



Forest School Handbook



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Responsible Person Signature Page

Name	Signature	Date
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Kelly Hidalgo Forest School Leader		

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(Handbook will be updated as is necessary during academic year)



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The Philosophy of Forest School

“The best classroom and the richest cupboard is roofed only by the sky”

The Forest School approach 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 they need to reflect on, 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 think ‘outside of the box’; 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.

Education should be all about experiences because that is when learning is optimised. Benjamin Franklin could not have phrased it better when he said:

“Tell me and I forget,
Teach me and I may remember,
Involve me and I learn”

At Newtown Church of England Primary School and Nursery we hope to encourage independent, enthusiastic and creative learners, who develop holistically. This is based on a fundamental respect for children and young people and their capacity to investigate, test and maintain curiosity in the world around them.

We believe in a child’s right to play; the right to access the outdoors; the right to assess risk and the vibrant reality of the natural world; the right to experience a healthy range of emotions, through challenges of social interaction, to build resilience that will enable continued and creative engagement with their peers

Children and young people are given encouragement to direct their own learning - this often requires catalysing on the part of the forest leader either through stimulating play in the outdoors or scaffolding, but mostly through simply observing how children are in the outdoors.

This approach is based more on the process of learning than it is on the content – more on the how than the what. This means that we step boldly out of the shadow and limitation of intensely structured activities and venture collaboratively into the realms of the unplanned, unexpected and ultimately unlimited.

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Forest School at Newtown

Forest School will form an important part of the curriculum at Newtown Church of England Primary School and Nursery. All children, from Reception to Year 6, will have access to a Forest School session. Reception and Nursery children every week, and Year 1 to Year 6 for three 4 week periods per year.

Each session will be led by qualified Forest School Leaders, Mr Ben Crompton or Mrs Kelly Hidalgo, with the support of the class teaching assistants. Newtown Forest School is committed to minimising environmental impact and maintaining the area for the future. (Appendix 11)

The Forest School area will be based in the area in the corner of the playing field (outlined in yellow - marked A) and will be accessed from school building on rubberised path. Vehicular access will be via car park gate – marked 1 on the map below. (Please note: map is out of date due to recent ground works at school. Map will be updated as soon as available on Google Maps.) (See Appendix 12)



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Aims

To give children opportunities to:

- Direct their own learning
- Decide how to approach and solve problems
- Think 'outside of the box'
- Assess and take risks
- Experience 'real life'
- Make mistakes

Which will result in:

- Increase in confidence levels
- Development of independence
- Rise of self-esteem
- Enhancement of communication skills
- Increased resilience
- Evolution enthusiastic and creative learners

By respecting and valuing a child's right to:

- Play
- Access the outdoors
- Assess risk and the vibrant reality of the natural world
- Experience a healthy range of emotions through the challenges of social interaction
- Build resilience that will enable continued and creative engagement with peers



Roles and Responsibilities

Forest School Leader:

- Plan and run sessions (Appendix 10)
- Suggest manageable and achievable tasks
- Take into consideration the specific needs of a particular group or individual
- Completing health, safety and risk assessments
- Administer any first aid
- Maintain the first aid kit
- Direct the group to safety in the event of an emergency
- Maintain tools - counting equipment in and out
- Inform Forest School support staff clearly of their role

Forest School Support Staff:

- Support the Forest School philosophy
- Read and sign the Forest School Handbook
- Follow the instructions of the Forest School Leader
- Undertake activities with groups of children under the instruction and at the discretion of the Forest School Leaders

All Forest School Staff:

- Encourage development of children's self-esteem, self-belief and confidence
- Model appropriate behaviour at all times
- Ensure children have time and freedom to learn at their own pace without pressure
- Encourage children to develop a greater awareness of their own and other's emotional needs
- Ensure that every child is respected as an individual
- Ensure that policies, procedures, rules and guidelines are followed



Policies and Procedures

Forest School takes place on school grounds, within the school day under the care and supervision of school staff. Therefore, where applicable, the policies and procedures that the school already has in place will form the basis for those followed in Forest School. Where required, the policies and procedures have been adapted and added to in order to reflect the Forest School environment.



“The more risks you allow your children to make,
the better they learn to look after themselves”

Roald Dahl



Emergency Procedures

Health and Safety Procedure

The Forest School Health and Safety Policy is an addendum to the School Health and Safety Policy and does not change the school's position on Health and Safety matters set out in the original document.

For Forest Schools to run safely, the Forest School Leader will:

- Ensure that at least one qualified first aider is on site at all times
- Establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment
- Follow policy and practice found in the Handbook
- Make sure all adults on site have knowledge of all guidelines
- Ensure that all adults are familiar with all emergency procedures, reporting and recording
- Make and share risk assessments before sessions
- Ensure that volunteers are aware of their responsibilities towards the children
- Fully investigate any accidents and use information for future risk assessments
- Make sure all safety equipment is in good working order

(Appendix 16)

Pupil responsibility for Health and Safety

All pupils will be responsible for:

- Complying with school rules and procedures plus any instructions given in an emergency.
- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others
- Co-operating with Forest School leader and any other staff and volunteers on site
- Using equipment in the way they have been instructed
- Remembering to use personal protective equipment provided when needed
- Dressing appropriately for weather conditions and safety
- Abiding by all safety requirements when using a fire pit
- Reporting to the Forest School Leader or staff member of anything they think could be harmful or dangerous on site



First Aid Procedure

The Forest School Leader is responsible for First Aid and is Paediatric First Aid qualified.

(Appendix 1)

An emergency kit is taken to all Forest School sessions. This contains:

- Medical Emergency Procedures
- First Aid Kit
- Notepad and pen
- Mobile phone

First Aid Kit Checklist

Minimum of:

- 4 eye irrigation solution sachets
- 20 x saline cleansing wipes
- 2 instant ice packs
- 5 large plasters/10 medium plasters/15 small plasters
- 2 triangle bandages
- 2 large bandages
- 1x resuscitation face shield
- 2 medium bandages
- 3 pairs of protective gloves/1 roll of micropore tape
- Safety pins
- Burn gels

(Appendix 2)



Critical Incident Procedure

Follow the school's critical incident procedure. (Appendix 3)

Missing / Lost Child Procedure

Newtown Church of England Primary School and Nursery puts the safety of its children foremost and to achieve this we have high fencing around the perimeter of our school with all external gates having padlocks.

In the event of a child discovered missing from a group, a whistle will sound for all children to gather around our base camp (fire pit). One adult will search for the child whilst a second member of staff will keep the children occupied with an activity.

The Forest School Leader will use a walkie-talkie to contact the main school building in case the child has gone back into school for toilets or any other reason.

If after 10 minutes the child has not been located, the school office will dial 999 to alert the police, then contact parents to inform them of the situation.

Staff will record details of the situation, including the last known position of the missing child and any timings. These will be recorded on the emergency procedures sheet before being uploaded to CPOMS.

Accident and Emergency Procedure

All staff, volunteers and participants will be briefed on what to do in the case of an emergency. A whistle will be blown as a signal to stop what you are doing, gather with a member of staff, be silent and wait for instructions. The Forest School Leader will assess the situation, the nature and extent of the injury/accident. They will ensure the rest of the group are safe from danger and adequately supervised. An accident form will be completed later. A RIDDOR record will be created, along with an Accident report for any death, serious injury or 7-day injury.

If anyone sustains an injury or illness which cannot be treated by first aid on site and requires medical assistance:

- In serious cases, the Emergency Services will be contacted (see below) using the mobile phone carried by the Forest School Leader. Then the school will be notified. The school office will be responsible for contacting the injured party's emergency contact.
- The rest of the group will be supervised away from the incident and if in danger, will be moved to safety
- One member of staff from school will meet the ambulance at the school entrance and direct the crew to the incident site.
- If the injured party is taken to hospital, one member of staff will go with them and the injured party's emergency contact will be updated about the situation by the school office.

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- In minor cases, the Forest School Leader will arrange to contact the injured party's emergency contact so that they can be collected and taken to hospital, doctor or home – as appropriate.

Emergency Contact Numbers:

Ambulance/Fire Brigade - 999

School Office – 01939 233353

Requesting attendance by Emergency Services

Dial 999 and ask for ambulance or fire brigade. Be ready with the following information:

School number – 01939 233353

School post code – SY4 5NU

Ambulance access to school – Newtown staff car park. Newtown public car park – access to the school field. Security lock code 1853.

Recording and Reporting Accidents

A RIDDOR record will be created, along with an incident report for any serious near miss incident at or in the vicinity of the Forest School site.

An accident form will be completed and taken to the school office after any accident.

(Appendix 4)

Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Newtown Church of England Primary and Nursery fully recognise its responsibilities for safeguarding children. All staff and volunteers are responsible for keeping children safe. In particular:

- Ensuring all children have a safe environment at Forest School in which to learn and develop
- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of volunteers to work with children
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse

Newtown Church of England Primary and Nursery will follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This can be found on the school website. (Appendix 5)

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Permission Procedure

Parental consent for Forest School Participation will be obtained prior to the first session a child attends. See Appendix for a sample letter. (Appendix 6)

Behaviour Procedure

Good behaviour is positively encouraged within Newtown Church of England Primary School and Nursery, with much emphasis on self-discipline, courtesy and consideration for others. We recognise that children respond well to praise and therefore use it freely to promote good behaviour. We also do all that we can to prevent bullying, by reinforcing the school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. Our Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policies can be found on the website.

We aim to:

- Build self-esteem, independence, motivation and learning in a safe environment
- Reinforce collaborative behaviour
- Promote awareness, respect and care for others
- Have a consistent approach to expectations both inside and outside of school
- Develop an awareness of acceptable behaviour in an outdoor environment
- Develop both children's and adults' pride in their achievements

To do this, the Forest School Leader will:

- Create a positive environment to encourage caring, nurturing and acceptable behaviour to all i.e. one another, the environment and the equipment we will be using.
- Be mindful of the need to maintain safety at all times
- Establish clearly defined standards of expected behaviour
- Place the needs of the children, including their preferred learning styles, behavioural needs and school curriculum to maximise individual success and raise self esteem
- Provide a positive role model for children and volunteers
- Promote effective relationships in which all are accepted, valued and treated equally.

The children will:

- Listen carefully to instructions and requests especially concerning safety
- Develop an acceptable attitude towards the environment and one another

Behaviour Management

There will be rewards that can be achieved throughout Forest School Learning – Class Dojos. The Forest School Leader will follow the Behaviour Policy and the following steps:

- Re-engage the child into the activity

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- Give a verbal warning by taking the child to one side and reminding them of the importance of acceptable behaviour and what we are trying to aim for.
- Give the child thinking time away from the activities (time out)
- If three-time outs are given in one session, the child's parents will be informed of the behaviour and the possibility of missing the next session.
- If time out is needed on three consecutive sessions, or the behaviour places them or other children at risk, a letter will inform parents and the child will miss the next session.

School will endeavour to include all children in Forest School session. The Forest School Leader will aim to make each new session a new beginning – a fresh start.

If a child's actions are placing themselves or others in danger, the following will happen:

- The child will be taken back into school to work in another classroom
- Parents will be invited to come into school and talk with both the Forest School Leader, head teacher and their child as to how they may solve this
- Where behaviour cannot be resolved and is deemed unsafe, the child will need to be excluded from Forest School sessions
- If behaviour is less severe, the child will be given a sanction based on the school Behaviour Policy incl. completion of Reflection Sheets.
- In all cases of behaviour that does not meet expectations; an incident report will be completed by the Forest School Leader and logged on CPOMS.

Insurance Policy

The Newtown Church of England Primary School and Nursery Forest School is covered under the Newtown Church of England Primary School and Nursery insurance policy. (Appendix 13)

Data Protection Policy

The Forest School will strictly adhere to the Data Protection Policy which is already in place at Newtown Church of England Primary School and Nursery. (See Appendix 14)

Risk Assessment Policy

The Forest School will strictly adhere to the Risk Assessment Policy which is already in place at Newtown Church of England Primary School and Nursery. (See Appendix 15)

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Food & Hygiene

Food Safety and Hygiene Procedure

Newtown Church of England Primary School and Nursery maintains high food hygiene standards in relation to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food.

- A full Activity risk assessment will be completed for any activity involving the preparing and/or consuming of food items. This will include attention to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of any food items to prevent the growth of bacteria and food contamination.
- The leadership of cooking on a campfire will be undertaken only by a member of staff in possession of a Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate
- Food/ingredients will be stored at correct temperatures prior to the session and checked to ensure they are in date and not subject to any contamination by pests, mould etc. A cool box will be used to transport and store any ingredients requiring refrigeration prior to use at the Forest School site. All such ingredients must be used within 2 hours.
- Unrefrigerated food will be served to children within 4 hours of preparation
- All utensils, crockery etc will be checked to ensure they are clean before use.
- Waste food will be disposed of promptly
- When food items are to be consumed during a session, warm water with anti-bacterial soap will be provided for hand washing.
- All medical records must be checked to ensure that no food item or ingredient is given to a child or adult with an allergy to it.
- Cooked food will not be reheated.
- Uncooked meat will never be used in Forest School. Cooked meat, for example, frankfurter hotdogs, may be used.

Campfire Cooking Policy

Cooking on the campfire will only be undertaken by a member of staff in possession of a Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate

The Food Hygiene policy will be followed when cooking on a campfire

A risk assessment will be completed for all activities involving cooking on the campfire

All hair will be tied back and loose clothing secured prior to cooking on a campfire



Toilet Procedure

- Before a Forest School session, children will be given the opportunity to visit the toilet.
- During a Forest School session, children will use the Creative Studio toilet.
- KS2 children are able to go unaccompanied.

Rubbish Policy

A responsible Forest School must ensure that we make no detrimental impact on its natural surrounding environment, this includes the correct management and disposal of food, litter and waste.

To achieve this, the following procedures will be followed at every session:

- Recap with the group our responsibility to the environment and the need to keep it clean and uncontaminated.
- All litter must be put straight into a designated rubbish bag or box, making sure there is no risk of any rubbish being blown away by the wind.
- Wastewater can be tipped away or used to douse the campfire.
- Any leftover/waste food should be put into the designated rubbish bag/box and taken back to school to be disposed of.
- At the end of every session a thorough check of the site must be undertaken to ensure no litter or waste is left behind.
- Wherever possible use sustainable products, for example, use of sustainable bio-degradable hand wash.



Fire Procedure

Campfires are an important part of Forest School and are used in many sessions. Newtown Church of England Primary School and Nursery aims to ensure that all adults and children participating in sessions with fires, will do so safely and with as little risk to their health and safety as possible.

Location

Only the campfire area will be used for campfires. The area will always be kept clear of low branches.

Campfire area is enclosed by logs / stones to make a firepit to prevent the spread of fire

Positioning of Children and Adults

Fire areas are surrounded by seating logs at least 1.5metres from the fire pit. Exit paths are available at each corner.

When the campfire is in use, children are not permitted to cross the area immediately surrounding the fire without permission.

Children will be taught how to change seats by standing, stepping over the log and then walking around the outside of the seating area. They must never cross the inner area.

Children must walk around the outside of the seating logs, and step over them to sit down. A fire will not be lit with a group until all children have demonstrated that they do this at all times.

Once seated around the campfire, the children must remain seated until directed by an adult to move.

Long sleeves and trousers must always be worn.

Children are not permitted to throw anything onto the fire.

Advice on the appropriate way for dealing with smoke will be given to the children

If there is a clear wind direction, seating in the line of smoke is to be avoided.

If wind direction is variable, the leader should rearrange the seating if at all possible.

Fire Lighting

Training has been provided to the Forest School Leader regarding the correct way to construct and light a fire.



Fire Safety and Responsibility

- A Fire Blanket, covered bucket of water, fire gloves and Burns Kit must be sited close to the camp. Cling film is carried in the emergency rucksack
- Only adults are permitted to light fires, unless children are under the direct supervision of the Forest School Leader
- Fires are lit using a match to paper and natural tinder. Cotton wool, tinder nests and waterproof matches may be used in extremely wet conditions.
- No flammable liquids are to be used to accelerate fires
- No plastics are to be burnt
- If sessions involve children adding fuel to the fire, this must be done with one-to-one adult supervision.
- Sticks/wood must be placed, not thrown, from the side of the fire. The hand should never go near the fire

Extinguishing

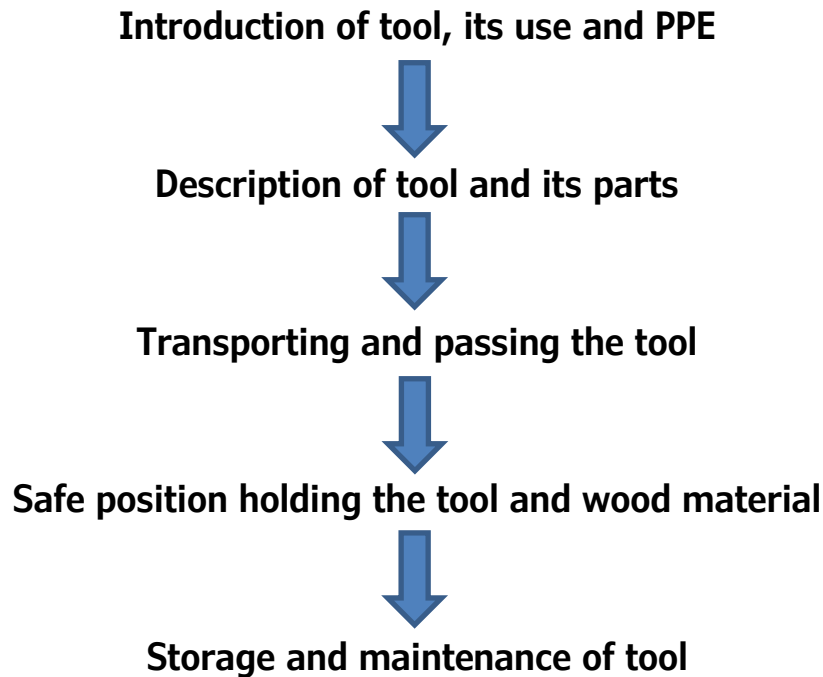
- All fires must be extinguished at the end of a session
- Whenever possible, all fuels should be burnt off to ash
- The Forest School Leader should ensure that any large remains of wood, especially when using logs, are separated from one another
- At the end of the session, the fire must be doused down with water using a watering can and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased
- Large build ups of potash, from several fires, need to be dispersed. This must only be done when it has totally cooled, preferably the following day. It should be finely scattered through the woodland to enable natural decomposition.

(See also Appendix 9)



Tools

Teaching Process for Any Tool



Tool Safety Procedure

Gloves need to be a really good fit otherwise grip on the working material can be compromised. In the latter case it is better to have no glove and a safer grip. Gloves should never be used on the tool holding hand. Provide a range of glove sizes to suit your participants.

Safe distance: Always use tools at a distance at arms' length and one tool's length away from other people.

Establish expected behaviour: to ensure everyone clearly understands all instructions and expected behaviour for safe tool use. Anyone misusing a tool intentionally can be given 'time out' from the activity, required to put down the tool, and step away, until they are ready to behave appropriately and join in again.

(See Appendix 8)



Teaching Tool Use

Mallet

Usage

To provide a force to tools that split wood. To hammer wooden pegs into ground, and other activities that require a pounding force.

Key parts

The handle and head.

Skills supported

Improved fine and gross motor skills, spatial awareness.

How to use it safely

- Ensure appropriate child to adult ratio at the discretion of the Forest School Leader.
- Don't use a glove on your tool hand, use a well-fitting glove on your non-tool hand.
- Maintain safe distance.
- Establish expected behaviour.
- Ensure proper demonstration and supervision.
- Ensure handle a good fit with size of hand for firm grip.
- Ensure no-one is directly in front or behind during use.

Passing

Hold the top of tool and offer the handle to the other person.

Placing

Put the tool down on ground or surface with handle facing backwards, or return it to its designated place.

Walking

Hold the handle of the tool next to your leg with your head facing downwards.

Cleaning

Remove any loose bits of wood, dry with a cloth.

Storing

Store in a large waterproof and air-tight container.



Potato Peeler

Usage

For whittling small soft sticks, and peeling bark.

Key parts

Handle, blade, cutting edge.

Skills supported

Improved fine and gross motor skills, spatial awareness.

How to use it safely

- Ensure appropriate child to adult ratio at the discretion of the Forest School Leader.
- No gloves on tool hand; well-fitting glove on non-tool hand.
- Maintain safe distance.
- Establish expected behaviour.
- Ensure proper demonstration and supervision.
- Place on a clear space where it will not hit other hard objects.
- Keep the blade facing away from you on the outside of your wood.
- Keep wood on the outside leg peeling away from the body.

Passing

Hold blades in gloved hand and offer handles to other person.

Placing

Put the tool down on ground or surface with handle facing backwards or return it to its designated place.

Walking

Walk holding blades in gloved hand next to leg with handles facing downwards.

Cleaning

Use stick/paint brush to clear out any wood & dust in the blade of the peeler.

Use cloth and gun oil/WD40 to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.

Storing

Store in a large water-proof and airtight container.



Bow Saw

Usage

For cutting lengths of wood in two or removing branches off trees.

Key parts

The shaft, handle blade, blade cover. There are 3 different sizes and hedging saws.

Skills supported

Improved fine and gross motor skills; co-operative work (if working with a partner, saying 'to me to you' to get a rhythm of forwards / backward motion, then allowing the other to pull).

How to use it safely

- Ensure appropriate child to adult ratio at the discretion of the Forest School Leader.
- No gloves on tool hand; well-fitting glove on non-tool hand.
- Maintain safe distance.
- Establish expected behaviour.
- Ensure proper demonstration and supervision.
- Select the saw according to the size of wood to be cut. Hedging saws are useful in tight spaces!
- Sharp serrated edge can cause lacerations. Keep both legs to one side of the saw. Always put protective guard on when not in use.
- Make a small nick in the wood first. Use the full length of the saw, drawing backwards. Keep it straight!
- Ensure the blade is of good quality as poor-quality screw fixed blades are hard to use and more likely to cause injury.

Passing

Keeping blade facing downwards, turn the handle to offer to the other person.

Placing

Put the tool down on ground or surface with handle facing backwards or return it to its designated place.

Walking

Holding tool like a handbag with blade facing downwards.

Cleaning

On site, use a dry paint brush to brush off sawdust etc. Use cloth and gun oil/WD40 to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.

Storing

Keep the blade covered. Keep spare blades in container to replace when necessary. Store in large waterproof and air tight container, with protective sheath/ cover on.



Secateurs

Usage

To cut twigs smaller than a penny piece.

Key parts

Handles, safety catch, hinge, jaws/ blades.

Skills supported

Improved fine and gross motor skills, spatial awareness.

How to use it safely

- Ensure appropriate child to adult ratio at the discretion of the Forest School Leader.
- Maintain safe distance.
- Establish expected behaviour.
- Ensure proper demonstration and supervision.
- To put down, close and lock safety catch and return to the designated place.
- Use a glove on the non-tool hand when using

Passing

Holding blades in hand and offer handles to another person.

Placing

Put the tool down on ground or surface with handle facing backwards or return it to its designated place.

Walking

Close and lock safety catch, hold blades in gloved hand next to leg with handles facing downwards.

Cleaning

On site, use a dry paint brush to brush off sawdust etc.

Maintenance

Use cloth and gun oil/WD40 to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.

Sharpening

Use a round file.

Storing

Store in a large waterproof and air tight container.



Loppers

Usage

To cut small branches & twigs smaller than a 2 pence piece. By-pass loppers have scissor-like cut for green and wet wood. Anvil loppers are ideal for dead or dry wood.

Key parts

Shaft, handle, jaws, hinge.

Skills supported

Improved fine and gross motor skills, spatial awareness.

How to use it safely

- Ensure appropriate child to adult ratio at the discretion of the Forest School Leader.
- Wear sturdy footwear; gloves may be useful for handling material, but do not use on tool.
- Maintain safe distance.
- Establish expected behaviour.
- Ensure proper demonstration and supervision; Is the branch smaller than your thumb?
- Always keep closed after cut has finished.
- Use the telescopic handles, hold at arms' length, and don't work with body inside handles.

Passing

Hold blades in gloved hand and offer handles to other person.

Placing

Put the tool down on ground or surface with handle facing backwards, or return it to its designated place.

Walking

Carry so they don't open by holding by the lower tool arm.

Cleaning

On site, use a dry paint brush to brush off sawdust etc.

Use cloth and gun oil/ WD40 to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.

Maintenance

If the loppers can be dismantled sharpen using a round stone file otherwise get them sharpened by a Forest School leader.

Storing

In protective cover, in a large waterproof and air-tight container.



Bill Hook

Usage

Taking the side branches off lengths of wood (snedding) or splitting wood or brash small twigs of branches.

Key parts

Handle, blade, hook.

Skills supported

Improved fine and gross motor skills, spatial awareness.

How to use it safely

- Ensure appropriate child to adult ratio at the discretion of the Forest School Leader.
- No gloves on tool hand; well-fitting glove on non-tool hand.
- Maintain safe distance.
- Establish expected behaviour.
- Ensure proper demonstration and supervision.
- Never throw a bill hook or use it to hack wood.
- Only leaders to remove and replace sheaths or guards unless participants are competent.
- Blade moving away from the body, hook facing downwards, always work with the edge away from you.
- Keep the bill hook as parallel and close to the wood as possible.

Passing

Keeping blade facing down, holding top of the tool, turn handle towards another person.

Placing

Place down on a cover/ sheath/ tool mat with the blade facing inwards and the handle facing forwards.

Walking

Walk holding tool next to leg with hook facing backwards.

Cleaning

Use cloth and gun oil/WD40 to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.

Maintenance

Sharpen using a round sharpening stone after each session.

Storing

Ensure blade is covered when in storage. Store in large waterproof and air-tight container with a protective sheath/cover.



Knife

Usage

For whittling, carving and cutting.

Key parts

Blade with tang inside handle, bevel & cutting edge, handle & hand guard. The blade itself has parts: point, edge, grind, spine, fuller, choil.

Skills supported

Improved fine and gross motor skills, spatial awareness.

How to use it safely

- Ensure appropriate child to adult ratio at the discretion of the Forest School Leader.
- No glove on tool hand; well-fitting glove on non-knife hand.
- Maintain safe distance.
- Establish expected behaviour.
- Ensure proper demonstration and supervision.
- Keep blade facing away from you on the outside of your body, keeping wood between you and the knife.
- Keep in pocket or designated place.
- Sheath immediately after use.
- Only leaders to remove and replace sheaths or guards unless participants are competent.

Passing

Holding sheathed part, offer handle to person.

Placing

Put the tool down on ground or surface with handle facing backwards or return it to its designated place.

Walking

When walking, place blade in sheath (hearing a click) place in pocket.

Cleaning

On site, use a dry paint brush to brush off sawdust etc.

Use cloth and gun oil/ WD40 to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade. Use long stick with cloth to wipe out any debris inside the sheath.

Maintenance

Sharpen using sharpening stone after each session.

Storing

Store with protective sheath/cover on, in a large water-proof and airtight container.

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Session Procedures

Daily Operating Procedure

Before the session

- A session plan form will be completed, taking into account observations, interest areas and learning points from the previous sessions. All adults will read the session plan form prior to the session.
- Activity risk assessment forms will be completed/updated for each planned activity. All adults will read the forms relevant to a particular session before it starts.
- All staff will have read the latest Fire Risk Assessment, which will be relevant to the current season.
- The Forest School Leader will check that enough adults are present for the session to go ahead and that the weather conditions allow it to take place.
- The Forest School site will be visited and the base camp area set up.
- A daily risk assessment will be completed.
- The equipment required for the session will be assembled, checked and prepared ready for taking to the site.
- All children will be registered by their class teacher. They will then get changed for Forest School, go to the toilet and apply sun cream where necessary.
- The class teacher will then escort the children to the Forest School Croft. The pre-session checklist will be undertaken. (Appendix 7)

During the session

- A headcount will be undertaken on arrival at Forest School and whenever the group is brought back together.
- Risks will be continually assessed and appropriate action taken to reduce or remove and risks found.

After the session

- A headcount will be undertaken at the end of the session.
- If the Tool Bag and/or Tool Box have been taken to the site, the contents will be checked by the Forest School Leader to ensure that no items are missing.
- After the children have left the Forest School Croft, the Forest School leader will return the penknife to the Tool Box and clean, check and maintain tools, as required. The Tool Box will then be locked.
- A session evaluation will be completed by the Forest School Leader, along with any observational records that will be useful to the class teacher.



Weather and Cancellation Procedure

Newtown Church of England Primary School and Nursery Forest School will take place at the usual site in **all** weathers except for high winds or where there is a risk of an electrical storm. In high winds (at the discretion of the Forest School Leader) Forest School will take place away from trees.

In addition:

- Forest School will also be cancelled if the minimum ratio of adults to pupils cannot be achieved.
- Forest School will also be cancelled if the Forest School Leader is absent.
- Forest School session duration may be reduced in extreme weather.
- Parents will be advised of the cancellation via an electronic message.
- Volunteers will be advised by a telephone call.



Appendices

Appendix 1	First Aid Certificates
Appendix 2	First Aid Checklist
Appendix 3	Emergency Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fire Safety Policy- Critical Incident Plan
Appendix 4	Forest School Incident Form
Appendix 5	Safeguarding Policy
Appendix 6	Parent Consent Form
Appendix 7	Site Risk Assessment
Appendix 8	Tool Use Guide & Activity Risk Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Bill Hook- Bow Saw- Kelly Kettle- Knives- Loppers- Mallet- Potato Peeler- Secateurs
Appendix 9	Teaching Fire Lighting
Appendix 10	Session Plan (Blank)
Appendix 11	Site Maintenance Plan & Ecological Impact Assessment
Appendix 12	Forest School Map
Appendix 13	Insurance
Appendix 14	GDPR Policy
Appendix 15	Risk Assessment Policy
Appendix 16	Staff and Volunteer Signature Page

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Appendix 1



First Aid Certificates



Appendix 2



First Aid Checklist

Contains a minimum of:

4 eye irrigation solution sachets	
20 antiseptic wipes	
2 instant ice packs	
A range of different sized plasters	
2 triangle bandages	
2 large bandages	
1 resuscitation face shield	
2 medium bandages	
3 pairs of protective gloves/	
1 roll of microspore tape	
Safety pins	
4 burn gels	

Original contents of First Aid Kit:

CONTENTS OF KIT

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 x Adhesive Plasters (S) 50 x Adhesive Plasters (L) 20 x Antiseptic Wipes 10 x Butterfly Closure Strips 2 x Conforming Bandages (S) 2 x Conforming Bandages (L) 10 x Cotton Tip Applicators 1 x CPR Face Mask 1 x Crepe Bandage Roll 5 x Elbow/Knee Plasters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 x Fingertip Fabric Strips 1 x First Aid Guide 1 x First Aid Tape Roll 2 x Foil Emergency Blanket 2 x Instant Cold (Ice) Packs 6 x Knuckle Fabric Strips 1 x Medical Scissors 1 x Metal Tweezers 1 x Moleskin Blister Relief 20 x Safety Pins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 x Splinter Lancets 2 x Sterile Eye Pad 2 x Sterile Eye Wash 6 x Sterile Gauze Pads (S) 4 x Sterile Gauze Pads (M) 4 x Sterile Gauze Pads (L) 8 x Sting Relief Pad 2 x Triangular Bandages 4 x Vinyl Medical Gloves 1 x Fabric Case
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Appendix 3



Emergency Procedures

Fire Safety Policy

Critical Incident Plan

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Appendix 4



Forest School Incident Form – Transfer to CPOMS as soon as possible

Date	Incident	Action Taken



Appendix 5



Safeguarding Policy



Appendix 6



Forest School Parent Consent Form

I confirm that I would like my child to take part in the Forest School activities.

I understand that the use of tools such as bow saw and knives may be used and that they will learn how to make a fire that they can use to cook on.

The School Office has up to date emergency contact numbers and details.

Name: _____

Relationship of child: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please note any medical conditions such as asthma, allergies, hayfever.

All medication for any of the above conditions will be on the Forest School site with your child at all times.

Mr Ben Crompton & Mrs Kelly Hidalgo

Forest School Leaders



Appendix 7



Site Risk Assessment



Appendix 8



Tool Use Guide & Activity Risk Assessment



Appendix 9



Teaching Fire Lighting



Appendix 10



Session Plan



Appendix 11



Site Maintenance Plan

Year 1 – 2023/24

Autumn: Area clearing, bulb and tree planting. Campfire area creation.

Spring: Bird box installation

Summer: Create bird hide out of pallets.

Year 2 – 2024/25

Second member of staff to be trained as Forest School Leader.

We also aim to create a wildflower area in our meadow, which will again hopefully encourage more birds, butterflies, ladybirds and much more.

We aim to re-establish the pond area which will be fenced off, but would create a natural habitat which the children could use for pond-dipping etc. Pond area to be left untouched for 12 months to let it establish.

Year 3 – 2025/26

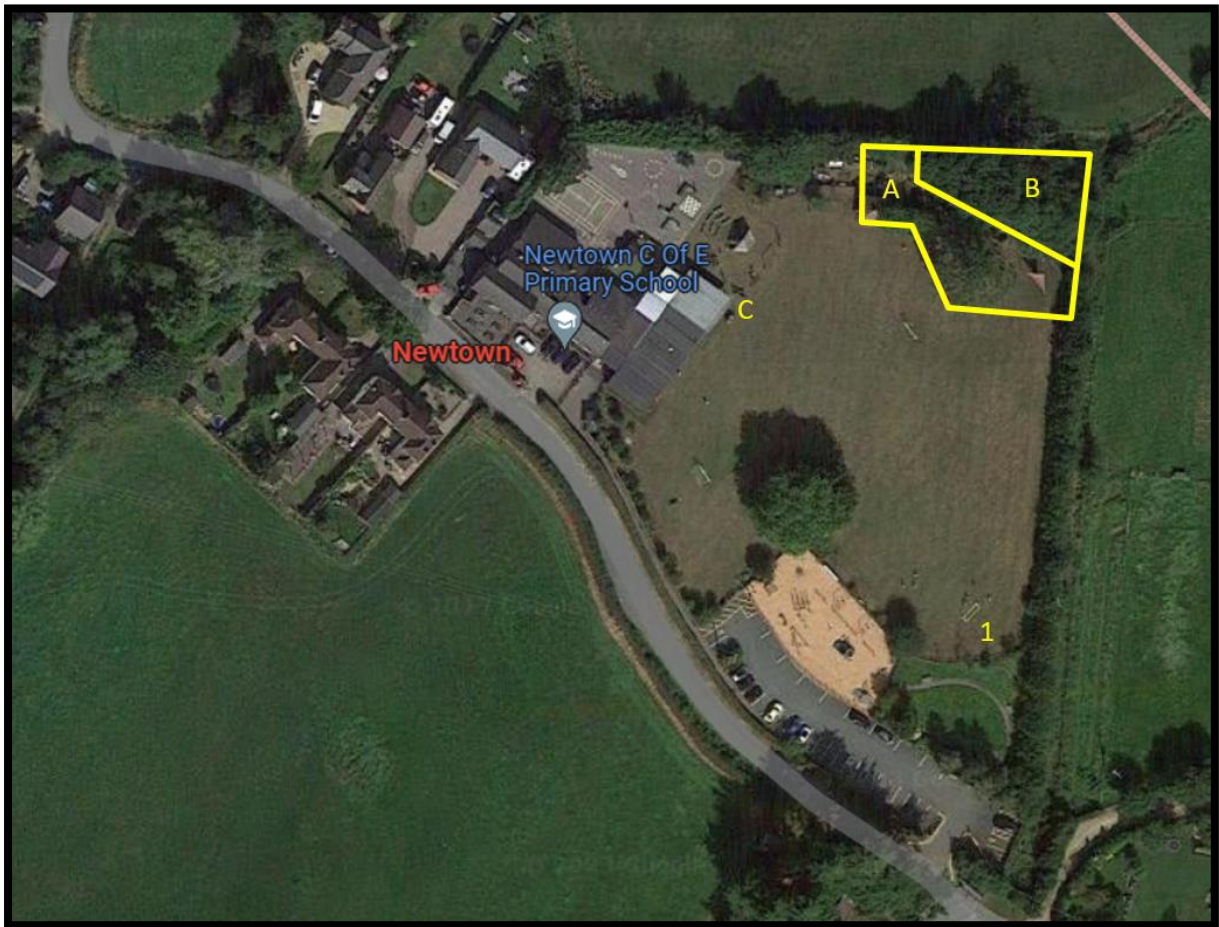
Dig a circular ditch / moat / fort area. This can be utilised for bridge building and challenges. The central area to be developed in future to be a place of sanctuary hopefully though the use of willow.



Appendix 12



Forest School Map Overview



A – Forest School Area 2023-24

A + B – Forest School Area 2024-25

C – Welly store / changing area

1 – Vehicular Access

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Appendix 13



Insurance Policy



Appendix 14



Data Protection Policy



Appendix 15



Risk Assessment Policy



Appendix 16



Staff and Volunteer Signature Page

I have read and understood the Forest School Handbook

Name	Signature	Date