



## Jordans Forest School Good Practice & Code of Conduct

### *Safe, Respect & Ready for Forest School*

Good Forest School Practice and our Jordans Forest School Code of Conduct/Golden Rules of Jordans Forest School will be formalised and amended into language chosen by our children during initial discussions as part of the "Introduction to Forest School" sessions.

Our Forest School expectations will mirror the key Jordans "Safe, Respect & Ready" expectations and our core school values of "Courage & Kindness". These expectations, using terms already familiar to our children, can be adapted to apply specifically to our Forest School environment:

#### *Safe, Respect & Ready for Forest School.*

Safe: *"We look after ourselves and each other"*

We stay within the boundaries of Forest School

We are careful how we play

We don't put anything in our mouths

Respect: *"We leave behind only footprints"*

We look after our woodland


We don't pick anything that is growing

We listen to each other

Ready: *"There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing"*

We dress for the conditions

We are ready to try new things



The Forest School Leader and adult helpers will support the children to develop a good understanding of the following good practice and code of conduct through ongoing teaching, discussion, modelling and the use of child-friendly memorable phrases such as:

***"Stop. Think. No lick, no pick & look out for sticks"***

### **"Stop"**

Children will be made aware of boundaries and of where they can go during a session. We will establish a routine of "1,2,3 Where are you", with the children replying "1,2,3 I'm here". "1,2, 3 come to me" (and potentially using a duck-call sound) will be the call for all participants to come to the base camp log circle. This routine will be initiated through games and will be established as a routine through regular practice across sessions.

"Stop, think....." will also be adopted a key phrase for adults supporting children to make decisions, choices and to manage risks in Forest School.

### **"No lick"**

"No picking and no licking" will become a familiar phrase for the children, through which we communicate the importance of not picking and eating anything they find in the woodland. Children will be made aware of the hazards present in terms of naturally occurring poisonous plants and of the health importance of not putting anything (including fingers) in mouths during Forest School sessions.

Handwashing/wiping arrangements will be in place if food or drink is being provided as part of a session.

### **"No pick"**

The use and collection of natural materials will be a core part of Jordans Forest School but children will be taught to only collected from the ground (never "picking" from living trees/plants – unless essential, in which case a "caterpillar pinch" will be permissible).

### **"Look out for sticks"**

Stick carrying and use is inevitable in woodland activities. We will establish safe handling procedures to teach children that they should only carry sticks shorter than their arm (walking and with a hand over the end) and longer sticks should be dragged or carried between two children (one at each end). Children will be taught to think about how close they are to others when they are carrying or moving sticks/pointed/large items. We will encourage all participants to "look out" for themselves and each other.



## **Other Good Practice:**

### **Ropes/String/Fastenings**

Fastening and fixing materials together using string/ropes opens up a range of fun activities for children and provides valuable opportunities for developing fine motor skills, dexterity and problem solving. Whether tying den materials with ropes, moving large logs or tying fiddly sticks together to make a decoration, adults will seek to support this and will model effective knot tying as appropriate. Small lengths of string/rope will be provided where possible to minimise entanglement. Children will not be permitted to use ropes or string to tie up people (including themselves)! All string/rope will be removed from the woodland at the end of each session.

### **Climbing in trees**

Children will only be permitted to climb in trees/shrubs which are sufficiently robust and have been identified as having clear/safe areas underneath. Children will be taught that they should not to climb higher than an adults arm reach for safety in Forest School.

### **Moving heavy materials:**

Moving heavy objects provides a valuable opportunity for children to develop strength and potentially also teamworking skills, as they work together to move a large log. Adults will model and support children to learn how to lift safely (bending knees with a straight back). We will encourage and support children to find alternative ways of moving larger materials safely – rolling/lifting in group/dragging/pulling with ropes.

### **Toileting**

Children will go to the toilet as part of getting ready for Forest School. In the same way as during a playtime, if a child needs the toilet during a Forest School session, they will need to ask an adult for permission to return to the school building (who will either record who is going or will accompany them if they require support). Children will use the usual toilets for their class.

### **Leave behind only footprints**

We will endeavour to leave the site as we found it, removing all traces of additional materials.

- Natural materials will only be collected from the ground layer of the woodland.
- If there is a demand for digging opportunities, a suitable area will be identified and designated for this, rather than disrupting or damaging existing flora and fauna.
- Children will be shown how to look carefully for insects and their habitats and look after them when they have found them.

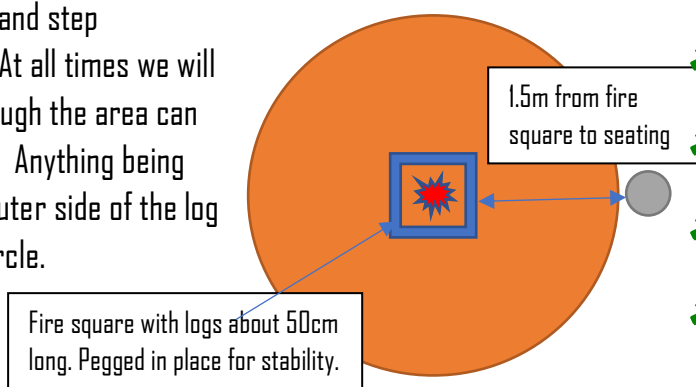
-If small creations related to school topics are made using collected materials, these may be taken back to school for temporary display purposes. However, where possible we will share by looking/discussing and will record digitally with photographs rather than keeping all creations – in order to minimise the depletion of natural resources on our small site. Whenever possible, we will seek to provide additional sustainable, native, natural materials sourced from the local area.

-Shelters, fastening and ties will be removed at the end of each session. This will help to protect our woodland and will also help children to develop their skills by tying/untying fastenings in every session.

### **Fires - Fire circle**

We intend to include fire circles as part of some Jordans Forest School sessions. Children will be taught not to use or cross the base-camp circle if it is a “fire circle” session. If the fire basket and fire area is in place, indicating that it is a “fire circle”, the whole centre of the circle will be “out of bounds” throughout the session.

In order to establish good practice, in all sessions (whether fire circle or normal base camp session), we will maintain log seating at 1.5 metres from the intended fire square. All participants will walk around the outside of the base-camp log circle and step over/through the logs when going to sit down. At all times we will try not to cross the base-camp log circle (although the area can be used for activities during non-fire sessions). Anything being shown at circle time will be stored behind the outer side of the log seats to maintain a clear zone within the fire circle.



Our fire will never be left unattended. An adult will be in place until the fire is fully extinguished. The adult will wear fire gloves and will have a bucket of water for extinguishing available.

Only a maximum of 4 people will be permitted inside the fire circle at any one time (e.g. if we are cooking marshmallows) – individuals will be allowed in by specific invitation from the adult in charge of the fire. We will have a designated entrance/exit point for moving into the fire circle and it will be a “walking feet only” zone.

The “respect position” will be used by all participants tending to/using the fire – this means one knee on the ground with the other foot firmly on the ground – which provides a stable body position and also easy, quick movement away from the fire in the event of sparking or flaring.

Participants will be taught to wait at least 20 seconds before eating anything cooked on the fire (to allow it to cool a little) and they must be seated whilst eating.