



RISK ASSESSMENT – Billhook

Low risk – a minor injury e.g. scratch or bruise

Medium risk – significant loss/damage or injury such as broken bones (requires hospital trip)

High risk – extensive loss, multiple injuries or death

Location/Activity:	Stoneydelph Forest School	Date:	January 2025
FS Leader:	Miss Sarah Kidner	Review date:	January 2026

Hazard	Who is at risk?	Risk	Potential level of risk:	Control measures and who is responsible for actions	Level of risk after control	Risk benefit
Correct use of Billhook	Adults/ children	Cuts, lacerations abrasions, amputation	High	Tool checked to be in good working order by FSL before use Check area before using the Billhook. Clear the area of any debris that can cause a slip, trip or fall. FSL - Tool talk and safe working distance 1.5m Blade covered with sheath/hessian cover when not in use Used for splitting/cleaving wood or stripping branches Kneel on both knees – this will help with balance.	Medium	Learners will understand the correct purpose and method on how to safely use and handle the Billhook. Managing their own risks and make safer choices for themselves and others.
Handling Billhook	Adults/ children	Cuts, lacerations abrasions, amputation	High	FSL- Tool talk and safe working distance 1.5m Ratio - adult to child 1:1 Qualified First aider and fully stocked first aid kit. Don't touch the blade always hold the handle. No gloves to be worn by the person using the Billhook or mallet.	Medium	
Carrying Billhook	FSL	Slips, trips, falls, cuts, lacerations abrasions, amputation	High	Billhook will ONLY be carried by the FSL The blade will need to be covered by a wooden sheath or thick hessian cover Stored correctly in a secure container Be aware of surrounding to avoid any slip, trips or falls	Medium	

Cleaning, Storing and sharpening Billhook	FSL	Cuts, lacerations abrasions, amputation	High	FSL to collect the Billhook Inspect for wear and tear. Cover the Billhook with a wooden sheath or thick hessian cover Store Billhook into a secure tool bag. Store bag into a secure shed/container. Cleaning: • Hold the handle and position the blade away from your body • Wipe blade with a cloth to ensure its clean and dry • Mark the blade with a marker pen • Use a cigar stone in a circular motion along the whole blade, evenly on each side • Spray with WD40 to prevent rust	Medium	Learners will develop their fine and gross motor skills. Producing woodland crafts e.g. mallet.
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	Signature	Date
Forest School leader		
Head Teacher		
Forest School Assistant		