

Forest School handbook 2023-24



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Emergency Information

The Federation of Abbey Infant and Abbey Junior Schools.

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Inclusion Lead and Designated Safeguarding Leader Mrs J Sharp.

Local Authority Contacts	Office Hours/Out of Office Hours	Number
Area Education Officer Children's Services	Office Hours Only	0121 569 8385
	Office Hours	0845 351 0131
	Out of Office Hours	0121 569 2355
Child Safeguarding	Out of Office Hours	0845 113 5000
	Office Hours	0121 569 6600
Environmental Health	Out of Office Hours	07810 756 336
	Office Hours Only	0845 352 7552
Educational Psychologists	Office Hours Only	0121 569 8152
	Office Hours	0121 569 4886
Educational Visits Advisor	Office Hours	0121 569 4886
	Out of Office Hours	07800 611 207
Property Services	Office Hours	0845 352 7645
	Out of Office Hours	0121 569 6800
	(Community Alarm)	
Public Health	Office Hours	0121 569 3031
	Out of Office Hours	07920 027723
	Office Hours	01215693313/3983
Resilience Unit	Office Hours	0121 569 6800
	Out of Office Hours	
	(Community Alarm)	
Risk and Insurance	Office Hours	0121 569 3654
	Out of Office Hours	07891833074
City Hospital	Office Hours	0121 554 3801
Piddock Road Police Station	Office Hours	0345 113 5000

Who produced this handbook and when it will be reviewed

This handbook was written and produced by Rachel Kentish, teacher at The Federation of Abbey Infant & Junior. It will be reviewed every three years or as other core policies referred to are significantly updated impacting on the leadership and management of FS.

Note: Where there are summaries and/or adaptations of policies and procedures referred to here and adapted for Forest School, all original policies are the policies from The Federation of Abbey Infant & Junior. The Federation of Abbey Infant & Junior is a LA Maintained school. Some policies are therefore written on behalf of the school, negotiated with all local trade unions, and as such cannot be amended.

Procedure for sign off for adults who are part of Forest School Provision

All staff will have completed a planned induction session. This covers the essential KCSIE, H&S and site-specific information.

Annually, all staff complete LCSB L1, DVA, Fire Safety, School Nurse Emergency training.

Volunteers complete the school's induction.

All adults are Enhanced DBS checked; these are renewed at three yearly intervals. This includes a barred list check.

All adults sign an electronic declaration as proof of completion; some training comes with a certificate of completion that is collected centrally.

The schools' website provides most of the common risk assessments; this refresher is part of the schools' annual update and digital self-certification forms.

The Executive Headteacher has completed the IOSH Managing Safety three-day CPD programme.

All forest school staff be they employed or volunteer will complete a google form to say they have read this handbook and any specific risk assessments.

General Information Section

Key Site Information Including Map



The forest school area is located on the Infant School site and is accessed via a bolted gate in (classroom) reception's outdoor space or via a padlocked green gate located between the two reception classrooms. The FS lead will have a key to the green padlocked gate to easily access hand washing and toileting facilities. The FS lead will ensure the gate is locked at the end of FS sessions for the day.

There is an area of mowed grass and an area with trees. At the bottom of the wooded area (top left on the image) there is an unused gated gulley which is kept locked at both ends. This belongs to the school.

Adults, should they need the toilet, will need to access the toilet facilities in the main Infant block. The closest adult toilet is in the 'staff room' block.

The site is self-contained and without any public access.

Communication.

The school's website is the main tool for statutory information. Parents & carers would access this. EYFS (Reception and Nursery) have their own class pages. Main communication to parents and carers is via email and text-messaging; sometimes, individual telephone calls are made.

Staff access the school's intranet.

Absence and welfare calls are covered under the school's Management of Absence, First Day calling and Safeguarding policies.

The school promotes aspects of its work through its website and can be found from the home page of the website.

Introduction to Forest School

Our Ethos

It's the process, not the product, that brings about the biggest changes.

Underpinning everything that we do in (referred to in the text as FS from this point on) is the realisation that it is the process that learners journey through, rather than the products that they make, which can have a profound and lasting impact on them. The journey that each Forest Schooler goes on is unique; the skills which they gain along the way are skills that will be useful for them throughout their lives. As reflective practitioners, we will endeavour to provide opportunities for each individual to develop, grow, explore and take chances (the ability to manage the risks associated with the choices made in the FS area) whilst keeping them safe, and following their interests and ideas using a holistic approach.

Whilst we will teach various tool skills and fire-lighting it is the behaviours and attitudes that are developed through the learning process which we believe are most important. We would hope that through FS each learner will become a R.I.C.H.E.R person (Reflective and Responsible, Independent, Confident and Creative, Happy, Emotionally-aware, Resourceful and Resilient). Within our FS we will endeavour to provide each member with the B.A.S.I.C.S (a sense of Belonging, a chance to Achieve, opportunities to recognise their Success, time to be Independent and Inquisitive, a supportive Community and personal Challenge. We aim to make every session fun and memorable.

Within FS we also aim to build a community connected by their shared love of the outdoors and stewardship of natural areas. Part of FS involves all participants in ownership, development and responsibility for taking care of our FS sites in sustainable ways which support conservation. It is intended that this carries over into other natural areas, places and spaces that participants visit and use.

What is FS?

FS, is not what the name suggests, it is not a school in a forest. Rather it is the application of a certain set of principles and way of working with people in an outdoor area-ideally with trees. It is the ethos established by the practitioners and the use of the guiding principles which create a 'FS', not the site.

The FSA (Forest School Association) identifies six underlying principles which should underpin a FS. These are:

1. FS is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions in a woodland or natural environment, rather than a one-off visit. Planning, adaptation, observations and reviewing are integral elements of FS.
2. FS takes place in a woodland or natural environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.

3. FS aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.
4. FS offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and themselves.
5. FS is run by qualified FS practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.
6. FS uses a range of learner centred processes to create a community for development and learning.

These principles were arrived at after consultation with a range of stakeholders and agreed upon by practitioners across the UK. When finding out about FS, in books, on the internet or talking to people involved, there are differing versions of this set of principles but the key constants are:

1. FS happens regularly (and) over time.
2. FS happens in a natural environment.
3. FS is learner led, fun and often play based.
4. FS engages and develops the 'whole' learner in a community of trust, support and success.
5. FS learners are able to take risks and learn to manage and assess risk (at an appropriate level).
6. FS is run by a qualified FS practitioner*.

*As staffing changes arise, to build up the core requisite skills, new staff may run 'FS style' sessions for portfolios of evidence

What will I see at FS?

You could certainly see a huge range of activities across just two or three FSs, you would see children working in groups, on their own and with varying amounts of adult support and intervention. You may see a magnificent woodland or a small patch of trees. The activities and the venue may have things in common but it is underneath this where you will find the true commonalities. It is the way we 'do' FS that is of most importance and it is in this that you will find every FS has common threads.

You will find that:

Everyone is valued and their uniqueness is recognised and celebrated.

Regardless of age or other factors the participants will be trusted to explore and discover without interference or the assumption that they need adult 'help'.

There will be an appropriate level of challenge and risk for the group. Adults will facilitate risk taking by assessing risk themselves and aiding the children in developing their own ability to assess risks and to take them.

The approach is learner centred. This can take time to establish and develop but even in a fledgling FS, the lead practitioner (and other facilitators) will be watching and establishing what the children want to do next and experiences which may be beneficial for individuals and the whole group. This will inform what happens in their next session. This observation may lead to the introduction of games which help to develop certain skills (patience, perseverance) or skills, like knots, to help children who are creating and expressing a need or desire to learn how to join objects.

There will be regular reviews of what has happened, what the group wants to do next. The adults will respond carefully to the needs of the children, giving support when it is asked for, they will be flexible and follow the children's lead. Where there are more adult directed activities e.g. introducing a new material, skill or tool use the adults will watch carefully for indicators that the children are ready for the adult to step back.

All of the adults will work towards providing a community where there is time for individuals to explore and investigate at their own pace, in their own way, building trust and enabling success.

The adults will interact with the children in a positive way, even when there are problems. Adults will model ways to solve problems, help children to mediate and facilitate discussions which lead to a consensus rather than simply imposing a rule or 'telling off' a child.

It will be outdoors, whatever the weather (barring thunderstorms, high winds and extreme cold or heat).

Why FS?

There are a number of theories of learning and development which are evident with FS, through its ethos, approach and activities. There are also theories which are important to incorporate into FS so that children can enjoy and get the most out of their experiences. As FS incorporates such a range of ideas about learning and development it has much to offer alongside the obvious physical benefits and engagement with nature and the environment.

Session Routines and Procedures

Before FS Begins - Risk Management and Risk Assessment.

One fundamental element of the FS process, as in life, is the opportunity to assess and take sensible well-managed risks. A very important part of our responsibility to keep children safe is to equip them with the skills and experiences they need to keep themselves and others safe.

Risk management is about identifying hazards (something which could cause harm, either physical or psychological), assessing the amount of risk (the potential harm if the hazard was realised) and where there is a clear positive benefit putting measures in place to mitigate the risk and ensure participants' safety (taking positive steps to identify causes of accidents and implementing suitable measures).

Within FS we will:

- Carry out a site assessment for any potential FS sites, before using the site.
- Carry out a site checklist drawn from the most useful daily pre-session checks of the FS site before FS sessions, on the day of the session (for example the branch health).
- Carry out risk assessments for any activities or experiences to be undertaken as part of a FS session. This could include games, tool use, fire-pit rules and creative experiences. Once a correct procedure is established e.g., how to enter and exit the fire pit, all adults will consistently model and reinforce the procedures with a view to the children self-managing and supporting others.

As part of the daily risk assessments for FS, the class teacher (or appropriate adult) will ensure that the FS leader and accompanying adults know of any relevant assessments of individual children attending the session e.g., social, emotional, behavioural, physical needs.

As needed, carry out ongoing, dynamic risk assessments in response to the children and changing situations.

All staff and any volunteers will familiarise themselves with the FS Handbook, all relevant school and FS policies and risk assessments. All staff will have signed to say that they have read and understood the above documents.

All staff and volunteers will have completed the appropriate induction programs. All regular volunteers will have completed an induction program and have an enhanced

DBS check. All participating adults will have read the relevant risk assessments and signed the form to show this.

On the day of a FS session:

The FS leader will check the site prior to use. This will include:

- A thorough visual check of the location, ground and equipment for any litter, glass etc. Any such items will be collected using suitable safety equipment according to the hazard. The onsite facilities manager will handle any significant risks.
- FS lead will check for any increased risks due to weather and the short-term weather forecast. Trees will be checked for any dead or broken branches which may fall.
- Carrying out any safety checks in line with risk assessments.
- Checking or placing any boundary markers.
- Arranging log stumps, fire pit and seating that may have been moved since the last session.
- Put up a shelter if needed (e.g., very wet)
- Check the FS bag including first aid and burns kit is at base camp or with the FS lead.

A written record will be kept of these checks. It will state if any hazards were found and how they were dealt with or reported to site/facilities staff.

During the session

All adults will:

- Ensure all children are wearing appropriate clothing and footwear.
- Support children in applying sunscreen as necessary (subject to parental consent and provision of sun cream).
- Ensure risk assessments are followed supporting and modelling appropriately.

The FS Leader will:

- Discuss any safety issues for the session ensuring adults and children are aware.

- Review the boundary of the FS and any areas which are out of bounds. Walk this with the children (where necessary after the initial session this walk can be repeated).
- Review agreed rules for the sessions e.g., 'no pick, no lick. Be careful with your stick.'

At the end of the session

- There will be time where we 'tidy up'.
- All tools and equipment will be counted and returned to tool boxes.
- All waste food will be bagged up to take to school and recycled where possible.
- We will ensure we are leaving no trace of ourselves.
- All equipment will be returned to designated places and tools will be placed in FS sheds and closed securely. During sessions there is a high latch that ensures only adults can access the tool shed. After sessions, the shed will be padlocked.
- Children will be part of this process and will help carry equipment to and from the forest and when on site return equipment used to appropriate storage places. The FS leader will carry out a head count before we leave the forest site.
- When offsite, the group will return to the minibus/coach pick up site. Any equipment will be returned to and locked into the FS leader's car to be checked, cleaned and locked up.
- A period of reflection will take place at the end of the session.

After the session

When offsite, if this is the last session of the day or if the FS leader is not remaining on site:

- All boundary markers will be collected in.
- Any stumps or logs will be hidden or returned to the wider area if we are required to do so by the landowner or management.

- When onsite, boundary markers will remain as long as they pose no hazard to wildlife. Permanent areas will be left ready for use in the next session. Ropes will be untied from trees, unless they are risk assessed to r
- When onsite, after all sessions are complete, the FS lead will ensure the green gate is padlocked and organise the replenishment of any supplies for first aid kit and ensure the FS shed is padlocked with all tools inside. If the FS lead is unable to replenish supplies to the first aid kit, the FS lead will leave the kit with the office staff for the site/facilities manager to replenish.

Health and Safety.

The Federation of Abbey Infant and Junior School has policies which set out clear statements of intent with regard to the school's approach. There are a number of policies which are particularly relevant to FS which include:

- Health Safety
- First Aid
- Management of Medication
- Specific Site Risk Assessments
- When working with EYFS: EYFS Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- GDPR Policy
- Contenance Policy
- SEND Policy



All adults involved with FS should familiarise themselves with these policies. All adults must ensure that they have read and understood the contents of this handbook and risk assessments. All adults must ensure they have read the risk assessments appropriate to sessions they are supporting. Provided below are the additional measures regarding FS sessions.

Staffing of FS Sessions

The FS leader has the overall duty of care for the children in their charge. All adults involved in FS sessions are required to take reasonable steps to ensure that the children are safe. FS sessions will always have an appropriate adult to child ratio, in line with the statutory EYFS framework and staffing ratios as defined by the education act. FS sessions will include a link adult from the base class and a FS leader. Wherever possible FS sessions will run with at least three adults (including the FS leader and the link adult).

First Aid Provision

When working with EYFS, EYFS welfare requirements (including first aid) will be met for example a member of staff is trained in paediatric first aid. When working with age groups outside EYFS the HSE, School's first aid policy and local authority guidance will be followed. When off site, we will follow the educational visits policy. FS lead will ensure adults are aware of first aider (s) for the session. The FS first aid kit will be located in either the FS bag or in base camp.

Accident reporting

In line with the school policy, all accidents and first aid administered (for staff and children) is recorded on Medical Tracker (app on i-pad and program on PC). This automatically informs parents. In line with the school policy parents will also receive a phone call about 'head bumps' (neck up injury).

Medical contact details, emergency contact, permission to receive first aid.

The school collects all of the consent information and medical requirements through its annual data collection/checking exercise. This information is processed by the central schools' office team who then provide a confidential summary for FS and other class teacher practitioners.

For any off-site visits we will follow the educational visits off-site policy.

The link core-adult from the class accompanying the FS group will ensure that all consent forms, medical forms (including care plans and medications) group lists (registers), allergy summaries and special requirements are up to date and ready for each group.

The link core-adult will be responsible for updating these and informing the FS leader should any extra relevant information be given to school during the normal school week (e.g., we've found out that blackcurrant squash makes him sick).

Between sessions all confidential information will be stored in a secure area of the three classroom teachers' rooms.

Administering medicines

The link core adult will be responsible for ensuring any medication for any children requiring it comes out with the group. E.g., asthma inhalers, epi-pens. They will also ensure the appropriate health care plans come out too. These will be stored either in a red box at base camp or in the FS bag. In line with school policy if medication is administered it will be logged on Medical Tracker. The link core adult will be responsible for ensuring the medication and health care plans return to the classroom with the children.

Parental Consent

Parents/careers will be informed about FS sessions as part of the school curriculum and provided with information about clothing requirements etc. Parents/careers will complete a full parental consent form in line with the school's Educational Visits and off-site policy, if the group is going off site.

Photo Permission

We follow the school's policy for the use of photographs and videos. Consent is gained or denied at the start of the academic year and lists of children are available from the office. These lists will be obtained and checked prior to FS session.

FS Code of Conduct

Our Agreed Rules

1. 1,2,3 come to me means come to the FS lead or member of staff/ adult calling out.
2. Air Horn means come back to base camp.
3. Stay within the agreed boundaries (see boundary section for further detail)
4. Follow the fire pit area rules at all times, even when there is no fire. (see the fire section for further details).
5. No pick. No Lick. Be careful with your stick. No picking of fruits, berries, leaves, branches.* No putting of forest items or hands in our mouths. Small sticks to be carried at our sides, longer to be dragged behind us, very long to be carried cooperatively.
6. Leave no trace.

*The FS leader may amend or alter this rule as we learn more about our patch, using tools etc. Rules in FS are wherever possible reached by consensus and are there to help us keep ourselves and others safe. There will be instances where we may need a different rule, a new rule and discussions about how we could 'do' an activity and keep ourselves and others safe.

FS Clothing.

Everyone participating in FS needs to be appropriately dressed. This includes adults as well as children. Adults should tuck their ID badges inside their clothing as they are easily caught on branches, could dangle into a fire or catch in a tool. As a result, if there are any unknown visitors to the site, staff should appropriately challenge them.

Old clothes are recommended as they will potentially get muddy and dirty.

Winter

Warm Clothing, multi layers and long sleeved.

Warm coat or fleece

Warm socks for in wellingtons

Gloves (not mittens), hats.

For children school will provide: waterproof coats, waterproof over trousers and wellingtons.

Summer

Light trousers, no shorts or skirts in the woodland.

No open toed shoes, suitable shoes for messy play.

Tops appropriate to the season and vegetation: light, long sleeves are ideal.

Sun hats that fit and where possible protect the neck in sunny weather

Participants are also responsible for providing their own insect repellent and sunscreen.

Boundaries

In the first session together the FS leader will show the children and adults the boundaries and boundary markers on the site. There will be reminders, as needed, each session.

Toileting

When on the school site, children will be taken or asked to go to the toilet before sessions. FS and KS1 children will be able to access a class toilet adjacent to the FS area. The gate to this area will be unlocked and an adult will open and close it for them. KS2 children will be shown where the disabled toilet is on the Infant site and will be able to use that toilet, going in a pair and closing all gates behind themselves.

When offsite, all children (and adults) will be encouraged to go to the toilet before getting on the minibus to travel to the site. Where the site has toilets within walking distance, if the children need the toilet during the session, a member of school staff will take the children to the toilet. Boys and girls will both use the toilet matching the accompanying adult's gender (e.g., female member of staff, children all use the ladies loo). This ensures that the children can be safely supervised in public toilets. In addition, the accompanying member of staff will have their mobile phone to call if help is needed. Staff will check prior to the session that their phones have reception. If there is any doubt, we will use the 2-way walkie-talkies from school.

If there is no public toilet available or close enough, the FS leader will explain and establish the procedures for the most appropriate toileting solution (this will have been agreed upon in consultation with the land owner, manager or rangers as appropriate.)

With all toileting, children will wash their hands and dry them, as usual.

Eating and Drinking

Eating and drinking provides opportunities for building community and is an ideal time to reflect and share feedback. It can also be a good opportunity to warm up, cool down and remain hydrated and maintain energy levels.

There will be some simple clear rules, that follow the class practices for snack time.

- Wash hands before eating, drinking or handling.
- If you are eating or drinking you should be seated.
- When you have finished, you must dispose of any rubbish and put away any water bottles or cup/mug.

The FS lead will have the information regarding allergens and dietary requirements for each group. The FS lead will follow the school's policies and the FS risk assessments for cooking regarding allergens. Wherever possible, FS will use food that does not include any allergens from the group. For children with specific allergens /dietary needs suitable dietary alternatives will be provided.

In FS we will ensure all cooking equipment is clean and sanitised before use and follow management of medication in schools' policy

Children will have their own water bottles available to them. These will be located at base camp or another agreed location where they are accessible by the children.

Hot food and drinks will be temperature checked and cooled, if necessary, by adults before giving to children. All food and drinks will be appropriately stored at a suitable temperature.

Plants and Animals (including insects).

On our FS site there are a range of plants and insects, some of which can sting, scratch and irritate. There are also foxes, hedgehogs and birds. All of these natural elements make for a diverse environment to explore and learn to take care of.

As part of FS, we will help children to know plants which can sting and scratch, on our site these include holly, hawthorn, nettles and brambles in the main. We have a 'no pick' 'no lick' rule in place which includes remembering not to put our hands in our mouths before we have washed them. Hands will be washed before eating, drinking or preparing food and at the end of the session. FS Lead and adults will all help to ensure children are appropriately dressed and have appropriate footwear for the start of the session.

Children will be supported in moving away from stinging animals such as wasps and to leave any fox holes undisturbed. The FS Lead will check for new holes/dens during site check and mark any new boundaries as needed. FS Lead will alert site staff to any faeces found (fox) and they will ensure this is removed prior to the session. As part of FS safety talk the FS lead is to tell children to alert an adult if they find faeces and not to touch. Hands will be washed after any possible contact with faeces.

Before the sessions the FS lead will complete a sitecheck and will remind groups of the rules where necessary and any new information and boundary changes. As part

of the maintenance of the FS site, the FS lead together with site staff and contractors will monitor and maintain paths so that they are free of stinging plants etc. There are regular maintenance checks in place.

The FS lead check with the link-adult that medication and care plans are out with pupils and stored in FS school back or base camp. For FS, at least one member of staff will have suitable first aid training. When working with EYFS, EYFS welfare requirements will be followed. FS lead and other adults/volunteers will provide continual reminders and support as needed by the group.

Dogs and unwanted guests on site

As the FS site is enclosed within the school grounds and only accessible via the main school entrance. Dogs are not allowed onto the school site so it is very improbable that there would be unwanted dogs or guests on site.

As part of the site check, the FS lead checks for fox faeces and will inform site staff who will remove before sessions commence. The same procedure would cover any dog or other faeces.

If offsite, the group would follow the visits policy. When offsite the FS lead will ensure the children know not to run away from dogs but to assume a strong standing stance with arms folded. When offsite, in public, the children will be within visual distance of an adult. The nearest adult will support the child and ask the dog owner to put a lead on their dog and bring them under control. If the dog owner refuses to do this then the adult will signal (using horn or whistle) to bring all children together and inform FS lead.

Once children are all gathered together, FS lead will make a decision about whether it is safe to continue. If necessary, FS lead will inform rangers/land owner and where needed inform or call the police. If it is not safe to continue, the group will return to school.

Where the unwanted guest is an adult, the nearest adult will politely explain that we are using the space for an activity with children and ask if they could use another area. If they are unwilling to do this, the adult will signal, using horn/whistle, for all children and adults to return to base camp and inform the FS lead. If an unknown person attempts to interact with the children the nearest adult will explain that we are doing an outdoor session and that they are an unknown adult, not on our risk assessment and could they please not interact with the children as it is inappropriate.

If they do not comply, the adult will warn that if they do not leave and cease, we will have to phone the police. Again, the horn/whistle will be used to gather children together and once all are accounted for FS lead or adult involved will inform the police or 111 if appropriate. Adults should, if safe, take photographs and note down

a description of the person. Subsequent sessions, FS lead would request community PC or link education officer (or PCSO if available) to accompany the group.

General overview of PPE

An essential part of FS is that everyone comes in suitable clothing and footwear. School provides children with waterproof trousers, waterproof coats and wellingtons in appropriate sizes. Everyone will bring out a full water bottle with them.

There is clear communication with parents reminding them of when FS sessions are and to send children in suitable clothes for the weather with text message reminders which are especially useful in colder or warmer weather, where clothing needs to be adjusted. In cold weather parents are asked to provide warm layers, hats and gloves (not mittens). In warm weather parents are asked to provide light layers, sun cream (and to ensure children can apply themselves) and sunhats (school does have legionnaire sun hats.)

There is a range of more specialist PPE available in suitable sizes for FS. These include:

- Heavy work gloves: suitable for protecting non-dominant hand when cutting, drilling etc for use when gardening if needed.
- Cut gloves: suitable for wearing on non-dominant hand when using a cutting tool like a knife, awl etc
- Goggles: for use when there may be risk of eye injury
- Fire gloves: for use when handling utensils and equipment when cooking.
- Fire safety equipment: including fire blanket and water.
- There will also always be a stocked first aid kit.

Tree Climbing

All adults will have read and understood the associated risk assessments. When supporting children to climb in FS there will be an annual tree survey and adults will ensure climbers are in appropriate clothing and footwear. No scarves, loose clothing or hair that could become entangled.

All children will know they need an adult to supervise climbing activities and if they want to climb, they need to check with an adult first. There will be trees that we have identified together as good for climbing. Use these trees, but still complete visual checks. Where climbing is an offered activity for the session there will be no pressure to climb or encouragement to go higher than is comfortable for the individual.

Check the weather is safe for climbing.

- In wet weather conditions trees, branches, rocks etc can be more slippery.
- limit climbing in windy/gusty conditions or very cold.

Before climbing there needs to be a visual inspection of the tree and the ground underneath the tree for sharp roots, rocks or branches.

Do NOT climb a tree if there is/are:

- broken branches that are hanging lodged in a tree.
- A leaning tree which has air spaces in the soil opposite the tree's leaning direction
- Cracks in the trunk, absence of bark on the trunk or a long streak of missing bark coming down the trunk
- The tree is dead or mostly dead- no foliage in summer and no buds or small twigs in winter
- Branch angles that look out of place or unusual.
- Power lines (often seen more clearly from a distance.)
- Large dead branches in the top of the tree
- Dead branches lying on the ground from the tree.
- The presence of fungus on or near a tree trunk.

When climbing:

- Children are limited to 2m until they have demonstrated competence and then permitted to climb no higher than 3x their height off the ground (FSA guidance).
- allow children to focus on the activity and speak to them calmly
- Get children to 'flag' (verbally or physically) Dead branches and sharps
- Limit numbers of children in any one tree or rock. One child per tree for vertical climbs.
- Children must only climb where they can climb unaided. Do not give 'bunk ups' or allow children to use climbing aids except those approved by FSA which include ratchet straps with climbing handholds fastened to trees.
- Ropes are not to be used in trees.
- maintain 3 points of contact whilst climbing.

Tool use and selecting PPE

Learning to use tools as part of FS enables children to develop a range of skills beyond that of the actual use of the tool. It allows them to learn to manage risk safely, to be independent, to develop their ability to solve problems and to work cooperatively. There are many more benefits including developing gross and fine motor skills, dexterity, coordination resilience, perseverance and responsibility.

The FS lead will train children and adults in the safe use of tools in FS. The FS lead will check tools are safe to use before sessions as needed and only safe tools will be used. FS lead, together with site staff will maintain tools. Each tool has a risk benefit assessment.

Tools will be locked away in the shed between sessions and during sessions tools not in use will be in the shed with the top latch closed. This prevents the door being opened. All will know that tools should not be moved from the shed or designated areas without permission.

There are a range of tools available as part of FS these include:

- Mallets
- Hammers
- Screwdrivers
- Potato peelers
- Knives
- Hand drills
- Palm drills
- Gimlets
- Bradawls
- Saws
- Bow-saws
- Billhook
- Froe
- Loppers
- Secateurs
- Scissors
- Hatchet

When working with tools, gloves should not be worn on the dominant hand or the hand holding the tool as this can cause poor grip and the tool can more easily slip from the hand.

With tools like sharp knives, that can cut or slice, a cut glove should be worn on the non-dominant hand until an appropriate level of competency has been developed. With tools like saws, drills, gimlets etc a heavy work glove should be used on the non-dominant hand to offer protection if the tool slips and to help protect the hand whilst gripping or holding wood.

The children will know how to walk and move with the tools, what they are used for, what to do with them when they need to put them down (but are still working with them) and where to return them too when they are finished working. Children and adults will, in line with risk assessments, be provided with heavy work gloves and cut gloves. Adults will support children with removing and returning tools to sheaths or putting on blade covers or protective equipment for when tools are not in use. When children are able to do this safely then they will do so.

All tools are counted in and out of their storage boxes at the beginning and end of each session. The FS leader will have checked the tools prior to the session but adults should still check for any damage (a tool may have been damaged after being used in the session or during transit)-if in doubt ask the FS leader. The FS leader will

check and clean any tools, which have been used in a session before putting them away. When tools are not in use they will be locked away.

The FS leader will train the children and adults in tool use. This will involve a 'tool-talk' about the tool and 1:1 working to learn how to use the tool safely in line with risk assessments. With all tools the FS lead will introduce the concept of a 'blood bubble' or safety circle. Areas for tool use will be clearly demarcated with a boundary and all participants will know not to enter the tool use area unless invited in.

With some tools, once competence has been achieved, participants will be able to use these outside of designated tool areas for example mallets and pegs for building dens, scissors for cutting string.

If adults see any practice which is unsafe or 'not quite right' they will intervene positively, either offering a reminder or demonstrating or repeating the tool talk for the child or reminding them clearly of what we do (not what we don't) e.g., if someone is running with a whittling knife- [Name of Child] Stop. Remember we walk with the knife, in its sheath, by our side. Can you show me how we do that.....well done. Children will be encouraged to learn tool talks so that they have memorised the way to use the tools.

When tools are used the adult: child ratio will be 1:1 there are 3 exceptions to this:

- Bow saw use-when children are confident and competent the adult: child ratio can be 1:2 with one adult supervising 2 children working cooperatively.
- Potato peeler use for stick whittling-the adult: child ratio can be 1:3. When children are confident and competent the adult: child ratio can be 1:5. 1:3 for the introduction of use.
- Bill hook (or other tools used for splitting wood) use-when children are confident and competent, the adult: child ratio can be 1:2 with one adult supervising 2 children working cooperatively.

Equipment use and selecting PPE

Alongside tools, there is a variety of equipment available at FS. This could include:

- Slack lines
- Ropes
- String
- Beads
- Mud Kitchen
- Tarps
- Sticks
- Pegs and Fastenings
- Paints
- Hammocks
- Hand lenses

- Mini beast tubs
- Clay
- Natural materials
- Buckets
- Bowls
- Spoons

Equipment such as hammocks and slack lines have their own risk assessment and clear rules for use to be followed. Activities have a risk benefit analysis and all adults should have read and understood these before they undertake the activity.

Additional PPE available will include heavy work gloves and goggles. All children will be appropriately dressed and with suitable footwear.

Other equipment present at every session.

There will be a FS bag which will contain:

- ✓ First aid items:
 - ✓ A first aid kit (including list of items it should contain)
 - ✓ A burns kit (including list of items it should contain)
 - ✓ Scissors
 - ✓ Water (1/2 litre designated first aid)
 - ✓ A Carry mat or roll (when offsite)
 - ✓ Consent forms (when offsite)
 - ✓ Emergency Procedures
 - ✓ FS Handbook, essential policies and risk assessments
 - ✓ Summary sheet for children- medicines, allergies etc.
 - ✓ Children's medical supplies (which they are not able to self-administer) this will be in a box similar to the one used in classrooms for easy swapping between groups
- ✓ Wet wipes
- ✓ Emergency fire kit (when offsite)
- ✓ Thermos of hot water (in cold weather conditions when off-site)

Hammocks

The FS lead will ensure hammocks and fastenings are without frays or damage and choose an appropriate site for hammocks to be set up and use appropriate trees. The FS lead will ensure everyone knows the correct way to enter and exit hammocks through demonstration and an adult will supervise children until competency has been achieved.

Hammocks have weight limits and these must not be exceeded.

Hammocks should have only one occupant.

Hammocks should not be pushed, pulled, swung or bounced on.

Children must be able to enter and exit the hammock independently and should not be lifted into a hammock.

For EYFS maximum hammock height (fabric with child in) should not exceed 55cm. This is based on needing crash mats for equipment use over 60cm.

Slack Lines

The FS lead will erect slacklines, following FSA guidance and adhering to insurance requirements and the instructions for setting up provided with the slackline. For EYFS the slack line should be no more than 30cm off the ground. Slack lines will be set up away from trees with low branches and ground that is free from sharp objects and rocks.

Slackline use will be supervised by an adult with an appropriate adult to child ratio to supervise and provide prompt assistance if required. Adults will instruct children on safely getting on and off the slackline and maintaining balance.

The slackline has a weight limit which allows more than one child on it at a time (around 1000 Kg). Initially when using the slackline, the procedure should be one person at a time, supported by an adult 1:1 until appropriate confidence and competence has been gained.

Rope and String Use

Rope and string use within FS is extensive and offers opportunities to develop dexterity, confidence, independence and lots more. Where ropes are used to mark boundaries, FS lead will ensure all know not to move these and they will be brightly coloured.

Where there are areas with guy ropes FS lead will ensure all know to take care and walk in these areas. All adults will model good practice and remind when needed.

There is a specific area for den building using ropes and tarps. Everyone should take extra care in this area, walking and paying attention to ropes which may be at different heights.

When using ropes in dens or otherwise these are simple rules for FS:

- secure loose ends so there are no dangling ropes or strings.
- If using large amounts of force with rope, heavy work gloves need to be used.
- ensure no damage to rope before use with visual check
- Do not use damaged rope.
- do not tie or wrap rope around ourselves or others.
- Ensure no one swings rope in an unsafe way
- ensure appropriate rope for task

Digging

When digging, children should use an appropriate tool and gloves if needed. Children need to return tools and gloves to designated area. This is a really good habit for the children to learn which feeds into all of the tool use in FS

We will have designated areas for digging where we will not disturb seeds or damage roots. Children will be taught that if they find roots, they should replace the dirt carefully and find another area. In order to keep paths safe, children should not dig on paths. We will return areas to the way we found them when digging.

Carrying and Transporting Materials

FS Lead and other adults will ensure that all participants follow the school's manual handling and lifting policy. Often young children naturally lift correctly. Where the weight is appropriate children will be encouraged to roll and pull objects using rope as a method of transportation.

When transporting sticks longer than our arms, we will drag them. When transporting materials or tools children will be encouraged to walk and look for hazards on the ground as they go. As well as being aware of other children and adults.

Blindfolds

Activities using a blindfold are supervised and supported by an adult. No one is pressured into participating in a blindfold activity. It is an invitation and no is a fine answer.

When demonstrating an activity using blindfolds, other adults will where possible be used. Where appropriate competence has not been demonstrated, blindfold activities will be carried out on suitable ground for the level of competence e.g., flat ground or away from low branches. Activities should be set up away from stinging plants and spiky plants and trees.

Fire

Use of fire within FS will be done in line with risk benefit assessments and all adults should have read and understood these.

Siting and Procedures

When siting a fire, the FS leader will check the ground to make sure it is fairly level, clear area, free of trips and hazards. The FS leader will also check that the soil type is suitable for fire use (not peaty, fluffy, woody, with deep leaf litter). We will only light a fire in areas where we have prior permission and we will clear any ground cover (brambles, nettles), fill any holes, remove and overhanging branches and leaf litter.

The fire pit will have a layer of logs or rocks surrounding it, around a metre square. If rocks are used, care will be taken to ensure they are not porous rocks as these could explode when heated. There will be a distance of at least 1.5m-2m between the fire and surrounding log seats.

The fire circle will be made of a circle of logs (or other suitable seating) and will have a clear entry, exit and fire exit as well as gaps between the logs (except the 2 logs at the entry point). The logs or seating will be an appropriate height for the group to step over when sitting down.

When approaching the fire pit, you should enter at the entry point, walk anti-clockwise around the outside of the logs, step over a log and be seated. If you wish to leave the fire circle you stand, step over your log, walk anticlockwise until you reach the exit and leave. This ensures a one-way system so there should be no collisions between people leaving and entering the fire circle.

Once children are seated around the fire, they should ask an adult for permission to move. Children may be invited to approach the fire. This will be with an adult to child ratio of 1:1. This can rise to a maximum ratio of 1:4 where the adult is confident of children's competency and ability to follow and knowledge of fire safety rules. When at the fire, children and adults will use the respect position (one knee) Children will be shown the correct way to add fuel to a fire and adults will talk through how they are using the fire and why so that the children can see and hear a model of good practice.

Before lighting a fire, the FS leader and adults will ensure that there is a bucket of cool, fresh water in case of an accident so a burn can be fully immersed and a first aid kit. There will also be a fire blanket hanging near the fire circle and a bucket of water in case it is necessary to extinguish the fire quickly. In addition, they will check that there is no debris from other people using the fire, which may be hazardous.

If the children are practising fire lighting, this may initially be in metal containers using limited cotton wool and tinder, under adult supervision of the group or in the fire pit. (1:5 but with only 1 striker and 1 child attempting to light 1 fire). Adults will ensure the children are aware that metal

If there is smoke, adults will advise children to try turning their heads, closing or covering their eyes whilst we all count to 20, putting a hand across their face. If they need to move away, they will do so calmly and safely following the exit rule.

A fire pit area will be established within the first few sessions. Children and adults will be made aware of the rules of use. These will be reinforced and it is expected that everyone (children and adults) will politely remind of what we should do.

Once lit, a fire will **NEVER BE LEFT UNATTENDED**. If there is an emergency the fire should be completely extinguished using the water and fire blanket.

To extinguish the fire (at the end of a session), splash water on the fire, use a large stick to move around the coals and continue adding water. For any larger pieces that remain (ideally it should burn down to ashes) knock off any white and splash more water. Continue to do this until there is no more steam or sizzling. Continue to turn over the embers and add water until the fire is totally cold and out.

You should make sure that any evidence of fire is removed after you have used a fire, unless you have a permanent fire pit or have agreed that it will remain with the land owner/manager. Look carefully and make sure that the area looks pretty much as you found it, with no evidence you've been there at all!

Lighting a fire

There are lots of different methods to light a fire, some easier than others initially and each suitable to different conditions. In FS our main methods initially will be to use a fire striker with natural tinder or wood wool.

Fire strikers provide a spark and heat, which hopefully will light the tinder and start the fire. One real advantage with fire strikers over matches is that even if a child manages to get one (perhaps at home) it is very unlikely they will cause a fire with one whereas using matches could much more easily lead to a fire in those circumstances.

Campfire cooking

Any cooking done at FS will be done in line with risk assessments and with a dynamic risk assessment on the day to account for any changes in weather, site, the group etc. The school policy for food hygiene and food hygiene regulations will be adhered to.

The FS leader will review any cooking based activities for each group to ensure that they meet any specific needs such as: religious requirements (halal, vegetarian), moral or lifestyle (vegetarian, vegan) or medical needs (allergies). We will review any cooking planned for each program and plan for cooking that does not include any foods which children are allergic to.

Food can be checked by cutting open to check it is cooked through or by using a temperature spike if one is available. Food will be passed to children at an

appropriate temperature or children will be taught appropriate ways to cool and check the temperature of food is safe to eat.

If we use skewers, we will use green wood with the bark removed by scraping or the FS leader will bring pre-soaked skewers.

When a Kelly Kettle is used at FS it will be on a flat surface within the fire pit in line with the risk assessment (making sure the cork is out). Adults will model how to light the tinder in the pan and how to safely feed the fire by dropping a stick, which is held at one end, in from the side. Children may be invited to feed the fire with an adult ration of 1:1. If the fire does not burn out it will be extinguished with water.

Before any cooking session the school and the FS leader will review the ingredients. Parents will be informed that cooking food will be part of FS activities via the information leaflet and school website.

Activities and Games

There are a huge range of activities and games that could form part of a FS session. Each session builds on the last, using the observations to identify challenges and areas for development for the group and individuals as a whole and also where individuals may have shown particular interest or aptitude. Activities may include:

- Shelter building
- Using tools
- Laying and lighting fires
- Collecting tinder, kindling and sticks
- Studying wildlife
- Playing team and group games
- Environmental art
- Solving problems
- Learning a new skill
- Teaching someone else a skill
- Sculpting with natural materials
- Creating simple furniture or structures on a small and large scale
- Tying knots
- Cooking
- Making drinks
- Using a Kelly kettle
- Exploring using our senses
- Trust games
- Developing stories and working role (similar to mantle of the expert)
- Using a range of dramatic devices e.g., meeting imaginary character, receiving a request for help, taking on a role, hot seating
- Playing with and using sticks
- Tree Climbing
- Collecting wood

- Carrying and transporting materials
- Sourcing and sorting materials
- Using rope bridges and slacklines
- Using ropes to climb slopes
- Digging
- Planting

The list could go on and on! Essential to the FS program is that the FS leader responds to the needs of the group and as a new activity is begun the FS leader establishes any rules with the group, agreeing them together. Where a particular rule is for safety, the FS leader will explain the rule, ask if everyone has understood, and ask for everyone to agree to follow the rule. Activities and games will be appropriately risk assessed.

Insurance Coverage.

Activities undertaken as part of the school curriculum are covered under the Local Authority (Abbey is an LA maintained school) insurance which includes public liability cover.

The school's educational curriculum includes forestry activities such as use of tools, climbing at height, rope swings, creating fire pits etc. The school has Forest School Guidance in place together with risk assessments which are reviewed regularly.

Lost or missing person action plan

The onsite provision is enclosed and without public access. It is unlikely a child would be lost. This plan details action for both onsite and offsite missing persons.

As soon as a child is found or thought to be missing, inform the FS leader.
They will:

1. Use the horn to signal return to base camp by all children and adults. Gather away from fire area
2. FS leader will complete a headcount check
3. If a child is missing FS lead will stay with children and supervise the remaining group (ensuring maintenance of adult to child ratios in line with policies- Where FS lead is a teacher, they can supervise up to 30 children) whilst other adults search the area using 1,2,3 where are you.
4. Adult supervising children should ask them to remain silent and not answer so we can all listen for the lost child's reply.
5. When offsite if the child is not found in the immediate vicinity, the FS Leader will call the school to alert them, they will then contact the police and parents. School number: 0121 429 1689 (infants) 0121 429 2700
6. Adults will escort remaining children to the minibus.

7. School will advise who/whether to remain onsite for the police. If it is safe to do so adults may recommence searching near the FS site.
8. If on-site senior staff member would be informed immediately, they would instruct staff.
9. Remaining children would be returned to class by link-adult.
10. If it is safe to do so adults may recommence searching near the FS site and school buildings.

Emergency or serious incident plan

The Federation of Abbey Infant and Junior School has policies which set out clear statements of intent with regard to the school's approach. There are a number of policies which are particularly relevant to FS which include:

- The Business and Emergency Continuity Plan
- First Aid Policy
- Educational Visits Policy

In the case of an emergency, you should blow an emergency whistle or horn. All of the group will know that this means find an adult and reassemble as a group.

In the event of an emergency the FS leader will resume control of the group. The FS leader will delegate responsibility when necessary to all accompanying adults.

Assess the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible.

The first member of staff to the casualty with first aid training should assess the casualty.

All other adults informed quickly. One adult to use 1,2,3, come to me to assemble children safely and away from the incident and to remain calm and in control of the children. If on school site and this is a serious injury (requiring an ambulance) this adult will take the children back to the main building. The FS session will cease.

Another adult should remain with the first aider. They will get medical forms (when offsite) and first aid kit from FS bag.

Establish (check) names of casualty, administer any necessary first aid (check for any allergies or medical conditions)

Phone for an ambulance if the injury or illness cannot be treated with first aid on site and send for a first aider with 3-day HSE approved first aid at work.

The second adult should do this, not the first aider.

- Dial 999 and request ambulance.
- Give location and location of site entrance
- Give brief details of injury or illness.

- Speak calmly and slowly.
- If onsite send for school first aider with 3-day HSE approved first aid at work.
- If offsite phone school to inform them of the injury and that an ambulance has been called. (Phone numbers Infant:0121 429 1689 Junior:0121 429 2700)
- School, office staff will then call to inform parents and 3-day HSE first aider will speak to them.

Ensure there is an adult at the site entrance to direct the ambulance.

If it is a death or serious injury, school will follow The Business and Emergency Continuity Plan

Ensure that a member of staff accompanies any child casualties to the hospital with any relevant medical information and consent forms.

Write down accurately all events and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence.

Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident.

Complete an accident/incident report form as soon as possible

Keep receipts for any expenses incurred.

N.B. No one in the group should speak to the media. The names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could result in distress to their families. Any enquiries from journalists must be referred to the head teacher.

No one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, or sign anything relating to accident liability without clear advice from the LA or relevant Union.

Plan for what happens if FS leader or other adult has an accident.

If the FS lead has an accident requiring minor first aid and ratios can be maintained, the session can continue and FS lead will re-join the session. It may be necessary or appropriate to alter the activity.

If the FS lead or any other adult has an accident which requires first aid and ratios cannot be maintained then the children will be gathered together by remaining adult and returned to main classroom.

If FS lead or other adult has a serious accident then the serious incident and emergency plan should be followed, as detailed above.

Safeguarding Policy Section

The Federation of Abbey Infant and Junior School has policies which set out clear statements of intent with regard to the school's approach. There are a number of policies which are particularly relevant to FS which include:

- Safeguarding
- KCSIE



Work ratios of staff involved

FS sessions will always have an appropriate adult to child ratio, in line with the statutory EYFS framework and staffing ratios as defined by the education act and the welfare requirements of the EYFS framework. FS sessions will include a link adult from the base class and a FS leader. Wherever possible FS sessions will run with at least three adults (including the FS leader and the link adult).

Use of photographs and digital recording media

We follow the school's policy for the use of photographs and videos. Consent is gained or denied at the start of the academic year and lists of children are available from the office. These lists will be obtained and checked prior to FS session. Some parents are happy to give permission for use of images or videos for specific purposes (such as FS blog on class pages). Class teachers or FS lead will speak to individual parents where needed.

Visitors and volunteers to FS and Enhanced DBS Checks

At FS school we will follow the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory legislation. All staff and volunteers will have completed the appropriate induction programs. All regular volunteers will have completed an induction program and have an enhanced DBS check. All adult members of staff have current enhanced DBS checks completed. All participating adults will have read the relevant risk assessments and signed the form to show this.

As the adult support for FS is made up of school staff, they are all aware of the importance of confidentiality. Should there be any additional volunteers (parents, students) then confidentiality will have been covered in their induction. All visitors, unless enhanced DBS has been provided, will be accompanied by a member of school staff. No adult will be given un supervised access if they have not had an Enhanced DBS check.

Disclosure recording and reporting

Because of the ethos and atmosphere that FS creates, when children feel comfortable and have built a relationship with the adults in an environment where risk taking and trust is encouraged children may disclose information, which they may otherwise have kept to themselves.

Any adult finding a child is telling them about something, which causes concern, should follow the guidance in the school safeguarding policy.

If a member of staff is concerned, the same safeguarding procedure as detailed in the policy should be adhered to.

All staff should listen to a pupil and record, verbatim, what is said. This must be recorded on a school 'Record of Concern' form. Should the record be a low-level concern then it can be left on a DSL's desk. If the concern is of a more serious nature, an adult should seek a DSL without delay and if none are available use one of the school's four Assistant Head Teachers. All staff should follow the TEDO principle when exploring with children any disclosure.

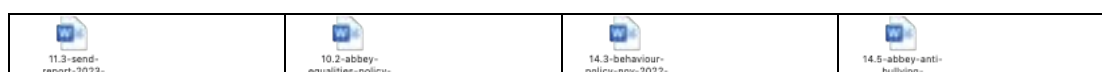
- Tell
- Explain
- Describe
- Outline

Using these prompts may help to avoid leading questions. Mirroring back what the child has said can be a useful strategy. All of the full guidance can be found in the school's statutory Safeguarding policy.

Equal Opportunities and Behaviour Policy Section

The Federation of Abbey Infant and Junior School has policies which set out clear statements of intent with regard to the school's approach. There are a number of policies which are particularly relevant to FS which include:

- Inclusion and accessibility (within the same policy)
- Behaviour management (including anti-bullying)
- Equalities policy (including diversity in doc 10.2 icon below)
- Anti-racism (see section in behaviour policy).



All adults involved with FS should familiarise themselves with these policies. All adults must ensure that they have read and understood the contents of this handbook and risk assessments. All adults must ensure they have read the risk assessments appropriate to sessions they are supporting. Provided below are the additional measures regarding FS sessions.

The Inclusion (including SEND) policy defines that no pupil will be excluded access to the school's provision and that reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that all can access the FS area and provision. Therefore, when looking at access to the FS area, the needs of all pupils with SEND will be taken into account and reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that they have equality of opportunity to access the same learning and play opportunities as those without SEND. This may include modified, scaffolded or differentiated tasks; modified resources or additional time; it may also include 1:1 adult support. These modifications will be agreed with the SENCO & class teacher responsible (or link adult).

The accessibility policy ensures that no pupil or adult will be disadvantaged from using the school facilities and access to the curriculum. The FS site is equally accessible to all pupils regardless of cognition; there are some limitations for those who may require assisted technology for movement. However, with the small exception of some specialist activities; reasonable adjustments can be made to the place, space, equipment and guidance to ensure that 95% of the opportunities are available. A notable exception would be climbing to a child restricted by (for example) leg braces.

The behaviour management policy is a school wide, commonly understood document. By following the school policy in the FS area/activities - pupils and staff will experience the same level of consistency and commonly accepted values that run across the school. In FS, it is unlikely that pupils will be able to use 'going for gold' boards where they move from 'zones of regulation' up or down dependent upon the behaviours exhibited.

However, all adults in the FS area can draw upon the same common language used in the classroom space, focussing upon the positive behaviours and offering guidance and modelling where needed. Upon returning to the classroom, it may be that FS leaders or linked adults ask children to 'move themselves' up the board because of what they have demonstrated.

One notable FS difference is the signalling of the end of activities in the wide-open FS space that is different to in the classroom. These expectations will be clearly communicated to pupils and link adults. Some pupils may require adjusted expectations as defined in their SEND profile. These will be agreed with the SENCO/class teacher/ link adult as appropriate. The behaviour management policy also details how any incident of bullying may be dealt with - there will be no different treatment in the FS area for this aspect. For the few children who may require handling, this too is detailed in the school's behaviour policy. There will be no different treatment in the FS area.

The equalities policy details how the school will ensure that the protected characteristics are promoted and treated equitably. In the FS area this means that all pupils, staff regardless of their protected characteristic will be treated equitably with the same opportunities afforded to all. In the curriculum FS equalities consideration will be given to the range of models, images, equipment, stories that are used. For example, it may be that the mud kitchen will also contain cooking equipment commonly found from the Asian continent; or that stories used will reflect upon the broad ethnicities found in the Abbey Federation school.

Environmental Policy Section

Underpinning FS there is the development of a community where trust, respect and responsibility are essential. At FS we endeavour to apply these principles and values throughout all of our work, including our use of the environment. Respect and responsibility for the environment and site should be embedded within our practice, both with the children or group and as practitioners and adults.

In order to achieve this, we will carry out an initial site assessment, taking an overview of the site and then looking at identifying the flora and fauna of the site, soil and any geological information, any archaeological considerations, finding out about previous woodland management and usage, current usage and the impact of any additional noise or activity at the site. We will work closely with the landowner and manager when the site is not the school's own and will consider other stakeholders or users.

After this initial assessment, we will evaluate any areas of the site, which may be of special importance, whether locally or nationally, or simply features of the site, which are important to the stakeholders. Following this we will look to consider what the site would probably be like without the project and consider whether any areas of the project need to be amended or altered in light of the site survey.

Next, using an overview of the project including its timescale and overarching objectives we will look at the possible impacts on the site. This impact assessment will always include ground, field, shrub and canopy as well as additional areas which may be important or specific to the site e.g., Dead wood, foot paths and will consider the range of activities we would expect to undertake at FS.

Whilst the activities we would undertake are dynamic and respond to the needs of the group there are certain activities you would expect to be included within an extended program (e.g., Fires, whittling, den building, environmental art etc.). Furthermore, the impact assessment will consider not only direct effects (the effect of clearing an area for fire use) and the cumulative impacts (e.g., More foot traffic over weeks could impact on paths or the ground and field layer but also less obvious indirect effects. Each of these activities, for each area, will be identified as creating a positive or negative impact, a time frame (short, medium or long-term) will be identified and an assessment of the permanency of the impact (permanent, temporary or reversible.)

We will then create a plan, which will identify how we will manage and mitigate the negative impacts to the site and how we can use the project to make positive impacts to the site. This plan will consider what will be done in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd years of the project and identify ways in which we will monitor the effectiveness of the measures put in place by the plan. The evaluation of the project and effectiveness of the plan would then feed into a further plan, following the same process as described above.

We have an initial site assessment, an impact assessment and a three-year plan for our school site. Which detail our plans for the site and how we will mitigate impacts on the forest floor etc. All adults should be familiar with these and especially the impact assessment. It is important to understand that many of our activities can have a detrimental impact on our woodland if we don't take care and put some thought into managing what we do. This ensures our woodland flourishes and remains part of our school and community in the future. All adults will support and model good practice and the actions outlined in this plan.

Activity	State what the impact is and whether it is positive or negative	Actions to reduce impact (if required)
Walking/ running/ hiding	Damage to plant and grasses. N	Have some paths cut into areas to protect longer grasses, herb layer and support the development of rides. Identify areas in need of protection and clearly ID these as out of bounds so children know the boundaries of the areas we are using.
Digging	Damage to leaf litter, damage to ground. Potential damage to roots of plants and trees nearby. N	Choose specific areas and rotate if needed. Teach children to ID roots and to recover and move to another area if needed. Teach children to replace what they have used and leave no trace.
Handwashing	Grey water creating mud and water that cannot drain N Grey water disposal could leave plants waterlogged or if same plants could damage over repeated 'watering' N	Have a container to catch grey water and dispose of down drains. Create a hand washing area that has a deeper layer of gravel (on the mown grass area) to allow for drainage. Use grey water to water different plants or areas each time.
Making Mud/ mud kitchen	Digging and scraping back the ground layer to bare soil. N Picking of plants and leaves from herb layer could damage plants, reduce food sources for animal species. N	Teach children about looking on the ground first for leaves and responsible picking. Help them understand the impact of picking lots of one thing. Grow some plants (perhaps on the mown area) that are specifically for the mud kitchen or for picking and establish rules for using responsibly. Ensure they know how to pick one small part and not pull up by the roots. Only to take what they need (up to a maximum amount/percentage). Encourage return of mud/soil from where it was found at the end. Teach to identify more prevalent plants that we can pick with a much lower impact. Teach to leave no trace.
Collecting leaves, flowers, twigs for crafts	Removal of dead wood Damage to plants over collecting and damage to plant species taking 'live' twigs, snapping of branches rather than cutting, Scraping off bark	Teach children about looking on the ground first for leaves and responsible picking. Help them understand the impact of picking lots of one thing. Grow some plants (perhaps on the mown area) that are specifically for the mud kitchen or for picking and establish rules for using responsibly. Ensure they know how to pick one small part and not pull up by the roots. Only to take what they need (up to a maximum amount/percentage). Teach to identify more prevalent plants that we can pick with a much lower impact. Have agreed deadwood piles and areas that we don't take from. Teach how to identify 'dead branches in understory and when small ones can be snapped without damage to plant. Teach how to make angled cuts to prevent potential damage from water etc. Provide and maintain a supply of twigs etc. If needed to supplement what is available
Slack lines/ropes on trees	erosion and damage from footfall N erosion and damage from footfall N Damage to tree trunks where slack lines and ropes are attached N	Choose suitable areas for siting. Use protective measures like carpet, thick fabric between rope/slackline to protect trees. Take down ropes/slacklines when they are out of use for potentially longer periods. Regular checks and monitoring of trees used. Check suitability of tree for purpose and potential load.

Activity	State what the impact is and whether it is positive or negative	Actions to reduce impact (if required)
Collecting firewood	Reducing deadwood Footfall for collecting wood may damage herb layer Thinning of canopy/understory when removing dead twigs from understory P Removal of wood for fuel N Removal of wood for fuel N	Bring in fuel from external sources. Manage the collection of tinder and small fuel from the site for minimal impact.
Den Building	Footfall, erosion of ground layer. Hammering in of pegs to soil, could leave holes or exposed roots. N Damage from using and siting dens N Cutting larger poles from existing shrubs and trees. N Attaching rope to trunks and branches, friction damage; damage from pulling/weight; damage from ropes being left up. N	Rotate areas used for den building. This would require another cleared area but could possibly be achieved through adaptation of the tarmac ride. Where ropes are strung between trees, check trees, use protective layer between tree and rope; take down when not in use for longer periods. Supplement the branches available with supplies from other areas-gardeners can often provide us with branches etc from work they do in other places on trees
Planting saplings	Could lead to reduction in light levels for herb layer Could lead to more competition in the understory Could lead to extended area of understory and gentler transitions Increased species diversity and food and habitat sources Over time could lead to a larger-areas with a higher canopy	Considered planting and as trees mature, introduce some form of coppicing or thinning to help create opportunities for herb layer development. Use of native species. Consider maximum height and spread desired and choose and maintain appropriate tree species.
Building mini beast house	Loss of whatever the footprint for the minibeast house is to the ground layer. N Use of twigs, deadwood etc to add to construction of minibeast house. N increased habitat for invertebrates. P Increased space for overwintering of invertebrates. P Increased species diversity. P Damage to path from footfall whilst making will prevent herb layer from growing where it is sited N increased animals that consume plants in the herb layer. N	Site in an area that does not have a herb layer, perhaps under the shaded of a tree, towards bottom of slope. Assess how much deadwood can be used form the forest. Either look at replenishing from other sources or bring in wood and supplies to use.
Making birdfeeders	Food dropping to the floor onto the ground layer N/P Growth of unwanted plant species from bird seed mix Damage whilst hanging from trees N Increased number of birds P Increased number of squirrels N	Use hanging pine cones with vegi lard and use a no grow seed mix
Planting seeds (native wild flowers)	Increased species diversity in the herb layer P Increased insect diversity P	Choose native woodland flowers Use planters for other flowers along fence areas of grassed area.

Activity	State what the impact is and whether it is positive or negative	Actions to reduce impact (if required)
Having a bell tent	<p>Loss of ground layer where footprint is</p> <p>Loss of herb layer where tent is sited.</p> <p>Loss of canopy if trees need cutting back to make room and safe</p>	<p>Site on the short-grassed areas, close to the school buildings.</p> <p>Take down over longer periods of no use.</p>
Creating a tool use area	<p>Impact of footfall on ground layer, herb layer</p> <p>Impact of footfall on herb layer getting to tool area</p> <p>Impact of cutting back herb layer to make space for tool area</p> <p>Impact on shrub and understory of clearing any smaller trees to make space</p> <p>Impact of clearing any branches that overhang to prevent hazards.</p>	<p>We could site this on an area that is suitable along the tarmac path and look to creating an area there where there would be no impact on the herb, shrub, understory or canopy layer.</p> <p>We could rotate sites to allow time for ground recovery.</p> <p>We could have a permanent site and take action to improve the herb layers and plant and seed other areas.</p> <p>Create cut paths through areas with a herb layer we are trying to protect, preserve or establish</p>
Looking for mini beasts	<p>Digging, disturbing the ground and soil layers. N</p> <p>Disturbance to herb layer potential damage to plants. Trampling of plants. N</p> <p>Moving of deadwood like logs to look underneath N</p> <p>Digging could prevent seed germination at certain times of year. N</p> <p>Possible identification of any pests. P</p>	<p>Limit digging to certain areas and rotate these.</p> <p>Move digging away from areas where we are seeding or growing.</p> <p>Move digging to turf/grassed area next to forest and have some turf we lift and replace when looking for worms.</p> <p>Introduce a garden area where we can dig and know where is planted etc.</p> <p>Teach children to return deadwood and anything moved back carefully to preserve the microhabitat.</p>
Having a fire	<p>Clearing an area of ground back to soil to have a fire removes the ground layer. N</p> <p>Damage to soil/ground from burning. N</p> <p>Need to clear the herb layer for the area for the fire and around it. N</p> <p>Understory may need to be cut back to provide adequate safe space for fire and seating group.N</p>	<p>Use areas that may need clearing.</p> <p>Keep one area for fire to allow planting and development of other areas.</p> <p>Use a raised fire bowl.</p> <p>Review impact and move fire circle to a different area and allow sufficient time for recovery. The area would benefit from active seeding, planting etc.</p>
Planting a hedge	<p>Will shade the ground layer. Falling leaves should help build up under the hedge. P</p> <p>Will prevent a herb layer from growing where they are planted. N</p> <p>Management of hedge may cause an area along the hedge to be damaged by footfall. N</p> <p>This could create a natural path. N</p> <p>Will add to species diversity of plants in the understory P</p>	<p>Plant hedge along boundary where it will add to species diversity, provide more available food sources for birds and other animals as well as potential for foraging.</p> <p>Manage the hedge to ensure it does not encroach on the space and into the neighbouring herb layer.</p> <p>Allow time between cutting back and maintaining the hedge to allow the areas to recover.</p>
Clearing nettles/brambles to make space for tool areas, den areas and opening up some areas more of the woodland	<p>Loss of these plants to the herb and shrub layer N</p> <p>Loss of these plants as a habitat and food source for animals. N</p> <p>Provides opportunities for some more diverse plants to establish in the herb layer. P</p> <p>Allows for the creation of pathways cut through the herb and shrub layer so over time the herb layer can re-develop and allow access.</p> <p>Thinning or loss of some younger trees. N</p> <p>Opens up the understory layer and this may allow more light into some areas P</p> <p>Makes access to some trees much easier to allow to check for health and prune appropriately. P</p> <p>Cutting back of larger tree branches could mean loss of canopy N which also means more light P</p>	<p>Leave a balance of areas with nettles and brambles.</p> <p>Re-plant and re-seed and use clearing as opportunity to add to plant species diversity in the herb layer.</p> <p>Maintain keeping some areas clear of brambles and nettles to allow for more species diversity and smaller herb level plants and planting.</p> <p>Identify any areas that could be coppiced so that there are denser areas to give greater diversity in habitat and species potential</p>

Activity	State what the impact is and whether it is positive or negative	Actions to reduce impact (if required)
Creating a mud slide	Damage to ground, removal of ground layer, erosion of soil, water doesn't drain away easily. N Damage to herb layer of plants and possible removal of seeds within soil. N Damage to shallow roots. N	Site should be chosen carefully to ensure no damage to herb layer plants that are visible. Look for ways in following sessions to help recovery of the area e.g. no use,
Using rope on trees to help climb steeper areas	Damage to ground layer with footfall. N Damage to herb layer with trampling. N Damage to tree from attaching rope. N	Padding on tree to protect from damage from rope (old blanket, carpet, etc). Choose site and have a clearly defined climbing area to minimise damage to surrounding area. Establish a pathway for use to get to and from climbing to protect and maintain areas.
Making story stones, stone villages, crafts using stones.	Removal of stones from ground N Digging to remove stones N	Bring in stones instead of using from the site. Add stones to the site so they can be collected with minimal impact. Return stones or return an alternative stone. Discourage digging for stones and use surface stones.
Creating living willow structures or arched over pathways	Shading of herb layer N Deciduous so allows light at certain times of year P Increased species diversity P Increased competition depending on where it is sited. Cuttings from maintaining can provide craft materials P	Siting on the grassed area would allow for development without impact on existing canopy, herb or ground in the wooded area. Regular management and pruning would be required to prevent them from spreading beyond their intended footprint
Creating a larger fire circle	Removal of ground layer back to soil N More deadwood in the form of log seats P Loss of herb layer N Loss of understory to make a clear space. N	Current area is grass, expand this for minimal species diversity loss, taking space from the turf area.
Growing craft willow	Loss of herb layer where they are sited N Increased species diversity as there is no willow currently. P Potential loss of understory to clear space N Craft materials available for use without depleting forest resources P	Site on area that is a mowed grass area.
Having cut pathways for access through some areas	Damage to ground layer from footfall N more limited as there are pathways for most used routes P Cutting back/loss of herb layer N Limits damage to herb layer and allows areas to be undisturbed P Cutting back loss of shrub/understory layer N	Choose pathways carefully; review seasonally or yearly to allow areas to regenerate. Manage pathways to keep them clear and useable.

We will utilise connections with gardeners and local woodlands to source materials like larger tree trunks, branches for projects etc where our woodland would be negatively impacted by us using resources from it. Managing the collection of natural resources so that the woodland is not depleted is an important part of our approach.

When we have maintenance work, we will look to see how can use any ‘waste’ to help support species diversity, create new habitats or for use in activities like den building. We will protect specific areas of the field and ground layer by having areas we don’t walk or collect or dig. These will be clearly identified within our site boundaries.

We also have a three-year stewardship plan which is for the period 2023/24-2026/27. This details how we will develop and improve the area for future users.

Current Situation	Target Situation	Measures to be taken	Timescale	How to Involve Learners
Limited species diversity in the herb layer	Wider range of species across the site	Planting of bulbs to naturalise Expansion/improvement of longer grassed area to include wildflowers Clearing of areas of bramble to allow for more developed herb layer	Year 1: Plant bulbs in some shaded areas for naturalising Clear some bramble and nettle areas. Remove hogweed. Seed longer grass area to include more wildflowers Year 2: Review cleared areas. Maintain clearing of nettles, brambles, hog weed from these areas. Create scalloped edge to area where woodland and mown grass connect. Widen the longer herb layer to allow for more gradual shift from woodland to short grass. Add wildflower mix and seed this area Year 3: Review cleared areas. Maintain clearing of nettles, brambles. Maintain wild flower areas. Look at species which are self-seeding.	Involved in the planting and protecting of areas. Involved in the monitoring of species we have seen in the woods over time
Limited numbers of bird species seen or heard visiting	Wider range of bird species visiting the site	Creation of natural and native hedging along some borders with plants that provide opportunities for habitat and food. Creating and maintaining bird feeders.	Year 1: Hedge planting. Add bird feeders and maintain Year 2: Continue to extend if more areas are clear. Maintain current hedge. review bird feeders and squirrels. Consider adding nest boxes Year Maintain hedge, pruning in March to allow max time for birds and wildlife to nest and feed. Clear and check any nest boxes before re-siting.	Planting hedges Making pine cone bird feeders and hanging Bird watching to look for different species Learning to ID birds from bird song.
Two overgrown fire pit areas which are no longer fit for purpose	A safe, suitable fire pit area. One should be suitable for erecting a tarp to cover if needed.	Clear space of suitable diameter, move logs and re site. Create wooden boundary. Bark the area. Ensure there is clear entrance and exit and children can walk around tree stumps. Purchase fire pit, fire lighting equipment, logs etc.	Year 1: Clear and create 1 fire pit area. Clear the second area of logs. Year 2: Maintain fire pit site. review if a second area is needed and tarp or cover was needed during year one. Feed this into plans. Create a log store. Year 3: Maintain fire pit area.	Moving logs Adding bark Maintaining the fire circle

Current Situation	Target Situation	Measures to be taken	Timescale	How to Involve Learners
Small rope between two trees to attach dens to on sloped area currently.	Setting up a den building area with suitable resources	Identify possible spaces on site. Cut, acquire suitable resources including branches, rope, clips/pegs. mallets, tarps.	Year 1: Clear spaces to allow access to other areas. ID potential den building sites. Create one area. Year 2: Review impact of den building and whether to move sites to a different place in Y2. Consider also if there are sufficient opportunities for dens to be built with tarps, branches. Year 3: Look at impact of den building, assess and move, create second area.	Cutting branches to size Making pegs
No opportunities for tree climbing, balancing or building strength in arms legs etc readily available	Opportunities for physical development suited to EYFS including climbing, slacklines, rope walk up bank.	Identify potential trees Set up slacklines /ropes/equipment and ensure trees are protected. Have suitable equipment including hammocks Take down when not in use Safety checks before use.	Year Identify safe spaces for slacklines, rope climb and hammock. Find about about rules for adding hand and footholds to trees. Monitor trees Year 2: Replace any equipment as needed. Re-assess locations after assessing any impact. Re-site or maintain manage current sittings. Check for any naturally developing 'climbing trees' prune existing trees with some in mind for climbing. Year 3: Maintain and monitor	Use only.
Lots of damage to forest floor from only having a small area available and other areas not able to be accessed. Trampled herb layers due to lack of clear path through	Pathways cut away with herb/shrub layer either side to allow access to areas and connect areas.	Identify areas to clear of bramble. nettle and hog weed. Clear areas. Connect with pathways	Year Cleared areas and some pathways Year 2: Have identified areas we can develop further, any additional or alternative pathways. Cut back bramble, nettle, hogweed. Year 3: Maintain areas free of nettle and bramble and hogweed.	Understand why we are using pathways able to ID nettles, hogweed and brambles and tell FS lead if they are spotted to help with keeping them within specific areas
Roped off tool area is overgrown, lots of new sapling and herb layer growth. The understory canopy is dense enough to make standing difficult with no room or space to safely use tools.	Set up a designated area for tool use. This would need to have shelter of some sort (from trees or tarp) to allow work in light drizzle/rain.	Identify suitable area. If necessary clear. Make safe and clearly demarcate.	Year 1: Area identified and cleared Year 2: Review area. Did it have sufficient cover? Space? Maintain or move Year Review, maintain, remove	Help with clearing Help demarcating the area

Current Situation	Target Situation	Measures to be taken	Timescale	How to Involve Learners
No minibeast houses or known piles of deadwood. There is overgrown dead wood along almost the entire back border which means this isn't accessible at all for maintenance of trees or for potential use	Minibeast house set up to encourage more bugs and to allow for observation. Two could be created on in sun and one in shade Log piles that are to be left to rot.	Identify suitable area Have suitable supplies including bricks, larger flatter pieces of wood or slabs. Have some hollow sticks and a variety of materials to create different habitats within the minibeast house.	Year 1: mini-beast house 1 sited and 1 deadwood pile Year 2: Second house sited and log pile created. Check first house and add too, amend as needed. Year 3: Maintain and monitor	Help cutting sticks to size moving and creating layers and building structure Creation of log piles. Moving sticks Identifying invertebrates seen

The schools purchasing agreements are in part defined by Sandwell LA audit team, local governance arrangements and the DfE's guidance on securing best value. Sandwell's Schools' Financial Value Standard (SFVS) provides a framework to support schools in purchasing. Whilst sustainability and local purchasing is a consideration, this must be balanced against securing the best value and most appropriate purchase for the school. For example, a local company offering to fell a tree at twice the price of a bigger regional provider would not provide sufficient justification for the increased cost of using a local provider. However, where possible to reduce carbon emissions and global footprint, local providers and companies will be the preferred solution and choice wherever practicable.

A4 Emergency or serious incident plan

- 1. In the case of an emergency, you should blow an emergency whistle or horn. All of the group will know that this means find an adult and reassemble as a group.**
2. In the event of an emergency the FS leader will resume control of the group. The FS leader will delegate responsibility when necessary to all accompanying adults.
- 3. Assess the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible.**
- 4. The first member of staff to the casualty with first aid training should assess the casualty.**
5. All other adults informed quickly. One adult to use 1,2,3, come to me to assemble children safely and away from the incident and to remain calm and in control of the children. If on school site and this is a serious injury (requiring an ambulance) this adult will take the children back to the main building. The FS session will cease.
6. Another adult should remain with the first aider. They will get medical forms (when offsite) and first aid kit from FS bag.
7. Establish (check) names of casualty, administer any necessary first aid (check for any allergies or medical conditions)
8. Phone for an ambulance if the injury or illness cannot be treated with first aid on site and send for a first aider with 3-day HSE approved first aid at work.

The second adult should do this, not the first aider.

- Dial 999 and request ambulance.
 - Give location and location of site entrance
 - Give brief details of injury or illness.
 - Speak calmly and slowly.
 - If onsite send for school first aider with 3-day HSE approved first aid at work.
 - If offsite phone school to inform them of the injury and that an ambulance has been called. (Phone numbers Infant: 0121 429 1689; Junior: 0121 429 2700)
 - School, office staff will then call to inform parents and 3-day HSE first aider will speak to them.
9. Ensure there is an adult at the site entrance to direct the ambulance.
 10. If it is a death or serious injury, school will follow The Business and Emergency Continuity Plan
 11. Ensure that a member of staff accompanies any child casualties to the hospital with any relevant medical information and consent forms.
 12. Write down accurately all events and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence.
 13. Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident.
 14. Complete an accident/incident report form as soon as possible
 15. Keep receipts for any expenses incurred.
 16. N.B. No one in the group should speak to the media. The names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could result in distress to their families. Any enquiries from journalists must be referred to the head teacher.
 17. No one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, or sign anything relating to accident liability without clear advice from the LA or relevant Union.

The Federation of Abbey Infant and Junior School's FS Risk Assessments

The Federation of Abbey Infant and Junior School has comprehensive risk assessments for all areas of its site, and all activities, which would be expected to be carried out in school. All involved adults should familiarise themselves with the school's risk assessments. Provided below are the additional risk assessments for activities specific to FS.

