

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

Forest school uses campfires and storm kettles in many of the Forest School sessions. We do this safely and with as little risk to any person's health as possible.

Location of the fire

- Campfire areas are enclosed by logs or large stones to prevent the spread of fire.
- Storm kettles are only used on flat ground and any inflammables such as woodchip or leaf litter must be brushed away before use.

Positioning of Children and Adults

- Fire areas are surrounded by seating logs or kneeling mats at least 1.5 metres from the fire pit.
- When the campfire is in use, learners do not access the area without permission.
- When allowed to access the campfire, learners walk around the outside of the seating logs and wait for permission to step over. Once permission has been given, they must sit ensuring legs are drawn into the log and not outstretched.
- Once seated around the campfire, the learners must remain seated until directed by a member of staff to move.
- No person must ever cross the inner area of the fire boundary perimeter.
- Suitable long sleeves and trousers must always be worn.
- Advice on the appropriate way for dealing with smoke will be given to the learners and there is specific advice given to those with health issues associated with smoke inhalation such as asthma: Learners are advised to turn their head to one side, placing their hand across the face, to close their eyes and count to 30 (or ask an adult/peer to count for them) or if required, moving to a different seating area will be advised.
- If there is a clear wind direction, seating in the line of smoke is to be avoided.
- If wind direction is variable, the leader should rearrange the seating.

Type of Fire

Training is provided for leaders regarding the best fire lay to use for a session:

- **Waffle** fires are used to provide a large amount of heat and light and are fast burning.
- **Long Log** fires are good for cooking as they are slow burning and require little fuel.
- **Indian Fire** can be used for specific purposes such as cooking as the heat from them can be carefully controlled by regulating air flow.
- **Safety and Responsibility**
- Only adults are permitted to light fires, unless children are under the direct supervision of a trained member of staff. This will always be the Forest School Leader.
- Fires are lit using cotton wool and a strike stick.

- No flammable liquids are to be used to light or accelerate fires.
- No plastics are to be burnt.
- When sessions involve learners adding fuel to the fire, this must be done with one to one adult supervision. (only one student to add wood at a time supervised by the forest school staff)
- Sticks/wood must be placed, not thrown, from the side of the fire. The hand should never go over the fire.

Extinguishing

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

Storm (Kelly) kettles

- Only adults are to light the fire in the fire pan unless learners are directly supervised by a member of staff
- The storm kettle must be placed on flat, clear ground.
- Learner's must be seated at least 1.5 metres away from the storm kettle when lit / hot.
- Learners can feed the fire with one to one supervision until it is deemed that learners are competent, Learners in this situation will have been shown how to do so safely and will be observed by a trained member of staff.
- Fuel should burn itself out, but if it doesn't it must be extinguished with water.
- Storm kettles should never be boiled with the cork in.
- When pouring water from the Kelly Kettle, this should be carried out by staff until it is deemed that learners are competent, Learners in this situation will have been shown how to do so safely and will be observed by a trained member of staff. Other students must be at least 1.5 meters from the kettle when being poured.