



All Saints CE (VC) First School

Forest School Policy

Date: January 2020

Updated: February 2026

To Be Reviewed: February 2027

1. Introduction

Forest School at All Saints CE (VC) First School, Busy Bees and Kingfisher Club provides regular opportunities for children to learn outdoors through child-centred experiences. The programme operates in line with the six recognised Forest School principles and reflects the school's vision of being a safe, caring and thinking environment for all.

This policy brings together the key procedures and expectations that ensure Forest School operates safely, responsibly and sustainably. It covers:

- Roles and responsibilities
- Ratios
- Risk management
- First aid provision
- Food safety
- Conservation and environmental care

Forest School encourages environmental awareness, supported risk-taking, personal development and respect for the natural world.

Conservation Policy

2. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Forest School sessions are safe, well-managed and purposeful learning environments
- Staff understand their responsibilities
- Children can take supported risks in a controlled and managed way
- Food, equipment and activities are handled safely
- The Forest School site is protected and enhanced

The policy applies to all staff and adults involved in Forest School delivery.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Forest School Leader

The Designated Forest School Leader (Joanne Jones) is responsible for:

- Promoting the six principles of Forest School
- Holding:

- Level 3 Forest School qualification
- First Aid qualification with outdoor component
- Level 2 Food Safety qualification
- A valid DBS check
- Planning and delivering sessions appropriate to age and ability
- Carrying out risk assessments and risk-benefit analysis
- Maintaining appropriate adult:child ratios
- Ensuring equipment is safe and maintained
- Providing shelter, handwashing facilities, food/drink and toilet arrangements
- Completing ecological impact assessments and supporting site sustainability
- Observing and supporting learner development
- Maintaining communication with staff, parents and grounds teams
- Attending CPD and reflecting on practice

3.2 Forest School Assistants

Assistants are responsible for:

- Supporting the six principles of Forest School
- Following the Leader's instructions, particularly regarding tools and fire
- Modelling positive behaviour and language
- Reading plans, risk assessments and procedures before sessions
- Escorting learners to/from site
- Supporting activities as directed
- Reporting concerns (first aid, equipment, behaviour)
- Dressing appropriately for weather conditions
- Respecting photo consent requirements
- Leaving personal mobile phones in school (only official Forest School phone permitted)

Clear roles ensure effective and safe delivery of sessions.

4. Ratios

To ensure safe and supportive learning:

- Maximum pupils per session: **16**
- Minimum adults: **2**, including the qualified Forest School Leader
- Tool use:
 - Initially 1:1 supervision
 - Increased independence at the Leader's discretion based on competence
- Fire lighting: 1:1 supervision
- Campfire cooking/toasting sticks: 1:1 supervision (adjusted by Leader judgement)

High adult ratios support safe risk-taking and skill development.

5. Risk Management and Assessment

The school recognises the value of managed risk in outdoor learning and follows HSE guidance on sensible risk management.

Requirements:

- Emergency contact details available at every session
- Risk assessments completed for activities and equipment
- Daily site checks completed and signed before sessions
- Tools checked in and out when used
- Knives stored in a lockable container when not in use
- Staff adhere to Forest School handbook procedures
- Assistants read and sign the Forest School Code of Conduct
- A method of contacting emergency services must be available (e.g. mobile phone)
- Fire Service informed prior to any controlled burn

Risk is reduced to acceptable levels, not removed completely, to allow meaningful learning.

6. First Aid Provision

First aid follows Staffordshire County Council Health & Safety guidance.

Personnel

Named First Aiders include:

- Joanne Jones (Lead Forest School First Aider – Outdoor qualified)
- Tracey O’Flaherty
- Sarah Hill
- Sarah Boden
- Kirsty Devenport
- Clare Griffin
- David Elliott-Hancock

Emergency First Aider:

- David Elliott-Hancock

Responsibilities

First Aiders:

- Take charge in emergencies
- Call an ambulance if required
- Maintain first aid equipment

Emergency First Aiders:

- Provide immediate treatment
- Call for help
- Maintain records

Any staff member may act as an Appointed Person if needed.

Provision at Forest School

- First aid kit and burns kit present at every session
- Burns gel administered by the Lead FA
- First aid records completed after treatment
- Students accompanied to hospital by parents where possible

Training is refreshed regularly, and provision reviewed annually.

7. Food Safety

Food and drink may be part of Forest School sessions and will follow Food Safety Regulations 1995 and Healthy School guidance.

Leader Responsibilities

- Ensure safe food preparation
- Hold Level 2 Food Safety qualification

Storage

- Food stored in sealed containers
- Knives stored in lidded containers

Hygiene

- Handwashing station provided at each session
- Separate water for washing and drinking
- Utensils cleaned after use
- Cuts covered before food preparation
- Foraged food washed before eating
- Chilled items kept in cool storage
- Fresh drinking water stored in sealed containers

Dietary Requirements

- Written consent obtained for food consumption
- Leader aware of allergies and dietary needs

Waste

- All food waste and packaging removed from site

Safety

- Children reminded not to eat anything unless directed by an adult

Burns or scalds must be reported immediately.

8. Conservation and Environmental Care

Forest School promotes respect for nature and sustainable practices.

Conservation Standards

- Fires lit only in fire pits
- Kelly kettles placed on tree stumps to protect ground
- Cooking equipment placed on trivets
- Foraging only when species are abundant; roots/stems left to regrow
- Firewood brought from off site unless plentiful supply available
- Dead wood left for wildlife habitats
- Areas of long grass maintained for biodiversity
- Tree planting encouraged
- Coppicing carried out when necessary
- Activities support conservation (bird feeders, bug hotels, log piles)
- Daily site checks monitor erosion; restorative work completed if needed
- All equipment removed after sessions to return site to natural state

Children learn to value and care for the environment through participation.

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains current, safe and effective, and reflects best practice in outdoor learning.