**Play Policy.**

Play is an integral part of a child’s learning and therefore is central to the Forest School ethos.

The roles and responsibilities of the FS leader and supporting adults are to ensure that participants are able to reach a state of ‘flow’ which can be through play. The power of choice in a FS environment is critical, however this policy will outline good practice for facilitating any risky play.

Risk benefit assessments in Section 3 of this handbook will give the appropriate guidelines for specific activities within the Forest School.

The following points should also be considered:

* Before each session, FS leaders and tutors should ensure that participants are aware of any risks involved in activities by modelling best practice and being aware of risk assessments.
* Participants should be given freedom to make mistakes in a safe way, avoiding harm from occurring.
* Supporting adults are required to avoid interrupting the ‘flow’ unless participants are at risk of endangering themselves or others.
* Supporting adults are required to facilitate and approach risky play with the confidence that children are able to manage risks for themselves. Carrying out a dynamic risk assessment jointly with children before starting an activity will help negate some risk involved; as will correct supervision as set out in the tool safety policy.
* Through careful observations and attuning to the needs and interests of individuals, FS sessions can and should be child led, ‘in the moment’, as much as is reasonably practical. These ‘moments’ should be seized upon to allow the natural development of individuals’ curiosities and insights.