



Tool Handling Policy

When using any type of tool during forest school sessions it is vital to instil respect for the tool and ensure that children are fully aware of the possible dangers and safe use. To make sure safe handling is passed on with a clear understanding all adults who conduct forest school activities must receive basic training on the safe use of tools before they can carry out any sessions with the children. Taking into account different learning styles it is important through demonstration of tool safety that learners receive a multi approach;-

- **Auditory-** understand its use by direct explanation where the learner can listen to instructions and ask questions.
- **Kinaesthetic-** be 'hands-on' with the tool, looking at the features and understand how it works for one's self.
- **Visual-** clearly sees how it is used through demonstration or looking at previous examples also being shown/ explained how it may cause harm to one's self or others when incorrectly handled.

Children will not be able to use any tool until the leader feels confident in their ability to do so. In order for children to feel confident when using tools they need to be aware of good practice, a good way to do this is to instil a rhyme, song and memorable saying that reflects tool use as a whole. If the same procedure is used when handling any type of tool then children will become confident in safe handling regardless of tool type for example scissors, wood knife or bill-hook.

Our safety song, taken from forest school training:-

- This is my_
- I Use it for_
- This is its cutting edge and this is the handling point
- When I carry my_ I hold it like this.
- When I pass my_ I pass it like this.
- When I use my_ I hold it two arms and a tool's length away.
- When I am not using my_ it goes in the designated tool area.
(CERTA Level 3- Handbook, 2018)

Tool Maintenance

Tools will be kept in a lockable cupboard at all times. When the forest leader is selecting tools for the session they will conduct safety checks on each item before use. If a tool is damaged or deemed unsafe before, during or after a session it will be removed straight away. Children will be shown how to check tools are safe themselves before use. Tools will be placed in a designated tools area which children will be made aware of during forest sessions. The forest school leader will make sure all tools are checked and cleaned to in guidance with our risk assessment policy after every use.