



NEWBOROUGH SCHOOL

Forest School Policy

Reviewed June 2019
Next review date: June 2020

POLICY FOR FOREST SCHOOL

Introduction:

Forest School (within Newborough CE Primary School) is an exciting branch of outdoor learning that gives children an opportunity to develop self-esteem and self-confidence whilst learning within a natural environment. This supports our school aims:

- **To provide a high quality teaching and learning environment in a caring, safe and secure atmosphere. The school promotes equality of opportunity and aims to develop the pupils' awareness of moral, cultural, social and spiritual issues according to our Christian ethos.**
- **To develop and strengthen the abilities of all individuals to enable them to realise their full potential, develop a high self-esteem, and promote acceptable standards of behaviour making them responsible and valuable members of society.**

This is achieved by running forest school sessions which involve 'small achievable tasks'. This will create an environment of success where children can thrive; using their personal learning styles to complete outdoor tasks and activities.

Newborough Forest School area:

Newborough Forest School is run completely within the school grounds; utilising the 'wooded area' to the rear of the school field. The area also includes the shrubs and trees that run from the rear of the school field, down the side of the field and reach the reception outdoor area. Forest school may also use the 'allotment' beds and willow tunnels on the other side of the field. There may also be supervised access to the wildlife and pond area (fenced off) at the front of the school.

Legislation and Forest School

Legislation of importance to Forest School includes the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This act makes it a statutory that an employer has a duty to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare at work of their employees (in the case of schools adults and children) and any equipment used by them, and that employees are responsible for the Health and Safety of themselves and others they may be affected by their acts. The risk assessments carried out Newborough Forest School are written with the Health and Safety of all participants in mind; children, volunteers and members of staff.

The Children's Act 1989, makes it important to consider adult ratios for all activities, equal opportunities and access, clear communication with parents and DSB checks for staff and regular volunteers. Routines and procedures are developed with reference to this act and safeguarding practices.

Staff attending forest school sessions will be familiar with the following school policies:

- Asthma Policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality & Inclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Copies are available on the school website.

Health and Safety and Safeguarding

The Forest School Leader has an up to date 2 day Paediatric First Aid qualification. The classroom first aid kit and inhaler/medication box (of the class attending the session) will be taken out to the Forest School area. Usual school first aid and safeguarding procedures will be adhered to (see appropriate policies).

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are made and updated on a regular basis and will include the following.

- Forest School Site Assessment
- Tool use
- Fire building and lighting activities

Forest School sessions and leadership

The Forest School at Newborough CE Primary school is run by a trained Level 3 (advanced) Forest School practitioner with a 2 day Paediatric first aid qualification. They are responsible for organising and planning the forest school sessions and carrying out any related risk assessments.

The forest school leader will:

- Plan sessions appropriate for the age of the children taking part.
- Ensure safety of the adults and children within the sessions.
- Carry out relevant risk assessments and weekly checks on the site and of equipment and tools.
- Keep the Forest School handbook up to date.
- Will ensure appropriate first aid kit and children's medication (such as asthma inhalers) is present during the session.

Sessions will be led by Abbie Houghton (Forest School teacher), accompanied by the class teacher and any TAs that would usually be working within the class at the time of the forest school session.

Routines and procedures:

Information will be sent out to parents regarding dates and clothing for forest school.

Children will arrive at the session suitably dressed for the weather conditions:

- In cold/wet weather – warm (waterproof coat), tracksuit trousers, leggings of waterproof over trousers, a hat, gloves and wellies or walking boots.
- In warm weather – Sun hat, sun-cream applied at home (or by the children themselves), tracksuit trousers, leggings of waterproof over trousers and wellies or walking boots.
- Long trousers and long sleeves should always be worn to prevent injury.

In very severe weather, Forest School may have to be cancelled, postponed or a shorter session may have to take place on that day or an alternative classroom based activity will take place.

During the session, children will predominantly work with their class group. The activities that take place are all inclusive and will cater for all ability levels and disabilities and they are introduced gradually, in small achievable steps. They will be taught to use a variety of tools safely and some groups will learn the skill of fire lighting (in a high adult to child ratio). The children will have to stick to strict rules associated with using tools and lighting fires (as outlined within the risk assessments.)

Children will use the toilet prior to the Forest School session and will be supervised (where necessary) for any additional toilet trips.

Children will be encouraged to wash their hands after their Forest School session.