



WFSI Information Sheet No 4

Whittling Sticks

Most children enjoy whittling sticks at Forest School, especially if there is a purpose, for example whittling sticks for toasting marshmallows , pancakes or damper bread. Whittling sticks is also a good way to introduce children to using tools in a safe and controlled environment.

Equipment needed:

Penknife—preferably a child's size.

You can use most coppiced green wood when whittling sticks for toasting forks.

Taking care of your penknives:

- Always make sure that your penknives are kept sharp. Sharp knives are less dangerous than blunt knives.
- Make sure that the blade is cleaned regularly.
- Knives should always be kept in a secure and preferably lockable box.
- The Forest School Leader must ensure the correct number of knives are returned to the box at the end of the session.

How we at Bishops Wood use knives with foundation stage children.

1. Encourage the child to find a green stick as long as their arm and no thicker than their middle finger.
2. The child can sit comfortably
3. Hold the stick in their non dominant hand with one end of the stick under their arm to keep it secure.
4. Hold the blade of the knife at a right angle and the stick and start by gently scraping the bark off. Gradually demonstrate how to sharpen the end of the stick into a point.
5. If the adult sits behind or to the side of the child they can safely intervene if necessary.

