

BLOSSOM WITH BECKO
BESPOKE EDUCATION
.CALM.KIND.ORGANIC.

HCIS Forest School Handbook

Reviewed: October 2026
Next review date: August 2027

Contents:

Why forest school?
Forest school setting
HCIS Forest School Code of Conduct
A typical Forest School Session
Equipment
Tool use
Risk Assessments
Health and Safety
Fire safety
Safeguarding
Health and Safety Policy
Equal opportunities Policy
Insurance

Why Forest School?

There is no greater place for children to develop as a whole child than outdoors. Through each child's individual experience of the outdoors, they build resilience, confidence and self-esteem. Develop skills such as teamwork and risk management and foster a love and respect for nature.

Throughout history we are always reminded about the importance of being outdoors and immersed in nature; from the industrial revolution to theorists such as Montessori and The Woodcraft Folk established in 1925. The Forest School we see today is based on a model from Denmark brought back to the UK by a team from Bridgwater College in 1993.

Forest School is a holistic approach to learning. A safe space for a child to explore their sense of self and the natural environment and create their own adventures.

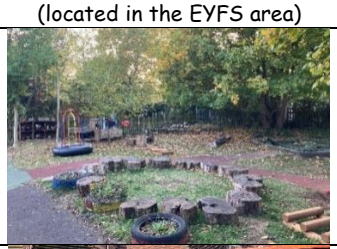
Forest School Setting

The HCIS Forest School is led by Beckie Lewis, from Blossom with BECKO who is a qualified Level 3 Forest School Leader, has Qualified Teacher Status and a Level 3 Diploma in Childcare and Education. Beckie also holds Paediatric First Aid and DBS certificate.

The forest school sessions will be assisted by the staff of HCIS who also hold valid First Aid and DBS certificates. Our main assistant leader is Zoe Ciortan, who is a Level 2 Forest School assistant and experienced teaching assistant.

Our Forest School sessions will mostly run on our school site either in our school outdoor area, the vegetable patch, the EYFS outdoor area and pond. We may occasionally use the adjacent village field.

In line with the new and exciting expansion at HCIS the Forest School will work around the building requirements and risk assess each session as normal to ensure the safety of the children.

Our Forest School	
	Our outdoor area **Being updated**
	Fire circle **Being updated**
	Digging zone **Being updated**
	Mud kitchen
	Activity course **Being updated**
 (located in the EYFS area)	Pond
	EYFS outdoor area
	Vegetable Patch

Our forest school will be mainly located within our outdoor area on the school site. It has a fenced perimeter and is not accessible to the public. This is the same for the pond and EYFS outdoor area. The pond area has its own fenced perimeter and can only be accessed with adult supervision, there is a padlock on the gate.

The school site has various trees, mainly maple, ash and cherry trees in the outdoor area, plants and shrubs and some bamboo. The outdoor area is multi-purpose so also has a fixed activity course and monkey bars. There is a bench circle on an area of slabs and a wall dividing the outdoor area to the playground.

In the event we use the public field for Forest School activities, children will be reminded of the boundaries and made aware of the risks and code of conduct for use in a public space for example stranger danger and dogs.

Taking care of the natural environment is a priority for Forest School and the children will also be encouraged to minimise their impact during the session.

This includes; learning about the animals and creatures we are likely to find and need to care for on our school site, not destroying animal homes including deadwood, identifying the trees and plants, taking all materials and litter with them at the end of the session.

HCIS Forest School Code of Conduct

Our forest school site

From the beginning of the Forest School session respect is shown for the nature and wildlife around us. Throughout the session an awareness that we share our outdoor space with animals, trees and plants and during our time work in a way that will not cause damage or harm.

Boundaries

At the beginning of each session the children are given a recap of the boundaries for the forest school sessions and activities that take place within them. As most of our sessions are on the school site if the children leave the forest school boundary they are still onsite with a secure fenced perimeter.

Toileting

Children will be encouraged to use the toilets before the session starts. The children will need to return to their classroom door and change back into their school shoes to use the school toilets, if they need to use the toilet during a session.

The fire circle

We use logs to mark out our fire circle and to sit on. At all times, even when the fire is not lit, we adhere to the safe practice of only walking in and around the fire circle and only entering the fire circle when invited by an adult. No other items are placed within

the fire circle apart from by the Forest School Leader or level 2 assistant. The fire is kept in a marked fire square. An adult will never leave a lit fire unattended.

Fire lighting

The fire will only be lit by the Forest School Leader and level 2 assistant, additional helpers are briefed on safety protocols. The forest school leader will ensure that fire safety equipment is present.

Tool use

Children will learn the correct way to use tools safely within Forest School. This will include safety equipment necessary such as gloves and space awareness around them. Many tools will only be used in the designated tool zone.

Sticks and wood

Different sizes of wood are collected and used for many purposes within a forest school session. Children are taught how to carry sticks safely and be aware how close they are to other children. Sticks should not be thrown. If longer than arms length it should be dragged or ask a friend to help carry it by each holding an end. Sticks should not be pulled from living trees. The logs are not to be moved.

Stones

Stones must not be thrown. They may be dropped if safe to do so. They may be picked up and carried for use in natural art for example.

Digging

The children may investigate the natural environment by gently moving small areas of dirt to look for bugs and insects. Children should not be digging large holes and take care not to harm creatures or destroy habitats. The children of HCIS have a specially made digging zone which they can use tools in.

Eating and Drinking

The children will be reminded of 'no lick, no pick' for items they find in the natural world. They are reminded also not to put the fingers or hands near their mouths or noses. Anti-bacterial handwashing facilities are provided if they eat any food within the session. They can have their water bottles with them. Food allergies will be shared by class teacher and or parent before sessions.

String, ropes or knots

The children are supervised with the use of ropes and string and taught the correct ways to use them. They may learn different types of knots and how ropes can be used for carrying. Adults will talk through their ideas and support as needed if used for tarpaulin or swings. Rope uses are carefully monitored throughout the session.

Carrying heavy or large materials

Teamwork is encouraged for heavy or large materials. The children are advised to keep their backs straight and bend their knees. They can explore lifting, rolling, dragging and pulling as ways to move.

Barefoot

We experience a high level of sensory feedback through our feet. Walking barefoot can be calming and give a sense of freedom. Children may be given opportunities to

explore the natural environment barefoot when it is safe to do so. The forest leader will risk assess the floor on a site check. Shoes will be worn at all times when taking part in the risky activities such as tool use and in the fire circle.

Tree climbing

The children are taught safety checks for climbing trees, checking there are no sharp objects beneath, climbing to their own personal limit but not above 1.5m. Also taking the time to think about the best possible route for ascending and descending. Tree climbing is a great opportunity for children to manage risk. The forest leader will look out for rotten or broken branches on session site checks.

Leaving the site

Forest school sessions follow a 'leave no trace' ethos as much as possible. All personal belongings and rubbish taken off site. With permission from forest school leader creations could be taken home. Shelters taken down and equipment sorted and counted back in again.

A typical Forest School session

A small group of children will attend a Forest School session for a term for a minimum of an hour and a half a week. The Forest Leader will have some adult planned activities, these could be linked to the natural world such as seasons, linked to the school curriculum or topic theme. Children's skills, abilities and confidence are gradually built upon across the sessions. There is also time for children to develop their own learning journey, gain responsibility and explore their interests.

Activity	Details
Meet and greet	The children will be collected from their classroom and given an area to change into their Forest school kit provided from home. Walk and sit around the fire circle to share any rules, risks, hazards and boundaries necessary. The children might then help get any resources needed for the session.
Nature connectedness	The children take part in an activity to help with the transition into the forest school session. For example using our deer ears to listen out for the sounds we can hear today.
Child-led learning	The children develop their own activities and learning within the forest school environment. For example; den building, climbing trees, etc…
Adult initiated learning	There may be a suggested activity the children can take part in such as; fire pit skills, nature art…
Goodbye	The children return to the fire circle to share a personal forest school story of the day. Help to return the outdoor area as they found it, packing away tools and materials they have been using.

Activity examples		
shelter building	identification	rope and string work

natural art	open fire cooking	pond dipping
tool use	team games	bug hotel
fire lighting	whittling	looking after wildlife

Equipment

Clothing- Before the session begins, the children will have on their appropriate 'Forest School' clothes provided from home and their school wellingtons. The school also has waterproof trousers on site for the children to wear as needed.

First Aid- the forest school will have its own first aid, burns kit and record book available in the secure shed.

Forest School equipment- found in the outdoor area secure shed unless specified.

Emergency procedures

- Emergency contact details- will be available from the school office
- Handbook and emergency procedures
- Risk assessments
- Medical information- shared by class teacher available in class
- Inhalers/epi-pens- shared by class teacher available in class

First aid kit

First Aid reference book		Tough cut scissors	
First aid record folder (for minor injuries)		Tweezers	
School accident report book		Emergency whistle	
Triangular dressing		Abdominal dressing	
First aid tape		PBT conforming bandage	
Instant cold compress (+ in school freezer)		Tourniquet	
Moleskin pad		CPR face mask	
Emergency blanket			
Splinter lancets	X5	Safety pins	X5
Gloves	X2	Antiseptic towelettes	X10
Alcohol prep pads	X16	Junior adhesive bandages	X25
Adhesive bandages	X30	Butterfly closure strips	X10
Burn gel	X2	Wooden splint	X2
Sterile gauze pads	X3	Wound dressing pad	X2
Non-adherent pad	X2	Cotton tipped applicators	X20
Sterile eye pad	X2	Saline solution	X2
Knuckle adhesive bandages	X5	Fingertip adhesive bandages	X5
Knee/elbow bandages	X2		

Burns first aid kit

* There is always a bucket of water next to the fire pit for immediate use on the affected area in the event of a burn

Gloves	X2	Cling film	X1
Conforming bandage	X2	Burn dressing	X2
Burn gel	X3	Safety pins	X12

Activities equipment

tarpaulins	Clay

Wool, string and rope	Felt pens
Wood	Paint brushes
scissors	Pots
Cotton sheet-calico	Sieves
Identification materials	Cargo net
Hammock	

Fire equipment

Sit mats for kneeling	Cotton wool
Fire glove	Vaseline
Jerry can for spare water	
Bucket of water	
Firestriker and steels	

Tools

Tool bag and tool box	Loppers
Bow saw	Secateurs
peeler	Childrens work gloves
Pruning saw	Soft wood hand drills
Fixed blade knife	Palm drills
Hammer	Garden; trowel, fork, cultivator

Other equipment

- handsoap
- Jerry can for handwashing

Tool use

Tools will be used age and skill appropriately and after support and guidance from the forest leader. The forest leader will ensure that tools are stored, maintained and transported safely. There will be high adult to child ration using tools of 1:3 max.

Tools available to be used-

- Palm drills
- Fixed blade knife
- Bowsaw
- Secateurs
- Loppers
- Peelers
- Hand drill
- Conker clamp
- Hammer

Storage in locked shed

Locked tool box	Tool bag	In shed storage
Fixed blade knife Peelers Palm drills (within box)	Bow saw Secateurs loppers	Scissors

Conker clamp Soft wood hand drills Rotary hand drill Hammer x3		

Before and after the session the tools are checked and counted by the forest leader. There is a tool zone marked out by a red rope, the children only enter if invited to do so by the forest leader and are not help themselves to tools. The children are made aware of the importance of safety zones around themselves, at least an arms length, and other safety rules before tool use. The use of tools will be modelled by the forest leader and adult supervision if carried or transported. We only walk if holding or near tools or the tool zone.

Tool care- the forest leader will ensure the tools are cleaned, sharpened and oiled to maintain longevity and ensure they are safe and useful to use. They will be kept stored in their containers and packed away until needed.

Risk Assessments

A site risk assessment is undertaken by the forest leader. Daily risk assessments with pre-site check are made before a forest school session takes place. An activity risk assessment is completed for each forest school activity including; whittling, controlled fire lighting, palm drills etc… Specific risk assessments may be undertaken if needed for example for children with additional needs. All adults are First Aid trained.

In the event harm comes to an adult within the Forest School session all children will hear the recall signal, be made aware and asked to sit in designated meeting area. Two children will be chosen to go to their classroom and ask for an adult to assist. A risk assessment will be made as to whether the session can continue or they may return to class. If a child comes to serious harm the above steps will also take place.

The risk assessment process:

- We look for potential hazards.
- We decide who might be at risk of harm.
- We think about how harm may occur and the worst outcome that we could face.
- We evaluate the current level of risk.
- We decide on a course of action or set of precautions that will be put in place to minimise the potential risk.
- We then re-evaluate the level of risk once our course of action and precautions have been put in place.
- We create a risk assessment and collate them in the Forest School file.
- We inform all adults with accompanying the group and ask them to read the risk assessment
- We regularly monitor and review each risk assessment and as an action is needed.

HCIS Forest School risk assessment

Hazards & risks	Harm	Level	Control/actions	Revised level	Risk Benefit
Trip hazards- Uneven ground Holes Roots Muddy ground Icy ground	Trips, slips, falls and injure themselves. Head injury. Cuts, grazes, bumps, bruises or breaks.	Med	Wear appropriate footwear. Verbal warning or visual prompt given on boundary tour. Apply boundary to area if necessary. Remove trip hazard on pre-site check if possible. Make aware to move more carefully around trees. Apply first aid if required.	Low	Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware. Gain knowledge around materials and their properties, inc. when wet. Promote physical development and awareness in different surroundings.
Low branches	Trips, scratches and foreign object in the eye. Cuts and scratches to skin or eye.	Med	Verbal warning or visual prompt given on boundary tour. Make aware to move more carefully around trees. Apply first aid if required.	Low	Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware.
Falling branches	Cuts and scrapes Broken bones Head trauma/neck Injury Knocked unconscious Trapped	Med	Identify risky branches on pre-site check if possible. More likely after bad weather, heavy rainfall or high winds. Keep an eye on weather forecast and warnings. Forest School session cancelled in weather warnings or risk assessed unsafe. Remove lose branch if possible. Apply boundary to area if necessary until safely removed. Apply first aid if required.	Low	Children develop awareness of the natural world around them and possible dangers during extreme weathers. Children follow weather forecast and seasons. Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement.
Brambles, thorns, stinging nettles.	Cuts, scrapes, itchiness, stings, rashes.	Low	Identify locations of plants and give verbal warning. Apply water to affected areas and first aid if required. Arms and legs are covered by clothing.	Low	Plant identification and knowledge. Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware.
Fruit, berries and fungi	Poisoning Tummy upset Allergic reaction Skin reaction	Medium	'No pick, no lick' policy Identify locations of plants and give verbal warning, can be poisonous and should not be eaten. Encouraged not to touch hands to face, mouth or nose. In case of accidental ingestion alert staff members and parents. Handwashing facilities available.	Low	Plant identification and knowledge. Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware.

			Only with Forest Leader consent can they pick and eat fruit and berries.		
Poisonous plants	Poisoning Tummy upset Allergic reaction Skin reaction	Low	'No pick, no lick' policy Identify locations of plants and give verbal warning, can be poisonous and should not be eaten. Encouraged not to touch hands to face, mouth or nose. In case of accidental ingestion alert staff members and parents. Handwashing facilities available.	Low	Plant identification and knowledge. Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement and avoid dangers. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely, become more self-aware, and know what they must not touch.
Nuts eg- Horse chestnut Hazel Acorns	Poisoning Tummy upset Allergic reaction Skin reaction	Low	'No pick, no lick' policy Identify locations of plants and give verbal warning. Encouraged not to touch hands to face, mouth or nose. In case of accidental ingestion alert staff members and parents. Allergies are known to staff. Epi-pen kept in class first aid box.	Low	Plant identification and knowledge. Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware.
Insect bites and stings	Allergic reaction Skin reaction Pain, itchiness, swelling in affected area Foreign object remains in skin.	Low	Identify locations of nests and remove safely if necessary. Alert all FS members where location of nest is and avoid, create boundary if necessary. Allergies are known to staff. Epi-pen kept in class first aid box. If possible identify location of sting entry. Some show great fear around certain animals and insects if known shared with FS Leader. If bee or wasp come near us stand still. Don't try to catch. Arms and legs are covered by clothing.	Low	Animal and insect identification and how they move and protect themselves in the natural world. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely. Role model positive approach to insects and animals rather than being fearful of them.
Harmful litter	Broken plastic, metal or glass. Cuts and grazes. Foreign object enters skin.	Low	Pre-visit check and continuous monitoring. Harmful litter removed before session. Children encouraged to report to an adult if they see any harmful litter so it can be disposed of safely.	Low	Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware. Gain knowledge around materials and their properties.
Animal faeces	Contamination, illness and disease	Low	Pre-visit check and continuous monitoring. Safe removal if necessary, school caretaker jet washes regularly bird droppings.	Low	Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware.

			Children made aware of and identify areas, reminded not to touch. Children to let adults know if they see any. In case of accidental contamination on skin or clothes, hands and clothes washed thoroughly. Parents made aware of contaminated clothes.		Gain knowledge around animals faeces identification and the habitats for wildlife that might be in our outdoor area. Develop an understanding of the importance of hygiene.
Exposure to the elements; rain, wind, snow, ice	Frostbite Hypothermia	Low	Follow weather warnings. Ensure appropriate clothing is worn. Participating in the session may be refused by FS leader. Use tarpaulins as shelter. As much as possible Forest School sessions will run in all weathers. However if there is a risk, for example of thunder and lightening or high winds, an alternative indoor session may take place along a nature theme. Alternative activities may be undertaken to suit conditions.	Low	Children develop awareness of the natural world around them and possible dangers during extreme weathers. Children follow weather forecast and seasons. Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement and dress appropriately for all weathers.
Exposure to the elements; heat, sun	Sunstroke Over heating Sun burn Dehydration	Low	Follow weather warnings. Ensure appropriate clothing is worn, still long sleeves and trousers but loose and thin. Children could apply own sun cream before session if provided in school from parents. Use tarpaulins as shelter if needed, the outdoor area has natural shelter. Water bottles available during session. Risk assess the decision to light a fire. Alternative activities may be undertaken to suit conditions.	Low	Children develop awareness of the natural world around them and possible dangers during extreme weathers. Children follow weather forecast and seasons. Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement and dress appropriately for all weathers.
Sticks	Cuts, scrapes and grazes. Whip, hitting, poking. Puncture wounds. Foreign object enters skin.	Med	Stick rules and procedures explained and followed. 'Be careful with that stick' Sticks for playing arm length. Keep pointy end down. No contact with other sticks or people.	Low	Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware. Gain knowledge around materials and their properties.
Use of string, rope and wool	Falling Rope burn Tied up Lack of blood flow to body part Strangulation	Med	Children taught knots and rope use is supervised by adults to ensure no length of rope is left dangling and knots are secure. Children taught safe use of ropes, wool and string and reminded they are not for	Low	Children learn a range of knots and their names. Learning a new skill. Encourages creativity. Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement.

			tying around themselves or others.		Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware. Gain knowledge around materials and their properties.
Pond	Falling in Drowning Contamination	High	Pond area is always locked with gate and fence around the perimeter unless being used. Always adult supervised. Children are taught safe and correct behaviour around water, inc. not drinking. Area around the pond is clear to prevent tripping. Children to sit on both knees or lie down on edge to prevent accidentally falling in. Wash hands after pond activities.	Med	Animal and insect identification and their habitats. Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware.
Tool use	Cuts, scrapes and grazes. Deep wounds Amputation Puncture wounds	High	Tools securely stored and maintained. Kept secure until needed. Only used with adult supervision and high ratios. Only used for purpose. Children taught safe and correct use and carrying, repeated each session. Only trained FS leader and level 2 assistant will use tools with the children. *Separate risk assessments undertaken.*	Med	Building confidence and gaining new experiences. Learning a new skill and vocabulary. Develop hand eye coordination. Supporting communication- good listening. Encourages creativity. Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement. Managing own behaviour and frustration and patience. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware. Gain knowledge around materials and their properties.
Campfire	Burns, scalding. Ash and smoke inhalation Ash and smoke in eyes Fire out of control	High	Children invite only to enter fire circle. All use fire respect position around fire. Fire only in allotted fire location. Children taught safe and correct fire lighting methods. Only trained FS leader and level 2 assistant will use campfire with the children with high ratios. Fire never left unattended by adult. Fire glove and bucket of water always present. First aid kit and burns kit includes eye wash on outdoor site. *Separate risk assessments undertaken.*	Med	Development of awareness and respect of fire. Working as a team and building trusting relationships and self confidence. Children learn to be aware of danger and risk take as well as learning how to light and maintain a fire safely. Gaining new experiences that empower them to use their initiative and enjoy the natural environment. Supports mathematical development, sizes and sorting.

					Supporting communication- good listening. Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement. Managing own behaviour and frustration and patience. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware. Gain knowledge around materials and their properties; fire.
Cooking	Burns to mouth Burns to hands when handling food, or cooking implements such as tinfoil, kebab stick, pan	High	Children invite only to enter fire circle. All use fire respect position around fire. Children taught safe and correct campfire cooking methods and use of handling cooking implements. Only trained FS leader and level 2 assistant will use campfire with the children with high ratios and supervision. Fire glove and bucket of water always present. First aid kit and burns kit on outdoor site.	Med	See campfire. Children learn about cooking and being independent as well as learning life skills. Encourages creativity. Gain knowledge around materials and their properties; fire, food- melting points, conductors of heat.
Inappropriate behaviour	Disruption to the activity. Physical harm to self Causing accidents to Others Deliberate harm to others Compromise of safety rules eg by fire or with tools	Med	Forest School rules and boundaries explained each session. Adults to watch for sign of frustration or aggression. Practice de-escalation techniques. Follow school behaviour plan. Child may be removed from session and sent back to class. Adults to remove other participants to safety if required. Risk assessment may be put in place for individuals.	Low	Managing own behaviour and frustration and patience. Learn how to navigate the natural world safely and become more self-aware. Supporting communication- good listening. Children able to build their own risk assessment judgement.

Health and Safety

Policies and Procedures

Clothing-

If unsuitably dressed, children and adults will not be able to take part in the forest school sessions if not protected by extreme weather and help in the reduction of cuts

and scrapes. Forest School runs during all weathers. It is also very likely that clothing will get wet and muddy.
Clothing list: all year round

- Waterproof coat with a hood
- Long sleeved top
- Jumper
- Full length trousers
- Wellington boots
- socks (and a spare pair)
- Long hair tied back

Could have; waterproof trousers, alternative warm boots, extra layers to above such as vests, leggings and t-shirts, thick socks or two pairs, gloves and a woolly hat or sunhat.

Bad weather-

Before each session the forest leader will risk assess the site. As much as possible Forest School sessions will run in all weathers. However if there is a risk, for example of thunder and lightening or high winds, an alternative indoor session may take place along a nature theme.

Toilet-

Children will be encouraged to use the toilets before the session starts. The children will need to return to their classroom door and change back into their school shoes to use the school toilets, if they need to use the toilet during a session.

Behaviour-

The forest school will follow the same high behaviour expectations of the school and the schools behaviour policy. If a child could cause harm to themselves or others within a session the forest leader may decide they are unable to take part in the session. They will return to class and parents made aware.

Tools-

Children will only be trusted with the use of sharp tools when they have shown they are competent and confident within the forest school sessions. The Forest School leader will ensure that children are appropriately supervised. Safety instructions explained before the use of any tool and necessary protective clothing such as gloves given.

Ratios-

At HCIS a Forest School session will not exceed 16 pupils. In addition to the forest leader Beckie Lewis, accompanying the children will be another member of staff from Haddenham Infant School. It is useful if it is the same adult for the block of forest school sessions for continuity. Tool use will mostly be 1:1. With the exception of 1:3

maximum depending on the tool and skill of the child for example the use of peelers. Adult ratios may increase to work with children with additional needs.

COSHH forms-

COSHH forms have been completed and are available on request for items containing potential hazardous substance. During Forest School sessions we are using natural materials as much as possible to protect the environment therefore it is low in risk. These items include hand soap, Vaseline, WD40.

First Aid-

Forest School leader Beckie Lewis is paediatric first aid trained and staff from HCIS hold a valid first aid certificate. The Forest School sessions will have their own first aid kit, burns kit and first aid record. All activities are risk assessed and the safety of the group is assessed throughout the session.

In the event of a first aid emergency:

- assess the situation for danger to yourself or the group
- administer first aid as necessary
- ensure the participants are safe and away from the incident area, risk assess whether they should return to class
- assess the casualty and make them as comfortable as possible given their circumstances
- if appropriate contact emergency services from the school office
- phone the casualties emergency contact from the school office

Emergency procedures-

In case of an emergency the Forest School leader will follow the schools emergency plan.

GDPR and confidentiality-

The Forest School will follow Haddenham Community Infant School GDPR procedures. This will include emergency contact details, medical details, photographic permissions, first aid permissions and any special requirements needs such as medical, allergy, learning difficulty or physical impairment.

Food and drink-

The children will bring their water bottles from class to have access to water throughout the session. At times around the fire circle there may be a social sharing of food or group cooking activity. Allergies will be shared by the class teacher previous to the Forest School sessions, including information about the dietary rules of the religious groups, to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans. The Forest School leader will follow the schools policy and generic parent consent forms completed at the beginning of each academic year.

There are handwashing facilities on the outdoor learning site.

Fire-

To ensure risk is managed effectively and everyone stays safe on site the Forest School leader will follow daily procedures.

- Keep ignitors in a safe location
- Ensure there is a supply of water to douse the fire and for emergency first aid use
- Decide on the location and size of the fire needed and plan accordingly including fuel stocks.
- Complete pre-session site check and risk assessments.
- Douse fire at completion.

When lighting fires the forest leader will ensure-

- Long hair is tied back and there is no loose clothing
- The children follow the fire circle rules at all times, only approaching the fire when asked.
- Strike away from their body.
- Try to keep away from the smoke.
- Put out the fire with water when finished.
- Never leave the fire unattended.

Medical- medicines

As our forest school is on site any medicines, inhalers and or epi-pens will be kept securely on site following school procedure.

Missing child policy

At the beginning of each session the children are reminded of the recall signal and where the meeting place is, if not the fire circle it will be a recognisable place. The forest leader and assistant will know the number of children that are attending the session.

The Forest School is mainly run on the enclosed school site so it is very low risk.

Missing child procedure-

- Recall all children to designated meeting place and register to identify and confirm missing child.
- One adult to remain with the group and one adult to look in the near vicinity. If a wider search is needed the adult can request help from the school site.
- If the search lasts longer than 10 minutes the Forest School children will return to class and a more thorough check will take place. Ensure SMT are aware.

Example areas to check; outdoor area, hall, hall toilets, playground, EYFS playground/ outdoor area, the childs outdoor classroom, the childs classroom, the school toilets, the library, pond zone (gate always locked). If missing from the field; the field, tennis courts, public play park.

- If after the second search for the arranged time has elapsed, with SMT consent, the police and their parents will be contacted.

- An incident form will be completed.

Volunteers-

Volunteers may join the Forest School session once DBS checks have been undertaken. They must follow the policies and procedures written in this handbook and for Haddenham Infant School. The Forest School leader will ensure they are fully briefed and supervised.

Fire safety Policy

HCIS Forest School Campfire Policy

Campfire Safety Policy

Staff and volunteers will ensure that participants at Forest School sessions at Haddenham Infant school as well as any visitors, are made aware of fire safety and fire emergency procedures which affect them. The Forest School leader Beckie Lewis will regularly review existing fire safety procedures to ensure they not only reflect accepted best practice in the forest school sector but that the lessons learned from any accidents have been taken on board.

Fire poses a threat to life through fumes, smoke, burns, scalds and equipment destruction. The aim of the fire safety policy is to minimise the risk of fire or fire related incident by taking adequate fire precautions. Fire prevention measures focus upon the removal or control of available fuel and ignition sources. Fuel includes waste, debris, flammable gases, liquids and materials. Waste materials must not be allowed to accumulate in and around the Forest School at Haddenham Infant school. Waste bins are provided on the playground and must be utilised to keep the operating area clear and safe.

Participants at Forest School sessions are supervised when using the fire bowl or fire area which is regularly maintained and checked. Whilst next to the fire the respect position is held, kneeling on one knee, this ensures you can move backwards if need but also stable. Fire safe gloves will always be provided for anyone working with a fire. Any form of smoking or vaping is prohibited at all times on the school site, including the outdoor area where forest school will be held. Participants may only have access to matches, fire starters and other fire lighting equipment under the supervision of a member of staff.

Only designated sites will be used for campfires. These sites will always be sited away from low canopy branches. Campfire areas will be enclosed by logs to make a Fire Pit to prevent the spread and are surrounded by seating logs at least 1.5 metres from the fire pit. An exit path is available. When the campfire is in use, participants are not permitted to access the area immediately surrounding the fire without permission. Participants will be taught how to change seats by standing, stepping over the log and then walking around the outside of the seating area. They must never cross the inner

area. Once seated around the campfire, the participants must remain seated until directed by an adult to move.
A bucket of water will always be sited close to the campfire, first aid and burns kit are located in the outdoor learning shed. Cling film is also stored by First Aid. Only adults are permitted to light fires, unless children are under the direct supervision of the Forest School Leader. Fires are lit using a fire lighter, Vaseline, cotton wool and natural tinder. If sessions involve children adding fuel to the fire, this must be done with one to one adult supervision. Sticks/wood must be placed, not thrown, from the side of the fire. The hand should never go over the fire. All fires must be extinguished at the end of a session. At the end of the session, the fire must be doused down with water and rose and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased.
A fire blanket can be located in the staff room and school kitchen if required.
Fire procedure
•In the event of a fire that cannot be put out quickly and safely by the Forest School Leaders, blow repeated long whistles to alert the group.
•Gather everyone together, conduct a head count and evacuate area to a safe location – Playground meeting point in case of fire.
•Alert SMT and instruct one person to call the fire brigade to the schools address and access through staff car park is clear.
•Ask a second person to telephone the emergency numbers (see emergency plan).
•Arrange for someone to stand at the entrance to the school to direct emergency services round to fire circle in outdoor area.

Campfire procedure
Haddenham Community Infant Forest School provides opportunities for children to get closer to nature and the outdoors through a variety of activities, which include learning about fire safety and how to make fires. Children may also get the opportunity to light their own fires on wooden blocks or in small metal containers. This will only take place under strict supervision, with a one to one adult to child ratio. All Forest School Leaders are skilled and practiced in fire-building and management. Small fires only will be used and lit in the centre of the Forest School circle. All Forest School activities are rigorously risk assessed. Sessions are planned in such a way as to introduce higher risk activities to children over a period of time. This allows Leaders to get to know the children in the group and for the children to learn how to behave responsibly and to build knowledge and understanding of the activity.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Haddenham Community Infant School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This means that we have a Child Protection Policy and procedures in place which we refer to in our prospectus. Parents and carers are welcome to read the Policy on request or on our website.

Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. We will ensure that our concerns about our pupils are discussed with his/her parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that such a move would be contrary to the child's welfare.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) are: Lucy McNeil (Headteacher) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) are: Carly Busby and Natasha Alleyne
All staff at Haddenham Community Infant School hold a DBS certificate.

HCIS school child protection policy can be accessed on the school website.
https://www.haddenhaminfant.bucks.sch.uk/web



Health and Safety Policy

HCIS STATEMENT OF INTENT

This policy and its supplements should be read in conjunction with the Buckinghamshire County Council Health and Safety Policy. It sets down the local organisation and arrangements established by the governing body to implement that policy.

The Governing Body of Haddenham Community Infant School is committed to high standards of health, safety and wellbeing and will take all reasonable steps to meet its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act, the Management of Health

and Safety at Work Regulations, other relevant health and safety legislation and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order and also to ensure that the County Council's health and safety policies and procedures, set out in the Buckinghamshire County Council Health and Safety Handbook for Schools and other documentation listed below are implemented with regard to the provision of:

- a safe and healthy working environment with adequate control of health and safety risks arising out of the school's activities;
- an effective local organisation within the school to implement the policy;
- full and effective consultation with employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- effective communication throughout the school on health and safety matters;
- competent specialist advice on health and safety matters when this is not available in the school;
- sufficient information, instruction and training for staff on health and safety;
- staff who are competent to carry out their work to meet their health and safety responsibilities and have been provided with adequate training and development to do this;
- effective management of contractors;
- effective monitoring and review of the implementation of the health and safety policy and health and safety performance.

Other Managers including Subject Co-ordinators and Managers of Non-Teaching Staff

Managers are responsible for implementing this policy in the area of their control. This includes:

- ensuring staff meet their health and safety responsibilities;
- consulting with staff on matters affecting their health and safety;
- communicating health and safety information to staff;
- assessing staff competence and ensuring appropriate training and development;
- ensuring school wide health and safety standards, school health and safety codes of practice and procedures are implemented;
- ensuring risk assessments, including those relating to directly managed staff, are carried out and implemented;
- ensuring safe working procedures and codes of practice and procedures are developed for activities under their control;

They are also responsible for implementing health and safety monitoring arrangements within their area of responsibility, such as:

- incident reporting and investigation;
- statutory inspection of equipment as appropriate;
- termly health and safety inspections;
- annual monitoring checklist;
- checking compliance with job risk assessments and reviewing health and safety performance in staff appraisals/performance management reviews;
- reporting any health and safety issues which cannot be resolved to the Headteacher or Health and Safety Co-ordinator to the Governing Body and the County Council.

Responsibilities of all staff

All staff employed at the school have responsibility to:

- take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others when undertaking their work, eg checking classrooms/work areas are safe, checking equipment is safe before use, ensuring safe working procedures are followed;
- co-operate with the Local Authority, Governors and Headteacher on all matters relating to health and safety by complying with the Health and Safety Policy;
- not intentionally or recklessly interfering with or misusing any equipment or fittings provided in the interests of health safety and welfare;
- report immediately to their Headteacher/Line Manager any serious or immediate danger;
- ensure that they only use equipment or machinery which they are competent to use or have been trained to use;
- participate in health and safety inspections and the health and safety committee where appropriate.

Forest School

- The trained and named Forest School leader is always in charge of the forest school sessions.
- The trained and named Forest School leader has overall duty of care for the children in Forest School but all adults are required to assist in keeping children safe.
- Risk assessments are reviewed regularly, dynamic risk assessments reviewed before and after each session, risk assessment will be read by all assisting staff.
- The Forest School has its own first aid and record, kept in the outdoor shed on outdoor learning site, we are still on school site.
- As we are still on school site emergency contact details can be found secure in the school office.
- Adult supervision of tools kept to low ratios no more than 1:3 depending on age, skill and tool used. The high ratios mean that children can safely experience activities such as climbing trees, lighting controlled fires and using knives.
- The Forest School leader is responsible for the care and maintenance of tools.
- The Forest School leader is responsible for teaching and monitoring safe use of tools.
- The Forest School leader is responsible for the pre-visit check of the Forest School site prior to the session.
- In an emergency the schools emergency procedure will be followed.

Equal opportunities

Our school commitment

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to publish information that demonstrates that we have due regard for the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

At Haddenham Community Infant School
- We try to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and respectfully
- We want to make sure that our school is a safe and secure place for everyone
- We recognise that people have different needs, and we understand that treating people equally does not always
involve treating them the same
- We aim to make sure that no-one experiences less favourable treatment or discrimination because of:
    - Their age
    - Disability
    - Their ethnicity, colour or national origin
    - Their gender
    - Their gender identity (they have reassigned or plan to reassign their gender)
    - Their marital or civil partnership status
    - Their being pregnant or having recently had a baby
    - Their religion or belief
    - Their sexual identity and orientation.
- We recognise that some pupils need extra support to help them to achieve and be successful
- We try to make sure that people from different groups are consulted and are involved in our decisions, especially pupils, parents and those of us who can be treated less favourably.
- Our aim is for all children to reach their full potential and grow their brains.
We welcome our duties
- To promote community cohesion (under the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- To eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations (under the Equality Act
2010)

Equal opportunities within Forest School

The outdoors, nature and Forest School is for the enjoyment of all and activities are designed to build self-esteem and promote personal success. Children with additional

needs will be helped so they can participate in the forest school sessions. A risk assessment will be put in place and the decision made whether they need 1:1 support.

Insurance

Buckinghamshire County Council covers HCIS insurance.
Contact Blossom with BECKO for further insurance information.
info@blossomwithbecko.uk
www.blossomwithbecko.uk

BLOSSOM WITH
BECKO
BESPOKE EDUCATION
.CALM.KIND.ORGANIC.