






Forest School and Garden Risk Assessment



Activity / Situation	Hazard	Benefit of Activity	Level of Risk	Control Measures	Further Action
Shelter Building	Falling trees / branches - Shelter collapse - Dead wood	- Improves teamwork and communication - Helps creativity	Medium	- Assess trees, look for large dead limbs – avoid building shelters under those areas - Staff to encourage ‘wiggle test’ and regularly check shelter is OK - Highlight rotten branches - Keep ground clear around fire squares - Fire bucket next to fire - Staff to demonstrate kneeling ‘respect position’ when approaching fire and to monitor - Use of fire glove when using pans / kettles etc and putting wood on fire - Staff may need to put out fire if an individual is not listening / following instructions	
Fires (boiling water / cooking / marshmallows)	- Burns and scalds - Spreading of fire - Boiling water - Hot food	- Improves listening skills - Builds confidence	High	- Keep working area clean - Staff to check hot drinks to ensure they aren't too hot, add cold water if necessary	
Cooking	Burning mouth or other body part with hot marshmallow	- Good fun - Encourages teamwork - Improves communication - Improves hand eye coordination			
Tool usage (knives, axe, bow saw, loppers, folding saw)	- Cuts / stabs - Aggressive participant	- Helps participants assess risk - Improves focus - Improves listening skills	High	- Instructors to follow Forest School protocol on tool usage: ☑ Tool talk ☑ Blood bubble ☑ Glove on non tool hand ☑ Specific area for tool usage ☑ Monitor usage - Tools will be removed from any participant who is deemed unsafe	
Animals / insects	Bites / stings - Allergic reaction - Cuts - Illness	- Improves knowledge and understanding of nature	low	- Highlight specific creatures to avoid - Get participants to check themselves at end of session or at home	
Collecting and using natural materials	- Poisonous plants / mushrooms - Cuts / stings - Trip hazards / falling - Illness due to poisons / toxins - Allergic reaction	- Improves knowledge and understanding of nature	low	- Highlight specific plants to avoid (e.g. Lords and ladies) - Explain not to pick berries or fungi as some are poisonous - Group to wash hands before eating and after session - Respond to medical consent forms (e.g. allergic reactions may need epi-pens) - Highlight the need to look down to avoid trip hazards	
Off-the-ground activities	- Falling - Sprains / breakages	- Physical benefit - Hand eye co-ordination		- Highlight and remove rotten branches - encourage children to climb no further than an Adult shoulder height	
Blindfold activities	Trees / roots / branches - Falling, tripping, collisions	- Improves other senses - Improves communication	low	- Encourage slow movement - feeling ahead	

Chasing games (e.g. 40/40 / manhunt)	Trees / roots / branches s - Falling, twists, collision	Physical benefit - Improves teamwork	medium	- Move major trip hazards - Remove any sharp branches - Before game highlight trip hazards and branches . - Monitor and adjust / end game if needed
behaviour from participants	- Physical harm to self, other participants and staff	N/A	Low/medium	- Watch for signs of frustration/escalation of behaviour - Try to calm participant - Staff to radio office/head/other designated staff to remove aggressive participant from the group if necessary - Move other participants to safety if required
Hammock	Falling out - Hitting a tree	Physical benefit - Hand eye co-ordination - Very relaxing	low	- Ensure hammocks are not erected too high from the ground - Explain that hammocks are not for swinging in, only gentle rocking - ensure hammock is secure
Nettles and brambles Thorny trees	Sting	Walking to the wildlife area N/A	medium	Make children aware, clear pathways and main play areas. Children to wear long trousers. - Make children aware of hazard - Cut branches and use of gloves to remove if necessary
Pond Area	Falling in	Habitat for frogs - Drinking area for animals	low	- Explain to participants the associated dangers and uses - Hazel fence along front and back - Not easily accessible from the sides due to brambles and other shrubs
In the area	- Log piles, falling wood when climbed on Falling trees Escapes	N/A	Low	Signs are on wood piles telling people not to climb - Groups are reminded not to climb on wood piles Remover rotten branches / tress if needed
Boundaries		N/A	Low	
Compost/ Composting	Pathogenic microbial contamination Airborne particles Flies Vermin Lifting/ Turning	Planting / digging weeds	low	Compost should be stored in cool place ie not in a greenhouse Avoid turning compost heaps but keep as cold heaps. Adults only to turn heaps when pupils are not present, adults must wear face mask and gloves to do this. Schools must avoid making compost heaps too wet by adding too much fruit waste as this attracts flies and does not make effective compost. If too much fruit waste then this will need to be disposed of elsewhere and compost heaps just kept for garden waste.
infection	Various	N/A	low	Children to wash their hands after touching plants or soil/compost and before handling food and drink. Either cover any cuts or abrasions before garden sessions or ensure gloves are worn.
Garden tools Rake/ spade/ shovel / fork / trowel etc	Injury, trips and falls	N/A	low	Tools correctly maintained to be safe to use. Children to only use tools when instructed to do so. At start of each teaching session tool safety to be embedded When working with Reception/ Year 1 pupils, forks and spades are only to be used by pupils if there is a ratio of 1 adult helper to 1 child. All tools counted 'out' and 'in'. Appropriate type and size of tools to be selected for age of children. 'Tool stop' point to be clearly

Water / Water butts	Slips, trips, falls Drinking Washing Hands Water borne bugs/ infections Drowning	N/A	low	<p>identified and all tools to be returned here when not in use during a teaching session. Pupils with certain behavioural difficulties may be precluded from using certain tools. Advice to be sought from class teacher. Pupils to be supervised during all gardening activities. Tools to be stored safely when not in use.</p> <p>Children shown how to correctly water plants to avoid soaking pathways. No running.</p> <p>Water butts only to be installed by the school if this is in line with the school's own Health & Safety Policy. Such butts must have child proof, locked lids and should be firmly secured on a stable surface. Pupils must not wash their hands or wash garden produce for consumption with water from the butts. When using water from the butts for watering then pupils and adults must wash their hands afterwards. Water butts should be emptied and scrubbed out once a year. This job should be carried out by an adult with gloves and face mask. Water butts to be kept in cool position as far as practically possible. If not, consideration to be given to insulation or light reflecting paint. Empty water out of full hoses after use. (NB Full hoses left in sun or warm conditions may breed micro-organisms such as Legionella) Hoses should not be stored in warm place eg greenhouse.</p>	
Plants / Plant supports	Ingestion / allergic reaction Damage to eyes			<p>Adults to be made aware of any children/volunteers/staff known to have specific plant and food allergies or hay fever, and to know the school representative responsible for administering that medication. Some of the plants may be irritating to skin (gloves to be worn), or contain parts which are harmful or toxic if eaten, or have been sprayed with chemicals.</p> <p>Children, School staff and volunteers must not eat any plants from the school garden unless they are competent to identify the potentially harmful plants in their garden. Staff must not allow the children to pick the plants or put their fingers in their mouths. Children must not eat parts of plants unless instructed to do so, and must wash hands after garden sessions. When undertaking taste tests in the garden, all produce and pupils hands should be washed in tap water (not water butts) before eating. Do not plant potentially poisonous plants (eg daffodils) in edible beds.</p> <p>Plant supports to be avoided where possible. When being used care should be taken. Children and adult helpers to be made aware of hazard and to take care when leaning over beds. Cane toppers to be used where</p>	

Soil	Tetanus Toxoplasmosis Skin Irritation Soil blowing into eyes	Working in the raised beds	low	cane height less than 1.8m high. Schools to check with parents/carers and advise coordinators as to whether or not pupils have had tetanus inoculation before sessions start. Hands must be thoroughly washed (by pupils and adults) at the end of each session and especially before eating food/ drinking. Adult helpers or staff to check garden before pupils attend session and remove any animal mess whilst wearing gloves. Bury/dispose of mess away from the garden and wash trowel and hands afterwards. If pupils come across buried animal mess, adult to remove as above and pupils to wash hands immediately if they have had direct contact. Gloves to be worn when working with the soil. Proprietary compost e.g. for seed sowing, can be handled without gloves but hands must be washed after the session. If pupils or school staff have skin irritations e.g. eczema, or cuts/abrasions, or are likely to have a suppressed immune system, then disposable gloves should be worn. Bags of compost or potting media should be opened with the head away from the opening as far as practically possible. Moisten dry compost/potting media before using.
lifting	Injury Strain	Moving objects Tiding the garden area	Medium/ low	Children and adults are not to lift heavy objects or to overfill wheelbarrows where in use.
Emergency Arrangements				
<p>Serious Accident: Seek additional adult help, provide first aid, call ambulance 999, inform parents (next of kin). Return all other children into the classroom, keep them calm, read stories, sing songs etc. Write up accident report form, inform HSE, assess risk assessment and make new adjustments for future. (MG keep mobile on her)</p> <p>Minor Accident: Provide first aid, complete accident report form, inform parents (carer), assess risk assessment and make adjustments for future.</p> <p>Weather change: Make dynamic risk assessment, seek shelter or return to classroom.</p>				
Safety Advice				
<p>Clothing: Long trousers and long sleeves, warm clothing in cold weather, waterproof clothing in wet weather. Safety gauntlets at fire, gloves for collecting rubbish. Spare clothing available in the classroom for emergencies.</p> <p>Communications: Mobile phone, member of staff to use land line in school.</p> <p>First Aid: Woodland first aid kit to be taken down with every class</p> <p>Food and Drink: Wash hands/ use wipes/ antibacterial gel before eating, sit for eating and drinking, take snack and drink for full sessions, take cups, wet wipes and kitchen roll.</p> <p>Children's safety advice: Remind children of rules being outside.</p> <p>Staff safety advice: Staff to discuss any worries before entering the site, before each session, and decide if it is safe to enter as a team. Consider weather, environment, state of site etc.</p>				
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Sign:-		Print:- HELEN CESSFORD	Gardener Lead	Date 27/11/2020
Sign:-		Print:- MICHAEL QUAY	Health and Safety Governors	Date 27/11/2020