

## **Oak Field School Policy for Forest School**

### **Philosophy**

At Oak Field, we believe that everybody should have regular opportunities to access their natural environment. Forest School provides pupils with opportunities to develop confidence, independence, self-esteem, resilience and awareness and knowledge of their environment. Forest School is a holistic approach to learning, incorporating student's individuality and developing their skills through exploration of the outdoors and practical activities. Pupils will be in a safe environment which encourages creativity and individuality as they begin to explore, learn about, understand and respect the natural world around them.

### **Intent**

Forest School at Oak Field aims to:

- Develop personal, imaginative, creative and social skills.
- Develop problem solving skills through practical, hands on activities.
- Enable pupils to discover and explore the natural world around them in a safe environment.
- Promote independence; it is important students take part in activities which are motivating for them.

### **Implementation-strategies for putting policies into practice**

- Forest School sessions will be delivered by a class teacher who is a qualified Level 3 Forest School leader.
- Both Forest School leaders hold First aid certificates.
- Every half- term, two classes from across school will be given the opportunity to take part in Forest School.

- Every Forest School session will be risk assessed by the Forest School leaders and specific measures put in place, if appropriate.
- Activities could include: Using tools, building, lighting and cooking on a fire, sensory trails, bug hunts, sensory play, tying knots, den building, team building games, orienteering, foraging and natural arts and crafts.

### **Implementation- Roles and responsibilities**

Teaching and support staff will:

- Be responsible for supporting the Forest School lead during sessions. This will be by facilitating students learning, taking photographs, doing observations of students and writing up observations.
- Model good practice throughout the session, extending pupils learning, where appropriate.
- Be aware of dangers within Forest School and monitor levels of safety.

The Forest School leads will be responsible for:

- Planning and setting up Forest School activities that are suitable for the cohort being taught; including differentiating for pupils needs, abilities and interests.
- Completing individual risk assessments for each class attending Forest School and be regularly reviewing the site risk assessment.
- Completing site checks before each Forest School session.
- Administering first aid, if appropriate, and checking the first aid kit weekly.
- Organising emergency procedures.
- Supervising tool and fire use.
- Uploading observations and photographs on to Earwig, under an assessment framework appropriate for the learners.
- Updating the Forest School rolling programme to ensure pupils across school are accessing a wide range of activities.

- Ensuring the site is left as it was found after every session.

### **Emergency procedure**

In the event of an emergency, students will be advised to stop, put tools down (if required) and support staff to stay with students. The Forest School leader will assess the situation and remove hazards. Following this, the leader will deal with the incident or follow First Aid procedure.

### **First Aid procedure**

A number of staff within the school (including the Forest School leaders) are qualified First Aiders and will administer the care needed.

A first aid kit will be taken to all sessions and will be checked regularly. If a student is given first aid, a form will be filled out. A copy of the form will be kept on file in school and the original sent home to parents. Parents will also receive a telephone call when their child has received First Aid during a Forest School session, by the Forest School lead who was supporting them.

### **Behaviour**

The Forest School leads will follow the Schools behaviour policy, however, if the behaviour of an individual or group puts their own or others safety at risk, then the individuals will be asked to return to the school building.

### **Health and safety**

All activities will be risk assessed; each member of staff supporting Forest School sessions is required to sign the risk assessment after reading. It is the responsibility of the Forest School leader to ensure that activities are safe enough to go ahead. A

general site risk assessment will highlight additional risks (eg: extreme weather) and special measures put in place. If any activity is deemed too high risk, it will not go ahead, under any circumstances.

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