



Stanley Crook Primary School

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OUR MISSION: TO TRY OUR BEST, TO TELL THE TRUTH, TO LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER AND THE COMMUNITY

"Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare is OUTSTANDING" (Ofsted, 2019)

Forest Schools Policy

Completed by: Mrs D Martin

Approved by: Mrs C Lawes

Date Implemented: September 2023

Review Date: September 2024

Stanley Crook Primary School is committed to improving outcomes for all pupils



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What is Forest School?

The Forest School movement originated in Denmark. It has been an integral part of Early Years education since the 1980's, when it was introduced as part of an expansion of nursery provision. It is based on the idea that young children can develop enthusiasm for education through the appreciation of nature. In Denmark, Forest schools have been found to boost pupils' confidence and improved their behaviour and social skills. Forest school is holistic learning through play and exploration - children learn about the environment, how to handle risks and use their initiative to solve problems and to co-operate with others.

Where?

Our Forest school site is set securely within the school grounds in the area directly outside Team Morpurgo classroom. The site is accessible via the Early Years outdoor area or externally via a secure gate along the path to the front of school. The gate is to be locked at all times and the key located in the school office.

The space contains a range of different learning areas as well as exercise equipment, benches to relax and socialise and space to work. The area also has a fully resourced and functional Forest School Classroom.

Who?

Designated person responsibility: Mrs Danni Martin. Mrs Martin is a member of the SLT/ teaching staff at Stanley Crook Primary School and is the Team Dahl Teacher as well as Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

Mrs Shields and Mrs Kyle will act as **Forest School Coordinators** for EYFS/ KS1 (Mrs Shields) and KS2 (Mrs Kyle) and will assume leadership of planning, provision and monitoring of Forest Schools and the area/ resources within it.

Mission statement:

Through weekly visits to our Forest schools site every child will access learning and development within the natural world around them. Every child will succeed through inspirational, stimulating, hands on experiences, developing their self-esteem, confidence and responsibility.

Forest School Code of Conduct

Children will always be made aware of how far they can explore before a session begins. If we are unable to see all the children, shout '1, 2, 3, eyes on me' The child should reply '1, 2 eyes on you.' This will have been introduced through ongoing and normal classroom practice and will be practised many times.

Picking up and playing with sticks.

Children will be allowed to carry sticks shorter than their arm's length but made sure they think about how close they are to other children. Longer sticks can

be dragged or carried with a child at both ends. Sticks must not be thrown, nor should children be allowed to pull them from living trees.

Tree climbing

Children are not to climb trees within the Forest School Area.

Rope and string use

Children will be encouraged to connect and transport materials but prevented from tying up other children or themselves! If a child has a good idea and wants, for example, to try and build a rope swing, staff can help and support them and use the opportunity to model appropriate knot tying.

All string and rope must be collected up at the end of the session.

Carrying and transporting materials

The children should be encouraged to roll, lift, drag and pull materials either by hand or using ropes. The safe way to lift, by bending your knees and keeping your back straight should be modelled by all adults. Heavier objects will be rolled, dragged or carried by more people.

Digging

There will be a designated area for digging. Children will be shown how to look after the tools. Children will be shown how to look carefully for insects and their habitats and look after them when they have found them.

Toileting

Children will always use the toilet before leaving school and going to the Forest Schools Area. However, in the case of an emergency, staff are to accompany children back into school for use of the toilet and then supervise their return to the Forest Schools Area.

Eating and Drinking

Children will be taught not to eat anything found in the woods through 'stop, no pick, no lick'. We will discuss this together so that children are secure in their knowledge. If we take drinks or snacks outside, we will ensure children use anti-bacterial wipes to clean their hands before eating their snack or drinking.

Fire circle

At our forest schools site we have a fire circle with a fire pit in the middle. Children will be seated on other logs approx. 1.5 metres from the fire. There must be no running within the fire area and anything being carried must be placed on the ground behind the seating. We then step over the logs to sit down. The fire is never left unattended at any time and an adult is always there until it is extinguished. Only 4 people are allowed in the fire circle at any one time and they have to be invited in by an adult. You must walk around the fire circle in an anti-clockwise direction and there is a designated entrance and exit to the circle. When tending to the fire you must always adopt the 'respect position' with one knee on the ground and then other for firmly on the ground. Children will be taught that before eating anything cooked on the fire they must wait at least 20 seconds before eating and must stay seated until finished.

Collecting Wood

Wood can only be collected from the ground layer of our Forest Schools Area.

Leaving the site

The site must always be left as it is found and must be ready for use at the next Forest School session.

If artefacts are made using 'found materials' these may be taken off the site and back to school. Shelters should normally be demolished and imported materials taken back into school at the end of each session.

The logs which form the Fire Circle must be placed back in formation, the fire pit must be placed in the centre of the Fire Circle after any use of the area so that the space is ready for use by the next group.

Any resources which have been used from the Forest School Classroom must be returned and the classroom must be left clean and tidy ready for next use.

Forest School Rules

- Look after your Forest School
- Always leave Forest School tidy and ready for 'next use'
- Respect the resources and equipment of Forest School
- Do not pick anything growing
- Do not put your fingers or anything else in your mouth
- Stay within the boundaries of Forest School
- Stay outside of the fire circle.
- Look above, below and around for hazards.

Walking to and from the Forest School Area

Forest schools takes place every day of the week with each Team having at least two timetabled sessions. Children are to wear appropriate clothing and footwear to school on days when they are participating in Forest School.

Children have forest school partners which remain the same each week for walking to and from Forest School. A minimum of 2 adults will accompany the children to and from the area and remain on site throughout the entire session.

In case of an emergency, the adults must contact the school immediately or contact the appropriate emergency services, giving them details of location and grid reference.

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The school travel Policy should be adhered to at all times as if the children were to be leaving the school.

Forest School Routines

Procedures to be carried out before each session

- A thorough sweep of the site will be done half termly and then before each session to check for litter, glass, animal faeces, etc. Any such items should be collected using disposable gloves and a plastic bag.
- At the same time, boundary ropes, fences, gates and hedges should be checked to ensure that they are secure and safe.
- Trees should be checked for any broken or dead branches which may fall.
- Checks should be made that no dead twigs, etc. protruding at eye-level from bushes etc.
- Check weather conditions. If it is unduly windy or a thunder storm is imminent or has commenced, then it is not advisable to carry out a Forest school session.

Procedures to be carried out at the end of each session.

- Clear away everything.
- Ensure if used that the fire is completely extinguished.
- Count all the tools back into the storage bags and boxes.
- Ensure the fire circle/ logs in back in formation.
- Check the Forest School Classroom to ensure resources have been returned and the area is clean and tidy.
- Count children and adults and ensure that all are accounted for.
- Collect any assessment sheets or observations from adults. Discuss next steps/ideas with adults back at school site present.

Insurance

The children Act 2004 and the Health and Safety Work Act 1974 place a number of legal responsibilities on the school. Stanley Crook Primary School has insurance cover appropriate to its duties under this legislation, including Employer's and Public Liability Insurance. Responsibility will in most cases rest with the school but staff will take reasonable care, both for themselves and other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.

Health and Safety

Stanley Crook Primary School sets out a clear statement of intent regarding the schools' approach to the health and safety of the children, staff and visitors to the school. The following list is additional measures relating directly to Forest School sessions.

1. However, many adults/ staff accompany Forest School sessions, **the person in charge is always the class teacher.**
2. The Forest School Leader has overall duty of care for the children in his/her charge, but all adults are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure children are safe.
3. All adult helpers must read this handbook and appropriate risk assessments and understand and agree to comply with the general operating procedures for Forest School.

4. The Forest School Leader or assistant will carry a first aid kit.
5. The Forest School leader will always carry a mobile in the case of an emergency.
6. In the event of an emergency, the Forest School leader will ensure that the school contacts the emergency services.
7. The Forest School leader will review the risk assessments before every trip to the Forest site.
8. When tools are used, the Adult/child ratio will be always be 1:1

Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Forest School

Stanley Crook Primary School is committed to the idea that there should be equal opportunity for all. Our policies help to ensure that we promote the individuality of our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

We undertake that all children:

- Feel secure and know that their contributions are valued
- Appreciate and value the differences they see in others.
- Are able to participate safely in clothing that is appropriate to their religious beliefs.
- Are taught in groupings that allow them to experience success
- Use materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds
- Have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles
- Are set challenging targets that allow them to succeed
- Participate fully, regardless of disabilities or medical needs.

Safeguarding Children, Confidentiality and Forest School

Stanley Crook Primary School recognises its responsibilities for Child Protection and for confidentiality. The school recognises that effective Child Protection work requires sound procedures, good inter-agency cooperation and a workforce that is competent and confident in responding to child protection situations. A full copy of our Safeguarding Policy is held in the school.

Emergency Incident Procedures during Forest School

- Children with minor injuries will go back into school with a member of staff to receive first aid.
- Major injuries will be dealt with by Forest School Leader. Nominated assistant will phone through to school so that the emergency services can be advised. Assistant(s) will support other children bringing them back to school.
- Evacuation of site children will be called back to school (1, 2, and 3) counted and then lined up and walked back into school.
- Record full details through school incident procedure back at school.
- **Missing child.** Children will be taught '123 eyes on me'?

1. **Search vicinity**
2. **Assemble rest of children**
3. **Call into school to alert and school calls police(parent/guardian)**
4. **Follow school critical incident procedure.**

Risk assessment guidelines and forms:

A site risk assessment will be carried out half termly and a check made before every Forest school session will take place. In addition, an activity risk assessment will be in place for any activity that may require it.

The risk assessment process is as follows.

- We look for hazards
- We decide who might be harmed and how this might happen
- We evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done.
- We record our findings
- We review our assessments and revise them if necessary
- We inform all adults accompanying the group.
- We have a copy with us on an observation board.

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Risk Management of Tools and Equipment



General rules for tool use:

- All tools must have additional risk assessment in the Forest Schools Folder.
- All tools to be stored in school/ Forest School Classroom, with Forest School leader having overall responsibility and access.
- Forest School Leader has responsibility and safe storage of tools at Forest School site.
- A designated area will be used for activities involving tools.
- Adults and children to sit when using tools.
- Never walk around with tools.
- Children will be taught to ensure they have 'a blood bubble' around them, when using tools.
- Tools are to be clean and sharp before use. Children can only use tools with Forest School Leader.

Forest School Emergency Kit

In addition to tools/resources suited to the planned activity. The Forest School leader will always take an emergency bag.

- First Aid kit
- Emergency procedures
- Risk assessments
- Mobile phone
- Clean water
- Accident sheets
- Individual medication
- Blanket
- Wet wipes
- Tick remover
- Spare clothing
- Torch

	Name	Signature	Date
Head teacher/ SENCo.	Mr. David Christie/ Mrs D Martin		September 2023
Chair of Governors	Mrs Catherine Lawes		September 2023



SCHOOL
MEMBER

