

Things to consider when selecting a site for a fire

1. Check wind direction and weather conditions before any fire building activity. There should be no combustible materials nearby and you must check for hanging branches or dry sources of tinder. Fires will not be built in extremely windy conditions.
2. Soil type – ensure the soil bed is non-flammable, avoiding dry areas where dead roots, spruce or pine needles may catch fire under ground.
3. Avoid over-grown areas surrounded by leaves and sticks where there are possible hazards on the ground. Ensure the seating area around the fire is free from debris and trip hazards.
4. Fires will not be built on an upward slope.
5. Hair – no hair or jewellery dangling. If possible, hair must be tied back.
6. Clothing – gloves, loose clothing or flammable aprons should not be worn when placing materials on the fire.
7. Safe sitting – children should be seated in a safe area, positioned 1.5m away from the fire. Ensure gaps between seating positions for escape routes. Children will be taught the safety fire circle.
8. A boundary will be set around the fire with rocks, sticks or logs. This will contain the fire and ensure children do not get too close.

Safe and efficient use of the fire area

1. Safe management – clear the area where the fire will be lit. Fires will be lit by the Forest School leader unless learners are confident and ready to light it themselves. This will only be done when the leader is confident that the group is able to carry out instructions safely and adequate staff ratios are present.
2. The fire area will not be left unattended at any time or left to develop into a bonfire.
3. Children will not be unattended near a campfire.
4. Maintain safe practice and use of equipment at all times.
5. Children will be taught to turn their heads if smoke is blowing in their direction.
6. Procedure of safe removal away from the fire area will be explained with allocated areas of safety if needed.
7. Rubbish will not be disposed of in the fire, as this can cause dangerous gases and create a lot of mess which is hard to tidy up.
8. Lighting fires – fires will be lit using a fire flint and steel, matches, cotton wool and firelighters. These will all be stored safely away in a fire-proof box at a safe distance from the fire.
9. Extinguishing fires – if possible, let the fire burn down completely first. Then:
 - A bucket of water will be available; using small containers or a watering can, water will carefully be poured onto the fire.
 - Spread out the embers of the fire using a trowel.
 - The leader is to safely check for heat, adding more water if needed.
 - Use a trowel and cover the area. Ensuring that the fire is out underneath, fill the fireplace with some soil (humus) making sure that there is no trace of a fire.
 - Do not leave the site until you are certain that the fire is out and the area has been checked safely.

The school's Fire Action plan will be followed in an emergency. Refer to full list of school policies.