

# PRESTON GRANGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Forest school



# Forest School Handbook

This handbook supports Preston Grange Primary Schools forest school policies and procedures.

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## **Our forest school ethos**

Forest School is an exciting educational ethos that focuses on developing children's personal, social and emotional development through attending regular outdoor woodland experiences. At Preston Grange Primary School, we believe the ethos of Forest Schools is to allow children the outdoor space and time to develop skills, interests and understanding through engaging in a wide variety of activities providing practical, hands on experiences. The forest school ethos is embedded in our schoolforest school policy.



## **Our site**

Our forest school site is located directly behind the school building, in school land, making it a safe contained area. Our site has a large willow circle area, where the campfire is located in the middle. Around the circle there are seating logs, so the children are able to sit around the campfire on our fire sessions. To the right of the willow circle we have a small grassed area, in this area there are 6 small work benches, these benches can also be used as a seating area if required. We call this area the "Tool talk area" this is where the forest school leader delivered the tool talks and then the children could work on the benches for support when using the tools. There is a garden shed in this area. This is where all the tools are kept.



## **Forest School Rules**

- Look after our Forest School

- Have respect and do not pick anything growing
- Do not put your fingers or anything else in your mouth
- Stay outside of the fire circle, unless directed by an adult
- Look above, below and around for hazards
- Drag branches/logs on the floor behind you.
- The MOST IMPORTANT rule of all is HAVE LOTS OF FUN!!!

Our forest school rules support our forest school behaviour policy.



## **Staff and Training**

Miss Beavers is our qualified level 3 Forest school practitioner, holding an up to date Forest school first aid certificate. Miss Beavers has attended all the relevant training and has successfully completed her forest school practical tests.



## **Emergency action plan.**

The forest school leader should calmly assess the situation, Identify the number of children injured, ill, needing help ect.



The forest school leader will send the other member of staff to a safe area away from the casualty.



If the casualty is unconscious or un mobile, the forest school leader will radio through to the school office and ask for some help. A parent/ carer will also be contacted.



The school office will immediately call for an ambulance and send down another first aider for support



The forest school leader will carry out the appropriate actions needed as well as keeping the casualty comfortable and warm.



Once the emergency services arrive the forest school leader will pass on any important information the ambulance staff may need to know.



The forest school leader will accompany the child in the ambulance, depending on whether the parent/ carer has arrived at this point.



The forest school leader and any other members of staff will not put any information on social media.

**Minor injuries will be treated on site by the first aid trained forest school leader.**



## **Fire Policy and Procedure**

At Preston Grange Primary School campfires are an important part of Forest School and are used in many sessions. Preston Grange Primary School aims to ensure that all children and adults participating in Forest School sessions with fires will do so safely and with as little risk to their health as possible.

Sitting around the campfire as a group: learning, listening, singing, making and sharing food cooked on the fire is a wonderfully communal and magical experience for children. It also enables their senses to be stimulated by letting them feel its warmth. They will watch the flames dance and experience its rich smell. We aim for it to capture their imaginations and enthusiasm!

We aim to provide high quality campfire sessions involving fire, delivered by our fully qualified forest school leader.

The following procedures are put in place to ensure the children achieve the most out of their campfire sessions.

### **Procedures-**

#### **Location:**

- \* There is a selected area where fires will take place. Fires are strictly limited to the forest school area.
- \* Our campfire area is enclosed ensuring children know where fires will be taking place.
- \* Fire areas are surrounded by seating logs at least 1 metre from the fire pit.
- \* When the campfire is in use, children are not permitted to access the area without permission.

- \* When allowed to access the campfire, children must walk around the outside of the seating logs and wait for permission to step over. Once permission has been given, they must sit, making sure their legs are touching the log and not outstretched.
- \* Once seated around the campfire, the children must remain seated unless directed to move by an adult.



## **Use of tools policy and procedures**

At Preston Grange Primary School, using tools is an important part of Forest School sessions, as it enables children to develop new, practical skills that help them develop self-confidence. We aim to keep tools maintained to an immaculate safe standard.

Children will be taught how to handle tools properly and to treat them with respect. We aim to provide high quality tool sessions, delivered by our fully qualified forest school leader. The Forest school leader will not allow the children to use tools until they are ready in every way, emotionally and physically.

The following procedures are put in place to ensure the children achieve the most out of their tool sessions.

### **Procedures-**

- \* Staff to child ratio will be 1:2
- \* Tools will be kept in a locked secure shed in the forest school tool talk area and only removed by the forest school leader.
- \* Running and pointing with tools is not allowed.
- \* Children will be taught how to use each tool and reminded how to use the tool, with a tool talk at the start of every tool session.

- \* All tools will be counted and returned into their designated bag after use and returned to the tool shed.
- \* Volunteer helpers must receive basic training from the forest school leader, on the use of individual tools before being allowed to help the children with them.
- \* Any child who misbehaves during a tool session will be instantly removed from the session for their own and other children's safety.



## Health and Hygiene policy and procedures

As a school it is important to us to ensure all children attending forest school sessions, do so safely and with as little risk to their health as possible.

The forest school leader aims to educate all children of what is expected of them, to be as healthy and hygienic as possible at all times at the forest school site.

The following procedures are put in place to ensure the children adhere to the school's standard of health and hygiene.

### **Procedures:**

#### General health and hygiene:

- \* Take away everything you bring with you.
- \* Hands should be washed or sterilised using sanitising gel before cooking or eating and after going to the toilet.
- \* When returning to the classroom hands should be washed thoroughly with soap and warm water.
- \* There will be a designated area for hand and dishwashing while at the forest site



- \* Food should be stored in sealed containers and any dropped food to be picked up immediately and placed in black bags provided.

### Toileting:

Toileting is also something which needs to be considered while working on the forest site, especially when working with children.

- \* Children will be encouraged to use the toilet before leaving school.
- \* An adult, with the relevant DBS checks, will accompany the children to the area
- \* If a child has a wetting or soiling accident, they will be changed in accordance with the Schools Personal Care Policy



## **Our activities**

### Fire

The children will be taking part in many fire sessions. They will get the opportunity to cook and taste several different dishes on the camp fire. They may also get an opportunity to start up their own fire whilst working 1:1 with the forest school leader.

### Tools

The children will be taking part in many tool sessions they will use the following tools:

- Sheath knife
- Bow saw
- Bill hook
- Loppers

The children will be accompanied by the forest school leader at all times.

### Games

The children will participate in many different games during their forest school sessions. These games will be aimed to improve and encourage team building and social skills between the children.

The children will also be taking part in many other activities such as outdoor art activities and activities where we learn about our local wildlife. The children's sessions will be mainly based on the time of the year for example in the winter months we will do winter-based activities.



## **Clothing**

Clothing information will be given to children and their parent/carers prior to their forest school session. The basic clothing would be as followed:

Winter- waterproofs/coat/fleece/jumpers/hats/scarf/gloves/trousers/wellies or any other sturdy footwear.

Summer- waterproofs/ long sleeved thin top/ trousers/sunhats/sun cream/wellies or any other sturdy footwear.