



'Believe. Achieve. Be Proud.'

Forest School Policy

Lyngford Park Primary School & Nursery

Signature

N. Arnold

Headteacher

Date January 2025

Signature

F Forsyth

Chair of Governors

Date January 2025

Statement of Intent

Lyngford Park Primary & Nursery School aims to use the natural outdoor woodland area to offer the children an insight into the Forest School ethos. 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.

Lyngford Park Primary & 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 Policy	Health and Safety Policy

Legislations considered for policy

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974	Children Act 2004
RIDDOR (Accident Reporting)	

Implementation

Our Forest School sessions will be delivered by qualified Level 3 Forest School leaders in Key Stage 1 and Level 1 in Reception. They deliver this program following the guidance set out in this document. A copy of all policies and procedures will be taken into the woodland on each visit, this contains vital information needed for each session which includes procedures in the event of an emergency etc.

Equality and Diversity:

All children will be included with all activities and no form of discrimination will take place, reasonable adjustments will be made to make it inclusive for all. Inclusion is a thread which runs through all of the Forest School activities regardless of a child's ability, disability, gender, race, culture, etc.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Forest School Leader will have the overall responsibility. They will:

- Risk assess for each session, pre-visit site checks and continuous safety monitoring.

- Plan sessions, differentiation for individual children's needs.
 - Ensure once on site, rules are followed and continue to risk assess during the session.
 - Ensure necessary equipment is taken into woodland.
 - Administer first aid and checking first aid kit.
 - Supervise fire use, following procedures set out in this document
 - Supervise tools use, cleaning and storing.
 - Organise 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.

Health and Safety:

Forest School sessions by their nature encourage children to develop their own risk management skills and will support them to become responsible for themselves and others around them. Children will be reminded of rules and safe play if they are considered too dangerous. We will always ensure there are at least 2 adults per class in our own woodland area (onsite). All staff and helpers will be DBS checked. Risk assessments will be carried out and for the use of all tools and equipment.

The Forest School Leader will assess weather conditions regularly and will evacuate the area if they become too extreme. All children and adults will wear appropriate clothing depending upon the weather conditions. An open fire risk assessment will be carried out before a fire is allowed and protection procedures followed. A Forest School Leader will be present at all times and children will be reminded of safe practice.

The school has a Health and Safety Policy, Safeguarding Children Policy etc. to enhance aspects of health and safety Risk Assessments will include:

- Site of the Forest School
- Equipment and Activities
- Open Fire
- Individual Risk Assessments for tools where applicable

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.

First Aid Procedure:

- A number of staff within the school (including the current Forest School Leader) are qualified first aiders and will administer the care needed.
- First aid kit will be taken to all sessions and will be checked regularly
- Whilst dealing with a first aid incident, the leader will ensure the safety of all other children within the group by advising other adults present of the situation and ask them to monitor the other children, if alone children will be call to the area that the leader is in and if necessary all children will be taken indoors.
- Seek emergency help if needed.
- There will be a first aid kit taken into the woodland area and extra first aid equipment is located within the school.
- Contact the parents and complete the accident report forms
- Ensure all staff are aware of medical conditions of the children and inhalers, epi pens etc. are taken into woodland.

Child Protection:

It is the responsibility of the Forest School Leader and accompanying adults to ensure the safety of children when on a forest school session. We are committed to creating an environment in which children are safe and free from harm. It is the role of the Forest School Leader to minimise the risk of abuse taking place:

- Educate children how to stay safe and speak out
- Take appropriate action should any allegations arise and following the school's child protection and safeguarding policy.

Behaviour Procedure:

The Forest School leader will follow the school's Behaviour Policy, however if the behaviour of an individual, or group of individuals is such that it puts their own and others safety at risk then the individual(s) may be required to return to the school building with an accompanying adult. This will be at the discretion of the Forest School leader.

Weather conditions:

Following the Forest Schools 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 lightening
- 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 Schools 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. 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 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. Ratios will be set out in the session risk assessments.
- Relevant personal protection equipment will be worn at all times.
- Tools will be counted in and out and checked against an inventory and 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 meters. Relevant personal protection equipment will be used during 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 will role model 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. Lyngford Park Primary & 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 fire wood. 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, wild flowers will be allowed to grow and children encouraged to enjoy them growing rather than pick them.

The forest school area is at the back of the school field, in the far corner under the trees.