



# Forest School Tool Policy

“Using tools in forest school allows children to experience danger in the form of risky equipment”.

Therefore, at North Wootton Academy Forest School, we aim for learners to experience a sensible level of danger by using hand tools confidently and safely.

<https://earlyimpactlearning.com/10-forest-school-tools-activities/>

Hand tools will only be introduced to learners in a Forest School session if the Forest School leader feels the learner is confident and capable to engage in risky equipment. If the Forest School leader does not feel confident about the learners capability, hand tools will not be introduced until the Forest School leader is 100% comfortable.

## Tool Safety

- All hand tools will be stored in a locked toolbox which only the Forest School Leader has access to.
- There will be a set number of tools in the toolbox that will need to be counted in and out.
- Each hand tool has a specific use and learners will be educated on the correct use for each tool.
- Learners will be educated how hand tools should be carried and moved around the Forest School site.
- The Forest School site will have a designated ‘tool use’ area away from the rest of the activities.
- Learners must never run with a hand tool.
- Forest School leader will check for any damages before and after a Forest School session.
- Forest School leader will clean tools after every session (if used).
- All bladed tools will be covered with a protective sheath.

## Tools Used at North Wootton Academy Forest School

The Forest School Leader will decide on appropriate tools for specific age groups and if the tool is the correct tool for the desired activity.

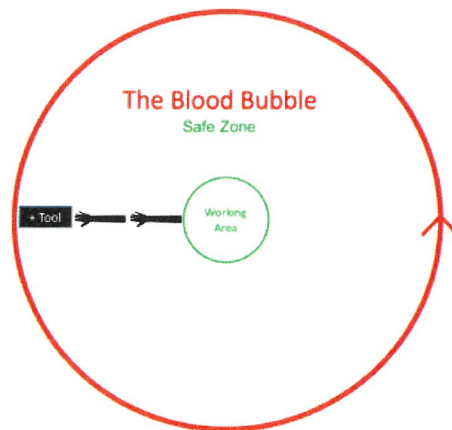
- **Potato Peelers**—used for peeling vegetables only ready to be cooked on the camp fire.
- **Gimlets**—used for making small holes.
- **Knife**—used for food preparation (chopping vegetables) and whittling of wood.
- **Bow Saw**—used for harvesting green wood e.g. branches. Bow saw can be used in pairs.
- **Folding Saw**—used for cutting branches. They can get into smaller spaces compared with the bow saw. They can only be used by one person at a time.
- **Hand Drill**—used for making holes in wood that are larger than gimlets. They are harder to use than a gimlet, often used as progression from a gimlet.
- **Mallet**—used for den building, hammering wooden pegs into the ground.
- **Hammer**—used for leaf bashing onto material.
- **Loppers**—used for pruning shrubs and chopping branches.
- **Handsaw**—used for cutting branches, planks of wood and smaller logs. They can only be used by one person at a time. Not as effective when cutting fresh green wood in comparison to the bow saw.



## Forest School Tool Policy Continued

- **Secateurs**—used for pruning and cutting smaller branches.
- **Rakes**—used for clearing leaf litter, clearing pathways.
- **Spade**—used for digging.

When using hand tools, learners will be educated about the blood bubble.



<http://learningintheleaves.co.uk/hand-tools>

'The Blood Bubble' is the safe working space around an individual or pair of individuals. The name is designed to show that this is the safe distance bystanders should stay out of to avoid being hurt, when a tool is in use. The 'Blood Bubble' is given a consistent size (two arms and a tools length) so learners easily remember. With younger children it maybe necessary to mark out the 'Blood Bubble', as they may not be able to visualise the size of the area.

<http://learningintheleaves.co.uk/hand-tools>

When hand tools are being used, learners are educated about the 'safe stance' or sometimes known as the 'respect position'.

The 'safe stance' or 'respect position' involves the learner(s) kneeling on one knee. This position gives learners a stable base whilst opening up space for them to use tools safely. The respect position also enables learners to move quickly out of the way if they should need too. When taking the respect position, learners should think carefully about where they are kneeling in relation to the job they are completing or the tool which they are using.

<http://learningintheleaves.co.uk/hand-tools>

Hand tools will only ever be introduced on a 1:1/1:2 basis depending on capability of the learners.

**Policy Created:** October 2021

**Review Date:** October 2022