

HAND TOOL SAFETY POLICY

Using hand tools is an important part of Forest School as it enables learners to develop new, practical skills that help them develop self-confidence. Hand tools are to be maintained in good order by the Forest School Leader and will be inspected before each session to ensure safety. Participants will be taught how to handle tools properly and to treat them with respect. Whilst using hand tools the staff to learner ratio is increased. This will be achieved by following these guidelines:

- Staff to child ratio 1:2 for bow saws, bill hooks and knives and for KS1 children, all hand tool work
- Staff to child ratio 1:8 (KS2) with hacksaws and peelers
- Tools will be kept in the Forest School tool bags and only removed by the Forest School staff.
- Penknives must be opened and closed by Forest School staff.
- Running with tools is prohibited
- Pointing with tools is prohibited
- Children will lose permission to use tools if the guidelines are not followed
- Bill hooks should not be swung or used with gloved hands
- Bow saws must have a blade guard on them when not in use. Blade guards to be removed and put back only by Forest School staff, until children have been shown how to do this properly and safely
- Wood being sawn must be supported on a sawhorse or a natural sawing break – hands must be kept away from the blade.
- When using penknives to whittle, this must be done at the side of, and downwards of the body
- All tools must be counted back into the tool box at the end of the session
- Volunteer helpers must receive basic training on the use of individual hand tools before being allowed to use them with children.