



Rudston Primary School

Forest School Policy

Date: September 2018

This policy and all school policies are produced in accordance to guidance set out in our school legislation and guidance policy.

Lead: Mrs. C. Mitchell

Approved By Governors: September 2018

Review Date: Autumn Term 2019

Our Mission Statement:

To develop a love of learning,
enabling all children
to reach their full potential.

* Respect * Resilience *
* Responsibility * Enjoyment *
* Challenge *

Safeguarding Statement:

“Rudston Primary school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.”

Introduction

Forest School is a unique method of outdoor education that allows children to develop confidence, independence, self-esteem and awareness and knowledge of the natural environment.

This is achieved by setting small achievable tasks. The child is never put in a position where he/she will fail so success is attained. It is a child centred and child led programme that provides the opportunity for the children to use their personal learning style to complete their chosen tasks. At present we are using the forest area on the school site, located at the far end of the junior playground.

Purpose and Aims of Forest School

1. To provide children with experiences that encourages an appreciation, awareness and knowledge of the natural environment.
2. To learn to respect and care for their own local environment.
3. To abide by rules and set standards of behaviour, to work cooperatively in groups and to respect each other.
4. Develop children's self-esteem and self confidence through the setting of small achievable tasks.

Descriptions and Characteristics

1. The Forest School takes place in term time and in most weather conditions.
2. The school will inform parents of the dates of Forest School.
3. Parents will be asked to supply suitable clothing for Forest School sessions, although some is available.
4. The sessions will vary in duration day according to the age and experience of the children.
5. A variety of activities are totally inclusive, thus catering for all ability levels
6. The children are taught a variety of woodland skills through practical hands on activities.
7. Children are encouraged to listen attentively to instructions and to take responsibility for their actions. This is achieved by games that also encourage respect for the environment.
8. The Forest School leader will keep parents informed and updated regarding all aspects of Forest School.
9. The children learn the care and safe use of a wide range of tools. This is a tightly supervised activity. It is introduced gradually in small steps.

Resources

1. The Forest School leader has achieved level 3 Forest School Training and holds an Outdoor First Aid certificate. The Forest School leader is responsible for running all Forest School sessions.
2. The Forest School site is on the school land and has full liability insurance.
3. Other adults who assist regularly on sessions will be given training by the Forest School leader. They will all be DBS checked.
4. There is a designated, well stocked Forest School shed on The Forest school site where all resources are securely stored.

The Role of The Forest School leader

1. The Forest School leader has the safety of the children uppermost at all times. The leader will carry out a detailed safety check before each session and comply with health and safety risk assessments.
2. The leader will ensure that all documentation, including risk assessments, are relevant and up to date.
3. There will be a first aid kit and fire blanket on the Forest School site for every session.
4. The leader is responsible for all equipment and will ensure that it is checked before use and returned to the storage area after use.
5. The Forest School leader will keep an accident book and keep parents fully informed of any major incidents that may occur during a session.

Communication

Information about what Forest School is, its aims and structure as well as information on clothing needed, is sent home to parents before the start of a series of sessions.

Cancellation

There may be times when Forest School sessions have to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. These may be:-

- Staff illness
- Adverse weather conditions
- Any situation that poses a health and safety risk.
- Timetable changes

Environmental impact

Forest School has environmental awareness at the heart of its ethos. Wherever possible, environmentally friendly products and recycled materials are used when appropriate. Good practice is modelled by adults showing children that the world in which we live in should be cared for.

Behaviour

At Forest School we operate within the Behaviour Policy of the school. 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 class.

Health and Safety

The Forest School sessions will help children to develop responsibility for themselves and others. It will encourage early risk management strategies that will ensure children consider the impact of their actions on themselves and those around them.

All Forest School risk assessments will be carried out by the Forest School leader. These will include tool use, fire lighting, slack line, rope swing, hammock and general Forest School activities.

The Forest School leader has an outdoor first aid certificate that is renewed regularly. In case of an accident requiring further assistance, the Forest School leader will liaise with the office to contact emergency services and the emergency contact listed.

Tool use

Tool talks and safety talks will be carried out before the use of any tools. All tool use will be under supervision. Tools will be safely stored in a tool box in a designated area.

Fire Lighting

Before lighting a fire, children will have a secure knowledge of the following fire circle safety:

1. Not walking through the fire circle.
2. Stepping outwards over the logs when moving away from the fire circle.
3. Using the 'respect position' when at the fire e.g. toasting marshmallows.

Either the Forest School leader or a trained adult will take responsibility for the fire. Responsibilities include lighting it, manning it while it is burning and putting it out at the end of the session.

The fire will be contained within the centre of the fire circle, generally in a fire pit.

The ground will be checked and cleared of flammable material before lighting a fire and low overhanging trees will be checked for.

A container of water will always be provided at the side of the fire together with a fire blanket and first aid kit.

Emergency procedures

The leader will ensure that any other adults are familiar with current risk assessments and emergency procedures at the start of Forest School. Children will stay within the agreed Forest School boundaries which will ensure they are within earshot of each other.

In the case of a major injury:

The Forest School leader will call "123, back to base," to call all children back to a central place. An adult will stay with the casualty whilst the children make their way back to the fire circle. The Forest School Leader will take responsibility for the casualty whilst in the Forest area.

The Forest School leader will carry out necessary First Aid, whilst delegating someone to go for further assistance if necessary. In event of emergency, help can be sought from the Year 3 classroom in the main building. Alternatively, a phone call can be made to the main office or the emergency services if deemed appropriate.

In the case of a minor injury:

All minor injuries will be reported to the Forest School leader. First Aid will only be applied by a member of staff with a current First Aid certificate.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

The Forest School leader will always carry the school mobile phone.