

FOREST SCHOOL SITE RISK ASSESSMENT

Educational Setting	The Pines Primary School Forest School Area
Activity / Task	Garden Project
Completed by & Date	Rachael Cox/ Maddie Saunders June 2024
Review Date	Ongoing Review – June 2025

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and <i>how</i> ?	What are you doing already?	What further action is necessary?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
Uneven surfaces	All participants at risk of tripping/ falling and causing an injury.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents sent home – what to wear information including the importance of adequate footwear. All participants to wear adequate footwear. High level of adult to child ratio (1:6) Landscapers to regularly cut any designated grass, weeds All participants to follow Garden rules and expectations outlined in Session 1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a whole group set out clear rules and expectations during first session. Additional needs to be considered when managing group ratios 	MS	Ongoing	
Tools	School staff, volunteer helpers, pupils Injury, trips and falls Minor cuts and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children to only use tools when instructed to do so and closely supervised, at all times. Close adult supervision when working with spades and forks – keep children working with large 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools correctly maintained to be safe to use. Teaching around right tools for the task. Identify area for tools when not in use. 	MS/ Any staff member assisting with gardening group.	Ongoing	

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	bruises	<p>tools in a different area to children kneeling working with hand tools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the right tool for the job which is appropriate for the age of the child. • Tools to be stored safely when not in use. 'Tool stop' point to be clearly identified and all tools to be returned here when not in use. • Ensure adequate working space for pupils when they are working around garden beds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify children's roles when packing away and storing items • First Aid kit to be purchased and accessible for use in garden 	RC to Liaise with Office Manager re: First Aid kit purchase.	June 2024	Yes
Lifting and Moving equipment.	<p>School staff, volunteer helpers, pupils</p> <p>Injury, strains and sprains</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gardening Lead demonstrates correct lifting techniques (back straight, knees bent) and asks if anyone has any back or muscle problems. • Do not lift heavy objects without help. • All equipment appropriately maintained and checked prior to use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and adults are not to overfill wheelbarrows where in use. • If required, use a trolley to transport materials. 	MS	Ongoing	
Soil and unintended animal manures from cats, dogs and foxes	<p>School staff, volunteer helpers, pupils</p> <p>Tetanus E-Coli Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult helpers or staff to check garden before pupils attend a session and remove any animal mess whilst wearing gloves. Bury/dispose of mess away from the garden and wash trowel and hands afterwards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix Information on diseases and health risks to be accessible to all staff working on project. 	<p>MS/Any staff member assisting with gardening group.</p> <p>RC</p>	June 2024	

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	Toxoplasmosis Toxocariasis Bioaerosols Skin Irritation Soil blowing into eyes	Gloves to be worn when working with the soil. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instruct children how to use tools correctly to avoid soil being flicked into each other's eyes. Avoid using loose compost and digging/raking soil in dry and windy conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This assessment and appendix list to be made available on website for parents and school community. 			
Homemade (school – made) garden compost	School staff, volunteer helpers, pupils Infection from airborne particles Flies Vermin (When lifting and transporting the compost or when turning the compost heap)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compost, brown and green waste should be placed in a suitable compost heap or compost bin. Do not allow material in the process of composting to become dry and thus mouldy. Fungal spores are potentially hazardous if inhaled. Avoid adding too much fruit waste as this attracts flies and does not make effective compost. Refrain from adding food waste. If vermin are a problem, consider buying a tumbler type compost bin which is sealed. When handling homemade (school-made) compost wear gloves and cover all cuts or abrasions. Reduce risk of air borne particles (bioaerosols) by damping dry compost or mulch, but not so much 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A Not currently composting. Discussion to be held around future composting. 	MS/RC		

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		that it becomes wet and prone to splashing.				
Potting compost	School staff, volunteer helpers, pupils Infection from airborne particles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compost should be stored in a cool place i.e. not in a greenhouse and the container (bag or dustbin) should be sealed when not in use. Children should wear gloves when handling potting compost and ensure any cuts or abrasions are covered Handle potting composts gently to avoid splashes and ensuring wet compost that might cause splash is not used. Use potting composts in a well-ventilated place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check with each child about cuts and abrasions at the start of each session and cover accordingly. 	MS/Any staff member assisting with gardening group.	Ongoing	
Plants	School staff, volunteer helpers, pupils Ingestion, allergic reactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit the school grounds to identify toxic plants and inform anyone who is using the garden. Adults to be made aware of any children/volunteers/staff known to have specific plant and food allergies or hay fever. Wear gloves if plants are a skin irritant. Always supervise vulnerable children, especially if they are inclined to eat plants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed information on harmful or potentially poisonous plants can be found on the resources/starting school gardening section of the Campaign for School Gardening website: https://schoolgardening.org.uk/home 	MS/KD	Ongoing	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Do not plant potentially poisonous plants (e.g. daffodils) in edible beds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link to potential harmful plants: https://www.rhs.org.uk/practice/protecting-potentially-harmful-garden-plants 			
Eye Level branches	Children at risk of being hit in head, eyes with branches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All participants to follow Garden rules and expectations outlined in Session 1. All participants to be mindful of any eye level branches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to monitor and check area prior to session. 	MS/ Any staff member assisting with gardening group.	Ongoing	
Large, heavy loose parts (logs, branches, crates, tyres)	All participants at risk of serious injury, trip/fall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gardening directly under trees to be avoided. All participants to follow Garden rules and expectations outlined in Session 1. All participants to wear adequate footwear to prevent injury to feet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a whole group set out clear rules and expectations during first session. 	MS		
Bees, wasps and Insects	School staff, volunteer helpers, pupils Stings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be aware of any wasp or bee nests and avoid these areas. Be aware of any children who are highly allergic to stings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid procedures to be followed. Advice and guidance to be sought from named first aider First Aid kit to be allocated and kept in shed. 	MS/ Any staff member assisting with gardening group.		

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Nettles/ Brambles	All participants at risk of getting stung or snagged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All participants to follow garden rules and expectations outlined in Session 1. Landscapers to regularly cut/spray nettles and brambles All participants to wear adequate clothing and shoes. Markers are placed as a visual reminder to support all participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to be aware when landscapers are booked in to support maintaining Forest school site. 	Forest School Leaders LD/JS MS	Ongoing	
Fallen leaves	School staff, volunteer helpers, pupils Risk of piercing wounds due to litter within leaves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear gloves when collecting leaves. Use leaf rakes to collect leaves in a pile and then pick them up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If leaves are to be collected, check the area in advance to make sure there are no hazardous objects such as syringes/ broken glass/ sharp items buried amongst leaves. 	MS/ Any staff member assisting with gardening group.	Ongoing	
Plant supports	School staff, volunteer helpers, pupils Damage to the eye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When canes are used, try to make them as tall as possible so they are above eye height. Point out the potential risk when people are leaning over beds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cane toppers or markers to be used for those at child height. 	MS	Ongoing	
Sticks	Children at risk of being hit causing injury to eyes, face, body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All participants to follow Garden rules and expectations outlined in Session 1. Children to drag sticks longer than their arms behind them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children to understand the difference between gardening and forest school. Staff to explain purpose of session along with 	MS	Ongoing	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children to hold sticks down when carrying around site 	<p>expectations at the start of each session.</p>			
Extreme weather conditions	<p>School staff, volunteer helpers, pupils</p> <p>Risk of getting burnt, sun stroke, soaked through, hyperthermia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All participants to wear adequate clothing and shoes. Sessions will be cancelled in the event of extreme wind, rain, heat Garden Project Lead, to be mindful in extreme weather conditions to ensure all participants have a positive and safe experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative activities to be explored. To ensure adequate measures are taken to protect children from the elements i.e. suncream, sunhats, wellington boots, raincoats. 	MS / Any staff member assisting with gardening group.	Ongoing	
Fire Safety		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire evacuation procedures remain the same, see school Health and Safety Policy. All participants to evacuate site during fire alarm. 		MS/ Any staff member assisting with gardening group.	Ongoing	
First Aid		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to first aid facilities is maintained and the school is suitably stocked with first aid supplies Staff or pupils with medical needs have been assessed and relevant consents are in place. Staff dealing with First aid will have access to First Aid grab bags. Please refer to addendum to the Health & Safety Policy - First Aid Requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid kit to be purchased First Aid kit to be allocated to garden area, kept in shed and maintained and stocked as needed. 	RC to liaise with Office Manager MS/ Any staff member assisting with gardening group.	<p>June 2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Yes

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid grab bags will be bought onto Gardening site. 				
Toileting	Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All participants are encouraged to use the toilet and thoroughly wash their hands before starting the session. If a participant does need the toilet during a session, then they are to wash their hands when entering the school building with soap and water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure access into school through bottom fire escape, to minimise disruption. Pupils to be made aware of the expectations and to always ask the Garden Project Lead before leaving the area. 	MS/ Any staff member assisting with gardening group.	Ongoing	
Behaviour	Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviour expectations please see separate behaviour policy Any child not able to meet the expectations as laid out in the session guidelines will be returned to class and further discussion had before rejoining the group for a future session. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that staff do not become complacent and carry out all checks regularly. Behaviour to be continuously monitored and reviewed. 	MS/ Any staff member assisting with gardening group.	Ongoing	