised. Adults should be trained in heavy lifting techniques, if lifting whole boxes from the container and the FS practitioner should tie the knots to set up hammocks, tarpaulins and/or balancing ropes. Adults to be advised to take care when accessing the storage box and the preschool is responsible for keeping the access to the storage box clear, with regular trimming of the brambles and bracken. Adults setting up should carry out an on-site risk assessment before each session, using preschool proforma and carry a personal first aid kit and mobile phone.	Overall the risk is LOW .	All staff
Incidences when the wooden bridge is not in use (broken slats, repair etc.)	The likelihood of harm is low, given that the FS leader will always be at the site prior to other adults and children and we are in communication with the	Adults should be briefed beforehand of the state of the wooden bridge (and it should be cordoned off appropriately by the landowner) and the intended alternative route. Children should be well-supervised on the alternative, and narrower, path and met by the FS	Overall the risk is LOW .	Preschool management, FS leader and all other staff

	landowners. There is also another access route to the site, turning left before the stone bridge at the wheelhouse and crossing the small leat at the bottom of our site. There is some risk of tripping up in the boggy ground: there is a path but is unfamiliar to our children. The severity of harm is low, as we will still be approaching on a well-used path. Overall the risk is LOW.	<p>leader at the bottom of the site.</p> <p>It is important that the children are all wearing appropriate waterproof and supportive footwear, as usual.</p> <p>The FS leader will need to use the alternative route when setting up and packing away the equipment from the box. Any fencing around the bridge site will be clearly marked with FS boundary markers and a staff member will be stationed here throughout the free-play part of the session.</p> <p>Any adults helping should be advised to take care.</p>		
Hot weather: activities in the stream, such as paddling and dam building etc. wearing swimwear.	The likelihood of harm is medium, given the age of the children and their inability to swim and their height, as well as the changeable nature of the stream at different times of year. The severity of harm is high, given that drowning is a risk, if the children are not correctly supervised. Overall the risk is HIGH.	<p>The changeable nature of the water, the steam bed and the surrounding vegetation mean that a thorough on-site risk assessment should be carried out in every session where children are expected to be in the stream.</p> <p>A suitable site should be identified prior to each session involving this activity and all staff should be briefed on location, access and emergency procedures.</p> <p>Before the children are allowed access to the water, any large sticks should be moved from the stream bed and it should be checked thoroughly for litter or debris.</p> <p>Appropriate clothing for the water, as well as towels and warm clothing, hot drinks and snacks to be provided by parents and staff. Preschool parents are to be notified before any session where these activities may take place and will be asked to provide appropriate swimwear and footwear (preschool to provide spare wellies, crocs and beach shoes where appropriate).</p> <p>A ratio of 1:2 adults to children ratio will be in place, with constant supervision and support of children in the water.</p> <p>All staff to be first aid trained. FS leader to be outdoor first aid trained.</p>	Overall the risk is LOW .	Preschool management, FS leader and all other staff. Preschool parents.
Spread of Covid-19 Coronavirus	The likelihood of harm is medium, given the age of the children and the risk of transmission in an outdoor	Handwashing: Hand washing facilities with soap and water in place. Stringent hand washing taking place. Paper towels for	Overall the risk is LOW	Preschool management, FS leader and all

	<p>area. However, the same guidelines will be in place at FS as in the usual Preschool setting. Given the contagious nature of the virus and the impact on vulnerable members of the population, all precautions must be followed with care. FS sessions will reduce to once a week at the beginning of September, to reduce the pressure on the setting and to also maintain the same group of children using equipment across sessions. Overall the risk is MEDIUM.</p>	<p>drying of hands (these will be taken off site). See hand washing guidance. https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthybody/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/ Gel sanitisers in any area where washing facilities not readily available.</p> <p>Employees and children to be reminded on a regular basis to wash their hands for 20 seconds with water and soap and the importance of proper drying.</p> <p>Also reminded to catch coughs and sneezes in tissues – Follow Catch it, Bin it, Kill it and to avoid touching face, eyes, nose or mouth with unclean hands. Tissues will be made available. To help reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) reminding everyone of the public health advice https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus</p> <p>Rigorous checks will be carried out by practitioners to ensure that the necessary procedures are being followed. Children will wash their hands on before snack and after choosing, after toileting and on returning to setting.</p> <p>Cleaning: Frequent cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces that are touched regularly particularly in areas of high use such as tools, toys, and resources using appropriate cleaning products and methods.</p> <p>Any wet or muddy children’s clothes will be placed in a sealed bag in their own bag to go home to be washed.</p> <p>Uniform: Staff will wear trousers and uniform top. Staff will wash their uniform after every shift on the highest temperature possible for that fabric. . These steps are to be taken daily to minimise the chance of cross infection</p> <p>Wearing gloves: Where Risk Assessment identifies wearing of gloves as a requirement of the job (for example, nappy changing), an adequate supply of these will be provided. Staff will be instructed on how to remove gloves carefully to reduce</p>		<p>other staff.</p>
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		<p>contamination and how to dispose of them safely. Staff will be reminded to wash their hands after using gloves.</p> <p><u>Symptoms of Covid-19:</u> Line managers will offer support to staff who are affected by Coronavirus or has a family member affected.</p> <p>If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in Preschool they must be sent home and advised to follow the staying at home guidance. If we are in the woods, parents/carers will be called to collect or all staff and children will return to setting, with the unwell person supervised and walking at a safe distance, and the guidelines below adhered to.</p> <p>If a child is awaiting collection on return to Preschool, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, with appropriate adult supervision. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people. If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.</p> <p>In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital. If a member of staff has helped someone who was taken unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. Line managers</p>		
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		<p>will maintain regular contact with staff members/parent of child during this time. Access to testing will be available to members of staff who are symptomatic.</p> <p>Mental Health: Management will promote mental health & wellbeing awareness to staff during the Coronavirus outbreak and will offer whatever support they can to help.</p> <p>Please see Constantine Preschool's Coivid-19 Operating Procedures document for all other information.</p>		
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Organisational Risks to Preschool:

Other risks involved in engaging in forest school activities may involve the consequences of something going wrong, both to our reputation and financially in respect of insurance fees and potential litigation.

Children’s Involvement:

We involve the children as much as possible in the consideration of risk and benefit. It is a part of the forest school ethos that children learn to manage risk for themselves so we involve the children in planning, have clear guidelines on use of tools and playing within the boundaries and encourage them to care for themselves, each other and the environment.

Risk versus Benefit:

The benefits from engaging in Forest School activities are numerous and convincing, for the children, for the staff working with the children and for the preschool as a whole. Providing the safety procedures listed above are put into place to manage the potential risk, making the risk level low for all activities, the benefits outweigh the risks by far.⁴ With regard to new operating procedures in place from September 2020, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the government guidelines for Early Years settings includes spending as much time outside as possible, where the risk to children in this bracket is low, outside it is even lower and the positive impact of time spent in the outdoors on our mental health and immune systems is fundamental at this time.

⁴ <https://nestinthewoods.co.uk/risk-benefit/> accessed on 11/02/19 at 19:51