Forest School Progression of Skills and Knowledge

Using Tools	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Tools are a key part of the Forest School curriculum as they enable children to create small projects and develop fine and gross motor skills. **Children's ability to use tools will develop at different ages. They will only use tools when they are physically, mentally and socially ready to do so.**	Be aware of tool rules: Back in box after use, no running, small groups etc Safely use trowels and spades Use scissors to cut string	Be aware and understand why Tool Rules exist: In pairs, use loppers to cut branches Use peelers for whittling Use mallets for bashing and small hammers for crafts	Put tool rules into practice: Show good practice In pairs, use loppers to cut branches Use hammers for bashing and crafts independently Use larger digging tools safely on their own In 3's, use a bow saw to cut branches	Put tool rules into practice: Show leaders good use of tool safety (e.g., returning tools back to box without being asked) Select correct tool for the task Bowsaw Hammers Apple Swirler Loppers	Actively initiate Tool rules: Repeat tool rules back to leaders Sheath Knife Bowsaw Sharp Scissors Hammers (independent) Loppers	Start to monitor Tool rule compliance of other children: Recognise inappropriate behaviour with tools Sheath Knife Bow saw Sharp Scissors Hammers (Independent) Loppers	Manage tool rules within the group: Call out inappropriate behaviour with tools Sheath Knife Hard point saw Mattock Secateurs Loppers

Shelter/Den Building	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Children will be encouraged to create dens and shelters using both natural materials and bought in materials **Shelter building develops FS values and in particular helps children to develop teamwork and problem solving skills**	Able to 'find' and feel confident in a natural shelter in the woodland (hiding place) Participate in larger den making activities led by adults or older children Build mini dens or nests for small animals	Adult supported construction of small tripod structure Erect lean to shelter with support Start to understand how basic knots work (friction, twists etc). Tie a clove hitch with help	Independent use of small tripod structures (animal den building) Erect a lean to shelter independently Tie a clove hitch without help	Create a tarpaulin shelter in a group Work successfully as a group having considered and evaluated each members contributions Compare and evaluate the shelter in relation to its sturdiness, durability, weather proofing and whether it is fit for purpose Explore different kinds of ways to twist rope and string to create bonds	Design and build varying sized shelters using tarpaulin and materials found in the woodland Work successfully as a group having considered and evaluated each members contributions Compare and evaluate the shelter in relation to its sturdiness, durability, weather proofing and whether it is fit for purpose Tie basic knots and hitches for den making	Create a shelter which is raised off the floor Work successfully as a group having considered and evaluated each members contributions Compare and evaluate the shelter in relation to its sturdiness, durability, weather proofing and whether it is fit for purpose Repeat basic knots from week to week	Independently create safe, semi-permanent shelters without arguments in a group Tie a range of knots using static rope and string Understand how to tie knots so they can be altered and removed Use lashings to make sturdy structures

Adventurous Play/Exploring	**Reception**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Year 6**
Learning through play is the key theme of FS. **Children at all ages will be encouraged to learn through different types of play – many which can not be achieved in a playground setting.** **FS play will include risky play, collaborative play and independent play. The aim is for children to feel safe and happy in all these types of play.**	Understanding of physical boundaries of woodland Independent exploration of woodland area Initiate play with small groups (2's and 3's) Return to base on call	Respect woodland boundaries Return to base on call Exploring out of sight play opportunities Adult led risk identification Able to recognise why conflicts occur and adapt behaviour accordingly	Respect woodland boundaries Return to base on call Confident with out of sight play with regular returns to base Identifying own risks with adult help Able to resolve conflicts with adult help using positive verbal and body language	Respect woodland boundaries Return to base on call Confident with out of sight play and play at height Starting to assess own risks and make good choices Conflict resolution with minimal adult intervention	Respect woodland boundaries Return to base on call Confident with out of sight play and play at height Starting to assess own risks and make good choices Conflict resolution with minimal adult intervention	Respect woodland boundaries Return to base on call Good choices made about out of sight play/tree climbing Start to Assess own risks and those of others without adult intervention Experimenting with conflict resolution without external moderation	Respect woodland boundaries Return to base on call Initiation and safe management of group activities and games Good choices made about out of sight play/tree climbing Assessment of own risks and those of others without adult intervention Able to resolve conflict using positive verbal and body language

Fire	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Fire is used for a variety of purposes in the woods: **For Heat** **For cooking** **For community** **To teach the fire triangle** **To help children understand risk**	Awareness of the Fire Triangle Understanding of safe practice around fire circle: entrances, please may I enter, safe numbers in fire circle etc Show Respect position around fire when asked by adult Awareness of the community of the fire circle	Awareness of the Fire Triangle Understanding of safe practice around fire circle: entrances, please may I enter, safe numbers in fire circle etc Contribute to fire lighting by gathering wood Help keep fire going through safe use of bellows Show 'Respect' position around fire	Understanding of the fire triangle Demonstration of safe practice around the fire circle Contribute to fire lighting by gathering wood Help keep fire going through safe use of bellows Show 'Respect' position around fire	Implementation of the fire triangle into fire lighting activities Contribute to fire lighting by gathering wood Help keep fire going through safe use of bellows Show 'Respect' position around fire Help to build fire. Understanding of fire structure and ingredients Use flint and steel to light fire – experiment with different techniques Awareness of the community of the fire circle (quiet)	Implementation of the fire triangle into fire lighting activities Respect for the community of the fire circle (quiet) Gather and sort firewood. Understand difference between green wood and seasoned. Wet and dry Show respect position around fire when prompted Understanding of fire structure and ingredients Use flint and steel to light fire	Understanding how to adapt fire lighting in wet weather due to the triangle rules Gather and sort firewood. Understand difference between green wood and seasoned. Wet and dry Show respect position around fire as instinct Understanding of fire structure (tinder, kindling, fuel) and ingredients Use flint and steel to light fire	Successful Fire lighting in wet weather using an understanding of the fire triangle rules Gather and sort firewood. Understand difference between green wood and seasoned. Wet and dry Show respect position around fire as instinct Understanding of fire structure and ingredients (tinder, kindling, fuel) Use flint and steel to light fire, keep it going and put out safely

Campfire Cooking	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Cooking over the campfire is a key part of the Forest Schools Curriculum. It enables children to see how food is prepared from scratch and to try new tastes. It is also an opportunity for children to see how foraged food can be combined into food dishes. Cooking over a fire can help children to understand how people live in other parts of the world and to understand food preparation in the past.	Awareness of the range of food which can be cooked over a fire. Awareness of the difference between a treat such as a marshmallow, and food cooked as part of a meal e.g., bread, pancakes etc Toast food with adult supervision	Awareness of the range of food which can be cooked over a fire. Awareness of the difference between a treat such as a marshmallow, and food cooked as part of a meal e.g., bread, pancakes etc Toast food with adult supervision	Awareness of how food is made from scratch as opposed to being made in a factory. Can name the key ingredients in bread and pancakes Understand safe foraging practice e.g., only put in mouth when checked with an adult. Able to try a range of tastes of food created over the fire Understand the difference between sweet and savoury flavours Cooking popcorn with adult supervision	Awareness of how food is made from scratch as opposed to being made in a factory. Can name the key ingredients in bread and pancakes Understand safe foraging practice e.g., only put in mouth when checked with an adult. Able to try a range of tastes of food created over the fire Understand the difference between sweet and savoury flavours Cooking popcorn with adult supervision	Understanding of correct fire state needed for successful cooking e.g., hot/flames/embers etc Preparation of bread dough or pancake batter with adult supervision Cooking popcorn with adult supervision	Understanding of correct fire state needed for successful cooking and ability to change the fire state using new wood, bellows etc Preparation and cooking of bread dough for flat breads Independent cooking of popcorn Preparation of foil parcels	Understanding of correct fire state needed for successful cooking and ability to change the fire state using new wood, bellows etc Foraging and preparation of bread dough, cooking flat breads with adult supervision Independent cooking of popcorn Assist adults in planning preparation and cooking of a meal over the fire eg soup or curry

Woodland Management	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
A key part of Forest Schools is the children's understanding of how the woodland changes throughout the year and what we need to do to help manage it sustainably. **Children should understand that sometimes trees need to be trimmed or cut down and understand how the different layers of the woodland need to be managed so that they can thrive** **In small groups, children can help to actively manage the woodland and wider site including Pond**	Awareness of how woodlands change with the seasons Awareness that woodlands need to be managed so that we can use them sustainably Actively help to manage the maintenance of the pond eg fishing out blanket weed with nets	Help to clear nettles in certain areas which are heavily used (no tools just gloved hands) Demonstrate good practice with regard to tree management e.g., no snapping living branches etc	Use trowels and forks to plant bulbs, seeds and plants Demonstrate and understand why we should not snap living branches etc	Take part in tree planting with adult supervision Use loppers to help adults trim overhanging branches Help to clear excess weed growth from the pond	Take part in tree planting with adult supervision Shovel and wheelbarrow in groups	Use a wide range of tools to help with general woodland management tasks e.g., bow saw, loppers, shears and secateurs Awareness of how plant and animal life cycles affects when woodland management tasks should take place	Take part in tree planting with minimal adult supervision Select correct tool for maintenance tasks Initiate woodland management tasks

Creative Projects	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Creative projects cover a wide range of activities which take place in the woodland. Most are adult initiated, but the children determine the form of the final outcome. Projects include whittling, nature art, sculpture, etc	Manipulate clay to create shapes Assist adults in the creation of group art works – leaf collection Concentrate on creative project for 10 minutes	Manipulate clay to create distinguishable forms e.g., animals Safely use small tools to deliver project - with supervision Concentrate on project for 15 minutes	Work independently to collect natural materials for creative projects Safely use small tools to deliver project - with supervision Collaborate with a partner to create project	Persevere with projects Use a range of tools and materials to create project e.g., scissors, string, hammers etc Collaborate with a small group to create project	Persevere with projects Use a range of tools and materials to create project e.g., scissors, string, hammers etc Collaborate with a small group to create project Start to resolve conflict without adult help	Initiate their own creative projects Independently use a range of small tools to complete the project Collaborate with a larger group to create project Concentrate for one hour on a project Resolve conflict without adult help	Initiate their own creative projects. Independently use a range of small tools to complete the project Collaborate with a large group to create project. Concentrate for an hour on one project Resolve conflict with peers without adult help

Connection with Nature	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Developing an understanding of and connection with the natural world is a key part of Forest Schools. Children should be able to recognise seasons, months, and weather patterns. They should understand life cycles and an understanding of how the seasons affect these life cycles. **They should develop respect for the natural world and be able to transfer this to their everyday lives.**	Name the 4 seasons and recognise key events which happen in those seasons Be aware of basic life cycles frog spawn to tadpoles, eggs to chicks Be happy to search for, and hold mini beasts	Be able to recognise the main features of the 4 seasons Be aware of basic life cycles frog spawn to tadpoles, eggs to chicks Understand why we mustn't squash mini beasts we find	Be able to match the months of the year to the 4 seasons Be aware of how life cycles fit into the seasons eg when frog spawn might appear Identify 3 types of plant or animal found in the woods	Have an awareness of how and why day light levels change with the seasons Understand basic life cycles and how FS activities might affect them Be able to identify more than 3 plant and animal species in the woods	Have an awareness of how and why day light levels change with the seasons Understand basic life cycles and how FS activities might **affect** them Be able to identify more than 3 plant and animal species in the woods Be confident and careful in holding a range of animal species including frogs	Recognise how seasons are affected by climate change Know the dates of the solstices and equinoxes and what these represent Understanding of life cycles of common species found in the woods Identify plant and animal species or know where to look to identify species Take action to ensure life cycles of animals and plants are not affected by FS activities e.g. Over picking, disturbing nests or hibernating animals	Recognise how seasons are affected by climate change Know the dates of the solstices and equinoxes and what these represent Understanding of life cycles of common species found in the woods Identify plant and animal species or know where to look to identify species Take action to ensure life cycles of animals and plants are not affected by FS activities e.g. Over picking, disturbing nests or hibernating animals

Planting and Growing	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Planting and growing can form an additional element to FS which helps children to understand the difference between the natural and cultivated world. It also helps children to understand life cycles and helps them to understand how food is grown and made into food for us to eat.	Be able to plant large seeds with adult supervision Understand the elements which seeds need to germinate and grow	Be able to plant large seeds with adult supervision Understand the elements which seeds need to germinate and grow	Be able to plant smaller seeds with adult supervision Assist in clearing beds to enable new planting (use of fork or trowel) Understand the elements which seeds need to germinate and grow	Plant and nurture a range of seeds and seedlings with adult supervision Harvest food which has been grown with adult supervision Start to identify how foods can be cooked and eaten – which can be eaten raw and which need to be cooked	Plant and nurture a range of seeds and seedlings with adult supervision Harvest food which has been grown with adult supervision Start to identify how foods can be cooked and eaten – which can be eaten raw and which need to be cooked	Independently plant and nurture a range of seeds and seedlings Understand the role 'weeds' play in cultivation Independently harvest food which has been grown Understand the role of pollination in cultivation	Be able to explain germination of a seed and the conditions needed for germination Independently plant and nurture a range of seeds and seedlings Understand the role 'weeds' play in cultivation Independently harvest food which has been grown Understand the role of pollination in cultivation

Teamwork and Values	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
The key theme which underpins all FS activities are the personal, social and emotional skills and values which children learn through being in the woods. At NMPS, FS skills and value we focus on are: **Problem solving** **Resilience** **Teamwork** **Independence** **Respect** **Determination** **Kindness**	Understand how and why we should respect nature Show resilience against minor injury Show kindness to others Start to show independence and ability to range widely in the woods	Understand how and why we should respect nature Show resilience against minor injury Show kindness to others Start to show independence and ability to range widely in the woods	Start to show teamwork when working in a pair Start to show empathy for others Start to show determination in FS tasks and activities Show kindness to others	Able to solve problems with adult help Resilient to injury or mess Be able to work in a small team to complete a task Be able to draw in new team members to help complete a task Start to demonstrate good communication skills and body language	Able to solve problems with adult help Resilient to injury or mess Be able to work in a small team to complete a task Be able to draw in new team members to help complete a task Start to demonstrate good communication skills and body language	Be able to solve problems or issues independently without adult supervision Be resilient to bad weather, minor injury, when things go wrong etc Be able to work successfully in large groups to achieve a common aim Social and emotional maturity Demonstrate good communication skills and body language	Be able to solve problems or issues independently without adult supervision Be resilient to bad weather, minor injury, when things go wrong etc Be able to work successfully in large groups to achieve a common aim Social and emotional maturity Demonstrate good communication skills and body language