



St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School and Nursery

Forest School Risk Assessment

General Welfare and Weather Risk Assessment

Date of Assessment: October 2025

Assessed by: Miss V Rees

To be Reviewed: August 2026

Risk / Hazard	Risk Benefit	Probability (1-5)	Who is at risk	Severity (1-5)	Management
High winds	Forest School is safe when there are not high winds	2	Children and staff	4	Forest School Leader to check weather forecasts daily. Forest School Leader to make the decision to cancel Forest School sessions when high winds mean that the session will be unsafe.
Inappropriate clothing/footwear	Children are taught the dangers of inappropriate clothing/footwear	2	Children and staff	3	Information is sent out to parents so that they know what children must wear for Forest School session. Spare clothes and wellies are available.
Medical problem	All children and staff know the procedures if there is a medical problem	2	Children and staff	4	Medical forms are kept in emergency rucksack and all adults are aware of any children with medical forms. All adults aware of procedure if there is a medical problem. Adult supervision.
Cuts/grazes	Children are able to take risks/challenge themselves and take part in a variety of activities	3	Children and staff	3	First Aid bag is in emergency rucksack. All adults are First Aid trained. Safety Sweep before session. Adult supervision.
Bumped head	Children are able to take risks/challenge	2	Children and staff	4	First Aid bag is in emergency rucksack. All adults are First Aid trained. Safety Sweep before session.



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	themselves and take part in a variety of activities				Adult supervision.
Lifting resources	Children are encouraged to lift resources and transport to different areas to promote independence, resilience and risk taking	4	Children and staff	3	Children are shown how to carry resources safely. First Aid bag is in emergency rucksack. All adults are First Aid trained. Safety Sweep before session. Adult supervision.
Broken resources	There are a variety of resources on site for children to use independently	2	Children and staff	3	Safety Sweep before session. Children are taught that if they come across a broken resource then to report to Leader straight away for them to dispose of the item safely. Adult supervision.
Splinters	Children are able to use pallets, wood, natural wooden resources to promote creativity, curiosity and independence	3	Children and staff	3	Children are taught to look carefully for resources that could cause splinters. Safety Sweep before session. First Aid bag is in emergency rucksack. All adults are First Aid trained. Adult supervision.
Nails	There are a variety of natural resources on site for children to use that promote curiosity, creativity, resilience, independence	2	Children and staff	3	Children are taught to look carefully for resources that have nails in. Children know to report anything dangerous to the Leader. Safety Sweep before session. First Aid bag is in emergency rucksack. All adults are First Aid trained. Adult supervision.



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Rubbish/Debris	Children are taught the dangers of rubbish/debris and how to care for the environment	2	Children and staff	2	Safety Sweep before session. Children taught how to dispose of rubbish safely. Adults to dispose of anything dangerous safely. Adult supervision.
Uneven ground	Children learn how to be careful in the surroundings and how to move around safely	3	Children and staff	3	Safety Sweep before session. Children taught how to move around safely. Adult supervision.
Low branches/trees	Children learn how to be careful in the surroundings and how to move around safely	2	Children and staff	3	Safety Sweep before session. Any low branches are cut safely before session. Children taught how to move around safely. Adult supervision.
Animal faeces	Children learn the dangers of animal faeces	2	Children and staff	2	Safety sweep before session. Children taught about dangers of animal faeces and to report to Leader straight away.
Lifting sticks/logs	Children learn how to carry and lift sticks/logs safely to promote resilience, risk taking and independence	4	Children and staff	3	Children are taught how to carry and lift sticks/logs as part of the Forest School Rules. Any very big logs they are not sure of, they ask an adult for help. Adult supervision.
Toxic plants	Children learn what to look out for and why some plants are toxic	2	Children and staff	4	Safety Sweep before session. Children are taught to report any plants they have not seen before to an adult before touching/handling them. Adult supervision.
Tripping/slipping	Children learn how to be careful in the surroundings and how to move around safely	4	Children and staff	3	Safety Sweep before session. Children taught how to move around safely. Adult supervision.



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Standing water	Children learn about the dangers of standing water. Children are able to use water in the Forest School sessions in a variety of different ways	2	Children and staff	4	Safety Sweep before session. Any water play activities are poured away safely after session.
Getting wet/hypothermia	Children benefit from taking part in sessions in all weather and know to wear appropriate clothing/footwear.	2	Children and staff	5	Parents know to send children to sessions with appropriate clothing/footwear. Puddle suits/wellies available. If a child becomes wet through, they are taken to get changed into their spare clothes.



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Den Building / Using Rope Risk Assessment

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Risk / Hazard	Risk Benefit	Probability (1-5)	Who is at risk	Severity (1-5)	Management
Weather	Children experience Forest School in all weather apart from high winds and storms	2	Children and staff	4	Safety Sweep before session. Forest School Leader to decide whether it is safe for den building depending on the weather.
Knots slipping	Children learn how to tie different knots and how to use them safely	3	Children and staff	3	Forest School Leader to check all knots before children enter den/shelter. Adult supervision.
Shelter collapsing	Children learn resilience and independence and perseverance if shelters do collapse	2	Children and staff	4	Forest School Leader to assess dangers of shelters made and to ensure they are not dangerous for children to enter. Adult supervision.
Banging heads on shelter	Children are learning about den building	3	Children and staff	4	Forest School Leader to assess dangers. Adult supervision.
Trip hazards	Children are learning about den building	3	Children and staff	3	Forest School Leader to assess dangers. Adult supervision.
Injury from tools	Children are learning about den building and how to use tools safely	2	Children and staff	4	Forest School Leader to assess dangers. Tools used in tool area. Children taught how to use tools safely. Adult supervision.
Rope burn	Children are learning about den building	2	Children and staff	3	Forest School Leader to assess dangers. Children taught how to use rope safely.



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					Adult supervision.
Entanglement from rope	Children are learning about den building	2	Children and staff	3	Forest School Leader to assess dangers. Children taught how to use rope safely. Adult supervision.
Pulleys failing	Children are learning about den building	2	Children and staff	3	Forest School Leader to assess dangers. Children taught how to use rope safely. Adult supervision.



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Fire Risk Assessment

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Risk / Hazard	Risk Benefit	Probability (1-5)	Who is at risk	Severity (1-5)	Management
Igniting the fire	Children learn about fire safety and management	5	Children and staff	5	Forest School Leader to ignite all fires. All children are aware of fire rules. Adult supervision at all times. Fire only lit in fire pit in safety square. Fire safety kit and First Aid kit nearby. Safety gloves worn at all times. Bucket of water next to fire at all times. Office and neighbours aware that fires are being lit at that session.
Cooking: burns from pans, kettle, water, wood	Children learn about fire safety and management	3	Children and staff	5	Forest School Leader to ignite all fires. All children are aware of fire rules. Adult supervision at all times. Cooking only over fire pit in safety square. Fire safety kit and First Aid kit nearby. Safety gloves worn at all times. Bucket of water next to fire at all times. Office and neighbours aware that fires are being lit at that session.
Area around fire catching alight	Children learn about fire safety and management	1	Children and staff	5	Forest School Leader to ignite all fires. All children are aware of fire rules. Adult supervision at all times. Fire only lit in fire pit in safety square. Fire safety kit and First Aid kit nearby.



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					<p>Safety gloves worn at all times. Bucket of water next to fire at all times. Office and neighbours aware that fires are being lit at that session.</p>
Tripping/slipping/falling into fire	Children learn about fire safety and management	2	Children and staff	5	<p>All children are aware of fire rules. No movement around fire when lit. Adult supervision at all times. Fire only lit in fire pit in safety square. Fire safety kit and First Aid kit nearby. Bucket of water next to fire at all times.</p>
Food hygiene	Children learn about fire safety and management and about food hygiene	3	Children and staff	5	<p>All equipment has been cleaned before and after use. All adults and children aware of food hygiene. Preparation of food to be done in classroom before taking to Forest session. Forest School Leader to check food and to when cooked and safe to use. Adult supervision at all times.</p>



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Tools Risk Assessment

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BOW SAW					
Risk / Hazard	Risk Benefit	Probability (1-5)	Who is at risk	Severity (1-5)	Management
Injury during Bow Saw transportation	Children are learning about transporting tools safely and correctly	2	Children and staff	5	Adult supervision. Safety sweep before session. Children are taught to transport tools correctly and safely. Tools used in tools designated area. Forest Leader to stop session if deemed unsafe. Forest Leader will choose who can use tool.
Tool slipping whilst being used	Children are learning how to use tools correctly and safely	2	Children and staff	5	Adult supervision. Safety sweep before session. Children are taught to use tools correctly and safely. Tools used in tools designated area. Forest Leader to stop session if deemed unsafe. Forest Leader will choose who can use tool.
Injury when sharpening/cleaning blade	Children are learning how to use tools correctly and safely	2	Children and staff	5	Adult supervision. Safety sweep before session. Children are taught to clean tools correctly and safely. Tools used in tools designated area. Forest Leader to stop session if deemed unsafe. Forest Leader will choose who can use tool.



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PRUNING SAW					
Risk / Hazard	Risk Benefit	Probability (1-5)	Who is at risk	Severity (1-5)	Management
Injury during Prune Saw transportation	Children are learning about transporting tools safely and correctly	2	Children and staff	5	<p>Adult supervision. Safety sweep before session. Children are taught to transport tools correctly and safely. Tools used in tools designated area. Forest Leader to stop session if deemed unsafe. Forest Leader will choose who can use tool.</p>
Tool slipping when using	Children are learning how to use tools correctly and safely	2	Children and staff	5	<p>Adult supervision. Safety sweep before session. Children are taught to use tools correctly and safely. Tools used in tools designated area. Forest Leader to stop session if deemed unsafe. Forest Leader will choose who can use tool.</p>
Injury when sharpening/cleaning blade	Children are learning how to use tools correctly and safely	2	Children and staff	5	<p>Adult supervision. Safety sweep before session. Children are taught to clean tools correctly and safely. Tools used in tools designa Forest Leader to stop session if deemed unsafe. Forest Leader will choose who can use tool.ed area.</p>
PEN KNIFE / PEELERS					
Risk / Hazard	Risk Benefit	Probability (1-5)	Who is at risk	Severity (1-5)	Management



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Injury during pen knife/peelers transportation	Children are learning about transporting tools safely and correctly	2	Children and staff	5	Adult supervision. Safety sweep before session. Children are taught to transport tools correctly and safely. Tools used in tools designated area. Forest Leader to stop session if deemed unsafe. Forest Leader will choose who can use tool.
Tool slipping when using	Children are learning how to use tools correctly and safely	2	Children and staff	5	Adult supervision. Safety sweep before session. Children are taught to use tools correctly and safely. Tools used in tools designated area. Forest Leader to stop session if deemed unsafe. Forest Leader will choose who can use tool.
Injury when sharpening/cleaning blades	Children are learning how to use tools correctly and safely	2	Children and staff	5	Adult supervision. Safety sweep before session. Children are taught to clean tools correctly and safely. Tools used in tools designated area. Forest Leader to stop session if deemed unsafe. Forest Leader will choose who can use tool.
Pen knife/peelers storage	Children are learning to have responsibility of tools and to store correctly and safely	2	Children and staff	5	Adult supervision. Safety sweep before session. Children are taught to store tools correctly and safely. Penknives/peelers are always stored in locked container and counted at the end of session. Forest Leader to stop session if deemed unsafe. Forest Leader will choose who can use tool. Safety check after session.



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WHEELBARROW					
Risk / Hazard	Risk Benefit	Probability (1-5)	Who is at risk	Severity (1-5)	Management
Unbalanced when in storage	Children are learning how to store tools safely	2	Children and staff	3	Adult supervision. Safety check after session. Children taught not to store wheelbarrow safely.
Injury to back when lifting handles	Children are learning how to use tools correctly and safely	2	Children and staff	4	Adult supervision. Children taught how to use wheelbarrow safely.
Wheelbarrow breaking/sharp edges	Children are learning how to use tools correctly and safely	2	Children and staff	4	Adult supervision. Children taught how to use wheelbarrow safely. Children taught to report and broken items to adult straight away – adult will then remove item.
Wheelbarrow impacting another person	Children are learning how to use tools correctly and safely	2	Children and staff	4	Adult supervision. Children taught how to use wheelbarrow safely. Forest School Leader will decide who uses wheelbarrow. Forest School Leader will stop session if dangers occur.
GARDEN TOOLS					
Risk / Hazard	Risk Benefit	Probability (1-5)	Who is at risk	Severity (1-5)	Management
Injury during transportation of garden tools	Children are learning about transporting tools safely and correctly	2	Children and staff	4	Adult supervision. Safety sweep before session. Children are taught to transport garden tools correctly and safely. Forest Leader to stop session if deemed unsafe. Forest Leader will choose who can use tools.



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Injury to others whilst using	Children are learning how to use tools correctly and safely	2	Children and staff	4	Adult supervision. Safety sweep before session. Children are taught to use tools correctly and safely. Forest Leader to stop session if deemed unsafe. Forest Leader will choose who can use tool.
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