



DOVEDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL
ONE Academy Trust



Dovedale Primary School

Forest School Risk Assessment

Reviewed: September 2026



Potential Hazard	Who might be harmed?	Existing Control Measures	Further Action Required	Risk Benefits
Slips, trips, falls in outdoor area E.g. on slippery grass, from heights trying to climb, when using equipment	Children Adults Staff	Children will be required to wear appropriate footwear at all times. All equipment will be stored in appropriate places before and after use. First aid kit to be taken outside during Forest School sessions.	Outdoor area to be checked before every Forest School session. Children will be warned about any potential slippery surfaces or items they could fall over. If incident does occur first aid will be administered.	Children develop understanding of location. Children will gain an understanding of challenges when they take part. Children develop confidence of own abilities to negotiate surfaces and obstacles in natural environment.
Wet weather E.g. rain, snow and ice	Children Adults Staff	If safe to be allowed out children will be required to wear appropriate footwear and clothing at all times. Children not allowed out in adverse weather conditions.	Outdoor area to be checked before every Forest School session. Weather will be monitored and deemed safe to allow children outside.	Children will gain an understanding of challenges when they take part. Children develop confidence of own abilities to negotiate surfaces and obstacles in natural environment. Children will be able to complete seasonal Forest School activities and develop independence.
Outdoor security issues	Children	The majority of the boundaries and gates are secure and in good repair, with no climbing aids such as trees adjoin the boundary. Access restricted to strangers. Children will be made aware of their boundaries during Forest	The Forest School leader and staff will monitor site at all times while completing a Forest School session.	The natural outdoor environment provides hands-on learning. Children learn to understand and respect the natural world around them.

		School sessions.		
Child Protection	Children	All members of staff and volunteers are DBS checked to work within school. All staff are trained on their responsibilities in child protection matters and steps to be taken when concern is raised.	Any raised concerns will be discussed with the headteacher. See the 'Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy' for more details.	
Behaviour Management	Children	Children to be given guidelines and rules for what behaviour is and is not acceptable during Forest School sessions. Activities to be stopped if behaviour is deemed to be unsafe to continue.	The school's behaviour system will be appropriately followed.	Children to learn about their behaviour and reactions to activities. Children to practise their own self-control. Children to develop social skills and empathy for others.
Trees E.g. fall, break off, climbing	Children	The school's grounds and trees are regularly checked. Children will be made aware of their boundaries during Forest School sessions. First aid kit to be taken outside during Forest School sessions.	Outdoor area to be checked before every Forest School session and discussions with sight manager as to which areas of school site best to carry out Forest School in. Trees will be checked for their strength. Children will be warned about any potential dead trees or any not to climb. If incident does occur first aid will be administered.	Children to develop their understanding of safe and potentially unsafe trees. Children to be able to identify different trees. Children will be able to take on the challenge of climbing trees and manage the risk.
Allergic reaction Including bites and	Children Adults	Parents required to provide the school office with information regarding any allergies. Children/adults to carry any appropriate medication required e.g.	Forest School leader will gain required medical information on the children attending Forest School from the	Children can gain awareness of any allergens present and learn to independently avoid. Children to be able to identify

stings	Staff	inhalers. First aid kit to be taken outside during Forest School sessions.	school office.	and spot a range of insects and wildlife.
Hygiene	Children Adults Staff	Staff and children to wash/clean their hands before handling food. Staff and children to wash their hands on return from outdoor activities.	None required.	Children to learn about maintaining their own hygiene after and before particular tasks and activities.
Food and drink procedures E.g. eating any food warmed around the fire pit Hazard from food allergies and food poisoning.	Children	Children and staff to wash/clean their hands before eating. Children not allowed to swap food with others in case of food allergies. Parents required to provide details in writing of any food allergies suffered by their children. Food stored in safe and hygienic manner, clearly labelled where appropriate.	Forest School leader will gain required medical information on the children attending Forest School from the school office. When warm weather children will be encouraged to drink more often and to take their water bottles outside. Food best before dates will be checked before any Forest School cooking session.	Children learn the benefits of fire and how to maintain a safe fire to cook food. Fine motor skill development to hold and cook food above a fire.
Activities Use of toys, blindfolds, building shelters	Children	Children will be reminded to take care during periods of play. Hazardous areas will be explained to the children and identified as areas to avoid. Children will be given clear boundaries. Children and adults will be required to wear appropriate footwear and clothing at all times. If children are playing games with blindfolds, they are paired up with a sighted partner to avoid slips, trips and collisions. When building shelters	Equipment will be monitored by the Forest School Leader. New resources will be purchased when required. All equipment will be stored appropriately before and after Forest School sessions.	Children will be using their fine and gross motor skills. Children will be able to problem solve to complete activities. They will also develop their social skills when working in pairs or groups to conduct blindfold or shelter building activities.

		rope will be a bright colour to stand out in the trees. Children taught to tie knots safely and effectively. In high winds shelters will be taken down or session will not take place. First aid kit to be taken outside during Forest School sessions.		
Tool use	Children Adults Staff	Forest School Leader to deliver a 'tool talk' and demonstrate safe use of tools to helpers and children. 'Tool talk' to include how the tool works, how to pass and carry the tool, how and where to store the tool, how and when to use the tool, safe working distances and personal protective equipment required for use of tool. All children to wear a high visibility jacket when working with a tool. Appropriate ratios of adults to children to ensure children are monitored at all time when using a tool. Designated storage space for tools while on site. All staff and adults are to be aware of location of tools and monitor how many are in use. Tools to be stored appropriately e.g. knives and saws inside box. First aid kit to be taken outside during Forest School sessions.	Forest School leader to maintain and check all tools before and after use. Tools to be stored safely within school.	Children will develop fine and gross motor skills through use of a variety of tools. Problem solving will occur to work out how to use the tool in the correct and safe way. Children will develop their social skills and team work when using tools. They will also develop their own safety awareness.

Fire Lighting a fire and in event of fire	Children Adults Staff	When lighting a fire the Forest School Leader will make sure there is a clear space free from equipment or undergrowth around the fire area. There will be extra water available to put out the fire. As well as the first aid kit to be taken out a burns kit will also be present. Heat proof gloves and a fire blanket will be available. Forest School Leader will be in charge of lighting a fire and putting out the fire safely. In an event of a fire normal school procedures will take place. See the 'Fire Safety Policy'.	The Forest School Leader will be responsible to remember all necessary equipment and safety equipment required to light a fire. The local fire service will be informed when a fire is lit on the school grounds.	Children will develop an awareness and respect for fire. Children will learn how to work as a group to manage a fire and learn the safety aspects involved. They will also be able to collect fire wood and identify suitable fire wood.
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