



Fradley Park  
Primary & Nursery School

# Forest School Procedure

January 2023

## Statement of Intent

Fradley Park Primary and Nursery School aims to use the natural outdoor woodland area to offer the children an insight into the Forest School ethos. This approach to outdoor learning encourages children to become independent, use their imagination, take appropriate risks within boundaries and initiate learning for themselves. Forest School is a holistic approach to learning, incorporating children's individuality and develops their skills for lifelong learning. It can cover many areas of learning, including the emotional and spiritual aspects of learning where self-esteem and self-confidence can grow and positive relationships with peers can be formed. Forest School explores the outdoors and the natural environment with practical, useful activities all year round. It develops peer learning with the adults providing support and enabling activities to take place. The child's interest will be at the heart of any activity.

Fradley Park Primary and Nursery School has many additional policies which will be adhered to alongside this policy during Forest School sessions within our woodland:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND (Special Educational Need or Disability) Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Equality and Inclusion Policy

Particular attention is paid to the following areas:

### Health and Safety

The Forest School curriculum supports children to develop responsibility for themselves and others. It will encourage early risk management strategies that will ensure that young children start to consider the impact of their actions on themselves and on others. A site risk assessment has been carried out and a copy is held on the school Share Point. The Forest School Leader (Jessica Nicholson) has an up-to-date certificate in ITC Outdoor First Aid and oversees first aid arrangements. All staff supporting Forest School sessions have first aid training. A first aid kit is taken on all sessions. In the case of an accident requiring further assistance, an emergency contact form is kept in the Office and a mobile phone/walkie-talkie is carried. The school will contact the parents. Fires are a valuable part of the Forest School experience but will only be lit according to the procedures below. As a minimum the ratio is 1:13 for Nursery and 1: 15 for classes of Reception aged children and beyond. For a class of 30 children there is typically the Forest School Leader and a Teaching Assistant although we welcome and encourage additional adults and volunteers.

Risk Assessments will include:

- The site of the Forest School
- Equipment and Activities
- Open Fire
- Individual Risk Assessments for tools (bill hook, bow saw, mallets, knives), where applicable

### Safeguarding

Forest School sessions are led by a trained Forest School Leader, supported by members of staff. Everyone involved is fully briefed on health and safety, risk assessment of sites and activities. Staff and

volunteers are made aware of the relevant school policies and procedures and ensure that they adhere to the guidance contained in them. All Fradley Park Primary and Nursery School staff have current DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks. Any concerns about a child's physical or mental well-being will be shared with our named Designated Safeguarding Leads and a My Concern form will be filled in as soon as possible, so that our school's Safeguarding Procedure can then be followed. Confidentiality should be maintained at all times. Any concerns should only be shared with those who need to know such as the class teacher who can then ensure the correct channels are then informed

### Equality and Inclusion

During Forest School, all persons are treated equally. We aim to provide a secure environment in which children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued.

### Behaviour

At Forest School we operate within the Behaviour Procedure of Fradley Park Primary and Nursery School. We praise and reward good behaviour using the established school systems. When a child's behaviour threatens the well-being of him/herself or others, and he/she does not respond to a verbal warning, he/she may be returned to school.

### Medical and Emergency Contact Details

All Medical Care Plans and Emergency contact details are held in the School Office. All medication for individual participants such as epi-pens, inhalers etc will be taken out to the Forest School site and administered if required. All staff will be aware of different participants medical needs.

### Roles and Responsibilities

The Forest School Leader will have the overall responsibility for:

- Risk assessments for each session, pre-visit site checks and continuous safety monitoring.
- Planning for sessions, differentiation for individual children's needs.
- Ensuring that once on-site rules are followed and continue to risk assess during the session.
- Ensuring necessary equipment is taken into woodland.
- Administration of first aid and checking first aid kit.
- Supervision of fire use, following procedures set out in this document
- Supervision of tools use, cleaning and storing.
- Organising emergency procedures.
- Ensure site is left as it was found after every session.

Staff/students/volunteers will model good practice throughout the session, carry out delegated roles and responsibilities, extend children's learning where appropriate by asking extending questions, support children to manage their own risk, remind children of rules and boundaries, be aware of dangers within Forest School and monitor levels of safety at all times, support the Forest School leader to run the sessions.

### Emergency Procedure

In the event of an emergency the following will happen:

- Emergency Whistle blown
- Children advised to put tools down by other adults in surrounding areas and to await further instructions.
- Forest School Leader to assess situation and remove any hazards.
- Once any hazard has been removed the leader will deal with the incident or follow the first aid procedures in the case of an accident.

### Weather conditions

Following the Forest School's ethos of, 'there is no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing,' children are advised to dress warmly and wear waterproofs if necessary. However, there are some occasions where it may not be safe or practical to go ahead with a planned session due to extreme weather:

- In the case of high winds of 25mph or more determined by the met office online.
- In the case of extreme temperature determined by a met office amber weather warning
- In the case of extreme cold of below '0' a session will be cancelled if it is near to this, we will ensure children are appropriately dressed, sessions will be made shorter, and activities will be planned to ensure children are kept moving.

### Food safety and Hygiene Procedures

Children at Forest School are taught a strict NO eating rule, unless it is a specific activity led by an adult to prepare and cook food. Initially, when children are ready, they will participate in simple cooking on the fire activities which include toasting marshmallows/waffles and making 's'mores.' There is always a staff member present with food hygiene training when food is being handled and prepared.

#### Food preparation, transport, and storage

- Hands will be washed thoroughly, and any cuts/grazes covered in the correct manner (blue plaster or ideally gloves) before handling and preparing food.
- Any food needing preparation will be prepared in the school kitchen e.g., bread dough.
- Food will be stored in clean containers and transported in a cool bag to and from the site, with any clean utensils and cooking pans required. The box will remain closed in between use with food covered in bags or boxes; to avoid attracting flies and other insects.
- Raw meats will be stored separately to any other foods.
- All 'use by' dates will be checked on foods before eating.
- Water for cooking will be provided in cleaned sealed storage container.

#### Handling, cooking, and eating food

- A fresh, clean, bucket of warm soapy water or hand sanitiser will be available for children to wash their hands before handling food or utensils
- Children are taught how to cook food safely following the activity risk assessment and fire procedure. All food will be checked by an adult to ensure it is fully cooked before eating.
- Children will be asked to sit still around the fire circle or to move to a designated eating area from the fire to keep numbers to a minimum near the fire circle.

### Clearing away and cleaning up

- ALL food not eaten or cooked will be placed in black bin bags and disposed of in the school bin at the end of the session by one of the adults.
- The area is checked to ensure there is no food traces to avoid vermin being attracted to the area.
- ALL utensils and pans will be washed at the station in hot soapy water and stored away correctly.

### Use of Tools procedure

- Children and adults will be informed of rules, safety and trained in the use of each tool before they use it. Tool use guidance documents will be carried by the leader during each session and tool use ratios will be at the discretion of the Forest School Leader. During an activity where children will be using a tool, the ratio will be a minimum of 1:6 with the Forest School Leader working with this group. We always welcome additional pairs of hands so if you would like to support the class on Forest School Day then please speak with the class teacher in advance to enable for planning.
- Ratios will be set out in the session risk assessments.
- Relevant personal protection equipment will be always worn.
- Tools will be counted in and out and checked against an inventory.
- Tools will be stored safely and kept out of the reach of children.
- They will be cleaned after each use to prolong their life, broken and damaged tools will not be used.

### Use of Fires procedure

- A Forest School Leader must always be present when a fire is lit and must never be left unattended. There must always be water available to extinguish the fire.
- Fires will be built in a designated fire area: if a tarpaulin is placed above the fire, it should be approximately 8 foot above the fire and seating will be at a distance of 1.5 metres. Relevant personal protection equipment will be used bring fire building.
- Children will be reminded of the fire pit procedures at each and every visit
  - Walk behind the log seats and stand behind the log.
  - Step over and sit down on the log seat.
  - Stand up, turn around and step over the log.
  - Children are not allowed to cross the inner circle (adults should be role models of this).
- The fire box containing fire retardant gloves, first aid kit and fire blanket should be placed close to the fire circle along with a covered bucket of clean cold water.

### Environment

Wherever possible environmentally friendly products and recycled materials will be used. Fradley Park Primary and Nursery School will promote environmental awareness and care for our environment. Conservation issues and sustainability will also be supported. The woodland will be maintained to ensure the survival of all native flora and fauna and new flora will be introduced if needed. We will

remove all litter and debris we take into the woodland and have regular litter picks to remove other refuse which is in the area. We will be caring towards our neighbours and try to minimise the amount of smoke and noise produced. Brambles and nettles will be removed from the main pathways but will be allowed to grow in other areas of the woodland. Branches at eye level and below on the main pathways will be removed to avoid injuries for people entering the woodland unsupervised (without the Forest School Leader), they will remain on all other trees. Dead and fallen branches will be removed, cut down and stored in the log store and used as firewood. During the winter months, large stones and logs will be left alone to avoid disturbing hibernating creatures. There will be areas created where wood is allowed to rot to encourage insects to thrive, wildflowers will be allowed to grow, and children encouraged to enjoy them growing rather than pick them. A hedgerow around the edge of the woodland will be built and maintained to encourage small wildlife to live in the woods. The forest school area is at the back of the field.

### Toileting considerations

All children will visit the toilet before leaving the classroom. Any children needing the toilet during the session will use the nearest school toilets. KS1 and EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) must be accompanied by an adult and remaining staff at the Forest School site will have a mobile/walkie-talkie if required.

### Procedure Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or before should any incidents arise or laws and policies change.

A copy of this policy is available to all staff and parents and is published on the school website. This policy is reviewed every year by the Forest School Lead, Headteacher and the Local Governing Body (LGB).

Signature



Headteacher

Date: 18/01/23

Signature



Chair of Governors

Date: 18/01/23

The scheduled review date for this policy is **January 2024**.