

Worplesdon Primary School



Forest School Handbook

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1. Introduction to Forest Schools

1.1 What is Forest School?

Forest School is an inspirational process that offers all learners regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees.

Forest School is a specialised learning approach that sits within and compliments the wider context of outdoor and woodland education.

At Forest School all participants are viewed as:

- Equal, unique and valuable
- Competent to explore & discover
- Entitled to experience appropriate risk and challenge
- Entitled to choose, and to initiate and drive their own learning and development
- Entitled to experience regular success
- Entitled to develop positive relationships with themselves and other people
- Entitled to develop a strong, positive relationship with their natural world

This learner-centred approach interweaves with the ever-changing moods and marvels, potential and challenges of the natural world through the seasons to fill every Forest School session and programme with discovery and difference.

Each programme does share a common set of principles, aimed at ensuring that all learners experience the cumulative and lasting benefits that quality Forest School offers.

(Taken from Forestschoolassociation.org)

1.2 Provision

The aim at Worplesdon Primary School is to offer all children in the infant years the experience for 1.5 hours per week, for two half terms over the school year. This will be rotated to give children the opportunity to experience the changing seasons.

In addition to Forest School, outdoor cross-curricular learning is encouraged throughout the School. Forest School sessions are run in the environmental area adjacent to the school field. The site has a diverse variety of flora and fauna including native species, ornamental planting and mature trees including Oak and Bird Cherry. There is a small pond/bog area which provides a habitat for amphibians such as newts and flora associated with this environment. There is access to the wider school field as required. The site is within the school grounds with no public access.

1.3 Communication

To enable the successful operating of Forest School, key stakeholders (Head Teacher, SLT, Governors and Parents) will be informed of the aims, objectives and outcomes in a variety of ways throughout the year. This will include staff meetings and taster sessions for Staff.

1.4 Environmental Impact

The aim at Worplesdon Primary School is to teach the children about caring for the environment in a variety of ways. These may include habitat creation and using non-native species for craft activities. There is a Woodland Management plan in place, with objectives to minimise the impact of activities on the site. The aim is to balance the benefits the outdoor environment provides the children, with caring for it.

2. Forest School Rules

In the initial Forest School session, children are involved in the setting and understanding of the Forest School rules. This is to ensure their safety. At the beginning of each subsequent session there will be a recap of the rules to reinforce understanding.

All adults involved in Forest School are to ensure that children understand the rules and the reason for having them. Children are to be made aware that if the rules are not adhered to, that individual may be unable to attend Forest School sessions. See the section on Behaviour.

2.1 Rules

The Forest School has the following rules, which must be adhered to:

- Walk or run slowly and with caution within the Forest School area
- Keep everything out of your mouth
- Stay within the Forest School boundary
- Kneel on the wooden boards when looking in the pond
- Drag sticks behind you
- Do not throw anything
- Be respectful of nature and the environment
- Always ask an adult before you use a tool and follow the Tool Safety rules
- Enjoy yourself and have fun!
- Remember to wash your hands at the end of a session

2.2 Code of Conduct

2.2.1 Entering the Forest School Area

We will enter the Woodland respectfully and know that when at Forest School specific expectations are in place. We will explore, investigate, learn and play in a manner that will not damage our Woodland environment. We understand that we share our Forest School with plants and animals and that when we are in our Forest School we are sharing the environment with them.

2.2.2 Boundaries

Before each session begins children are made aware of how far that they can explore. All children will be taught the '1-2-3-Where are you?/1-2-3 Come to me' game.

2.2.3 Lighting a Fire

When lighting a fire the Forest School leader will take control of the operation and all accompanying adults will be briefed before we start. A lit fire will not be left unattended at any point. A fire may not be lit until it has been confirmed to all that our fire safety equipment is in place. Open fires will be built within a fire square.

2.2.4 At the Fire Circle

An open fire will be lit within a fire square or stone circle. A fire circle using log sitting stools may be established around the perimeter, 1.5 m from the fire square. No one may enter the fire circle perimeter unless invited to do so by an adult. There is no running past the fire circle. No items must be carried and placed within the fire circle unless by an adult. If you wish to move around the fire to a new stool you must step out of the circle and walk around the outside of the log circle. Even when the fire is unlit we will treat it as if it is lit.

2.2.5 Using Tools

All tools have their own clear code of conduct for correct use which will include consideration of specific personal protective equipment, correct use of a specific body posture, and consideration of the appropriate types of activity that each tool may be used for.

2.2.6 Picking up and Playing with Sticks

Children can carry sticks shorter than the length of their arm, but are encouraged to think about how close they are to other children. Longer sticks may be dragged or carried with the help of another person when each person is at either end. Sticks must not be thrown. Sticks must not be pulled from living trees.

2.2.7 Picking up and Playing with Stones

Stones may be picked up and transported. Children often like to make patterns and pictures with them. Stones may not be thrown. They may be dropped but thought must be given to whether it is safe to do so, i.e. what is beneath where I am dropping it?

2.2.8 Digging

Digging large holes is not encouraged. Children may carefully move soil to look for insects and their habitats using fingers or small sticks found within the forest but deep holes should not be made.

2.2.9 Collecting Wood

Wood is collected for fire lighting purposes. It is collected in four thicknesses – matchstick sized, pencil sized, thumb sized and wrist sized. This is a good mathematical activity involving sorting and matching. Sticks may be collected for creating pictures and patterns but should be collected sparingly so as not to disrupt creature habitats. Sticks should not be removed from the site and there are resources available within school in the Forest School area for activities where natural resources cannot be found on the site.

2.2.10 Eating & Drinking

Nil by mouth policy (No lick, no pick) for anything found in the area, unless this activity has been specifically planned for during the session. Children must be reminded not to put their fingers or hands in their mouths or noses. When having drinks and snacks children will use soap and water to clean their hands before consumption.

2.2.11 Rope and String Use

We encourage the collection and transportation of materials. We do not allow children to tie up each other. If a child has a good idea and wants to tie up something, for example a tarp or a swing, an adult should help them as needed, modelling appropriate knot tying and modelling how to talk through ideas and decisions.

2.2.12 Carrying and Transporting Materials

Children are encouraged to roll, lift, and drag, and to pull materials, either by using their hands or by using ropes. We encourage safe lifting by bending our knees and keeping our back straight. Safe lifting should always be modelled by adults. Heavier objects should be rolled, lifted or carried by more people working together.

2.2.13 Toileting

Children are invited to use the toilets before we leave the school buildings. Children will be allowed to return to the school building, independently or with an accompanying adult if necessary. The nearest toilets are to be found in the Key Stage 1 area.

2.2.14 Leaving the Site

We work according to the ethos 'leave no trace' when we are in the wood as much as is reasonably possible. Shelters should be taken down, imported materials need to be removed. All equipment is carefully counted out and back in again, especially when using tools and tent pegs. Very occasionally large items may be left between sessions. All rubbish will always be removed. If artefacts have been found or made these may be taken off the site with the consent of an adult.

2.2.15 Tree Climbing

An adult must be present when children climb trees in the Forest School. The ground cover should be checked for 'sharp objects' and the tree marked as suitable for climbing. A visual check must be made for loose and rotten branches. Children are permitted to explore to their own limits or to a maximum height of 1.5m. This is marked on the tree. Adults should be near enough to be able to watch, but far enough away to not be invasive to the children's exploration

3. Staff at Forest School

3.1 Forest School Leader

Rachel Sherlock (RS)

- Level 3 Forest School Practitioner (Open College Network Qualified 31/10/2019)
- Higher Level Teaching Assistant
- Remote Emergency Care Outdoor First Aid qualification (Valid from 15/02/2019)

Louise Philpott

- Level 3 Forest School Practitioner (in training)
- Teaching Assistant
Remote Emergency Care Outdoor First Aid qualification (Valid from 18/11/2018)

Other Staff

The teaching assistants from each class may accompany children to Forest School sessions.

Forest School is carried out with an adult to child ratio of at least 1:8, but additional support will be provided where appropriate for those children with disabilities or SEN's. When using tools and/or equipment a definitive adult to child ratio is determined. (Please see section on Tool policies). A separate risk assessment will be carried out for each activity. If any hazards associated with that activity are at risk of causing harm, ratios for that activity will be determined by the type of activity, competence of children and the level of risk involved. Both Forest School leaders are DBS checked and are first aid trained.

All Staff and adults involved in Forest School are required to sign and date a form to show they have read this handbook, appropriate risk assessments and understand the safety procedures. A copy of this form is available at the end of this document.

4. Health & Safety

At Worplesdon School we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued.

The following policies within this handbook are in addition to the main school policies and do not replace them. They are the minimum requirement for the safe running of Forest School.

All Forest School sessions are held on the school premises within the outdoor classroom/bottom of school field and solely attended by Worplesdon Primary School pupils. It is covered by QBE Insurance (Europe Limited)

Policy number 096862QBE0118A

The designated Forest School Leader (Rachel Sherlock) is responsible for the safe running of Forest School sessions and therefore has a duty of care to all children involved. However all adults are required to take reasonable steps to ensure children are safe. Before a session commences all Staff involved are required to read the activity plans and risk assessments associated with the activities.

4.1 Site Risk Assessment

Before the site is used a risk assessment will be carried out by the designated Forest School leader (Rachel Sherlock) and approved by Mrs Kareen O'Brien (Head teacher). It will be updated as necessary when there are permanent or seasonal changes to the site not recorded on the daily site risk assessment.

4.2 Daily Site Risk Assessment

A daily site risk assessment (safety sweep) will be carried out before the site is used to ensure there are no changes to the site that could cause harm. This should be undertaken with extra caution following high winds and/or other bad weather. It should be carried out by the Forest School leader. Following the daily site risk assessment, the Forest School leader will carry out any appropriate action to make the site safe (e.g remove any hazards, mark off unsafe areas). At the same time they will consider specific circumstances which may make it appropriate to cancel a session.

4.3 Activity Risk Assessment

When planning activities for Forest School, any hazards associated with that activity that may cause harm should be considered. These should be recorded on the individual activity risk assessment with suitable control measures in place to control and minimise the risk. Due to the nature of Forest School being child led, the children may come up with a new activity during a session. In this situation reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that the activity is safe. An activity risk assessment form will be completed as soon as possible following the session.

5. First Aid

A small First Aid kit is available during all Forest School sessions. If a greater level of First Aid is needed, the Forest School leader will contact the school office, or if appropriate the Help Card will be sent into the office. The small First Aid kit will contain:

- Sterile water
- Antiseptic wipes
- Eye washing solution
- A selection of different size plasters
- Protective gloves

It is the responsibility of the Forest School leader to ensure this is well stocked and replenished.

In addition to this a summary of medical information relating to each child and/or specific care plans are carried by the Forest School leader, in addition to specific medication required (e.g inhalers, auto-injectors). Staff will be advised of any specific medical information. The Forest School leader will also ensure a mobile phone is available in the area during each session.

Access to the first aid kit, burns kit, medical information and mobile phone is restricted to adults only. As per the policy on Fires a burns kit is also available whenever a fire is lit.

5.1 Emergency First Aid Procedure

In the event of an emergency the following will happen:

- Emergency whistle blown
- Children advised of tools down and to await further instructions
- Forest School leader to assess situation

Under the guidance of the Forest School leader the following protocol will then be followed:

Emergency within FS area

- Children to line up at entrance to Forest School area
- Evacuate area to infant playground with other adults
- Forest School leader to communicate next steps with SLT

Danger outside of FS area

- Children and adults to assemble at meeting point (horseshoe bench)
- Forest School leader to communicate next steps with SLT

If required First Aid will be administered by any of the trained members of Staff available. The school office will be notified of any accident/incident at the same time as SLT. They will be responsible for calling emergency services and accompany them to the site. They will ensure the school gates are opened and will wait at the gate to direct emergency services.

6. Daily Operating Procedures

Before a session takes place the Forest School leader will carry out a daily risk assessment of the area and will take any necessary action to ensure the site is safe before use.

The Forest School leader will list the resources required for each session as part of the planning. All resources will be checked out of the storage shed (on raised playground) and tools will be checked before use following the tool policy procedure. (Refer to appendices). All tools and resources will be stored safely/locked away until required. Children may be encouraged to transport resources necessary for a session.

The Forest School leader will provide risk assessments to all Staff prior to the session starting. (See appendices) This will ensure all adults are aware of any risk/hazard associated with an activity and the control measures in place. Before the session starts all adults will be briefed on the intended structure of the session, possible outcomes and their responsibilities.

6.1 Access to Outdoor Classroom

Children will be brought to the outdoor classroom, after registration, by the Teaching Assistant in that class. They should be ready to start the session at 1.15pm having changed into their outdoor clothes. The accompanying adult will advise the Forest School leader of any pertinent information (e.g. absence). The beginning of each session will follow the same pattern, coming together to reinforce rules and boundaries.

6.2 What to do During the Session

It is the responsibility of ALL adults to make ongoing risk assessments. Regular head counts are to be carried out and if there is any doubt of numbers the call '1-2-3 Come to me' will be made, to bring children out from a hiding place. If any child is unaccounted for then the missing child procedure is to be initiated. All adults should follow the roles and responsibilities of adults, being mindful of the adult to child ratio.

6.3 What to do at the End of the Session

At the end of the session children are called together at the forest circle using the designated signal (1,2,3, Come to me.) Children will be encouraged to return resources safely to a central location ready to put away. Children will then group together in the forest circle for a head count. A reflection session will then take place to formally end Forest School for that session. Children will then be led back to class where another head count will take place before the children are handed back to the class teacher.

Remaining Staff will stay onsite to gather resources and return them to the shed. They will be checked over and any issues raised with the Forest School leader.

6.4 Evaluation for Next Session

During and following a session, Forest School Staff will ensure they provide any observations/notes to the Forest School leader to enable planning for future sessions.

6.5 Cancellation Policy

Following the Forest School ethos of:

'There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing'

Children are advised to dress appropriately for the time of year. See Clothing policy.

However there may be some occasions where it may not be safe or practical to go ahead with Forest School due to extreme weather. This would be:

- In the case of high wind 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 zero degrees Celsius. If the temperature is near to this the Forest School leader will ensure the session can go ahead if children are appropriately dressed. The session may be shortened and activities may differ to the plan to ensure children are kept moving.

6.6 Staff Ratios

A session may need to be cancelled due to Staff illness or other circumstances if the adult to child ratio is compromised. If a Staff member is unable to attend a Forest School session Laura Bassett-Cross will inform the Forest School leader as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, a decision to cancel may be made at short notice, on the morning of a session. The Forest School leader will endeavour to give as much notice as possible to Staff and children. In the case on cancellation consultation with the class teacher will determine whether an indoor nature or skills related session (e.g. knots or crafts) can take place instead.

7. Toileting Policy

Children will be encouraged to use the toilet before coming out for their Forest School session.

There will always be 2 adults at an infant Forest School session. Children will be shown and encouraged to use the toilets independently, if necessary an adult will be available to escort an infant child to the toilet.

Should a junior child need to go to the toilet during a session they will need to ask a member of Staff before they leave the outdoor classroom. They must inform the same member of Staff when they return.

Children will be asked to enter the building via the atrium door and use the KS1 toilets.

If a toileting accident happens on site, the Forest School leader will advise all remaining adults and children to stop use of tools whilst the situation is dealt with. If necessary the help card can be used/ contact made with the office via mobile phone. The child can return to the session when ready and the Forest School leader has been informed.

8. Parental Consent and Confidentiality

This information is extracted from Worplesdon Primary School data Protection (GDPR) Policy. (Reviewed May 2018) and can be read in conjunction with the full policy available on the school website.

8.1 Aims

Our school aims to ensure that all personal data collected about Staff, pupils, parents, governors, visitors and other individuals is collected, stored and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the expected provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) as set out in the Data Protection Bill.

This policy applies to all personal data, regardless of whether it is in paper or electronic format.

In relation to Forest School, medical information for each child is obtained at the beginning of each half term from the records stored in the main school office. The Forest School leader is given a report of specific medical needs for individual children (e.g. asthma, epilepsy allergies). At the start of the school year parents/carers are provided with information outlining the ethos of Forest School and proposed activities. They are required to sign a consent form to allow their child to participate in Forest School. (See appendix) On the consent form, as a cautionary measure, parents are asked to advise us of any further medical reason or phobia that could affect their child's wellbeing and experience of Forest School. The consent forms are stored in accordance with the school policy on data storage.

All information about individual children is private. Specific information that could affect a child's wellbeing and safety at Forest School is shared with Forest School Staff to ensure the best care and safety of children. A summary of medical information and any medication is kept in a secure emergency bag available at each session. Access to the bag is only permitted to Forest School Staff; not to volunteers, visitors or children. In between Forest School sessions this information is securely stored in the school office.

All emergency contact information is kept within the school office and if necessary will be obtained quickly via mobile phone or an adult going into school.

9. Clothing Policy

Forest School leaders will carry a spare set(s) of clothes outside in each session. We are building a bank of spare outdoor clothing and wellington boots. As the responsible adult in charge the Forest School leader has the right to exclude any child they feel is inappropriately dressed for Forest School activities. Parents are informed in advance of sessions starting what the expectation for clothing is.

Suggested clothing is as follows:

Winter

- Vest or T-shirt
- Long sleeved top
- Fleece or jumper
- Waterproof jacket
- Thick socks
- Long trousers
- Wellington or sturdy boots
- Hat, scarf and gloves

Summer

- Long sleeved top or long sleeved T-shirt
- Light weight long trousers NOT shorts
- Trainers, sturdy boots or wellingtons. Crocs, sandals, flip-flops are not suitable
- Sunhat

We remind parents that all items of clothing should be clearly labelled with the child's name. Participants are responsible for providing and applying their own sunscreen. This is in line with school policy.

10. Tools

10.1 Tool Handling Policy

All tools used within Forest School are stored in tool box/bag within a locked shed. When they are bought onto the Forest School site they are placed in a designated area with access to them limited to adults only.

Children will not be using tools until the Forest School leader has decided they are ready emotionally and physically.

Specific tool policies are in place for each tool that may be used in Forest School. These can be found in the appendices. The policies cover specific ratios for tool usage and any PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) required for adults/children whilst using the tools. All tool usage will be modelled by Forest School leaders to the children in accordance with their respective policies. All adults participating in Forest School activities will receive training on the safe use of tools before being allowed to use them with children.

Tool Maintenance

Tool safety checks will be completed by the Forest School leaders before the beginning of a session. If any tool is deemed unsafe for use it will be removed from site and returned to the locked shed.

Through safe modelling of tools, in initial 1:1 ratios children are taught how to check a tool before using as a matter of routine.

At the end of a session tools are checked back in by the Forest School leader to ensure no tools are missing. Once returned they will be cleaned and maintained if necessary.

10.2 Tool Rules

- Ask an adult before taking a tool from the tool area.
- You must have a purpose for your tool.
- You must choose a safe working area and check your blood bubble.

Children are taught these rules and they are reinforced at the beginning of each session involving tools.

11. Fire Policy

Fires will only be lit under the guidance of the Forest School leader, following this safety policy, when the children are ready emotionally and physically.

Considerations before deciding to have a fire.	<p>Wind direction</p> <p>We will have a designated fire circle which complies with these criteria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No combustible materials nearby/overhanging foliage • Condition of soil – not too peaty.
Safety – clothing and hair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long hair to be securely tied back • Clothing to be checked for loose/dangling items. These to be secured/removed. • No gloves to be worn when placing materials onto fire.
Safe sitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating 1.5m away from the fire. • Allow gaps between seating arrangements for escape routes. • Children to be invited into the inner circle. • Ensure the area between seats and fire is clear of debris and trip hazards. • Children taught not to cross/walk inside the fire circle. Children taught to stand up, step back and walk around the outside. • Seating in line of smoke will be avoided. Children taught to turn their heads if smoke comes in their direction.
Safe management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire to be lit by FS leader or children with 1:1 guidance, only when deemed as confident and safe by FS leader. • Fires will be lit by using a fire steel. Natural firelighters may be used but no matches or flammable liquids. • The fire will never be left unattended. • A bucket of water, fire blanket and burns kit are available. • The fire will only be lit in the designated fire circle.
Safe extinguishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread out the embers of the fire • Gently pour on water • FS leader, using the back of the hand will check for heat and apply further water if necessary.

12. Food and Eating Policy

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. This will be communicated to parents/carers in advance of the activity. Initially, when children are ready they will participate in simple cooking on the fire such as toasting marshmallow and cooking damper bread. As skills develop other activities may be introduced such as vegetable kebabs, baked apples/bananas/potatoes. No wild food will be cooked to avoid any confusion about what is safe and unsafe to eat. All adults will be aware of hand washing and safe handling of food products. The activity will have a risk assessment and the fire policy will be adhered to.

Food preparation, transport and storage

- Hands washed thoroughly before handling/preparing food.
- Any food needing preparation will be done before the session in the staffroom e.g damper dough.
- Food will be stored in clean containers and transported to site in a clean bag/cool bag along with any utensils required. Containers will remain closed to avoid attracting flies/insects.
- Any water need for cooking will be provided in a clean sealed container.

Handling, cooking and eating food

- A fresh, clean bucket of soapy water will be available for hand washing before handling any food/utensils.
- All food will be checked by an adult before being eaten.
- Children will be instructed where to sit safely to eat.

Clearing away and cleaning up

- All food not eaten or cooked will be placed in a black binbag and disposed of in the school waste bin at the end of the session by an adult.
- Any utensils and equipment will be carried back to school, washed and put away by one of the adults.

13. Tree Climbing Policy

Within the school field there are a limited number of mature trees which are suitable for children to climb. There are two specific trees that are marked with a blue band that children will be allowed to climb, under supervision, in a Forest School session.

Before allowing children to climb, trees will be checked for any loose/rotten branches. The ground and surrounding area will be checked for any hazards/sharp objects which will then be removed.

The Forest School leader will make the decision at the beginning of each session as to whether tree climbing can be undertaken following these rules.

- Adult to child ratio of 1:1
- Only one child to climb a tree at a time
- Tree climbing will not be allowed in high winds or wet weather
- Children will only be allowed to climb to a maximum height of 1.5m. This will be depicted on the tree with a blue marker.
- Adults to ensure that tree climbing to be carried out with extra caution if children are wearing wellington boots.

14. COSHH Policy

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

As a school we have a duty of care under the COSHH regulations 2002 to prevent any participants at Forest School sessions coming into contact with substances hazardous to health.

At Forest School we will avoid using any substances that have a risk of being hazardous to health.

We will only use liquid hand soap (as used within the school cloakrooms) for handwashing.

15. Safeguarding Policy

The information below is extracted from the Worplesdon Primary School Safeguarding Policy. (Reviewed annually, each September). This information has been applied to Forest School. The full Safeguarding Policy should be read alongside this and referred to for further information. The full policy is available on the school website.

15.1 Policy Principles

The welfare of the child is paramount.

All children regardless of age, gender, culture, language, race, ability, sexual identity or religion have equal rights to protection, safeguarding and opportunities.

We recognise that all adults, including all staff, volunteers and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm and have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm;

All Staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

Pupils and Staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

15.2 Policy Aims

- a) To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to pupils, parents and other partners.
- b) To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- c) To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident to, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- d) To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching Staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- e) To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- f) To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of Staff.
- g) To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- h) To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Care.
- i) To ensure that all Staff working within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance)ⁱⁱⁱ, and a single central record is kept for audit.

15.3 Safeguarding within Forest School

Through the long term nature of Forest School we aim to build trust and meaningful relationships between the adults and children. Therefore, disclosures may occur. Any member of Staff who has information disclosed to them should follow the school policy. The relevant procedures are extracted from the policy and can be read below.

15.4 If Staff are Concerned About a Child's Welfare

If staff notice any indicators of abuse/neglect or signs that a child may be experiencing a safeguarding issue they should record these concerns through the CPOMS site, as per the school procedures. DSL will be notified via the CPOMS site.

There will be occasions when Staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk, but have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical or inconclusive signs may have been noticed. Any concern should be disclosed through CPOMS.

Worplesdon Primary School recognise that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill or an accident has occurred. However, they may also indicate a child is being abused or is in need of safeguarding.

In these circumstances, staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

15.5 If a Pupil Discloses to a Member of Staff

We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that what has happened is their fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

- a) A child who makes a disclosure may have to tell their story on a number of subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.
- b) During their conversation with the pupil Staff will:
- c) Listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely
- d) Remain calm and not overact or act shocked or disgusted – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting the listener
- e) Reassure the child that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone
- f) Not be afraid of silences – Staff must remember how difficult it is for the pupil and allow them time to talk
- g) Take what the child is disclosing seriously
- h) Ask open questions and avoid asking leading questions
- i) Avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or make accusations
- j) Not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who is being abused.
- k) Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing sooner. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about it when it started’ may be the Staff member’s way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean they have done something wrong.
- l) Tell the child what will happen next.

If a pupil talks to any member of Staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing the Staff member will let the child know that they will have to pass the information on – Staff are not allowed to keep secrets.

The member of Staff should write up their conversation as soon as possible via the CPOMs site in the child’s own words. Staff should make this a matter of priority. The DSL will automatically be notified via CPOMs.

16. Safeguarding Adults.

16.1 Safe School, Safe Staff

We will ensure that;

- a) All Staff receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, the school's safeguarding statement, Staff behaviour policy (code of conduct), child protection policy, the role and names of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy(ies), and Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1 and annex A on induction;
- b) All Staff receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction in line with advice from Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board which is regularly updated and receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually.

16.2 Allegations Against Staff

16.2.1 Extracted from Worplesdon Primary School Safeguarding Policy.

- All school Staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.
- All Staff should be aware of Surrey's Guidance on Behaviour Issues, and the school's own Behaviour Management policy.
- Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by Staff and volunteers will be given at induction training.
- We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of Staff or Staff may have concerns about another Staff member.
- If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of Staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Head Teacher.
- The Head Teacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at the earliest opportunity and before taking any further action.
- If the allegation made to a member of Staff concerns the Head Teacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult the LADO without notifying the Head Teacher first.
- The school will follow the Surrey procedures for managing allegations against Staff, procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education and the school's Managing Allegations policy and procedures.
- Suspension of the member of Staff, excluding the Head Teacher, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Head Teacher will seek the advice of the LADO and an HR Consultant in making this decision.
- In the event of an allegation against the Head Teacher, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors.

17. Supervision at Forest School

Children are taught a game from the initial Forest School session.

17.1 1-2-3 Where are you?

This game is similar to hide and seek. Children are asked to hide within the boundaries of the Forest School site. On the call of '1-2-3 where are you?' Children make themselves seen by an adult and make their way to the designated call back area. (This is the horseshoe shaped bench in the outdoor classroom.) This game can also be played as a call-back when needed during a Forest School session, using '1-2-3 come to me'. Children then make their way back to the call back area and adults who will then do a head count.

17.2 Boundaries

Boundaries are established with children at the beginning of a session. Children are taught the rule of asking an adult if they wish to go beyond the boundary. Children are involved in the risk management process of establishing boundaries and safe areas to go. Worplesdon School Forest School sessions will take place in our outdoor classroom area and the school playing field. Children will not leave the school site. If a child did leave the Forest School site the outer school gates are locked during the day.

17.3 Headcounts

At the beginning of, during and at the end of a session headcounts take place. The number of adults to children participating is noted on the daily risk assessment. It is calculated specifically for each session to take into account the activities planned and the cohort attending. It is the responsibility of all adults participating to ensure they are aware of the headcount for the session and be involved in the monitoring of this. As the children become more aware of Forest School they can also, under supervision, undertake headcounts.

17.4 Ratios of Adults to Children

The high ratio of adults to children, minimum 1:8,(additional for infant children if required) will ensure that children are well supported and supervised in their development and learning. Additional SNTA's will be resourced, if necessary, to support individual children. Adults are expected to spread out within the Forest School site and be seen by but not impose on the children.

The size of the group participating in Forest School will be limited to 15 children. This will allow for physical safety and also for the Forest School ethos to have maximum effect.

18. Missing Child Procedure

If after using the designated callback a child is found to be missing, the following protocol will be followed.

Adult 1 – Forest School Leader Rachel Sherlock)

- To call 1-2-3 Come to me?
- Headcount
- If still not appeared to blow emergency whistle.
- If still not appeared take action.

Adult 2 – Forest School practitioner

- Start immediate search of area

Adult 3 – Teaching assistant helping at session

- To lead children to raised playground and supervise children, remain calm and ask other children where they last saw named child.
- Keep children safe and calm await further instruction.

Adult 1 – Forest School Leader

- To immediately contact school office to advise situation. Await support from senior team and begin search of surrounding area.

Under control of Head teacher and/or SLT

- Search to begin of grounds perimeter of fence and possible hiding places.
- School calls police (and parent/guardian).
- Follow School critical incident procedure, as detailed in the school Emergency Plan

If child is found/appears IMMEDIATELY pass this information to school office and all Staff.

19. Equality Policy

Please refer to the Worplesdon School Equality policy, Anti-Bullying policy and Special Educational Needs Disabilities Policy 2017. (The full versions are available on the school website), in conjunction with this information.

19.1 Public Equality Duty

Worplesdon Primary School is a multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-ability community of approximately 1800 people, parents, professionals and pupils. We believe that everyone in the School is of equal value and should have equal opportunities in school, the community and in life.

19.2 Forest School for All

Forest School aims to be child led and enables children to develop their independent learning skills at their own pace through their own interests. This links with the schools SEND policy detailing how this school will do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs and those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them.

The high ratio of adults to children enables support so children can fully participate in physical and practical activities. Adults facilitate learning to ensure children achieve, enabling them to develop their self-esteem and confidence.

Forest School is a long term process. At Worplesdon School we aim to promote equality of opportunity for all members of the school community. As a long term process, with high adult to child ratios, Forest School allows time to build meaningful and effective relationships consisting of trust, acceptance and empathy. Through a range of activities we develop trust between adults and children as well as children with other children. We aim in Forest School to create an all equal environment with a sense of community and belonging to make children feel safe, secure and valued. Adults within the Forest School environment are in control of this, ensuring that the messages we communicate both verbal and non-verbal help young people to feel respected and valued. The United Nations Convention Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989) articles 12 and 13 recognises the competences of children and their views should be listened to and respected.

In Forest School we aim to build an inclusive environment by:

- Using reflection – talking about feelings and emotions. Teaching children to become emotionally literate and aware of their own and others' feelings.
- Facilitating opportunities for children to work together. To develop social skills, share resources and try new activities.
- Ensure activities and resources are suitable for all. For example, tool size appropriate for users.
- Ensuring that the Forest School area is accessible for all users.
- Allowing children to choose to take their learning in a way that is appropriate and individual to them. To give children the time and space to do this.

20. Behaviour Policy

Please refer to the Worplesdon School Behaviour policy, (the full versions are available on the school website), in conjunction with this information.

As a Unicef Rights Respecting School all behaviour expectations are linked to the Unicef Children’s Charter. The focus of the behaviour policy is the Code of Conduct drawn up by the School Council through consultation with all classes.

Worplesdon Primary School believes that encouraging a high standard of behaviour is essential for all members of the school to thrive as individuals. The school aims to develop children’s self-esteem, respect for others and self-discipline. The overriding ethos is: “treat others as you would like to be treated yourself.” Worplesdon places great importance on positive reinforcement of behaviour through praise.

The school aims to build children’s confidence and self-esteem through encouragement, incentives and rewards, both verbal, written and merits.

At Forest School we encourage positive behaviour and learning through

- Building relationships and trust. It is vital for children to trust adults if the experience is to be a positive one. As trust is built we can teach children coping strategies and use reflection times to talk about feelings and emotions allowing children to become more emotionally literate.
- Adults model positive behaviour and create a positive environment where everyone is equal.
- Consistent boundaries give children security. By involving children in setting the rules and boundaries they are more likely to abide by them.
- Setting up activities that enable children to achieve, providing opportunities to work collaboratively.
- Being in the natural environment, Forest School naturally creates a calming environment. Being outside with nature encourages social and emotional wellbeing, self-confidence and resilience.

20.1 Rewards

At Forest School we aim to build children’s self-esteem and confidence through self-appraisal and a sense of achievement through completion of activities. Adults at Forest School facilitate learning to ensure children achieve.

Achieving a task will lead to a positive learning experience. When giving praise it will be for recognising skills and asking how the child feels. With permission, we will share items made with the rest of the group to celebrate individual success.

20.2 Sanctions

If a child’s behaviour becomes unsafe to himself or others then that behaviour needs to be stopped, and every measure taken to prevent a situation escalating. If needed the child will be removed from the Forest School area. The school Behaviour Ladder will be followed.

Incidents will be noted and the class teacher informed (for information only). The behaviour is dealt within the Forest School setting and no further sanctions carried out.

If repeated unsafe behaviour then further discussions to involve the head teacher to establish the next course of action.

21. Bullying

Please refer to the Worplesdon School Anti-Bullying policy, (the full version is available on the school website), in conjunction with this information.

At Worplesdon Primary School we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our pupils in order for them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and to help them maximise their potential. Pupils should feel safe in school, including issues relating to bullying, and feel confident to seek support from school should they feel unsafe. We aim to establish an ethos in which Staff, pupils and parents feel comfortable to report incidents and where they can feel confident that their concerns are dealt with sensitively, promptly and effectively. All Staff have the responsibility to model respectful behaviours towards pupils and other adults.

21.1 Definition of Bullying

‘Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally’. (Safe to Learn: embedding anti bullying work in schools, 2007).

How does bullying differ from teasing, falling out between friends, or other types of aggressive behaviour?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate.
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves.
- It is usually persistent.

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of sexual, sexist, racist or homophobic bullying and when children with disabilities are involved. If the victim might be in danger then intervention is urgently required.

At Forest School we aim to create a positive learning environment and develop relationships between children. All cases of bullying will be reported to the school Anti-Bullying Leader (Mrs Bassett-Cross).

22. Roles & Responsibilities of Adults.

The adult to child ratios are such to ensure sessions are high quality and children have access to risk taking in a safe and supported way. It is expected that all adults will take an active part in all activities. This may involve getting muddy and experiencing a wide variety of child initiated activities. Where possible Forest School sessions are child led, with adults expected to support the children; not take over. This enables children to achieve at their own level. Adults are to model activities where appropriate, take an active role and extend learning through open ended questions and sharing in experiences. Getting to know the children, developing relationships and building trust is vital in understanding, developing and supporting their emotional needs.

22.1 Other Roles / Responsibilities

- Before taking part in a session ensure you have read and understood the handbook, and signed to agree the policies and procedures in place.
- Before the session takes place read the lesson plan and refer to any related risk assessment.
- Alert the Forest School leader immediately to any first aid issue, however minor.
- ONLY use tools if the Forest School leader has said it is ok to do so. Follow the correct tool handling procedure and lead by example when using tools. Report any concerns to the FS leader immediately.
- Lead by example at all times, follow the Forest School rules and reinforce them to children as necessary.
- Be aware of the first aid kit.
- Only tend the fire to extinguish in an emergency, if instructed by the FS leader and you feel comfortable to do so.
- Stay within the boundaries and alert the FS leader if you need to leave the area/activity you are supervising.
- Be aware that you are duty bound under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to work safely. Take responsibility for your own safety, the implications of your actions and report any hazard immediately.
- Ensure you wear the appropriate clothing and footwear.
- At the end of the session support the FS leader with any observations and tidying away of resources.

22.2 Roles & Responsibilities of the Forest School Leader.

- To plan and lead all Forest School activities.
- To ensure that planned activities and resources available are within the capabilities of the children taking part, amending plans to provide an inclusive curriculum enabling the children to achieve.
- To take responsibility for discipline during Forest School sessions (see Behaviour Policy)
- To have an up to date First Aid qualification.
- To ensure that medication (e.g. auto-injectors/inhalers) and appropriate First Aid is available at every session.
- To ensure that all participants are adequately dressed for the weather.
- To ensure that adults participating understand their role in promoting emotional intelligence, self-esteem and learning at Forest Schools.
- To carry out daily risk assessments as described in the Risk Assessment Policy
- To ensure all Forest School policies are regularly reviewed and that review is informed by observations and developing knowledge of the Forest School setting.

22.3 Roles & Responsibilities of Children.

- To take personal responsibility for their own safety as well as the safety of others.
- To listen to and follow safety information given to them.
- To bring appropriate clothing and footwear to Forest School sessions.

23. Evaluating, Monitoring & Assessing

In order to develop the Forest School program and to ensure good practice is maintained, evaluation of activities will be undertaken.

Across all Reception and KS1 classes evidence is gathered using the following criteria; self-esteem/confidence, behaviour, relationships, independence, communication/language, exploration/curiosity, creativity/imagination, physical/practical skills, participation, taking appropriate risks and other general observations.

The evidence collected, in the form of notes and photographs, of children's learning is collated primarily to plan for future sessions.

The Forest School leader will write a reflection/evaluation of the session and plan accordingly for the next session based on the children's interests and learning in order to develop their skills and learning further.

APPENDICES

24. Parental Consent Form - Forest School Sessions

Dear Parents & Carers,

We would like to invite your child to attend our Forest Schools on For.....weeks
 Forest Schools is a unique opportunity that offers all learners regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees. Forest School is a specialised learning approach that sits within and compliments the wider context of outdoor and woodland education.

The children will be in a group of maximum 15, with our qualified Forest School practitioners.
 If you would like to discuss further, do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

I, _____, confirm that I give consent / do not give consent for
 _____ to attend Forest School sessions.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Medical Information

Medical information will be obtained from the medical information you provided at the start of the school year. However, if there is further information that you would like to make us aware of that might affect your child's involvement in outdoor learning (e.g. phobias, complaints) or any other allergies (e.g. material, food, medicine, pollen, dust, etc.) please indicate below.

Phobias, complaints, allergies...

Please give the Date of your child's last Tetanus Jab __/__/__

As a parent/guardian of the child named above, I agree to my child participating in the Outdoor learning activities taking place.

I understand that activities may include, walking, craftwork, tool use, flint fire lighting skills, den building, campfire cooking and other related activities. I give my consent for the equipment and tools necessary for the activity to be used by the young person mentioned above. I understand that a strict code of practice for working with children will be followed and all activities will be risk assessed and I will be informed of any extra details of activities that are out of the ordinary pattern.

Child's Name:		Child's Class:	
Signed:		Date:	
Name (in CAPITALS)		Relationship to Child	

25. Equipment Checklist

Name of Equipment	Total in Stock	Taken for Session	Checked Back In
Mallet	1		
Secateurs	2		
Bow saw	2		
Loppers	1		
Potato peelers	10		
Potato peelers 'u' shape	10		
Blindfolds	10		
Dentist mirrors	10		
Hand mirrors	10		
Bug viewers	6		
Palm drills	10		
Childrens gloves	20 pairs		
Adult gloves	2 pairs		
Foam sit mat	20		
Magnifying glasses	10		
First aid kit	1		
Fire bucket	1		
Fire blanket	1		
Fire gloves	1		
Water carrier	1		
Burns kit	1		