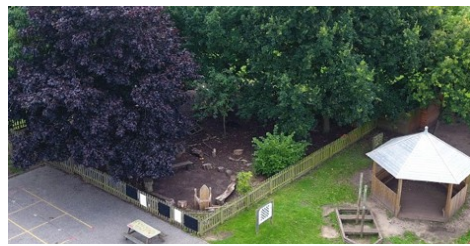


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# What is Forest School?



## What does Forest School look like at South Wootton Infant School?

Forest School is a unique and inspirational learning process where children can develop their self-worth, while enriching all areas of their learning in a real-life context. It is a process that children at South Wootton Infant School are privileged to be a part of, where they use the natural environment to deepen their learning and take the time they need to reflect and be inspired. It is a hands-on learning experience, personalised for each child and motivated by their interests and passions. At South Wootton Infant we believe that developing emotional intelligence, self-esteem and social skills are the key foundations that a person needs (the roots of our learning tree), and time is taken to develop these. During Forest School, children will be motivated and feel empowered to achieve tasks and activities that challenge their individual aspirations, with limitless academic achievements in ways that they learn best. In Forest School at South Wootton Infant, children will develop an understanding and connection with the natural world, work with tools, play, explore, and learn the boundaries of behaviour by managing risks. Our activities and Forest School sessions will depend on the interests, ability and experience of participants. Examples of Forest School activities include:

- Exploring the natural environment through their sense of 'awe and wonder'.

- Developing a relationship with the environment where children wish to learn how to nurture and manage the natural environment.

- Building dens and other structures to enrich their games and imaginative play.

- Fires and cooking.

- Natural crafts.

- Using tools, such as knives and saws.

- Scavenger hunts and adventure.

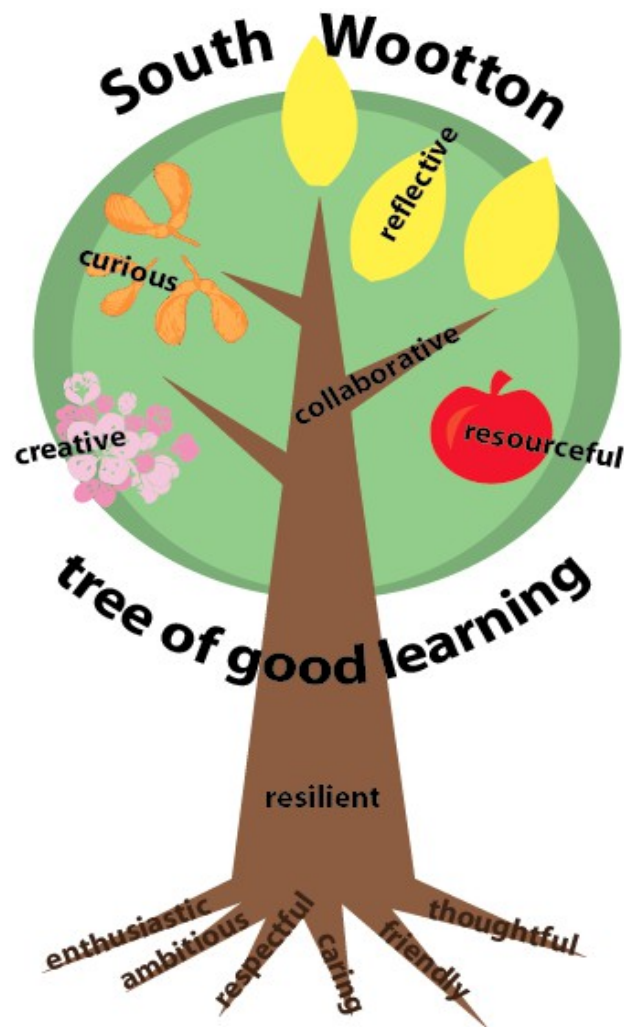
- Team games.

- Den and shelter building.

- Seasonal activities.

- Storytelling, using the natural world to enable stories to come to life.




Forest School is a rich learning environment that will further enhance the creative, enquiry based teaching that already happens in the classrooms. In order for our school to be a fun and enjoyable place, with happy and successful life-long learners, we all want to reflect the characteristics in our South Wootton tree of good learning;



Tree of good learning reference: South Wootton Infant School, diagram by Emily Riddington


## South Wootton Infant Forest School Rules

At SWIS during the summer term of 2017, each teaching staff member discussed the existing forest rules with their class in order to review them and compile a new set of rules to better suit the children and their wishes. The children in each Forest School group will discuss and come up with rules of their very own (guided by an adult who keeps these rules in mind). The children are then reminded of their forest rules before beginning each session.



### The agreed South Wootton Infant Forest School rules:

- Be kind.** work together and help each other. Don't ruin other people's games.
- No throwing.**
- Make safe choices.** Drag long sticks, do not wave them. Do not put anything near your mouth. Help each other if something is heavy, not move it by yourself.
- Be careful.** check the ground for trip hazards.
- Look after others, and nature.** Ask before I pick anything. Be kind to everyone.
- Be sensible.** Ask an adult if I am not sure.
- Follow the rules.** Always. Especially when using tools or around the fire.



Appropriate clothing must always be worn but will vary depending on the weather.

children must always wear wellies, old boots or trainers.

## Forest School staffing

Name	Job role	Signature	Date
Jo Davenport	Headteacher  Safeguarding lead		
Becky Burt	Senior teacher (deputy DSL)  class teacher		
Emily Riddington	Forest school leader  class teacher		
Charlene Martin	Forest school assistant  class teaching assistant		
Claire Gayton	Chair of governors		

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that the school has the correct insurance to cover the activities carried out in Forest School sessions.

Any first aid can be carried out by any of the staff members present at forest school (all staff at SWIS have basic first aid training), however, it is advised that a 'Forest School first aid' trained staff member (Miss Riddington or Mrs Martin) oversee and are aware of any first aid carried out if it is not them. Their outdoor first aid qualification must be renewed every three years. Staff are to fill out a 'green form' to report any first aid to the office, just as they would within the classroom. Green forms will be readily available with the first aid kit in the 'adult forest shed'. Any first aid must also be logged into the 'accident log book' to enable the Forest School leader to review and monitor safety and risks.



A minimum of 2 staff members can run a session, however the ratios in correspondence with the risk assessments will limit the activities available for the children. A level 3 forest school leader must always be present for a Forest School session with at least one other. If no Forest School leader is present, outdoor learning sessions can still happen in the forest area, but Forest School related activities must not take place.

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that they follow the school policies.

**It is the responsibility of the Forest School leader to:**

Either carry out, or work with the Forest School assistant to carry out and check risk assessments. A risk assessment of the forest area must occur before each session, or occasionally on arrival with the children for educational purposes. In addition to this, risk assessments will be carried out for each activity that may occur during the session (such as any individual tools being used, fire, shelter building...etc). Examples of these can be found in the appendix this handbook.

Ensure all of the first aid kits are fully replenished after use.

Work with with the Forest School assistant to ensure the tools and kit used are safe for use, looked after, and stored correctly.

Inform all staff involved in a Forest School session about the risks and how to manage them by showing them the risk assessments or talking and demonstrating safe practice.

Advise others of how to best keep safe when involved in different activities.

To ensure that crb/dbs checks have been carried out prior to an adult helping at Forest School.

To ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed precisely by all adults, as they are in school.

To spread the Forest School ethos across the school. Involve and inform people wherever possible about Forest School (such as by running a staff meeting, having a Forest School section on the school website, making a Forest School instagram account, making information booklets, ensuring Forest School is a part of reading and maths cafes... etc)

# Health and Safety at Forest School

The Forest School approach values the importance of managing risks and enabling children to take risks. This not only teaches them the importance of being safety conscious, but it also empowers children to be trusted and responsible for themselves. A risk-benefit analysis will be carried out by the Forest School leader or assistant in advance to ensure that the benefits of the activity outweigh the risk, and control actions that can be followed to reduce the likelihood of a risk occurring. We will carry out seasonal risk assessments, as well as daily (prior to each session), and specific activity risk assessments.

At South Wootton Infant School we will follow the '5 Step process' when managing risks to ensure that the risk assessments are thorough and effective:

1. Look for the hazards
2. Decide who may be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing controls are adequate or whether more should be done. Forest School activities may only proceed if the remaining risk is deemed to be low (green on the risk management grid).
4. Record findings on our school risk assessment sheets (seasonal, daily, or specific activity risk assessments depending on the risk). Add in any daily amendments to standing risk assessments.
5. Review assessments on a regular basis by discussing with the children and adults present (if circumstances change that could affect the rigour of the assessment) and revise if necessary.

## **Risk Management Policy**

We believe that, while there are risks that must be considered, there are also a wide range of potential benefits that we do not want children at South Wootton Infant to miss out on being a part of. We also recognise that taking risks is an important part of learning and developing and we want to provide a safe and supportive environment in which participants can learn about risks, challenges and personal safety. We will always ensure that appropriate and regular risk assessments are carried out, or involve the children in carrying out the risk assessments too. Wildlife and different weather conditions can create new challenges and changes to the forest area. These will need to be assessed prior to each session and may alter previously arranged activities.

The diagram on the following page will be displayed in the 'adult shed' in the forest area to help support adults in managing and reducing risk. Adults will be encouraged where possible to do risk assessments together, to increase awareness, have professional discussions regarding risk management, and provide a broader perspective.

		Impact				
		Trivial	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
Probability	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Moderate	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
	Likely	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	High
	Very likely	Medium	Medium	High	High	High



Health and safety grid reference: [www.justgetpmp.com](http://www.justgetpmp.com)

Photo reference: South Wootton Infant School, forest area 'adult shed'

Adults and children can use the table to increase awareness and assess risks to then reduce the probability and likelihood of an accident happening. The table allows us to think about the severity of a risk, alongside how likely it is to happen to weigh up it's safety. Activities must only occur if they fall into the green 'low' risk area. If an activity falls into the red 'high' area, the activity must not take place. If an activity falls into the orange 'medium' risk area, control actions must take place and a judgement must be made as to whether or not it is an appropriate risk to make (if it can be reduced to a green 'low' risk). Procedures can happen in response to a risk assessment (such as making specific rules to reduce the risk) to then enable an activity to move into the green 'low' risk area, allowing it to then take place.

Although unlikely, we are aware that due to changes in circumstance and the child-initiated approach to Forest School, risks may change or new ones arise. In order to manage these risks effectively during the forest sessions, discussions with staff and children must be had to revise the risks, promote awareness and make sensible decisions. Staffing should be a minimum of 1 adult : 15 children, but preferably 1 adult : 10 children ratio or higher. One of the adults present must be a level 3 Forest School leader.

## First aid, accident and emergency procedure



Photo reference: South Wootton Infant School, forest area 'adult shed' with 'accident log book' and first aid 'green forms'

### Minor Incident

1. Pupil/adult assessed by teaching member of staff (all first aid trained).
2. Treat as required (first aid kit stored in 'adult forest shed'), gaining additional assistance if necessary (additional support from other staff members, or asking an 'outdoor first aid' trained member to carry out first aid if more appropriate).
3. Fill in a 'green form' (as you would in school) to send to the front office.
4. Fill in the 'accident log book' to record incident. It is also important to log any 'near miss' accidents in the 'accident log book' to monitor these.

### Major Incident

1. Member of staff to attend to casualties immediately (preferably an 'outdoor first aid' trained member of staff, but if not they must be informed immediately to then attend to casualty).
2. Ensure the rest of the group have 'tools down' and are safe with another adult. Seek the attention of another staff member.
3. Assess the situation and distinguish between walking wounded (person is able to walk to get help- e.g broken arm), or a more serious accident (person is unable to walk- e.g unconscious). Attract the attention of the school front office by sending the 'emergency card' or a sensible child or adult (as we would in school). School office to contact emergency services if necessary (999) and inform parent.
4. Monitor incident and make notes while comforting casualty.
5. When deemed safe, get the rest of the children with their designated adult to go back inside until the emergency is dealt with.
6. complete incident report form/write in 'log book'.
7. Senior leadership team to complete online reporting forms, review incident, review our practice, and review the forest rules to ensure quality assurance. Report to RIDDOR for any major incidents.

If the casualty is an adult, the same process (above) applies. Tools must go down immediately and a sensible child must inform the office as soon as possible to enable another first aid trained member of staff to come to the casualty. The children must be taken inside as soon as possible and appropriate actions must be followed according to the step by step process above.

## First aid kits

As well as the first aid kits available in school, a forest first aid kit and a fire safety first aid kit will also be available in the forest area for quick and easy access. They will be kept in the 'adult forest shed'. It is the responsibility of the Forest School leader and assistant to ensure that the first aid kits are replenished after use.

The **forest first aid** kit will contain:

- Gloves (in sealable bags, which can then be used for safe disposal of soiled items)
- Swabs
- 'Green forms' and a pen
- Bandages (cotton, sizes...)
- Plasters
- Micropore tape
- Accident 'log book'
- Emergency procedures
- Medical information and emergency contact details for all in group, including adult helpers and leader of sessions
- Mobile phone or walkie-talkie
- Wet wipes
- Medication for individuals

The **emergency fire safety** kit will contain:

- Fire blanket
- Pair of fire gloves
- Burns kit
- Water container to store emergency water
- A flexi tub

## Administering Medicines/items to children

As we are on school grounds, the children who take regular medication will be able to continue to do so as they usually do in school. If sun cream or insect spray is required, the children will be encouraged to apply it themselves while being observed by an adult. Information on specific children and their medication (if necessary) will be available in the adult forest school shed, but class teachers must make forest staff aware of any medical information before carrying out Forest School with the children.

## Fire safety procedure

be fearless in  
the pursuit of  
what sets your  
soul on fire.

Fire is hugely powerful and often creates a calming atmosphere that encourages people to self reflect. Fire can ignite a rich sense of awe through it's power and beauty. Fire is mesmerizing and can fascinate people for hours, stimulating the senses through it's vibrant colours, unique smell, warm glow, and atmospheric crackling sounds

### Fire preparation

The fire will always be lit in a safe place. This safe place has already been prepared in the centre of the storytelling circle. The fire will be lit in a fire pit and always positioned in the centre of the circle away from low canopy branches.

check the floor in the fire circle to ensure there are no tripping hazards (pull up any weeds etc).

children must all understand and agree to follow the fire rules before being a part of the experience.

The seats are at least 1.5 metres from the fire pit with regular exit paths at regular intervals between log seats. The seats must be stable and sturdy.

The children must always walk around the outside of the fire circle.

A fire blanket must be hung close by the fire pit along with the fire emergency kit.

## Fire lighting

A Forest School leader or assistant must light the fire, and be at the fire at all times.

Do not throw anything onto the fire.

Sitting in the line of smoke must be avoided. A way to deal with smoke can be given to the children if required. They can be advised to turn their head to one side, put their hand across the face, closing their eyes and counting to 30.

children must only go towards the fire pit (such as for cooking) under the direction of the Forest School leader or assistant. When at the fire pit, children must be kneeling to avoid tripping into the fire.

children must be reminded about waving sticks (skewers), and also hot food and drink.

Fires must be lit using matches, fire flint, or fire steels.

Sticks and wood (no plastic) must be placed onto the fire from the side and not over the flame.

## Fire extinguishing

All fires must be distinguished at the end of a session.

Water must always be available to extinguish the fire.


There must be no smoke or steam left.

Large remains of wood must be separated.

Preferably, the fire should be put out once the fire has burned down to ash. When extinguishing the fire, the Forest School leader or assistant will use the container of water (part of the fire kit) to gradually pour water onto the fire, controlling the smoke levels by letting it burn down before adding some more water. Using a long stick the ash/water can be stirred to ensure all of the fire is put out. Children must still be reminded that the fire pit and the ash is very hot and the fire rules still apply. Once the water and ash are cool and there is no smoke or steam left, the ash and water can be removed from the fire pit. Once the fire pit has cooled down, it must be wrapped back up in the tarpaulin, and all of the fire safety equipment must be put away in the 'adult shed'.

## Fire safety tips

Object	used for	Safety tips
<p>Fire pit</p> 	<p>Holding the fire itself, keeping it in one place and stopping it from spreading.</p>	<p>Do not touch it.</p> <p>Always sit on a sturdy log around the fire circle at least 1.5 metres away from the pit.</p> <p>Only go towards it under the permission of the Forest School leader or assistant.</p> <p>Always kneel around the fire pit.</p> <p>Tie back loose hair/ tuck in scarf and jewellery.</p>
<p>Grill</p> 	<p>To provide a surface to cook foods or boil kettle.</p>	<p>Do not touch it.</p> <p>Only go towards it under the permission of the Forest School leader or assistant.</p> <p>Always kneel around the fire pit.</p> <p>Always use cooking utensils to move the food on the grill.</p>
<p>campfire kettle</p> 	<p>To boil water for hot drinks and cooking.</p>	<p>A child must not touch it.</p> <p>Adults must only pick up by holding the handle.</p> <p>Be careful that it is not too full (as water could bubble out of the spout).</p> <p>Be careful of the steam coming out on the spout.</p> <p>Do not put anything or lean over it.</p> <p>Remind children that it contains boiling water.</p> <p>When pouring, place the cup on the ground or sturdy log, and pour away from the child (never pour into a cup that a child is holding)</p>

<p>Skewers</p> 	<p>To push food onto to cook over the fire.</p>	<p>Do not wave around.</p> <p>Remind children that the end is sharp and pointed.</p> <p>Ensure there is plenty of handle space to hold the food over the fire, put it down and pick it up.</p>
<p>Pans</p> 	<p>To cook food.</p>	<p>Do not touch the pans.</p> <p>only adults are to touch the handles.</p> <p>children must only stir or serve using utensils under the instruction of a Forest School leader or assistant, wearing fire glove.</p>
<p>Hot food and drink</p> 	<p>To enjoy! (and taste new things)</p>	<p>Remind children that food and drink cooked on the fire is boiling hot and they must be sensible in waiting for it to cool down before eating and drinking. Adults are to help advise the children on suitable times to begin eating and drinking.</p> <p>Prior to Forest School session, pre-cooked and other food is to be stored in the fridge or freezer in the staff room if necessary (if it wont fit, seek permission to store in the kitchens). It must be kept in a plastic tub with a lid until use.</p> <p>A clean chopping board from the cookery box can be taken outside and used for a clean surface if needed to prepare food . Hands must be washed.</p>

### cancellation procedure

It is ultimately up to the headteacher, Jo Davenport, to decide if a Forest School session should be cancelled. This decision can be advised by the Forest School leader. If the headteacher is absent it is then the responsibility of the deputy headteacher, Becky Burt. If Forest School is cancelled, it is the responsibility of the headteacher or the deputy headteacher to make prior arrangements for the session.

circumstances where Forest School at South Wootton Infant would have to be cancelled:

If no Forest School leader is present. In this case, outdoor learning sessions could still happen in the forest area, but Forest School related activities must not take place.

If only 1 member of staff is available to run the session.

In extreme weather conditions (such as strong winds 42mph or above).

## Tool policy

Using 'real tools' enables children to learn a life skill alongside developing physically, achieving ambitious goals, and developing self-confidence. Trusting children with powerful tools is empowering for children and enables them to feel like their potential is limitless.

### General rules to be followed when using tools

Tools must only be taken by a child under the permission of a Forest School leader or assistant. Children will always have adult supervision when collecting, transporting and using tools. Tools will be monitored and counted in and out using the chalk tool count on the tool shelf in the adult Forest School shed. The adult Forest School shed is to be locked at all times, including during a Forest School session, unless an adult is using the shed to gain access to something. Children will lose permission to use tools if they do not follow the forest rules.





- Hand tools are to be maintained kept in good order by the Forest School Leader and assistant.
- The Forest School leader or assistant will inspect the tools before use to ensure safety and that the tools are in 'good working order'. It is worth modelling this to the children for educational purposes.
- Children and adults will be taught how to handle tools properly and to treat them with respect.
- Whilst using tools the staff to child ratio is dependent on the tool in use and the child/children using the tool. The ratios will vary from 1:1 to 1:3.
- Tools will be kept in the 'adult Forest School shed' and only removed by the Forest School team.
- No running or pointing with tools.
- The blade guards must be on all tools when not in use (hand saw, bow saw, knife sheaf). Forest School staff must be the ones to remove and put back on the tools.

- children must never touch the blades.
- PPE is available when needed.
- Nothing can be 'dangling' when using tools. It is the responsibility of the Forest School leader or assistant to ensure that long hair is tied back, and suitable clothing is worn (no scarves dangling). No gloves to be worn when using tools.
- When working with tools, children must only do so in the roped off 'tool safety zone'. Children must be aware of this working space, along with being aware of what a 'blood bubble' is (sufficient space around the tool/tool user).
- children understand that when they hear 'tools down' they must safely put down their tools.

### Tool use

The Forest School leader and/or assistant will decide if the age group/ individual child is ready for using each individual tool, and if it is the correct tool for the job at hand.

Tool	Best used for	Safety tips
knife 	Whittling wood, cutting cord.	The Forest School leader or assistant will demonstrate safe use with children and adults on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. Starting with the 3 point safety stance or safe seated position and checking there is a safe distance from others around the tool user ('blood bubble'). The Forest School leader demonstrates the scraping technique away from themselves. The other hand manipulates the stick above the whittling area, keeping the knife work safely away from the body. The adult will closely supervise the child behind their non dominant hand whilst using the tool.
Gimlet 	For making small holes.	The Forest School leader or assistant will demonstrate safe use with children and adults on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool, demonstrating the technique on an appropriate wooden block to show how to hold the tool safely, keeping vertical, and how to support the wood securely.

<p>Bow saw</p> 	<p>For cutting green wood such as tree branches and shrubs, or sawing logs to size. They are better for speed as apposed to a neat finish. These require less physical strength than the folding saw, so a better saw to begin learning with.</p>	<p>The Forest School leader or assistant will demonstrate safe use with children and adults on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. Starting with the safe standing stance, brace the wood securely, and checking the 'blood bubble', the Forest School leader/assistant will demonstrate the sawing technique with the blade cover on first, showing the children how to hold the tool safely in the knuckle grip and how to keep the other hand safe from the blade. If this is tricky, it may be suggested that the child holds the saw with both hands securely and safely and another adult/child to help support the wood at a safe distance. Depending on age and ability, the leader may take the opposite end of the bow saw to assist the child with the sawing motion, taking it in turns to push-pull, this could also progress to two children working together. It is useful to do several cuts in one direction before sawing. When sawing wood, hands must be kept away from the blade and the wood must be braced securely.</p>
<p>Folding saw</p> 	<p>For cutting branches and small logs. They can get into more difficult spots (that perhaps the bow saw cannot).</p>	<p>The Forest School leader or assistant will demonstrate safe use with children and adults on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. Starting with the safe standing stance, brace the wood securely, and checking the 'blood bubble', the Forest School leader/assistant will demonstrate how to hold the tool safely in the knuckle grip and how to keep the other hand safe from the blade. It is useful to do several cuts in one direction before sawing. When sawing wood, hands must be kept away from the blade and the wood must be braced securely.</p>
<p>Hand drill</p> 	<p>For drilling holes into wood. This requires more gross motor downward pressure as apposed to fine motor wrist twisting (like the gimlets) therefore, a good first step for hole making.</p>	<p>The Forest School leader or assistant will demonstrate safe use with children and adults on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. The Forest School leader will demonstrate the drilling technique on an appropriate, braced, wood block, showing how to hold the tool safely with both hands, keeping vertical, and pressing down while turning the handle.</p>

<p>Mallet</p> 	<p>For bashing, den building, wedging.</p>	<p>The Forest School leader or assistant will demonstrate safe use with children and adults on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. Standing or kneeling in a sturdy position, use the mallet to bash the job at hand, ensuring the other hand is either on the mallet or in a safe position. Hit the mallet away from your body, and ensure you are at a safe working distance from others.</p>
<p>Vegetable peeler</p> 	<p>To peel vegetables. <i>Please note: Do not use for peeling anything other than vegetables.</i></p>	<p>The Forest School leader or assistant will demonstrate safe use with children and adults on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool, demonstrating a safe seated position and the scraping action away from the body using the dominant hand. The other hand to be placed at a safe distance from the peeling.</p>
<p>Loppers</p> 	<p>For pruning and cutting smaller branches with less effort.</p>	<p>The Forest School leader or assistant will demonstrate safe use with children and adults on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. Check around for a 'blood bubble' of space around the tool user. Ensure that only the task at hand is in the way of the lopper blades. Where possible, the blades should be held upwards to create a 'crocodile's smile' (the curved blade under the straight blade). With one hand on each of the orange handles, carefully push the handles together to cut. Always hold the loppers closed and facing down when not in use.</p>

## Food hygiene and campfire cooking policy

All participants on activities will be encouraged to wash their hands with water and soap, which will be provided, before eating or cooking food.

chopping and preparing food must be on a clean surface (preferably bring out a clean chopping board).

All food waste must be disposed of to avoid rodents.

Food that must be kept refrigerated or frozen, or pre-cooked food must be kept in a plastic tub with a lid indoors and brought out just before the session. If it will not fit in fridge/freezer in staff room seek permission from the booking staff to keep in the school kitchens.

## Toileting procedure

Before a Forest School session, children will be given the opportunity to go to the toilet. Due to the close proximity of the school to the forest area during a Forest School session, children needing the toilet will be able to independently take themselves to their usual year group toilets (as the picture below shows), after informing a staff member that they need to go. Depending on their ability a child may go to the toilet independently, with another child, or with a member of staff.



## clothing

“There is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing”.

children at South Wootton infant will participate in Forest School sessions in almost all weathers, to enjoy the forest throughout the four seasons. Before entering the forest, children will be dressed appropriately for the weather. children will be asked to bring a weatherproof coat, and appropriate shoes (wellies, boots or old trainers) from home. School will also have a supply of waterproof trousers, waterproof coats, and spare appropriate shoes to ensure as best as possible that no children are left out.

If the children are getting cold, adults can initiate an active game to play, sit by a fire or share a shelter to help warm up. In rare cases if this is not appropriate for the child, they can return to the classroom supervised by an adult. Parents will be informed and reminded to send their children with additional layers if the weather is forecast to be particularly extreme. If the weather is due to be hot, it will be advised that children are still dressed in long sleeves and trousers, but bring a hat/sun cream to protect them from the sun.

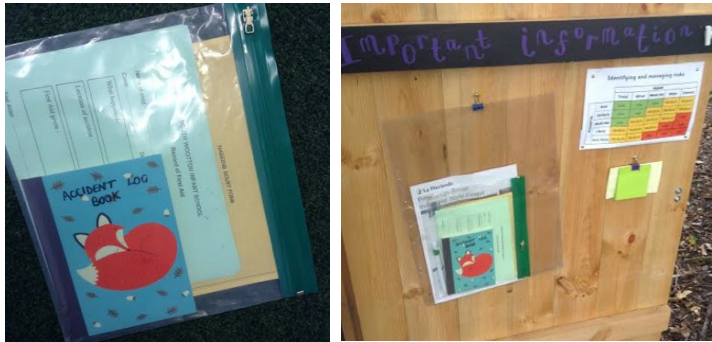
### **Drinking water**

We are running Forest School on the school site and the children are asked to bring a bottle of water daily. In the summer term the children will be encouraged to bring it to their Forest School session and leave in a designated area. During Autumn and Spring it is up to the children if they bring their bottled water, but the children will be allowed access to go and get it at all times if they want to (School such close proximity). Following the policy in school, children will be able to drink their water as frequently as they like. If a child has no water left they will be able to gain permission to go back into school to re-fill, and any child without a bottle of water can use the water fountains in school providing they inform an adult. They will be able to access the school the same way as they can for toileting. Drinking water in some cases may also be already available in the forest depending on the activities.

## **child protection and Equality**

### **Safeguarding procedure**

At South Wootton Infant School our safeguarding lead is the headteacher, Miss Davenport, and in her absence the deputy headteacher, Mrs Burt. It is our responsibility as teaching staff and as adults to promptly report any concerns to the safeguarding lead, just as we do within school. All teaching staff will have had safeguarding training, and know the process to report any concerns. It is the responsibility of the Forest School leader to make volunteers aware of the appropriate way to record any safeguarding concerns. This can be done either through a 'nagging doubt' yellow form to report concerns (kept in the 'adult forest school shed' as shown in the photo below), or through a child protection form (found in the class teacher packs) for a serious disclosure.



Dates, times, and a context must always be recorded and signed by the adult. No leading questions can be asked and adults must not promise to keep anything a secret. Ensure that any notes that are made are disposed of by shredding them after writing them up onto the form. It is important that any notes are accurate. It is not the responsibility of school staff to investigate welfare concerns (such as by asking further questions to the child), or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. For more information, please see the 'Safeguarding policy' on the school website.

### confidentiality procedure

An electronic register will be taken in the classroom before entering the forest area. The Forest School Leader and/or assistant will record the number of children present for that Forest School session before going to the forest area. Any confidential documents, such as medical information, will be locked in the 'adult forest shed'. It is not necessary to keep all information on the children in the forest area, as the school is of such close proximity and is accessible if required.

### Missing child procedure

Although unlikely as our forest area is on the school site, missing children must be reported to the front office by sending a sensible child, or having 'tools down' to spare an adult. Adults and children must communicate where they are (eg if a child goes to the toilet, or to get some water), to avoid any unnecessary worry. Regular head counts can also occur to monitor the children, including one at the end of the session when the children gather around the fire circle. In exceptional circumstances, if a child decides to leave the forest area and run, an adult must go straight to the front gate to ensure they remain safe on the school site, while the front office is informed.

### Equal opportunities and inclusion in Forest School

We promote the individuality of all children and adults at South Wootton Infant, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. We want everybody to feel empowered and equally valued. Wherever possible activities can be adapted to include everyone and provide no barriers to

learning. Information on children's additional needs can be gathered prior to the session, as well as the Forest School leader having additional ideas to differentiate activities is required.

### **Behaviour and anti-bullying policy**

During the first Forest School session, the children will discuss and agree on their 'forest rules' regarding respect, supporting one another, and behaviour. We will approach the subject of 'bullying' and discuss it positively through the importance of kindness, helping one another, and sharing. The children will be reminded of these rules and agree to follow them at the beginning of each Forest School session. We want everyone to feel safe, happy, and comfortable. Any behaviours that jeopardise the health, safety and well-being of others will be recorded by the Forest School leader, reported to the headteacher, and re-considered for joining in with Forest School.

During September 2017 staff have all had 'Step on' positive handling training. In exceptional and appropriate circumstances to protect the safety and wellbeing of children, those who have undertaken the training are allowed to follow the strategies learned.

### **Use of photographs**

Each child on entry will have submitted a school permission form regarding photo consent. This must be checked to ensure that we have photo permission for the children, and whether or not we have consent to share photos of the children on the school website or instagram page. Photos must only be taken on the school iPads.

### **Parental consent and agreement**

Parents will be given information all about Forest School to help gain interest, excitement, and promote the Forest School ethos. This form will be attached to the annual school consent form which will include Forest School and instagram permission. The information form will include examples of the activities that may be included in their Forest School programme, so that there are no surprises to parents. The Forest School instagram page: [swis\\_forestschooll](#) will be regularly updated to help engage parents and promote the benefits of Forest School throughout the year. An example of the parent information form that each parent must receive is displayed below:



South Wootton  
Infant School



Forest School  
Training



Eco-Schools

As part of an exciting new teaching approach, both Miss Riddington and Mrs Martin have been on the 'Forest School' training, enabling them to run a Forest School programme in our forest area for every child across the school at different stages throughout the year.

Our activities and Forest School sessions will depend on the interests, ability and experience of individuals. Examples of Forest School activities include:

- Exploring the natural environment through their sense of 'awe and wonder'.
- Developing a relationship with the environment where children wish to learn how to nurture and manage the natural environment.
- Building dens and other structures to enrich their games and imaginative play.
- Fires and cooking.
- Natural crafts.
- Using tools, such as knives and saws.
- Scavenger hunts and adventure.
- Team games.
- Den and shelter building.
- Seasonal activities.
- Storytelling, using the natural world to enable stories to come to life.






Forest School is a unique and inspirational learning process where children can develop their self-worth, while enriching all areas of their learning in a real-life context. It is a process that children at South Wootton Infant School are privileged to be a part of, where they use the natural environment to deepen their learning and take the time they need to reflect and be inspired. It is a hands-on learning experience, personalised for each child and motivated by their interests and passions. At South Wootton Infant we believe that developing emotional intelligence, self-esteem and social skills are the key foundations that a person needs (the roots of our learning tree), and time is taken to develop these. During Forest School, children will be motivated and feel empowered to achieve tasks and activities that challenge their individual aspirations, with limitless academic achievements in ways that they learn best. In Forest School at South Wootton Infant, children will develop an understanding and connection with the natural world, work with tools, play, explore, and learn the boundaries of behaviour by managing risks.

Forest School is an approach that will enhance the creative, enquiry based teaching that already happens in the classroom. It is another approach to help make our school a fun, memorable, and enjoyable place, with happy and successful life-long learners.

We will be outdoors in almost all weathers, so please ensure that your child has a warm waterproof coat, gloves, and old trainers or wellies to wear so they are dressed suitably.



To join us on our amazing journey, please follow  
Instagram: [SWIS\\_forestschool](#)





...and find more information on our school website:  
[www.southwootton-inf.norfolk.sch.uk](http://www.southwootton-inf.norfolk.sch.uk)

If you do not want your child to join in with Forest School, or do not give consent for photos of your child to go on the Forest School Instagram account, please indicate on the annual permission form.

For more information please see Miss Riddington or Mrs Martin.



## Daily operating procedure

### Before the session

check enough adults are present and the weather is suitable.

Do a daily risk assessment of the forest area and read the relevant activity specific risk assessments..

check the planning and inform adults.

Gather and set up any activity based resources (including water/soap for hand washing, water to extinguish fire...etc).

Register class in their classroom. Write down number of children present and remind yourself of any medical requirements to be aware of.

Ensure children have all been to the toilet.

Get dressed in appropriate clothing (coats, waterproof trousers, gloves, wellies or trainers, suncream, hats...etc) and gather water bottles to take if necessary (always take them in summer term, and if the children wish to take it at any other time they can- children are allowed to go inside to have a drink at any time during the session providing they inform an adult as the school is such close proximity).

### Beginning

walk to the forest area and re-cap the forest rules/promise to follow the rules..

Gather around the fire circle for the session stimulus (a letter, a gift...etc) and discuss ideas.

### Middle

child's choice.

FS Leader and assistant to model FS activities for children to choose from (risks will be continually assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce or remove any risks found) while the class TA plays with the children and gets photos/observations for their Tapestry account.

### End

Tidy up the forest area, making sure everything goes back tidily into the sheds where it belongs (FS leader or assistant to check all tools have been returned safely).

Gather around the fire circle for a story or circle time. Do a headcount to check everybody is present.

Thank the fairies/forest for a wonderful time.

walk back to class and get changed ready for home time.

### After the session

Share any photos of the FS instagram account.

Get class TA to send any photos to Forest School leader. Leader to post on Tapestry about their session to inform parents/ their class teacher.

check for/dispose of or recycle any rubbish.

clean tools and make sure the sheds are tidy, organised, and topped up (eg first aid kits, green forms etc...)

FS leader and assistant to evaluate the session and discuss plans for the next session based on the children's interests and progression.