

## Aldersbrook Primary School – Hand Tool Policy

Using small hand tools is an important part of forest school as it enables children to develop new, practical skills that will help them develop self-confidence.

All hand tools are to be maintained in good order by the forest school leaders and should be inspected before each session that they are to be used to ensure safety. Children will be taught how to handle tools properly, and to treat them with respect.

Whilst using hand tools the staff to child ratio is increased. This will be achieved by following these guidelines:

- Staff to child ratio 1:3 working within the tool use only area.
- All tools will be kept in the forest school tool box and only removed by the forest school trained adult.
- All tools MUST remain within the tool use area and running is prohibited.
- Pointing with tools is prohibited.
- Children will lose permission to use the tools if the guidelines are not followed.
- Bill hooks should not be swung or used with gloved hands.
- Bill hooks must have a blade guard when not in use.
- Bow saws must have a blade guard on them when not in use. Blade guards are to be removed and put back only by the forest schools leader.
- All wood being sawn must be supported on a saw horse or a natural sawing break – hands must always be kept away from the blade.
- When using sheath knives to whittle, this must be done at the side of, in a downward motion only and, away from the body.
- All tools must be counted out and counted back at the end of the session.
- Should any volunteer helpers be attending a session, they must be given basic training on the use of individual hand tools before being allowed to use them with children.
- ***A tool talk MUST be given before every session when tools are being used.***

***Policy agreed September 2021***

***Policy to be reviewed September 2022***