



# **Asterdale Primary School**

## **Forest School Policy and Procedures**

Review:

## Mission Statement

At Asterdale Primary School we aim 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 all aspects of the EYFS and National Curriculum, 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.

The main aims of Asterdale's Forest School are;

- To experience the outdoor environment for an extended period of time developing a relationship with natural spaces.
- To promote children's self-esteem and confidence using the Forest School area.
- To foster independent, resilient, creative learners.
- To meet the requirements of the EYFS and National Curriculum within each Forest School session

## Forest School Site

The Forest site at Asterdale is located at the far side of the school playing field, down the left hand side of the woodland walk, the central seating fire area and the woodland further below towards the Golf course. The area is marked by a roped fence to set site boundaries. The site is within very easy access to the main school building but far enough away to create the natural space of a woodland.

Asterdale has additional policies which will be adhered to alongside this policy during Forest School sessions within our woodland.

- Equal opportunities
- Health and Safety
- Child protection and procedure
- Safeguarding
- Behavior and discipline
- Design and Technology
- Inclusion
- PHSE
- Science

Legislation considered for policy:

Health and Safety at Work Act  
Race Relations Acts 1976 & 2000  
Children Act 2004  
First Aid at Work Regulations 1989  
Personal Protective Equipment Regulations  
Food Safety Regulations 1995

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Governors

Ensure they are aware of Forest School procedures and objectives.  
Ensure they are informed of the health and safety procedures in place for Forest School.

### **Head Teacher**

Ensure sessions comply with the regulations and guidelines.  
Be confident that the Forest School Leader/Group Leader is competent to monitor the risks throughout each session.

They will also ensure that:-

Adequate child protection procedures are in place.

The risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place.

The Forest School Leader or another member of teaching staff is competent to lead the activity and is familiar with the site.

The adult: child ratio is appropriate.

Parents have signed consent forms.

Arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of children attending.

Adequate first aid provision will be available.

There is adequate and relevant insurance cover.

The Forest School leader has a copy of the emergency procedures, the names of everyone in the group and contact details for the next of kin.

### **Forest School Leader**

The Forest School Leader will have the overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of each session. The leader will:-

Have a level 3 Forest School Leader qualification and an outdoor first aid qualification.

Follow the health and safety guidelines and policies.

Undertake comprehensive risk assessments.

Clearly define each adult's role.

Be aware of child protection issues.

Ensure that adequate first aid provision is available.

Undertake the planning and preparation for each session, including differentiation for individual children's needs.

Ensuring necessary equipment is taken into woodland.

Supervision of tools use, cleaning and storing.  
Organising emergency procedures.

### **Additional Adults/Volunteers**

Other adults will be clear in their roles and responsibilities. They will:

Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group-reminding children of rules and boundaries within the setting and following them themselves at all times.

Follow the instructions of the forest school leader and help with the control and discipline.

Model good practice throughout the session.

Carry out delegated roles and responsibilities.

Support children to manage their own risk.

Speak to the leader/adults if concerned about the health and safety of children at any time during the visit.

Be CRB checked.

### **Parents**

The Forest School Leader will:

Provide written information and briefing sessions to help parents decide whether their child should take part in Forest School sessions.

Tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit.

Invite parents to support Forest School sessions as a volunteer if they wish.

Parents will need to Sign a consent form and give the teacher information about the child's physical health

### **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.

### **Special Educational Needs**

- Forest School aims to provide a welcome and appropriate learning opportunity for all children providing an environment in which all children are supported to reach their full potential.
- We welcome children with special needs who can participate in forest school, if appropriate, after consultation between all relevant parties. Changes and adaptations can be made to the programme of activities to meet children's specific needs.
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### **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.

Risk assessments will be carried out for each activity and for the use of all tools and equipment. A pre-visit site check is also carried out and recorded before each visit. Dynamic risk assessments will be in place to cover other eventualities. 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. While delivering outdoor learning we will always adhere to the schools Health and Safety, Safeguarding Children, first aid and food safety policies to enhance all aspects of health and safety.

Risk Assessments will include:

- The site of the Forest School
- Individual Risk Assessments for tools (bill hook, bow saw, mallets, knives)
- Open Fire
- Rope and string
- Shelter building
- Collecting natural materials

### **First Aid**

Forest School leaders hold an advanced first aid certificate which specifically covers outdoor first aid. They will administer care needed during each session following the First Aid policy already in school and in line with Forest School procedures. The Forest School Leader will ensure the safety of every child and will assess the possible need to evacuate the children indoors. They will seek emergency help if needed and there will be a first aid kit taken into the woodland area and extra first aid equipment is located within the school. If an accident occurs the parents will be contacted, an accident report form filled in serious. Minor incidents will be recorded in an accident book which can be located in the Forest School Leaders rucksack along with the first aid kit. All staff and helpers are made aware of medical conditions of the children- inhalers, epi pens etc. and these are taken into the woodland as needed.

### **Emergency Procedures**

In the event of a minor injury occurring initial first aid will be carried out by the Forest school leader. If it is necessary the child will leave the woodland with an adult to go to the medical room on the school site. In this event a report slip will be sent with the child to notify the school first aider of any details.

In an emergency the Forest school leader will contact the school by mobile phone ensuring a quick response for emergency services.

Emergency bag equipment

- Full first aid kit
- Mobile phone
- Health and Safety Handbook
- Risk assessment for half term and specific activities
- Safety sweep for the day's session

- Non antiseptic wet wipes
- Pen and accident book
- Bin bags
- Scissors

#### Personal Protective Equipment

- Suitable clothing and appropriate footwear must be worn at all times. This includes a waterproof coat, waterproof trousers and wellington boots.
- Gloves must be worn throughout the session to protect hands and keep clean
- Sunscreen and hats must be worn during hot weather
- Hats and scarves to be worn in cold weather condition