Risk Assessment – Tarps and Hammocks

To be read in conjunction with other risk generic assessments i.e. General Welfare and Weather, Daily/ Site Specific and emergency site information.

Risk Benefit: What is the benefit to the children of offering this experience? Raises the confidence of participants, teaches risk management, teaches team work, gives a sense of achievement and independence, experiential learning opportunity, participants gain appreciation of what we need to survive, development of communication skills, hand eye co-ordination, and gross and fine motor skills, allows opportunity for creativity and imaginative play, gives opportunity to relax and lower stress levels, opportunity to practice tying knots.				
Probability Score: 1. <5% chance that it will occur – very unlikely 2. 25% chance that it will occur 3. 50% chance that it will occur 4. 75% chance that it will occur 5. >95% chance that it will occur – very likely	**Severity Score** 1. Not serious – no first aid required 2. Minor Injury – requiring basic first aid 3. Injury – requiring non immediate professional medical attention 4. Serious injury/multiple injuries – requiring immediate medical attention 5. Major accident – multiple injuries or fatality		**Calculate the risk levels:** The rating is calculated from the probability multiplied by the severity which will give a rating between 1 & 25. Our Forest School will not be carrying out any activities deemed to have a revised rating of over 12 as they are deemed too dangerous	
Hazard	**Who is at risk and from what?**	**Risk Rating (Probability x Severity =)**	**Control measures to reduce the risk and actioned by whom?**	**Revised Risk Rating (Probability x Severity =)**
Slips and trips onto ropes	Cuts, lacerations, or head injuries, rope burn or strangulation from falls onto ropes	3 x 4 = 12	Staff to: • Advise participants of any known trip hazards and avoid areas with great amounts of hazards (such as areas with rabbit holes)	1 x 4 = 4

			• Ensure all participants are wearing suitable foot wear Advise participants to walk rather than run near ropes	
Falling branches	Cuts and bruises, head injury	2x5=10	Sessions to be postponed if the wind is 7 0r above on beaufort scale. Staff to be aware of Beech trees self-pollarding in late spring and to keep participants away from Beech trees during that time. Staff to dynamically risk assess and carry out regular sweeps checking for damaged, diseased or fallen branches, ensuring no tarpaulins or hammocks are put up anyway near them.	1x5=5
Ropes	Rope burns, strangulation, walking into ropes causing a fall, misuse of ropes as whips	4x2=8	Staff to: • If possible use brightly coloured ropes or tie bright flags or material to ropes to make them visible. • Oversee the use of ropes and call a stop to any misuse of them. Demonstrate safe handling and how to put ropes away	2x2=4
Knots slipping	Shelters or hammocks collapsing causing cuts, head injuries leading to concussion or potentially death	4x5=20	Staff to: • Put up the hammocks rather than the participants doing it themselves	1x5=5

			• advise participants on which knots to use when using tarps for shelters • Use Hammock straps and Carabiners	
Poorly maintained equipment	Frayed ropes could fail and break, damaged hammocks could rip causing participants to fall and hurt themselves	3x4=12	Staff to: Regularly check ropes, tarps and hammocks for signs of damage and decommission any that are deemed as unfit for purpose	2x4=8
Getting in and out of the hammock	Participants could easily fall causing cuts, head injuries leading to concussion or potentially death	5x5=25	Staff to: • Instruct participants to sit on one edge of the hammock and then pull the other side over their shoulder and carefully lean back into the hammock in a lying position to prevent them from falling over the other side • Ensure hammocks are not overloaded, single hammocks should only have one person using them at any time • Instruct participants not to excessively rock , swing or turn the hammock over • Ensure that hammocks are erected so that they're low enough to allow participants to easily climb in and out of them, but so that they do not	2x5=10

			touch the ground when being used as this causes damage which leads to them ripping. • Ensure that the ground below them is free from hazards such as rocks or logs which participants could fall onto	
Poor Behaviour	Hammocks are NOT for swinging, just gentle rocking. Risk of injury if fall out	4x4=16	Only gentle rocking allowed. Hammocks are for relaxing in. If participants repeatedly ignore this rule the hammock will be taken down	2x2=4

Date : 3/10/2026 Signed by: Liz Cooke