

Mill Lane Community Primary School

Forest School

**Ecological Assessment and Sustainability Policy**

This documentation runs alongside the relevant whole school policies which can be viewed in full at <http://www.mill-lane.oxon.sch.uk/website/policies/3739>

At Mill Lane Primary school we aim for all children and staff to have a high level of respect for the natural world and encourage everyone in decisions about their environment and safety.

We aim to ensure that, where possible, we purchases products that have been assessed for having a lower impact on the environment.

Where possible we follow the ECO School code of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle by operating in a way that minimises waste, optimises recycling and promotes the reuse of materials.

On site activities such as fires will follow practices that minimise impact on wildlife through being mindful of what is burnt and how any residues are disposed of. We aim to limit the frequency of fires and evaluate the amount of dry, dead wood before having a fire. We will collect only the minimum amount required for any given fire.

Dead wood is important to the woodland ecology as it has a multitude of uses, from homes for mini beasts to beds for fungi, so a lack of it is bad for any woodland habitat.

Fires change the soil chemistry and can lead to increases in PH levels, carbon, phosphorous, etc. which can be harmful to some plants, whilst other essential nutrients may be depleted. We will ensure that all fires are extinguished fully before leaving the site. We will dispose of ash in compost bins or used by gardening club to help keep the snails and slugs off the plants.

For activities using trees; climbing, shelter building and building swings, we will restrict these activities to only suitable trees to prevent any damage to the tree.

We will leave plants unpicked whenever picking is not necessary.

Before leaving the site we will ensure that litter is collected and disposed of suitably and that the area is returned to its previous state.

**Sustainable Policy**

Mill Lane Primary School values environmental sustainability. We understand that the choices we make as buyers and consumers is a large part of our footprint and therefore strive to take this into account in our purchases. As far as possible we will buy items which are produced: as locally as possible; organically; from sustainable or renewable sources; ethically, with regards to environment, and workers’ and animal welfare; and with minimum packaging.

Reviewed: September 2018

Next Review: September 2019