



New Leaf Triangle Forest Schools Risk Assessment

Address: Goadby Lane, Chadwell, Melton Mowbray, LE14 4LP

ASSESSOR/JOB TITLE: Director

Name: Troy Shaw

DATE 31.11.17

REVIEW DATE: 04.04.19 Troy Shaw, 28/04/21 Carly Steel PREVIOUS REVIEW DUE APRIL 23 21/08/23 Laura Jackson

REVIEWED: Laura Jackson, Operations Manager - 23/09/25

NEXT REVIEW DUE: SEPTEMBER 2027

KEY

RISK MATRIX

Risk = Probability (Frequency) x Consequence (Severity)

CONSEQUENCE (Severity)

P
R
O
B
A
B
I
L
I
T
Y

	Severe (3)	Moderate (2)	Minor (1)
Frequent (3)	9	6	3
Occasional (2)	6	4	2
Rare (1)	3	2	1

Context

New Leaf Triangle is an outdoor learning centre for individuals with a range of disabilities, autism and mental health conditions. The main activities at New Leaf Triangle take place at the 2 main sites situated on Goadby Road, Chadwell, Melton Mowbray, LE14 4LP (site 1) and Eastwell Road Site 2). The sites are 2 and a half acres and 5 and a half acres of undulating ridge and furrow grassland with a 20 X 40m sand, fibre and rubber menage at site one and 20 X 40m sand and rubber ménage at site two.

Site 1 Buildings:

9M x 8M steel barn, with steel anti condensation roof, containing 4 internal stables with a 3M wide roller shutter door. Stable partitions are steel framed with wooden panelling and steel grills. The barn is lined with 1.2cm ply board to 2.5M height. Means of escape – 3M wide roller shutter door

Two 3.6M x 3.6 M wooden stables adjoined. Means of escape - standard stable doors in each

3M x 3M wooden tool/feed shed. Means of escape – standard full wooden door.

5M X 3M log cabin, consisting of a single room. Means of escape – 2 French style doors opening outwards 1.5M

6M X 3M log cabin consisting of a single room. Means of escape – 2 French style doors opening outwards 1.5M

Goat pen with 2 small goats sheds

3 small wooden chicken coops - located in the top paddock near small cabins.

1 larger wooden goose house, located next to the chicken coops.

There is a designated fenced off air rifle shooting area undercover shelter.

There is a garden plot, containing large wooden planters near the shooting shelter.

Two 2.5M x 3.5M log cabins in the small paddock next to the air rifle shooting area. Means of escape – 2 French style doors opening outwards 1.2M

1M x 2M metal tool shed located near the muck heap in the car park.

5M x 5M large wooden hay store located in the car park beside the muck heap. No doors, means of escape through the front opening.

New Leaf uses woodland areas for Forest School activities

ACTION PLAN

FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED	BY WHOM	TARGET DATE	COMPLETED
REVIEWED			

NUMBER	HAZARD/POSSIBLE OUTCOME	GROUPS	RISK RATING	CONTROLS
1	Control of access to the forest area	Staff/Students/Animals	3	The entrance gate must be locked at the end of each day and unlocked at the start of the first scheduled activity A flag system must be used at the woodland entrance to indicate access status: Red Flag – Do Not Enter, Green Flag – Safe to Enter When entering the woodland with a large group, staff must: - Conduct a headcount - Familiarise themselves with all students present - Provide a clear safety briefing before entry using the call-and-response method: "1, 2, 3 – back to me!" All students, regardless of whether they are using the woodland during the session, must be made aware of the flag system and its meaning.

2	Child running away in the wood	Student	4	Staffing levels must be appropriate to the individual needs and capabilities of the group. During term time, a 1:1 staff-to-student ratio is required. During non-term time, staff must conduct a dynamic risk assessment and may involve parents or approved volunteers to support supervision as needed. While in the woods: -Ensure a staff member is positioned at the back of the group to maintain oversight. -Use clearly defined pathways to guide movement through the area. -Conduct a safety briefing with the group before entering the woodland.
3	Risk of burn from fire	Staff/Students	3	The fire area must be actively managed at all times. No fire should be left without the preagreed forest school trained fire leader. A burns first aid kit must be taken into the woods for any fire-related activity, and clean water must be readily available to treat potential burn injuries. Fire-starting equipment must be stored securely in a locked box when not in use. Fires may only be lit with prior approval from the NLT management team. Fires must adhere to the following safety requirements: -Flames must not exceed 50cm in height -Fires must only be set within a designated fire square, clear of surrounding vegetation -No accelerants are to be used or brought into the woods under any circumstances

				-Water buckets must be filled and positioned before the fire is lit Fires must never be left unattended or placed under the supervision of someone who has not been properly trained. The designated fire leader (the staff member approved to manage the fire) must remain present from ignition through to full extinguishment. Once the fire has fulfilled its purpose, it must be completely extinguished and made safe. Staff must follow all instructions provided by the Forest School Leader and remain attentive to ongoing safety guidance throughout the session. Each staff member is responsible for the safety of their assigned 1:1 student and must maintain full focus on that individual at all times. The Forest School Leader will review all fire safety rules at the start of the session, including designated entrance and exit points for the fire area. When in the fire circle: -All individuals, including staff, must remain seated around the outer edge of the circle. -Standing is not permitted within the fire circle unless invited by the Forest School Leader. -Anyone approaching the fire must first ask for permission and receive approval from the Forest School Leader. -Once permitted, they must adopt the "respect position" (kneeling on one knee) to ensure greater stability and safety near the fire.
--	--	--	--	--

4	Head injury due to low branches	Staff/Students	2	Remove any spiky or low-hanging branches at eye level along walkways to prevent injury. Before entering the woods, brief all students to: - Stay alert for low branches and uneven ground - Watch where they are walking at all times - Pass warnings about obstacles (e.g. "low branch," "trip hazard") back through the group to keep everyone informed Running should be discouraged in the woods to reduce the risk of trips and falls. Where possible, avoid wearing hoods or clothing that restricts peripheral vision.
5	Eating plants/fungi in the wood.	Students	2	All students must be briefed on the risks of touching or consuming unknown plants or fungi before entering the woods. Introduce and reinforce the rule: "No Pick, No Lick" – students must not pick, touch, or taste any natural items without adult guidance. Ensure that hands are thoroughly washed after any woodland session to prevent accidental ingestion or irritation.
6	Trip/fall due to undergrowth	Staff/Students	2	Maintain clear walkways by regularly checking and removing any trip hazards such as fallen branches, rocks, or uneven surfaces. Teach participants to communicate obstacles by passing warnings back through the group (e.g. "tree root ahead" or "low branch"). Where possible, avoid wearing hoods or clothing that restricts peripheral vision while moving through the woods. Encourage individuals to become familiar with the terrain, including: -Watching where they step

				-Using safe foot placement to step over roots or obstructions -Taking time to understand their surroundings for safer navigation
7	Falling dead trees	Staff/Students	3	The woodland area must be checked for dangerous or unstable trees before each session, focusing specifically on the areas that will be used. Regular maintenance should be carried out to remove dead branches, foliage, and other potential hazards.
8	Falling branches during high wind	Staff/Students	2	The woodland area must not be used during periods of high winds, due to the increased risk of falling branches or trees. Staff should check the weather forecast in advance and assess wind conditions on the day. If conditions are unsafe, woodland activities must be postponed or relocated.
9	Risk of falling when climbing trees	Staff/Students	3	Where possible remove low branches from trees that are not designated for climbing, to discourage access. If this is not possible, clearly identify the risk with the student. Only trees that have been specifically identified as safe and suitable may be used for climbing. Climbing must be done using the buddy system: -One person climbs while the buddy remains on the ground to support, guide hand and foot placement, and assist at low level if needed. -The group leader must assess each group before allowing any tree climbing and provide a full safety briefing. -The group leader must instruct participants not to climb any branch or trunk thinner than their forearm, as it may not support their weight. Each climber's individual ability and suitability must be dynamically assessed by the group leader before they are permitted to climb.

10	Risk of falling due to uneven ground	Staff/Students	3	Regularly inspect and clear walkways to remove any trip hazards. Encourage individuals to communicate obstacles by passing warnings back through the group (e.g., "trip hazard ahead"). Where possible, avoid wearing hoods or clothing that restricts peripheral vision to maintain full awareness of the surroundings.
11	Bite/sting from insect or plant	Staff/Students	2	A first aid kit must be carried with every group entering the woods, to clean bites and stings as needed. Do not apply any creams or ointments to students to avoid the risk of allergic reactions. If a student shows signs of an allergic reaction—such as excessive swelling, redness, or heat around the bite or sting— call 111 for advice and inform their parents or carers. In the case of a more serious reaction (e.g., difficulty breathing, severe swelling), call 999 immediately . Before entering the woods, all students must be briefed on the risks of touching unknown plants or insects to promote awareness and prevent incidents.
12	Risk of forest fire	Staff/Student/Animals/Environment	3	Fires may only be lit by a trained member of the NLT team and with prior approval from the NLT management team . Flames must not exceed 50cm in height. Two water buckets must be positioned and ready before lighting any fire. One clean bucket of water for burns, one to extinguish the fire. Fires must be set only within designated fire squares , ensuring the area is clear of vegetation. No accelerants are to be used or brought into the woods at any time. Fires must never be left unattended or managed by untrained individuals. Once finished, all fires must be fully extinguished to ensure safety.

13	Cuts/grazes/stabs/amputations/death from tools	Staff/Student/Animals	3	All individuals must receive guidance on safe tool use from the Forest School Leader before participating in any activity involving tools. Staff should ensure they feel confident in supporting the task safely and seek further guidance if needed. They are responsible for conducting dynamic risk assessments throughout the session and must follow all rules established by the Forest School Leader. Staff must maintain constant awareness of their assigned student's safety, ensuring they do not become too focused on their own tasks at the expense of supervision. Tools must be regularly maintained and checked by Troy. Staff must visually inspect tools before and after use to confirm they are safe and fit for purpose. Students must be supported and observed by a staff member at all times when using tools and guided as necessary. Tools should only be used in designated safe areas, away from other students and animals. A minimum distance of two arm lengths plus the length of the tool must be maintained from others, except when working with a supporting staff member or peer partner where agreed. Staff must ensure that both students and themselves wear appropriate PPE based on the task, such as gloves, overalls, goggles, and boots. For example: -When hammering nails or sawing, the student should wear a glove on the hand holding the nail or wood -When drilling, both student and staff should wear goggles Tools must be stored securely in a locked toolbox or locked shed. When not in immediate use but needed again during the session, tools should be placed in a designated safe area or toolbox to
----	--	-----------------------	---	---

				keep the workspace tidy and safe. The area must be left clean and free of trip hazards after the session. Staff must not use billhooks, sheath knives, or flint and steels without direct supervision from the Forest School Leader (Troy). Only tools owned and maintained by NLT are permitted for use during sessions. Students who are anxious or angry should be encouraged to leave the area or complete a different task until they have calmed down. Ensure that animals are kept away from areas where tools are being used.
13	Burns or grazes from rope	Staff/Student/visitors	1	When using rope for constructing play equipment or during activities like tug of war, students may experience sore hands. Staff should regularly check on students during these activities and allow breaks as needed to prevent discomfort or injury. For tug of war, knots must be tied in the rope to prevent slipping and ensure a secure grip.
14	Falls from temporary play equipment or hammocks	Staff/Students/visitors	3	Individuals must be trained and confident in knot tying before constructing play equipment such as rope bridges, hammocks, and swings. Training may include shadowing, participating in forest school sessions with the Forest School Leader, or specific face-to-face instruction. Only approved forest school knots are to be used for any equipment intended to support a student's or person's weight. All knots must be strong, secure, and reliable to ensure safety. Climbing rope should not be used for the bottom line of rope bridges due to its stretchiness; instead, blue polypropylene rope is preferred for its strength and minimal stretch.

15	Rubbish causing death, illness and injury to wildlife	Wildlife	3	All individuals must ensure the woodland is left in the same condition as they found it. This includes removing all rubbish and equipment at the end of each session. No equipment should be left behind in the woodland after use.
I have read and understand the New Leaf Triangle Archery Risk Assessment above and agree to follow its guidelines				
Staff Name		Signature		Date

--	--	--