



# Forest School

Handbook  
of  
Health & Safety  
Policies & Procedures

(updated 10 April 2023)

To be read by all adult leaders, staff members,  
volunteers and visitors of Gardens Montessori Forest  
School sessions

## 1. FOREST SCHOOL SITE INFORMATION

Gardens Montessori Forest School is a natural wilderness area behind Christ Church Kensington. Access to the site is via an unlocked moveable wooden fence behind the nursery garden of Victoria Road Montessori.

Our Forest School area:

- is leased to us
- is used by Victoria Road Montessori nursery on Mondays (mornings), and by Iverna Gardens Montessori nursery on Tuesday (mornings)
- has no access for vehicles;
- has a designated fire pit area and the rules regarding this have been explained to the children.

### **Address:**

**Gardens Montessori Forest School  
Christ Church Kensington  
Victoria Road  
Postcode W8 5RQ**

### **Emergency Contact Numbers**

**Ambulance/Fire Brigade: 999  
School Office: 07939874086  
Forest School Leader Mobile 07939874339**

## 2. FOREST SCHOOL ETHOS

### 2.1. What is Forest School?

Forest School is an inspirational process that offers all learners regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees (Forest School Association)

The Forest School approach to learning can be summarised as one, which puts the child at the centre of their own learning. It is the child who makes the decisions about which activities to participate in, how to approach and solve problems, what their strengths are and what they want to learn next. All of this is achieved in our richest of classrooms – the outdoors.

Children are given room to have real life experiences. They are encouraged to make mistakes; direct their own learning and take risks. All of these factors culminate in producing children who have increased confidence levels, developed independence, raised self- esteem, great communication skills, resilience and high levels of motivation

The Forest School ethos has 6 principles, which were agreed by the UK Forest School Community in 2011.

- Forest School is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions and aims for children to visit in blocks of six to eight weeks each time. Planning, adaptation, observations and reviewing are all integral parts of the Forest School process.
- Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural wooded environment
  - we have been offered the natural wilderness area behind Christ Church Kensington to be used by both Gardens Montessori nurseries: Victoria Road Montessori nursery and Iverna Gardens Montessori nursery
- Forest School promotes the holistic development of all children involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.
- Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and themselves.

- Forest School provides a range of children centred processes to create a community for development and learning that is responsive to needs and interests of the children.
- The Forest School Principles and other information can be located at: <http://www.forestschoollassociation.org/full-principles-and-criteria-for-good-practice/>

## 2.2. Forest School Activities

Our activities will depend on the ability and experience of participants. Examples of Forest School activities include:

- Nature exploration
- Building dens and other structures
- Fires and cooking
- Climbing and balancing over logs and tyres
- Games and invitations for imaginative play
- Natural crafts
- Using tools, such as spades, penknives, bow saw, billhook
- Treasure/bug hunts and adventure
- Creating animal habitats (ie bug hotel, tree house, wormery etc)
- Learning about composting
- Seasonal celebrations

## 3. FOREST SCHOOL RULES/CODE OF CONDUCT:

***“No pick,  
No lick!  
Be careful when you hold a stick!”***

- **Do not pick anything growing (ie. flowers, plants, leaves)**
- **Do not put your finger or anything else in your mouth**
- **Use and carry sticks and logs carefully!**
- **Stay within the boundaries set**
- **No running and no throwing of any objects**
- **Use tools safely ('blood bubble')**

- **Do not walk through the fire circle**
- **Return to base camp when an adult shouts: “1, 2, 3 basecamp”**
- **Be kind to all plants, animals and trees, to yourself and to each other**
- **Look after the Forest School and leave it as you found it**
- **What you find in Forest School, stays in Forest School**  
*‘Take only photos, leave only footprints!’*

## 4. FOREST SCHOOL SESSION ROUTINES & PROCEDURES

### Procedures before each session:

- Forest School leader does a safety sweep of the site before each session to check for any litter, glass, animal faeces etc. Any such items shall be collected using plastic bags and disposable gloves.
- Boundary walls, fences, gates and hedges are checked to ensure that they are secure and safe.
- Trees are checked for any broken or dead branches, which may fall.
- Bushes are checked for any dead twigs, etc. protruding at eye-level.
- Weather conditions are checked. If they fall outside the limits specified in Section 6, then the session is cancelled
- First aid kit and equipment kit will be checked (see First Aid Content list)
- A written record is kept of each sweep. This shall state if any hazards were found and how they were dealt with (see Safety Sweep Evidence Form).
- Full risk assessments to be completed by Forest School leader termly to take into consideration any seasonal changes that may cause issue (see Risk Assessment for the Forest School site)
- All adults involved must have read through handbook and signed they have done so (see Forest School Agreement for accompanying adult)

### Session Plan:

- Go to the toilet
- Put on outdoor clothes and wellies (see clothing requirements)
- Children line up, are counted, and follow FSL to the nursery garden with the helper at the rear.

- Count children again in the garden before entering the Forest School site (ie sticky elbow song)
- Walk to base camp and sit down
- Good Morning/Afternoon song
- Listening activity
- Greeting the soft toy owl and her babies
- Recap on rules, boundaries and expectations and discuss any safety issues of the day
- Introduce activity/remind of previous activities, identify resources and session focus
- Children choose activities (more directed in early sessions)
- Adults to spread out along the boundaries, observe, interact
- '1, 2, 3, base camp'
- Count children and adults and ensure that all are accounted for
- Helper offers fruit snack to the children (ensure wet wipes/water bucket and towel for cleaning hands first)
- FSL prepares fire in fire kettle and recaps on fire rules
- FSL roasts marshmallows/brioches on sticks while the water in the kettle is heating up
- When the water is boiling, FSL removes the kettle from its base, put to the side inside the fire square
- Helper takes tray with cups from the wall and places it on the floor next to fire square
- Helper holds up each cup while FSL pours the hot water from the kettle (lip to lip) inside (1/3 full)
- FSL pours remaining water over the fire to ensure the fire is completely extinguished and places the kettle at a safe place (behind her seating log/back wall)
- Discuss session and allow children to choose to feedback what they have been doing, anything interesting they have observed/found, one at a time around the circle
- Story/songs(optional)
- Saying goodbye to the owl (goodbye song)
- Dismissal from the Forest School gate in the nursery garden area, one child at a time is called, ticked off at the register and handed over to his/her parent/carer.

### Procedures at the end of each session:

- Clear everything away and ensure Forest School area is tidy
- If a fire was lit, ensure it is completely extinguished

- Count all the tools back into the storage bags and boxes
- Collect resources back in containers
- Rinse pots, tools and any equipment that got dirty/muddy (use outdoor tap)
- Bring cups and snack tray/plate inside the nursery to be cleaned
- Collect/discuss any observations from the adults

## 5. FOREST SCHOOL TRAVEL POLICY

There are no travel arrangements involved as the Forest School area is situated just behind the nursery garden.

## 6. CANCELLATION PROCEDURE

Forest School is an outdoor 'classroom'; and as such, weather can be the most influential element in what and how things happen. Gardens Montessori Forest School will not take place if there are strong winds (wind speed above 42mph) or thunder and lightening (risk of an electrical storm) or extremes in temperature. Parents/carers will be advised of the cancellation through their nursery teacher when they drop off their child as well as via a notice on the display board outside the nursery. The session will take place indoors. Staff will be advised when they arrive at school. Volunteers will be advised by a telephone call.

## 7. TOILETING CONSIDERATIONS FOR FOREST SCHOOL

Children are encouraged to use the toilet before leaving the setting. If a child needs to go to the toilet during the Forest School session one member of staff will take the child back to the nursery. After toileting the child/staff must wash their hands.

## 8. FOOD HYGIENE & EATING

- All participants on activities will be encouraged to wash their hands with water and soap, which will be provided, before eating food (fruit)

## 9. FOREST SCHOOL ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

### Forest School Leader Responsibilities:

- Wear appropriate clothing (positive role modelling)
- Fulfil the role of the responsible person for Health & Safety, keeping the children safe
- Duties include: check weather conditions before each session, maintenance of all stock and equipment, risk assessments of the site, tools and environmental impact, safety sweeps, records of safety sweeps



and dealing with any issues that may arise from the safety sweep/risk assessments

- Provide appropriate Forest School activities, according to the age, stage of development and interest of the children, keeping in mind seasons and weather
- Brief/induct any other adults participating in forest School at any given time

### Support Staff Responsibilities:

- Wear appropriate clothing (positive role modelling)
- Comply with the contents of the Forest School Handbook
- Assist the Forest School Leader in keeping the children safe
- Assist the Forest School leader in any Forest School activities as directed, according to the activity, season and weather
- Help to prepare snacks and drinks, support in toileting and tidying
- To ask open-ended questions and follow children's lead rather than directing them to activities/telling them what to do.
- Provide observations and/or take photographs (on school camera).

### Parent/Helper/Volunteer Responsibilities:

- Wear appropriate clothing (positive role modelling)
- Comply with the contents of the Forest School Handbook
- Sign the Forest School Agreement for volunteers, Confidentiality and Medical form
- Assist the Forest School Leader and other staff in keeping the children safe
- Assist with carrying resources to and from the site.
- Assist in observing the children and recording those observations appropriately
- Ask open ended questions and follow the children's lead rather than directing them to activities/telling them what to do
- Give any feedback and suggestions (see Feedback Form)

## **10. DESIGNATED PERSON (FSL)**

Ms Pascal Rochefeuille is the designated person who will take responsibility for each Forest School session. Although the Forest School leader has overall duty of care for the children in Forest School all adults present are required to take

reasonable steps to ensure that all children are safe. The Forest School leader has a Paediatric First Aid qualification and will be responsible for taking the appropriate First Aid equipment and medication to every session. The Forest School leader will always carry a mobile phone and know what to do in case of an emergency. The Forest School leader will carry out a safety sweep of the site before each session. The Forest School leader is responsible for showing the children how to use tools safely and appropriately.

## 11. EVALUATION PROCEDURE

At the end of each Forest School session the Forest School leader will evaluate the session.

This will include

- reflecting on the session, what the interests of the children were and if there were any changes needed.
- From this information the Forest School leader will be able to plan the following week's activities from the children interests ensuring the Forest School ethos
- taking into consideration any feedback from other practitioners and parents/carers/helpers

## 12. FOREST SCHOOL CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS LIST (for everyone)

Gardens Montessori believes: *'There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing'*

To ensure that the children are sufficiently protected from the weather and the forest environment we require children to be wearing appropriate clothing and footwear.

### Cold weather clothing:

- Waterproof trousers
- Waterproof jacket with a hood
- Fleece/sweatshirt
- Warm waterproof boots or padded wellies
- Warm socks and spare socks
- Gloves
- Woolly hat
- Spare set of clothes and carrier bag for dirty/wet clothes

### Warm weather clothing:

- Full length waterproof trousers
- Light weight waterproof jacket with a hood
- Long sleeved tops
- Wellies
- Sun hat
- Spare set of clothes and carrier bag for dirty/wet clothes

### Spare clothing list:

- Socks
- Underwear/nappy
- Trousers/track suit bottoms
- Long sleeved top/jumper

## 13. ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT LIST

- Register with emergency contact numbers
- Medical forms for children and adults attending FS
- First Aid bag (see First Aid content list)
- Pamphlet on hypothermia and first aid
- Spare clothing (at setting)
- Tissues, wet wipes, gel
- Protective gloves/disposable gloves
- Carry bag for dirty/wet clothing/rubbish
- Mobile phone
- School camera
- Torches
- Whistles
- Newspaper and matches for lighting a fire
- Sun cream in summer
- Scissors
- Food/water (children's snack)
- Water bottle with water for drinking/washing/First Aid
- Medication and container for inhalers for staff and children
- Consent forms (to be filed at setting)

## 14. FIRST AID CONTENT LIST

First Aid items to be checked once a term and if used during Forest School sessions, items should be replenished immediately when back at the nursery.

- Disposable Gloves
- Bandages
- Plasters
- Burns gel
- Burn dressing
- Dressings
- Eye wash
- Sewing Kit
- Scissors
- Cotton wool
- Antiseptic wipes
- Medication for individual children
- Sterile water
- Cling film

## 15. HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Please refer to Gardens Montessori Health and Safety Policy.

These additional measures apply to Forest School:

- However many adults accompany Forest School sessions, the person in charge is always the trained Forest School leader. There should be at least one additional member of staff in the group (with other accompanying adults to the required ratio).
- The FSL has overall duty of care for the children in her charge, but all adults are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure the children are safe.
- The staff will carry the Emergency bag and at least 2 mobile phones
- In the event of an emergency there is a protocol – one copy is in the Emergency bag, the other copy is in the school office. The FSL will make a judgement as to whether to alert the emergency services, the parents or the school first; usually it would be the school so that they can make the phone calls while the FSL manages the situation and keeps the other children safe.

- In the case of needing to split the party, the FSL will remain with the casualty and other members of school staff will accompany the other children back to school. If necessary, staff will come from school to help accompany the main party back to school.
- The FSL (or other designated adult) will accompany the child to hospital and provide a full written report of the accident. School procedures will be followed and no one should speak to the media without the permission of the Head teacher.
- The FSL will ensure that the risk assessments are kept up to date and that the site is checked on the day of the session.
- When sharp or heavy tools are used there is always adult supervision. Gloves are worn when peelers, screws, saws or knives are used
- First aid certificates to be renewed every 3 years

## 16. FOREST SCHOOL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

### 16.1 Lost or missing child:

- If a child appears to be lost, one adult despatched to make immediate search of the vicinity while the other adults assemble the rest of the children and ensure they are safe.
- Information should be gathered as to when and where the child was last seen, and in whose company
- Two adults must stay with the children and any other adults can help in the search.
- If a brief search does not locate the child, call school office. School are to call parents/carer to inform them.
- The police should be informed by ringing 999 or 020 7376 1212 (ask for Kensington Police Station)
- After child is found, a full examination of all the surrounding circumstances must be carried out. All adults involved should be made aware of the reasons that led to the child being lost and procedures put in place to prevent a recurrence, including the adjustment of this policy
- The incident must be written up in the incident book

### 16.2 First aid incident (minor):

- Assemble the children, ensure the group is safe, delegating responsibility if possible
- If appropriate, remove the danger, or people from the danger
- FSL or qualified First Aider administers First Aid.
- If necessary, FSL calls for further assistance (emergency services, school, parents)
- Be ready to follow evacuation procedure if instructed to by Forest School leader
- Record full details and record in school incident book
- Follow up with parents

### 16.3 First aid incident (major):

- Follow First Aid procedure
- FSL stays with the casualty, but ensures that the rest of the group is removed from the situation and is safe. They should be with another member of staff.
- Contact the school and the emergency services. School to call parents/carers.
- Additional members of staff may be sent from school to help accompany the children back while the FSL and another additional adult stays with the casualty. The FSL (unless she delegates to another member of staff) will accompany the casualty to hospital and provide necessary information.
- Record full details and record in school incident book

### 16.4 Evacuation:

- Return to base camp
- Supervise assembled line of children as they leave forest school until they arrive safely back in the classroom
- In the event of a fire, the assembly point is on the pavement area on Victoria Road next to the school gates
- Follow instructions from FS leader

## **17. SAFETY ROUTINES & PROCEDURES FOR FS SESSIONS**

At the beginning of each term, the Forest School leader will identify hazards, record and take action upon the appropriate risk assessments for the Forest

School site (see Forest School Beginning of Term Risk Assessment of site). These will be updated and reviewed.

At the beginning of each session, the Forest School leader will carry out a safety sweep of the site (see Forest School Safety Sweep Evidence), in order to ensure the area is safe for the session to take place, and inform the other staff and children where awareness is needed.

The Forest School leader will ensure that there is always an emergency rucksack taken on site (see Essential Equipment list). This will be checked before each session. The bag will always be kept at the edge of the base camp area, where it will be accessible to all Forest School staff/helpers.

The Forest School leader will check the weather conditions. If the weather is particularly windy or a thunderstorm is due/or has started, then the Forest School leader would not allow the session to take place for Health and Safety reasons.

**In addition, the following procedures and documentation in relation to Forest School are in place:**

#### **Our Nursery Policies**

- Health & Safety
- Risk Assessment
- Safeguarding Children
- Lost child policy

**The legal framework for this guidance is:**

- Children Act 1989;
- Race Relations Act 1976;
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000;
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986;
  - Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

## **18. RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Gardens Montessori aims to develop children's self-esteem, independence and motivation to learn in a safe environment. In order that these aims can be met, the Forest School Leader will:

- Consistently apply the five-step approach to risk assessment for all Forest School activities:
  - Look for hazards.
  - Decide who may be harmed and how.
  - Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing controls are adequate or whether more should be done.
  - Record findings, including daily amendments to standing risk assessments based on site visits or observations.
  - Review assessments on a regular basis (or if circumstances change, which may affect the rigour of the assessment) and revise if necessary.

## 19. RISK ASSESSMENT FOR THE FOREST SCHOOL SITE

At the beginning of each term

Identified hazard	Risk/harm	People at risk	Control measures	Risk level (L/M/H)	Who will do it? When?
Slippery/muddy or uneven underfoot	Falls, Fracture, sprain, concussion, falling from a height	All	Advise all to wear appropriate outdoor footwear Advise all to walk carefully No climbing higher than head-height Advise all of slipperiness of logs	M	FSL – prior to visit, All on visit
Fence and gates	Escape of children	Children	Ensure fence and gate are secured in place, Ensure children understand boundaries, adult supervision	M	FSL – prior to visit, All on visit
Berried flora	Poisoning	Children	Inform all children not to pick or eat berries. Wash hands before eating/drinking	H	FSL – on visit
Mushrooms and fungi	Poisoning	All	Inform all children and adults to look only, no touching	H	All on visit
Litter/rubbish	Broken glass, cuts, drug use	All	Check and clear area, advise children not to pick up rubbish, advice adults if they find something to remove it safely	L	FSL – prior to visit, All on visit



			Gloves, disposable bags and wipes to be available		
Animal faeces	Contamination	All	Check and clear area, , remove and discard safely, advise all participants to wash hands before snack,	M	FSL – prior & on visit
Thorny plants	Stings, infected wounds, damage to clothing	All	Make all aware of thorny plants Advise to wear appropriate clothing	L	
Bees, wasps and other insects	Stings and bites leading to allergic responses, rashes and sickness	All	Be informed about any history of allergic responses, check area for nests, avoid contact, advise all to keep skin covered, first aider always on site, seek medical aid (999) if anaphylactic shock. See Emergency procedures	L/H	FSL – prior & on visit
Tools	Cuts, grazes	All	Tools securely stored away, used under strict FSL guidelines and supervision A separate, detailed risk assessment for tools available in handbook	H	FSL – prior to visit & on visit
Fire (in portable fire basket)	Burns, out of control	All	Trained staff present at all times, safety procedures followed, separate risk assessment available in the handbook	H	FSL – on site
Sticks	hitting	Children	Inform children of rules, use a stick no longer than your arm, no hitting. Demonstrate safe carrying of longer branches (child each end or drag)	M	FSL – on site

## 20. FOREST SCHOOL FIRE SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Fires and the use of storm kettles are an important part of Forest School and are used in many sessions. The Gardens Montessori Forest School aims to ensure that all children and adults participating in Forest School sessions with fires and/or storm kettles will do so safely and with as little risk to their health as possible. All our fires are contained – that is in form of a container (Kelly Kettle)

## Location:

- A designated area will be used for fires/storm (Kelly) kettles
- Fire area will be enclosed by fire square to prevent the spread of fire
- The storm (Kelly) kettle will only be used on a flat ground and any woodchip or leaf litter must be brushed away before use.

## Fire Safety rules:

- Fire area is surrounded by seating logs at least 1.5 metres from the storm (Kelly) kettle
- All participants will be given clear guidelines about how to behave when the fire/kettle is lit
- Once seated around the fire, children must remain seated until directed by an adult to move.
- Long sleeves and trousers must always be worn by all children and adults
- Children are not permitted to throw anything onto the fire
- If there is a clear wind direction, seating in the line of smoke is to be avoided.

## Safety and Responsibility:

- Fires will only be lit in the base/pan of the Kelly kettle
- Only adults are permitted to light the fire in the fire pan (usually the Forest School Leader)
- The Kelly kettle must be placed on flat, clear ground and the plug removed from the spout
- Fires are lit using newspaper, firelighters, dead wood and matches or a strike stick.
- A lit fire will be supervised by trained staff at all times, as will all cooking activities
- Related safety equipment, including heat proof gloves, a fire blanket, a burns kit and water will be kept within close range of fires
- No flammable liquids or plastics are to be burnt
- Kettles should only be removed from fire by an adult wearing fire safety gloves (hold each side of handle and lift off, take care not to put hand above chimney of kettle or over spout)
- If sessions involve children adding fuel to the fire, this must be done with 1: 1 adult supervision. Children must have been shown how to do so safely (stick held at the end and dropped inside the chimney from the side; hand should never be placed over the top of the kettle)

## Cooking

- If food/drinks are to be cooked/boiled at Forest School, the Forest School leader is responsible for ensuring that the food/drink has been transported, cooked and stored in a 'safe to eat' manner.

## Extinguishing fires

- The fire must be extinguished at the end of a session.
- Whenever possible, all fuels should be burnt off to ash, but if it doesn't, it must be doused down with water and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased.

## 20.1 Use of Storm (Kelly) Kettle Guidelines and Procedures



### Description:

The Kelly kettle comprises a double-skinned wall that holds water and a central open chimney. It sits on a small aluminium base with one large aperture as an air inlet within the base, which greatly increases the draw of the fire. Because the water is held within the kettle wall it means that a large surface area of water is exposed to the heat and therefore boils very quickly.

### Kelly Kettle Procedure

- Remove the plug from the kettle (the kettle may explode if allowed to boil with the plug still fitted).
- Fill the kettle with water and leave the kettle UNPLUGGED.
- Light a small fire in the base, using newspaper, cotton wool, fire lighters, kindling/sticks
- Put the kettle on top of the fire tray and light the fire with matches or a fire flint.
- Slowly feed the fire by dropping thin twigs inside the chimney from the side until the water is boiling (hand should never be placed over the top of the kettle)
- Lift kettle from fire holding both sides of the handle.
- Pour hot water into a cup by holding the handle in one hand and pulling on the plug, which is attached to the base with the other hand. Ensure lip of kettle and lip of cup are touching.
- Once the fire in the fire tray has died out and the tray has started to cool the ash and embers can be tipped out (use 2 sticks to help to tip).
- Pour water on the ash and embers and ensure that the fire is completely extinguished

## 21. GARDENS MONTESSORI FOREST SCHOOL FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

Site: Gardens Montessori Forest School, behind Christ Church, Victoria Road, W8 5RQ

Assessment date:

Assessed by: Valentina Luvara

### Activity:

- Building and lighting a small fire inside the base of the Kelly Kettle to boil water to prepare hot drinks (ie hot chocolate, tea, Ribena)
- Cooking of food over hot fire or ashes including heating, toasting on a stick (ie marshmallows, brioche, vegetables etc)

#### 1. Hazard: starting the fire (inside the Kelly kettle)

Risk: burns, scalds from the sparks of the fire

Risk level: low

Control actions: Ensure fire area is safe (square of logs, pegged into the ground, seating logs in safe distance away from fire etc). Establish rules of fire circle with the children (ie no walking/crossing/leaning over within the fire circle, no throwing anything onto the fire, children must remain seated on their logs, must wear long sleeves/trousers etc). Ensure children understand danger of fires and safe fire practice. Only trained staff allowed to use Kelly kettle and light the fire. Ensure kettle is stable and fit for use before each use. Place kettle on flat, clear ground inside the fire square. Fire will be lit when the kettle is on top of the base (no open fire – see kelly kettle guidelines). Ensure fuel is added down the chimney from the side and no part of the body is above the flame.

Water to extinguish the fire kept in vicinity. Fire gloves available near to the fire. First aid kit with appropriate resources available. The fire will be supervised by trained staff at all times. Children will be supervised by the fire at all times.

#### 2. Hazard: slips, trips, falls whilst fire alight

Risk: burns, scalds, injuries

Risk level: low/medium

Control actions: As above. Brief children, staff/helpers on safe standing, sitting, moving around distance from fire. Supervision of fire and children around the fire at all times

#### 3. Hazard: boiling water, hot drinks

Risk: burns and scalds

Risk level: high

Control actions: Only adults may lift the kettle when the water is hot. This should be done with two hands on both sides of the handle ensuring hands do not go directly above the chimney or spout. To pour the water,

the chain should be pulled to achieve the correct angle to allow the water to be poured slowly and accurately.

Boiling water only to be poured inside the fire circle, no hands, feet or body parts near to water or cups. Ensure all hot drinks given to children are cooled sufficiently with some cold water/milk.

4. Hazard: hot equipment / utensils and hot food  
Risk: burns and scalds  
Risk level: high  
Control actions: Brief children, staff/helpers on safe methods for handling and transporting all hot items. Provide implements/utensils for the removal of hot items from the fire. Forest school leader or representative to demonstrate safe practices.
5. Hazard: out of control fire  
Risk: burns, injuries  
Risk level: low  
Control actions: Ensure fire is of minimum required size and always contained within the Kelly kettle base/pan. Fires will not be lit in strong winds. No flammable liquids or plastics are to be used to light or accelerate fires. Ensure sufficient water is in place. Ensure fire is extinguished properly before leaving
6. Hazard: toxic fumes and explosions  
Risk: burns, scalds, minor injuries / illness  
Risk level: low  
Control actions: brief children, staff/helpers on safe practices – no unnatural items to be placed on or into the fire at any time. Forest school leader to advise on the environmental impact of burning unsuitable items – e.g. burning plastics

## 22. FOREST SCHOOL RISK MANAGEMENT OF TOOLS

### Hand Tool Safety Policy

We are committed to providing children with access to a wide range of equipment that stimulates enjoyment, learning and development. Using small hand tools is an important part of Forest School as it enables children to develop new, practical skills that help them develop self-confidence. To enable this, safety is carried out:

#### **General rules for using and storing tools:**

- Tools will be kept maintained and in good order by the Forest School Leader.
- Tools will be inspected by the Forest School Leader before each session
- Children and adults will be taught how to handle tools properly and to treat them with respect.
- Tools will be kept in a tool box/bag in the nursery shed and only removed by the Forest School team.
- Permission to use tools can only be given by the Forest School Leader
- Always make sure the tools are clean and sharp before using them
- Adult and child sized gloves will be available and are only to be used for the bracing hand. It is not advisable to use any hand tools with gloves on as it detaches the user from the tool.
- Running with tools is prohibited
- Pointing with tools is prohibited
- Children will lose permission to use tools if the guidelines are not followed.
- There is a designated tool area at the Forest school site, where to sit and use tools. This working area should have sufficient space (at least two arms and a tool away from anyone else) and be clear of trip hazards
- When tools are used the adult-child ratio is 1:1
- Tools will be counted at the beginning and end of each session

## 23. SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC TOOLS:

### Potato peeler:

- Must be with FSL (or other trained designated adult)
- Always sit down
- Make sure you are at least 1.5 arms' lengths from your nearest neighbour
- No glove needed on hand using tool, glove on other hand.
- Always move the peeler away from the body when it is in contact with the wood.
- Initial ratio should be 1:1 but as children demonstrate competence this can be increased to 1:4

### Penknife:

- Must be with the FSL
- Always sit down
- Ensure the penknife is closed and locked when not in use
- No glove needed on hand using tool, glove on other hand.
- Make sure you are at least 1.5 arms' lengths from your nearest neighbour
- Open the penknife away from you

- Always move the penknife away from the body when it is in contact with the wood.
- Initially the ratio should be 1:1 but as children demonstrate competence this can be increased to 1:2.

### Bow saw:

- FSL to carry to/from the site.
- Ensure blade guard is in place when not in use. Blade guards to be removed and put back only by Forest School staff.
- Must only be used with FSL
- Gloves to be worn on both hands (KS1)
- Children should kneel up securely on both knees and be in a stable position.
- FSL supports children to hold saw and to hold the wood. Explain what to do and why.
- Always maintain ratio of 1:1.

### Hand drill:

- Must be with the FSL (or other trained designated adult)
- Always sit down
- Wear gloves on both hands as the drill handle cogs can catch the skin and the bit can slip.
- Maintain ratio of 1:1, support the drill/wood to ensure that the drill does not slip.

### Spade:

- Ensure that the spade is in good working condition (handle well attached etc)
- If more than one spade is used, spades must be used in the digging area and supervised by the forest School Leader or an adult helper
- Talk with the children how to use the spade safely and replace it back when not in use.

## **24. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT:**

We aim to engender a high level of respect for the natural world and encourage everyone who is involved to make good decisions about their environment by operating in a way that minimises waste, optimises recycling and promotes the reuse of materials we hope to demonstrate and encourage a wider respect for the environment, as well as an understanding that all produce and waste is linked to the health of our planet as a whole.

Onsite we will follow practices that minimise the impact on flora and fauna through being mindful of what we are doing, show an awareness of disturbing habitats; assess what we are leaving behind and if we are causing any long-term damage.

Before leaving our site we will ensure that any litter is collected and disposed of suitably in order to adhere to our 'Take only photos, Leave only footprints' motto.



# Gardens Montessori Forest School Safety Sweep Evidence

<b>Name of Forest School leader:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Weather:</b>

<b>Checklist</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Fallen branches		
Low branches		
Protruding thorns		
Brambles/nettles		
Slippery areas		
Broken glass/needles		
Vandalism/intruders		
Weather effects		
Standing water		
Boundary line/fence		
Base camp		
Emergency ruck sack		
Equipment ready		
Spare clothes		

Other hazards identified:
Action taken:

## FOREST SCHOOL MEDICAL INFORMATION FORM - CHILD

Child's Full Name	
Date of Birth	
Emergency contact and relationship	
Home Address	
Phone Numbers	Home Work Mobile
Doctor	Name Address Phone

### Has your child had any of the following?

<b>Illness</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Medication needed Please specify</b>
Asthma/Bronchitis		
Sight/hearing difficulties		
Heart condition		
Diabetes		
Epilepsy		
Allergies: e.g. pollen, nuts, materials		
Has your child ever been stung by a wasp or bee? If yes, describe the reaction		
Immunisation for Tetanus If yes, what date?		

**Signed:**

**Date**

## FOREST SCHOOL MEDICAL INFORMATION FORM – ADULT

Adult's Full Name	
Date of Birth	
Emergency contact:	Name: Relationship: Phone Number:
Home Address	
Phone Numbers	Home: Mobile:
Doctor	Name Address Phone

### Have you had any of the following?

<b>Illness</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Medication needed Please specify</b>
Asthma/Bronchitis		
Sight/hearing difficulties		
Heart condition		
Diabetes		
Epilepsy		
Allergies: e.g. pollen, nuts, materials		
Have you ever been stung by a wasp or bee? If yes, describe the reaction		
Immunisation for Tetanus If yes, what date?		

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**FOREST SCHOOL AGREEMENT FOR  
VOLUNTEERS/HELPERS/  
PARENTS/STAFF/STUDENTS & ANY ACCOMPANYING  
ADULT**

This agreement states that you are familiar with relevant policies and risk assessments and you have read the Gardens Montessori Nursery Forest School handbook.

Volunteer's/helper's/parent's/student's name:

Date:

Signature:

## FOREST SCHOOL CONFIDENTIALITY FORM

Parents, staff, students and volunteers to respect all matters of the school's Confidentiality policy when participating during the Forest School sessions.

The aim is to foster an ethos of trust in Forest School and respond in a professional manner when engaging with the children. It is important to respect children's voices and for them to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received. All information is to be disseminated to the Forest School Leader.

**Full name of adult:**

**I will respect all matters of the school's Confidentiality Policy when participating during Forest School sessions.**

**Date:**

**Signature:**