



Forest School - Eating Policy

St John's Forest School recognises that raising awareness of the woodland environment increases children's interest in edible berries and fruits which may be found outside. However, there is no safe way of ensuring that children will always eat correct berries and/or fruit, or that appropriate berries and/or fruit will be clean.

There is also the possibility that by promoting the correct ingestion of berries and/or fruit in Forest School sessions may lead to incorrect identification by children when out of school.

With these considerations in mind, St John's Forest School adopts the following Policy on the eating of food during Forest School sessions:

- Forest School sessions on-site (i.e. those lasting a maximum of 3 hours) will adopt a nil-by-mouth policy with the following exceptions:
 - a. Hot drinks made in storm kettles for the group, from commercially available products such as hot chocolate.
 - b. Drinks and foods which link directly to the topic, such as elder cordial, which will only be sourced from commercially available products. In such cases, the Forest School Leader will be responsible for checking that no member of the group has any listed allergy to any of the products; if they have, the Forest School Leader will use their discretion as to whether a substitute product or different activity will be most appropriate.
 - c. Snacks and packed lunches brought by the children may be consumed by the children whilst on Forest School activities, provided careful monitoring by all staff ensures no berries and/or fruit from the forest is consumed

d. Children will be taught, at an age appropriate time, reasons why berries and/or fruit from the woodland may not be eaten during Forest School sessions. They will be reassured that fruit from the woodland can be safe to eat, but can equally be dangerous and that adult (i.e. parent) supervision is very important in ensuring only the correct berries are eaten.

Written October 2013

Reviewed August 2026