

Dear Parents,

As part of our 'Outside the Fence' program we have recently received some wood whittling tools for a Claire Warden inspired experience. The tools will be used to whittle wood that the children will find in the natural environment. The experience will be ongoing as the wood whittling tools, along with other tools, will be taken outside the fence with us each day.

We have decided to extend on this by providing an ember bowl experience to the children. This is an extension of our fire pit and real tools experiences.

During the ember bowl experience, the children will be wearing protective gloves and goggles the whole time. An ember bowl is made by using tongs to pick a hot ember from the fire and placing it onto the flat surface of a piece of wood. The children will be holding the wood and blowing gently on the ember to help it burn a hole in the wood. As the ember stops burning the children will put the dying ember back in the fire and get another one. They can use a tool or a stick to carve out the charcoal.



There will be a designated area as the children create their ember bowl's and each child will be wearing safety glasses and gloves on both hands. The risk benefits have been assessed and a risk assessment has been done with the children assessing their own risk and coming up with their own rules. A 'blood bubble' will be used when children are using tools and/or creating an ember bowl, ensuring a safe space around each child. The blood bubble is the length of the child's arm plus the tool. No one is to stand within the measure of anyone else's blood bubble. Once again the children will be wearing safety gloves and safety glasses.

As part of our risk benefit plan we have decided that a 'blood bubble' will also be around the fire. This means that there will be a boundary that is not to be crossed unless going to retrieve an ember for the ember bowl with a pair of gloves on, using tongs. It was also decided that only one supervised child at a time may do this.

Below are the risk benefits associated with the fire pit/ember bowl:

Area of enquiry concept/knowledge/skill

- Build independence and develop trust
- Opportunities for children to self-risk assess
- Build self-confidence
- Grow awareness and co-operation
- Group awareness
- Calming and therapeutic aspects of being around fire
- Understanding the use of fire – cooking, warmth, light

- Builds conceptual knowledge of the elements of fire
- Conceptual knowledge of the effects of heat on wood
- Children's awareness and management of risk
- The atmospheric effect of a fire can help support speaking and listening activities
- Active outdoor learning experiences
- Use of charcoal as a purifier

Precautions in place/risk assessments

- Gloves are provided for protecting the children's hands during tool use and when making the ember bowl.
- Children and staff are trained in using the tools and given demonstrations on how to use them safely. This also applies to using tongs around the fire and when making ember bowls.
- Adult have valid First Aid qualifications.
- Students are encouraged to whittle around knots in the wood or an adult helps remove the knot before or during the session.
- Appropriate wood is selected for the experiences.
- Safety glasses are worn to avoid wood or ember entering the eye.
- The 'blood bubble' is enforced. This bubble is the length of the child's arm plus the length of the tool. No one is to be any closer to another person.

Ember bowl permission

I _____ give permission for my child _____
(parent name) (child's name)

to participate in making an ember bowl conducted by OSHC.

Signed: _____ Date: _____