

Westhead Lathom St James'  
CE Primary School



## Forest School Health & Safety Policy

Last Reviewed Date: Spring 2020

Next Review Date: Spring 2023

Issue	Date	Author/Editor	Revision Notes
1	Spring 2020	Clare Glover	Original Policy documents copied into new format, with header, footer and version control.  Policy reviewed and updated to ensure reflects current policy and practice.

### **Mission Statement: Our School Now**

Our school provides a secure, caring, stimulating and challenging indoor and outdoor environment that promotes a love of learning. Our children, parents, families, staff, governors and community work together to enable each child to become a happy, healthy, well-balanced individual in preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

The ethos of the school is based on the Christian ideals of commitment, responsibility and respect and love for Jesus Christ, self and others. We are committed to working in partnership with all of those involved in our children's development to lead our children towards tolerance, understanding, justice, and sensitivity to the needs of others and appreciation of the world around them.

**Our motto**                      "Enjoy, Respect, Learn, Achieve"

### **Vision Statement: Our Vision for the Future**

***'A curriculum that is challenging, inspiring and engaging; in which all pupils flourish spiritually, creatively and academically to become confident young people.'***

***'With God's power working in us, God can do much, much more than anything we can ask or imagine.'*** Ephesians 3:20 New Century Version (NCV)

## **Safety at Forest School is paramount at all times.**

Forest school programmes may include activities that are considered higher risk than usual. We will minimise risk by following appropriate procedures, such as risk assessments, tool talks, 1:1 supervision with tools and training of camp fire rules. Taking risks is an important part of learning and development; we aim to provide a safe and supportive environment in which children learn to manage risk.

On site risk assessment procedure:

- The Forest School site must be safe. Full risk assessment must be completed, we will seek to identify hazards and implement necessary controls to reduce risk to a safe level.

### **Please refer to Forest School risk assessments**

- Different activities and groups of children may require risk assessments to be modified.
- Completed risk assessments must be shared with other staff.
- Copies of risk assessments are kept in the School Risk Assessment file.
- A final sweep of the site will take place prior to a session.

## **Responsibilities of the Forest School Leader**

To ensure that:

- Forest School is safe.
- Appropriate risk assessments have been completed.
- There has been a sweep/risk assessment of the Forest School site to check for hazards prior to any session.
- Adults have had a DBS check.
- Tools are counted and in a secure tool box.
- Ratios are safe.
- Staff and volunteers have read any Forest School risk assessments.
- Tools are checked for safety, any maintenance dealt with or if necessary, taken out of use.
- Accidents/incidents are reported.
- First aid kit is taken to sessions and is kept well stocked and replenished.
- To take lead in planning, delivering and evaluating the programme.

## **Health and Safety Ground Rules-Children**

- Never eat anything you might find at Forest School
- Large sticks/branches need to be dragged, not carried.
- Be aware of others.
- Use tools in the way you have been shown,
- Stay within boundaries.
- Once made aware of the fire pit rules, they must be followed.

## **Insurance**

Our Forest School site is covered by Lancashire County Council Public Liability Insurance.

## **Tool Use**

Forest School includes offering activities that require the use of tools; they may include potato peelers, bow saw, hand drill, knives and a fire steel. Using tools enable the children to develop new skills and increase self-confidence. We aim to ensure all participants use tools safely with little risk to their health. The following guidelines are to be followed when using tools:

- Regular checks made to ensure tools are fit for use.
- When using tools, a designated area will be marked out with rope and children will be made aware of this.
- Tool talks will be given prior to use.
- All tools must be accounted for at the end of the session.
- Tools will only be used when a level 3 Forest Leader is present.
- The use of tools with children will be carried out on a 1:1 basis with an adult.
- Tools should not be left unattended.
- Personal protective equipment can be provided in the tool area (gloves).
- Tools are stored in a locked box in the staff room.

## **First Aid**

First Aid treatment must be carried out by a trained first aider.

All cuts, grazes and open wounds must be covered when possible to avoid infection.

Major injuries that constitute 'reportable injuries' will be reported to the Health and Safety Executive via RIDDOR.

The Forest School Leader must check for any known allergies and conditions and make other staff/volunteers aware (if not already). Ensure medication is available and is only administered by a first aider. If parents have provided sun cream, it is to be applied prior to the start of the session (children encouraged to apply own sun cream with supervision)

## **Fire Procedure**

Camp fires are an important part of Forest School.

- Related safety equipment, including water will be kept in close range to the fire.
- Smoke inhalation will be reduced by burning dead wood. Children will be encouraged to move places if sat in direction of smoke.
- Children will only be allowed to light fires under direct supervision of Forest School leader using suitable materials and equipment.
- Fire must always be guarded by an adult.
- All fire must be extinguished at the end of a session-doused with water and stirred until all steam and smoke has ceased. Remains will be checked to see that they have cooled and are safe to leave.

Location: camp fire is situated in an open part of the site and is enclosed by short logs on all four sides then larger seating logs.

All children, staff and volunteers must be made aware of fire pit rules from week 1. A fire will not be lit until all children understand the rules:

1. Stand behind the log
2. Step over and sit down on the log.
3. Stand up, turn around and step over the log.
4. Children only allowed into fire pit area if invited by an adult.
5. Never throw anything into the fire.
6. Children should be knelt down if by the fire.

## **Emergency Fire Procedure**

In the event a fire became out of control:-

1. Assemble children away from the fire and headcount.
2. Exit School field via the gate.
3. Lead adult to call 999 and send additional adult to the School office. If no
4. signal, then additional adult MUST be sent to the office to request 999 call.
5. Assemble on School playground
6. Second headcount.

## **Forest School Leader becomes ill/injured**

In the event of the Forest School leader becoming ill or sustaining an injury, the session must end. An additional adult must take the lead.

Procedures to be followed:-

1. Lead adult to gather children together away from fire (if lit) and do a headcount.
2. Adult to use walkie talkie/mobile phone to call for help, whether that is the School office or 999.
3. Adult to ensure Forest School Leader is out of danger.
4. Extinguish the fire if lit.

## **Food Hygiene and eating**

By following food hygiene principles, we are trying to avoid contamination of food by doing the following:

- Food should be prepared by someone who has a food hygiene certificate.
- Any cuts are covered with a plaster before preparing food/serving food.
- Keep chemicals (hand sanitiser) in original container and store separately from food.
- All participants to use hand gel/sanitiser before eating.

## **Toileting**

Children will be encouraged to go to the toilet before the session.

Children will be allowed to go back into school escorted by an adult if the toilet is required/children need changing if a toilet accident occurs.

## **Weather and clothing**

All adults attending Forest school will be advised on the appropriate clothing to wear for the weather and activities they will undertake.

Where possible, we will try to provide suitable outdoor clothing for the children (dependent on what we have available and sizes etc). Families are reminded regularly, particularly when the seasons change, about sending suitable Forest School clothing into School.

It is the Forest School leader's and staff member's responsibility to check children are suitably dressed before participating in Forest School. For safety reasons if a child is unsuitably dressed and appropriate clothing cannot be provided by School or parent/carer they will be unable to participate.

## **Emergency Procedures**

In case of injury to adults or children:

- In serious cases, 999 should be dialled using the walkie talkie to communicate with the School office who will then phone the emergency services.
- The rest of the group will be supervised away from the incident and if in danger will be removed to safety.
- Inform Head Teacher.
- Inform parents/carers (responsibility of office staff).

Emergency phone numbers:

School Office: 01695 574078

## **Missing Child Procedure**

Children are regularly reminded of Forest School rules and boundaries.

Regular head counts take place and if on discovery of a missing child, gather children together and use '1,2,3 where are you' shout out.

Whilst an adult remains with the group of children, a search of the vicinity must be made. Whilst search is underway, the other adult must notify the School office either by walkie talkie or on foot.

Office manager will notify Head Teacher and a decision will be made on whether to call the Police.