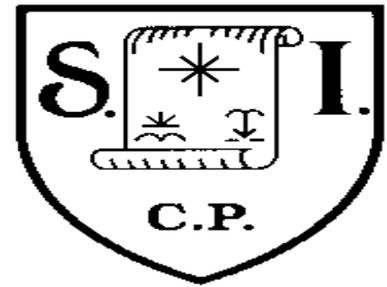




Fire Policy



The ethos of forest school is to teach respect for the world around us through curiosity and investigation children have the right to access risks within the natural world.

Forest school principles state;

‘Activities take place in a woodland or natural wooded environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.’

‘Offer learners the opportunity to take risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves’ (*CERTA Level 3- Handbook, 2018*)

Fundamental to fire building is safe teaching; how to build, maintain and extinguish a fire in a natural wooded area, for the purpose of keeping warm, cooking or making hot water. With this comes risk therefore primarily fires will only be lit by a forest school leader until learners are prepared with safe knowledge and understanding with fire lighting and management.

Considerations before deciding on an area to set up for a fire need to be taken;

1. Check Wind direction and weather conditions before any fire building activity- No combustible materials nearby/ 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 area when seating around the fire is free from debris and trip hazards.
4. Fires will not be built on an upward slope.
5. Hair- No hair/Jewellery dangling – if possible hair must be tied back.

6. Clothing- No gloves on when placing materials on the fire. No loose clothing or flammable aprons.
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 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 progress into a bonfire.
3. Children will not be unattended near a campfire.
4. Maintain safe practice and use of equipment.
5. Children will be taught to turn their heads if smoke is coming 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- this can cause dangerous gases and also leave 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 all will 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.
 - 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.
 - Leader is to safely check for heat adding more water if needed.
 - Use a trowel and cover the area insuring the fire is out underneath, fill the fireplace with some soil (humus) making sure there is no trace of a fire.
 - Do not leave the site until you are certain the fire is out and the area has been checked safely.

Emergency- School Fire Action plan will be followed in emergency- refer to full list of school policies.