

Likelihood (Probability)
5. Almost certain
4. Probable
3. Possible
2. Possible (under unfortunate circumstances)
1. Rare
Severity (Consequences)
5. Fatality
4. Major injury, resulting in permanent damage
3. Injury require doctor or hospital attendance
2. Minor injury, first aid required
1. No injury, damage

**Please
youth work
dynamic**

5 X 5 Risk Matrix							Risk Rating
L i k e l i h o o d	5	5	10	15	20	25	
4	4	4	8	12	16	20	High
3	3	3	6	9	12	15	Medium
2	2	2	4	6	8	10	Low
1	1	1	2	3	4	5	
		1	2	3	4	5	
	Severity						

**note:
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unpredictable environment and therefore all risks cannot be identified in advance. As situations or environments change, fluctuate. Despite our comprehensive pre-planned risk assessments, workers always need to be able to undertake dynamic risk assessments as an immediate response to evolving circumstances. Our priority is the safety and wellbeing of the young people in our care.

This risk assessment should be read in conjunction with the 'Taking Part in Activity' risk assessment which ALWAYS applies.

OYCI Forest School Risk Assessment TOOLS		Assessment completed by : Patricia Allison			Date of Assessment : 14/1/2025		Date of Review : 6 Monthly Review – 1/ 4 / 2023 REVIEWED – 1/10/2023 – PA Reviewed – 14/1/2025 – PA/CB			
DESCRIPTION OF TASK/ITEM	IDENTIFICATION OF HAZARDS & RISKS	PEOPLE EXPOSED			RISK RATING (L x S = R)	EXISTING SAFETY MEASURES	ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES	RESIDUAL RISK RATING		
		Young People	Staff	Others						
Ropes, string and twine	String and rope may be used for craft, creative construction or constructing shelters. Risk of burns, cuts, snagging and tripping	X	X		3 X 3 = 9 LOW	Young People instructed on using the right materials for the right task and using in the correct and appropriate manner. You can tie up tarps, shelters , sheets or materials but not each other!	Ribbon or warning tape will be attached to ropes that are difficult to see.	2 X 3 = 6 LOW		

Rope	Risk of equipment failure causing constructions to fall on participants				3 X 3 = 9 LOW	<p>YP will be reminded to use in a safe manner, to be careful of running through hands without gloves being on as this can give rope cuts and burns. All participants instructed to be aware of moving through the forest and the potential for ropes or string to be across pathways. String will be as bright as possible or will have ribbon/tape attached to increase visual presence. Running at speed through area should be discouraged.</p> <p>The condition of ropes being used will be checked before each session starts and at the end. Any frayed/ damaged rope will be removed from use.</p>	<p>Only use what you need and remove any extra cuttings from the area/ forest floor.</p> <p>Staff vigilant of young people wrapping string around fingers etc.</p> <p>First aid kit and first aider available .</p> <p>Young people will be asked to inform staff of any rope damage that occurs during session</p>	2 X 3 = 6 LOW
Scissors	Injury from using to cut string, twine rope or craft activity	X	X		3 X 2 = 6 LOW	<p>Scissors may be used to cut materials , string , twine, ropes for a variety of purposes. Young People will be reminded to take care using scissors , be mindful of where hands and fingers are and not to wave them around during use. No running or moving about with scissors. Remove carefully from and return to box when finished use. Scissors counted out and back into box.</p>	<p>Hand washing and First Aid kit available for any cuts.</p>	2 X 2 = LOW
Secateurs	Injury sustained whilst transporting around activity site.	X	X		3 X 3 = 9 MED	<p>Secateurs are stored with blades in locked position. They will be removed from store by staff and given to YP with clear instruction to carry with blade pointing downward and only for a short distance WALKING ONLY NO RUNNING.</p>	<p>Staff vigilance . Clear and strict instruction that when not in use Secateur blades to be locked in closed position. Most up to date Risk Assessment will be read before session.</p>	2 x 3 = 6 LOW

	Injury sustained whilst using tool	X	X		3 X 4 = 12 MED	Clear instruction on how to use tool will be given along with clear safety instructions – Always hold by handles, make sure no one is in your area reminding of “Blood Bubble”. If others are helping (holding branches steady) make sure their hands are well clear of the cutting edges of the tool. Clear communication between YP working together.	Tool will be used under close supervision of staff and YP behaviour closely monitored. Most up to date Risk Assessment will be read before session. IF STAFF DO NOT KNOW HOW TO USE TOOLS THEY SHOULD LET SESSION LEAD YOUTH WORKER KNOW AND NOT ATTEMPT TO OPERATE TOOLS UNTIL TRAINED. First Aid Kit and trained first aiders available. Fully charged mobile phone available	2 x 4 = 8 LOW
Potato Peelers	Injury whilst collecting / returning from/to storage	X	X		3 X 2 = 6 LOW	Peelers stored in locked tool box and only distributed by staff who will carefully remove from box by lifting the handles only. Counted out and back into box.	Young People should be seated/ in position before being handed the tool by staff. First Aid kit available	2 X 2 = 4 LOW
	Injury from using peelers – cuts, grazing, stabbing injury		X		3 x 3 = 9 MED	Peelers should not be used for whittling that requires any strength. Peelers should be used to demonstrate and allow YP to practice how to whittle safely. Use with carrots and/or thin sticks to show technique. YP can use glove on helping hand but not on hand gripping the peeler as this may loosen grip. YP should be in position before activity starts and be a safe distance from others. YP people should be seated with helping hand holding sticks to side of body and YP should direct whittling strokes away from their body. YP reminded of blood bubble and to take care and be aware of people around them	Staff guidance and 1 to 1 ratio advised until YP is deemed capable of using tool safely. YP behaviour closely monitored and reminded of keeping safe at all times.	2 x 3 = 6 LOW
Knives	Injury from knife when collecting/returning from/to storage	X	X		3 x 2 = 6 LOW	Knives are stored in their own individual safety sheath, stored in a locked tool box and only distributed by staff. Counted out and back into box.	Young people should be seated/ in position before being handed knife by staff. First Aid Kit available and close by	2 x 2 = 4 LOW
	Whittling wood - splinters		X		3 X 3 = low	Young People should wear glove on helping hand holding wood/sticks	First Aider and first aid kit available and close by	2 X 3 = 6 LOW

	<p>Injury whilst using knives for whittling through accident or poor behaviour – Small cuts – nicks and slight stabs – very small amount of blood easily stopped with a plaster. Large cut – profuse bleeding and pain, requiring first aid. Serious injury – Requiring external medical assistance</p>	X	X		<p>4 X 2 = 8 LOW</p> <p>3 X 3 = 9 LOW</p> <p>3 X 4 = 12 MED</p>	<p>Young people will have clear and detailed instruction on using the knife for whittling. YP reminded of Blood Bubble and not being close to anyone when using the tool. Glove to be worn on helping hand. NO GLOVE ON THE WORKING (TOOL HOLDING) HAND. Young people should be seated or kneeling. Forest Leader will demonstrate how Helping hand will hold stick / wood to be whittled, across body, twisting and down to the side of legs, with helping hand elbow on opposite leg and work strokes away from the body. Alternatively if yp is using a flat log or block they should be positioned kneeling behind the log – 3 point position- strokes of knife should be away from the body. YP reminded of blood bubble (distance around which the young people should be (2 arm lengths or 2 metres) away from anyone else) and to be aware of other people around. Knife will only be removed from its sheath when yp are in position, seated or kneeling and ready to begin activity. 1 to 1 ratio adult to young person. Young People reminded of safety for all and behaviour closely monitored. Young people will have practiced using potato peelers before using knives.</p>	<p>1 to 1 working with staff member being extra vigilant. Any issues or activity stopped for any reason knife to be placed in sheath immediately and given to staff.</p> <p>Poor behaviour will not be tolerated as it places everyone at risk. Poor behaviour will result in the YP being asked to change activity for something requiring a bit less focus and attention. Knife will be collected in by staff member and returned to locked tool box. Knives will be counted at the end of activity. First Aider and First Aid Kit available and close by. Fully charged mobile phone available</p>	<p>3 X 2 = 6 LOW</p> <p>2 X 3 = 6 LOW</p> <p>2 X 4 = 8 LOW</p>
Mallet -wooden /rubber	<p>Injury from using to knock tent pegs, sticks or stakes into ground.</p> <p>Injury whilst mallet is being used with knife/ axe to split wood.</p>	X	X		<p>3 X 3 = 9 LOW</p> <p>3 X 3 = 9 LOW</p>	<p>Young People instructed on mallet use and informed of safety requirements – look around you before using, make sure no hands, fingers or any other body parts are in the way of striking point. If working with a partner ensure good communication and clear instruction are given and only strike with mallet when both are ready. Do not wear gloves with this tool as good, secure grip is important. Mallet only to be used for specific purposes securing tent pegs/stick into the ground or along side knife or axe to split wood for fire. If being used to split wood 1 to 1 or 1 to 2 adult to YP supervision required.</p>	<p>Staff will be extra vigilant when mallets are in use. Poor behaviour will not be tolerated and result in YP being asked to try a different activity or help in a different way.</p> <p>First Aid kit and First Aider available and close by.</p>	<p>2 X 3 = 6 LOW</p> <p>2 X 3 = 6 LOW</p>
Kelly Kettles	Injury – Burns – from use of Kelly kettles	X	X		3 x 4 = 12 MED	<p>Trained staff will give thorough demonstration and clear instruction on use of Kelly Kettles. Kelly Kettles will be within fire circle and no one should be in that area unless working with this equipment. No loose clothing and hair will be tied back. All participants will be reminded not to put hands over the top of KK chimney once its base fire has been lit as flames may exit the top. KELLY KETTLES WILL ONLY BE USED WITH BUNG REMOVED. KK will be tended throughout and removed from the heat source as soon as water is seen to be boiling.</p>	<p>Dedicated fire circle Staff will closely supervise and monitor use of Kelly Kettles in the fire circle.</p> <p>At all times staff will have eyes on Kelly Kettles and YPs will remain outside the clearly marked fire circle unless working directly with the equipment and under supervision.</p>	2 X 4 = 8 LOW

	Injury – Burns- caused by removing Kelly Kettles from heat source and pouring boiling water.	X	X		3 X 4 = 12 MED	<p>Kelly Kettle will only be used on a suitable flat surface to prevent toppling. Fuels is dry wood and no immediate danger of combustion but will be kept a short distance from the fire circle.</p> <p>Full demonstration given prior to use. Wooden handle to be kept at 90 degrees angle to kettle body and away from chimney. Route for use to be clear and free of trip hazards. Ensure all participants are aware of movement of KK and keep out of way. Ensure flat surface to put kettle down. Pour using bung and chain and wooden handle AT ARMS LENGTH. This will be demonstrated and practiced using cold water before anyone uses the KK. Receiving cups/container should be appropriate size and placed on flat surface whilst water is being poured – IT MUST NOT BE HELD BY PARTICIPANTS. Where possible flat surface should be elevated.</p>	<p>Poor behaviour will not be tolerated and young people will be asked to use other activities on the site to ensure the safety of those working in and around the fire circle area.</p> <p>Water for extinguishing fire or emergency use, First Aid kit including burns kit and fire blanket all kept beside fire circle. Fully charged mobile phone available</p> <p>Cold water and burns kit will be kept close incase of burns.</p> <p>Staff will pour boiled water where necessary. Young People only to remove from fire and pour when they have practiced and demonstrated they can do this safely. This will only happen under the close supervision of trained staff.</p>	2 X 4 = 8 LOW
Fire Steel	Injury – from sparks or burn- from using to start fires in Fire pit and/ or Kelly kettles.	X	X		3 X 2 = 6 LOW	<p>Staff to give clear instructions and demonstrations on how to use fire steel. Only one yp at a time in the area no yp or other adults in the fire circle. 1 to 1 adult to yp ratio. Kindling will be set up ,as staff instruct, inside the fire pit and/ or Kelly kettle base and small fire lighters / cotton wool balls placed on top. Only use kindling and fuel as supplied and/or approved by staff. Young People will adopt 3 point safety stance in the fire circle and will strike fire steel directing onto the firelighters in the fire pit/ KK base and direction of strike away from body. IMPORTANT: NO LOOSE CLOTHING AND HAIR WILL BE TIED BACK.</p>	<p>Fire Blanket and Water will be on hand incase of emergency. First Aider and First Aid kit including Burns Kit available and close by.</p>	2 X 2 = 4 LOW

Fire Pit	Injury – burns - from lighting fire	X	X		3 X 2 = 6 LOW	Fire is lit using dry wood kindling, firelighters/cotton wool balls and a fire steel . Fire steel used as per instruction from Forest School leaders as detailed in RA above.	Fire Blanket and water on hand incase of emergencies. First Aider Available and first aid kit including burns kit will be close by.	2 X 2 = 4 LOW
	Injury – burns – from using fire pit – making smores/ cooking/ adding wood to fuel fire	X	X		3 X 4 = 12 MED	<p>Fire in fire pit is being used to provide heat and a cooking source . Only low risk items will be cooked – smores, possibly eg baked apples/potatoes/ other fruit and veg. Food to be prepared away from fire area and ready to be put into/onto fire before entering the fire circle.</p> <p>Fire pit enclosed in fire circle with clear point of entry/exit. Fire circle will be monitored and supervised by dedicated staff member. Staff will add wood as required.</p> <p>Participants will be reminded of importance of safe approach to fire – low and slow, and will adopt three point safety stance at the side of the fire before placing food on/into fire or toasting .</p> <p>Food will be placed /removed using appropriate tongs/ cooking utensils and heavy duty or fire resistant gloves.</p> <p>Where food will take time to cook participants must sit back but remain vigilant of the fire and others in the area. Participants SHOULD NOT SIT WITH LEGS IN BASKET FORMATION WHEN AROUND THE FIRE. NO LOOSE CLOTHING , HAIR MUST BE TIED BACK.</p> <p>Fire pit will need time to cool properly before leaving the Forest school site. Staff will monitor the adding of fuel to the fire and will stop adding in time to extinguish appropriately. Fire pit will be left to cool with no one in fire circle. Fire embers will be completely cooled by staff using cold water and embers will be transferred into a metal tin for proper disposal off site.</p>	<p>Staff extra vigilant around fire circle and surrounding area. YP reminded frequently on safety – their own and of others.</p> <p>Poor behaviour will not be tolerated and young people will be asked to use other activities on the site to ensure the safelt of those working in and around the fire circle area.</p> <p>Water, Fire Blanket and First Aid Kit all available and close by in case of emergencies. Fully charged mobile phone available</p>	2 X 4 = 8 LOW

Palm Drill	Injury from palm drill when collecting/returning from/to storage		X		3 X 2 = 6 LOW	Palm drills stored in locked tool box and only distributed by staff who will carefully remove/return from/to box by lifting the handles only.	Young people should be in position and ready to use before being given the palm drill.	2 X 2 = 4 LOW
	Injury from palm drill slipping during use -	X	X		3 X 3 = 9 LOW	Palm drill will be used on a flat, steady wooden surface and only to drill through suitable thickness/size of wood. Clear instruction on how to use will be delivered by staff. YP will wear glove on Helping hand. If anyone is helping YP hold wood they should also wear gloves on both hands. No loose clothing and hair must be tied back.	First Aider and First Aid kit available and close by. Fully charged mobile phone available	2 X 3 = 6 LOW
Hammers	Injury to fingers, arms, legs or other body parts while striking hammer on boards for Happa Zome craft	X	X		3 X 3 = 9 LOW	Young people should be in position before using hammers - either sitting or kneeling close to their board for ease of work. Plants, leaves petals etc should be placed between cloth sheets in the pattern required. Small taps with hammer to start with to see what effect it has on the cloth . Helping hand should hold board and cloth steady. Do not wear gloves as secure grip required. Demonstration and clear instruction by staff before beginning craft.	First Aider and first aid kit (including ice packs) available and close by.	2 X 3 = 6 LOW
Axe	Injury whilst removing/returning axe to tool box		X		3 X 4 = 12 MED	Axe will be removed/returned to locked tool box by staff only. Axe will be stored in a safty sheath/cover and this will only be removed by staff. Axe only lifted by and used with its handle.	Staff vigilant and very aware how sharp this tool is. Young People kept at distance until area is fully prepared and ready for use.	2 X 4 = 8 LOW
	Injury or amputation whilst axe in use	X	X		3 X 5 = 15 = MED	Wood to be chopped will be on a suitable flat steady surface . Staff are well aware of and will remind Young People of blood bubble and safety requirements before tool is used. If staff member using solo safe working stance will be adopted and are will be clear of young people. No gloves will be worn to ensure safe grip of axe. IF Young People are using to split wood, they will work with trained adult and clear instructions and demonstration will be given. Mallet will be used along with axe to split wood.	Trained Staff using axe solo will have let other staff know they are worling with this tool and young people will be away from their area of work. No distractions. Young People participating will have 1 to 1 adult to YP ratio.	2 X 5 = 10 MED 2 X 5 = 10 MED

						<p>Safe 3 point stance will be adopted by person A holding axe. Person B will hold mallet.</p> <p>Wood to be split will be placed on suitable flat and steady surface. Person A holding axe will rest axe on the wood to be split and the weight of the axe will hold steady. NO HANDS SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN HOLDING WOOD TO BE CHOPPED. Person A will clearly instruct Person B holding the mallet, to hit the centre of the back of the axe to split the wood. Person B should be alert and aware of where the wood could potentially fall. Young people will only be allowed to split wood in this way if it has been demonstrated by trained staff and they can confidently re-tell staff the safety information on how to proceed.</p>	<p>Behavior will be closely monitored and poor behaviour will not be tolerated, activity will cease and YP asked to move onto a less risky activity where good concentration is not necessary.</p> <p>First Aid kit and first Aider available and close by. Fully charged mobile phone available</p>	
Hammock	Injury from using hammock – falling from, failure of or mis-use of equipment	X	X		3 X 3 = 9 LOW	<p>Hammock will be checked thoroughly before and after each session for damage, wear and tear. Hammock will be secured to tree trunks only - no attaching to branches as they can break. Forest school leader will direct where hammock should go. Hammock will be low level.</p> <p>Ground below hammock will be as level as possible and cleared of stones, branches or logs.</p> <p>Space above hammock will be checked for and cleared of any loose branches, stick and twigs.</p> <p>Staff will check the hammock is safe for use before allowing any young people to climb in.</p> <p>Young people will have clear instruction on how to safely use the hammock - get in and out safely – and reminded that the hammock IS NOT A SWING.</p> <p>All users should be aware of the space around the hammock and that people may be walking past so vigilance is required when using.</p>	<p>Staff will put up hammock potentially with assistance from young people. Staff will ensure hammock is securely attached to tree, testing weight bearing ability themselves before the YP are allowed on</p>	2 X 3 = 6 LOW
Garden Shears	Injury occurring when Moving shears from shed and around garden/outdoor area (Falling onto, dropping onto limbs or others)	X	X		3 X 5=15 MED	<p>Garden shears are stored in the BC Centre shed, ALWAYS POINTING DOWN into storage bucket. Lift only using handles and ensure blades are always pointing down to the ground when standing still.</p> <p>When WALKING to area being worked on, shears should be held horizontally with blades pointing away from body. The shears do not have a lock but hold themselves shut and should be held with dominant hand holding the bottom handle close to the hinge, as shown at training.</p>	<p>First aid kit and trained first aider will always be available. Everyone using tools will be reminded before session of the risks and safety instructions will be given by session lead</p>	2 x 5=10 MED

	Injury occurring from damaged shears, or whilst participating in gardening activities	X	X		3 x 4=12=MED	Shears will be inspected carefully before and after each use. If any damage is evident they will not be used. Damages must be reported to ??? and this information must be passed onto all staff. Damaged tools will be placed in a bucket – marked DAMAGED TOOLS ONLY- in the big shed. Shears will be used for soft stemmed plant and bushes. Training will be given to staff before they work in the garden with our young people. If no training, do not use the tools with the young people.	First aid kit and trained first aider will always be available. Everyone using tools will be reminded before session of the risks and safety instructions will be given by session lead	2 x 3=6 LOW
Garden Loppers	Injury occurring when Moving loppers from shed and around garden/outdoor area (Falling onto, dropping onto limbs or others)	X	X		3 X 3=9 MED	Garden loppers are stored in the BC Centre shed, ALWAYS POINTING DOWN into storage bucket. Lift only using both handles and ensure blades are always pointing down to the ground when standing still. When WALKING to area being worked on, loppers should be held horizontally with blades pointing away from body. The loppers do not have a lock and DO NOT hold themselves shut and should be carried with dominant hand holding the bottom handle close to the hinge, as shown at training .	First aid kit and trained first aider will always be available. Everyone using tools will be reminded before session of the risks and safety instructions will be given by session lead	2 X 3=6 LOW
	Injury occurring from damaged loppers, or whilst participating in gardening activities	X	X		3 X 4=12 MED	Loppers will be inspected carefully before and after each use. If any damage is evident they will not be used. Damages must be reported to ??? and this information must be passed onto all staff. Damaged tools will be placed in a bucket – marked DAMAGED TOOLS ONLY- in the big shed. Loppers will be used for cutting out of reach branches and foliage when secateurs are not suitable. Training will be given to staff before they work in the garden with our young people. If no training, do not use the tools with the young people.	First aid kit and trained first aider will always be available. Everyone using tools will be reminded before session of the risks and safety instructions will be given by session lead	2 X 4=8 LOW

Digging tools – including spades, garden forks, hand trowels, hand forks, hoes	Injury occurring when Moving tools from shed and around garden/outdoor area (Falling onto, dropping onto limbs or others)	X	X		3 X 4=12 MED	When moving and/or using Long handled digging tools ensure strong soled, sturdy footwear eg boots or heavy walking shoes are worn. Move tools – carry using shaft of the spade/fork/hoe and hold steady – do not swing tools around. Be aware of other garden/area users and make sure they are not in close proximity. If any staff are unsure of using these tools they should speak to the session lead before tackling tasks with the young people. YP will be carefully monitored and supervised when in the garden and tools are in use.	First aid kit and trained first aider will always be available. Everyone using tools will be reminded before session of the risks and safety instructions will be given by session lead	2 X 4=8 LOW
	Injury occurring from damaged tools, or whilst participating in gardening activities	X	X		3 X 4=12 MED	Tools will be carefully checked before and after each use for signs of damage. Any damaged tools will be removed and this will be reported to ???? and this information must be passed onto all staff. Damaged tools will be placed in a bucket – marked DAMAGED TOOLS ONLY – in the big shed. Digging tools are used for a variety of garden tasks. YP will be shown how to correctly use these tools and will have been instructed to have correct footwear before using the long handled digging tools. When using hand trowels and hand forks gardening gloves will be provided and should be used. They will be carefully supervised during activity. Everyone should be aware of the people surrounding them – where they are, how close and possibility of injury. They should maintain a good distance from others whilst using all digging tools	First aid kit and trained first aider will always be available. Everyone using tools will be reminded before session of the risks and safety instructions will be given by session lead. YP will be reminded of the “Blood Bubble”– the area around them that will result in injury and possible blood loss to casualty.	2 X 4=8 LOW
General Behaviour	All of the above	X	X		3 X 4 = 12 MED	*Working with tools is serious activity and all young people will be reminded of OYCI's WORKING TOGETHER AGREEMENT BEFORE HANDLING OR USING ANY TOOLS OR RISKY EQUIPMENT		2 X 4 = 8 LOW
						*OYCI operate a dynamic risk assessment process at each and all of it's sessions. This means we are continually identifying any unexpected hazards and risks. We assess such risks and take action to reduce risk as far as possible. We continually monitor and		

						review situatons, especially in the quick changing outdoor environment of the Forest.		