

Fire Policy

Campfires and the use of storm kettles are an important part of Forest School and are used in many sessions. Stables Forest School aims to ensure that all children and adults participating in sessions with fires and/or storm kettles will do so safely and with as little risk to their health as possible.

Positioning of Children and Adults

- Fire areas are surrounded by seating logs at least 1.5 metres from the edge of the fire pit.
- When the campfire is in use, children are not permitted to access the area without permission.
- When allowed to access the campfire, children must walk around the outside of the seating logs and wait for permission to step over. Once permission has been given, they must sit, ensuring legs are drawn into the log and not outstretched.
- Once seated around the campfire, the children must remain seated until directed by an adult to move.
- Children will be taught how to change seats by standing, stepping over the log and then walking around the outside of the seating area. They must never cross the inner area.
- Long sleeves and trousers must always be worn.
- Children are not permitted to throw anything onto the fire.
- Advice on the appropriate way for dealing with smoke will be given to the children: they are advised to turn their head to one side, placing their hand across the face, to close their eyes and count to 30 (or ask an adult/peer to count for them)
- If there is a clear wind direction, seating in the line of smoke is to be avoided.
- If wind direction is variable, the leader should rearrange the seating if at all possible.

Type of Fire

Training is provided for leaders regarding the best fire lay to use for a session:

- **Criss-cross** fires are used to provide a large amount of heat and light and are fast burning.
- **Long Log** fires are good for cooking as they are slow burning and require little fuel.
- **Kelly Kettles** for heating water during a session for a hot drink

Safety and Responsibility

- Children will only light fires under one to one supervision with an adult.
- Fires are lit using matches or a striker with cotton wool
- No flammable liquids/accelerants are to be used to light or accelerate fires.
- No plastics are to be burnt.
- If sessions involve children adding fuel to the fire, this must be done with one to one adult supervision and not wearing gloves.
- Sticks/wood must be placed, not thrown, from the side of the fire. The hand should never go over the fire.

Extinguishing

- All fires must be extinguished at the end of a session.
- Water should always be to hand during campfire sessions.
- Whenever possible, all fuels should be burnt off to ash.
- At the end of the session, the fire must be doused down with water and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased.

Storm (Kelly) kettles

- Pre-site visit carried out to establish safe position of each kettle to ensure safe distance from buildings/vegetation and public access paths.
- Storm kettles are only used on flat nonflammable ground and any woodchip or leaf litter must be brushed away before use.
- Only adults are to light the fire in the fire pan.
- There must be a visible boundary 1.5 metres from the edge of each kettle which must not overlap.
- Students must be seated outside of this boundary and only enter by invitation.
- Fuel should burn itself out, but if it doesn't it must be extinguished with water (see above) and ash disposed of in a the metal ash bucket provided to be taken away and disposed of by Stables staff.
- Storm kettles should never be boiled with the cork in.
- Long hair should be tied back and loose clothing tucked in.
- Kettles must be placed on, and removed from, the fire pan, using two hands holding the wire handle at 90° to the kettle chimney.
- Ensure that the spout is opposite to the fire pan air hole.
- Ensure that the handle is opposite to the spout.
- Water should be poured by holding the wooden handle and tipping using the chain.
- Cups should be placed on a flat level surface before pouring water into them from the kettle – never into a cup held in the hand.