

Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School



Forest School Handbook

Compiled by V Foreman and M Hudson

Written: January 2025

Reviewed and ratified by governors: February 2025

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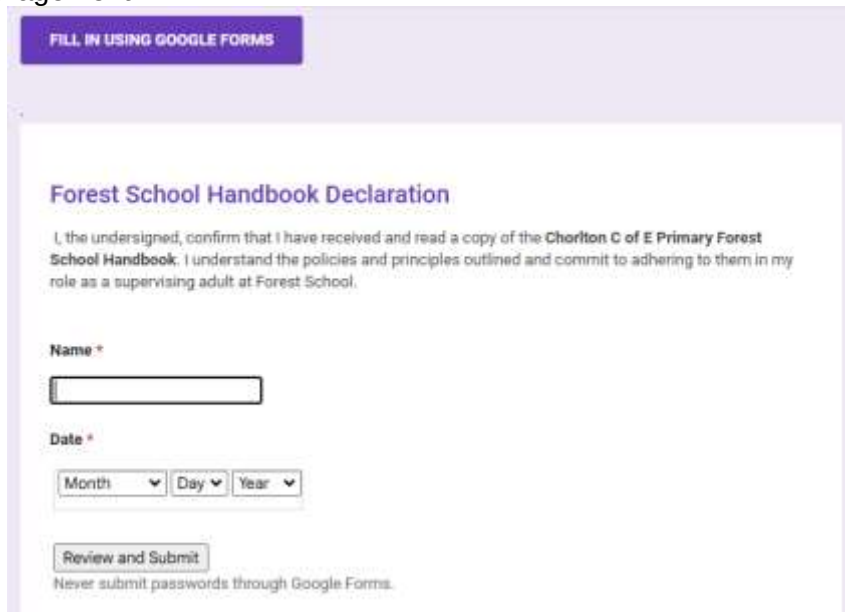
Introduction and Declaration

This handbook provides essential information regarding the practices, policies, and principles of the Chorlton C of E Primary School Forest School. All supervising adults, including teachers, teaching assistants, and volunteers, are required to familiarise themselves with this document and its contents before supporting in any Forest School sessions.

Having read the document, supporting adults will acknowledge this through signing an electronic version of the below Google document. By signing this document, the undersigned acknowledges that they have read and understood the contents of this handbook. The undersigned further agrees to adhere to all the guidelines, safety procedures, and policies laid out in the handbook.

All adults with a role in Forest School are expected to maintain a supportive, safe, and nurturing environment for all children attending the program. Supervising adults must be actively engaged in ensuring the ethos of Forest School is upheld throughout sessions and fulfil their role as Forest School leaders:

-  **Supervision and Safety:** Adults are responsible for the health, safety, and well-being of all children in their care. They must be vigilant and ensure that the Forest School environment remains safe and appropriate for learning.
-  **Active Engagement:** Supervising adults should actively participate in the activities, guiding children where necessary and modelling positive behaviours and attitudes toward nature and learning.
-  **Supporting Risk-Taking:** Adults are responsible for ensuring that risks are managed safely while encouraging children to push their boundaries and explore new challenges.
-  **Monitoring Progress:** Adults should observe and assess the children's progress in both social and developmental aspects, providing appropriate support and encouragement.



The screenshot shows a Google Form titled "Forest School Handbook Declaration". At the top, there is a purple button that says "FILL IN USING GOOGLE FORMS". Below the title, there is a paragraph of text: "I, the undersigned, confirm that I have received and read a copy of the **Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School Handbook**. I understand the policies and principles outlined and commit to adhering to them in my role as a supervising adult at Forest School." Below this text, there are two required fields: "Name *" with a text input box, and "Date *" with three dropdown menus for "Month", "Day", and "Year". At the bottom, there is a "Review and Submit" button and a small note: "Never submit passwords through Google Forms."

Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School



Vision Statement

At Chorlton C of E Primary School, we are committed to giving our pupils an excellent education with a rich and inspiring curriculum, whilst simultaneously providing nurture and care for their spiritual/emotional, moral, social and cultural wellbeing through a children's rights respecting approach. When they leave Chorlton C of E primary, they will be prepared for life with resilience, compassion, and having developed courageous advocacy so that they can be the very best that they can be (Article 29 of United Nations Charter for the Rights of the Child).

At Chorlton C of E Forest School, we believe in the power of the natural environment to inspire curiosity, foster resilience, and support the holistic development of children. We strive to create a learning space that encourages children to take risks, explore, and engage with nature in a meaningful way, whilst nurturing their right to play (Article 31) and confidence to use their voice (Article 12).

Our vision is to provide an inclusive, safe, and supportive outdoor environment where each child is encouraged to:

- Develop a strong connection to the natural world
- Build self-confidence and independence
- Foster creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills
- Understand the importance of community and collaboration
- Respect the environment and engage in sustainable practices

Through this ethos, Chorlton C of E Forest School aims to nurture well-rounded, resilient individuals who are confident in their ability to navigate both the natural world and the challenges they face in their everyday lives.

Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School



Policies and Procedures

Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School



Behaviour and Relationships Policy

Compiled by V Foreman and M Hudson

Written: January 2025

Reviewed and ratified by governors: February 2025

Review Date: February 2026

Introduction

Chorlton C of E Whole School Behaviour and Relationships Policy

At Chorlton C of E Primary, we take a proactive approach to support behaviour by building safe and trusting relationships between children and staff. Staff will take the time to get to know children, will take an interest in them and their lives and make an effort to understand what motivates and inspires them. Where they sense a change in a child's mood, behaviour or output, they will take the time to speak to the child. Our aim is that every child feels seen, heard and valued.

At Chorlton CofE Primary School we strive to create a culture around mental and emotional well-being that is open and empowering for all our children. The Zones of Regulation is an approach to teaching about and talking about behaviour with an emphasis on children learning to recognise their own and others feelings and the strategies and tools needed to self-regulate. It incorporates specific taught sessions with a visual support system and the use of a consistent language frame to support children with developing self-regulation and understanding of expected and unexpected behaviours. The curriculum supports children not only to attend to how they feel, but also to better understand their sensory needs and thinking patterns. This in turn, means our children will also become more attuned to how their actions affect others, resulting in healthy relationships for all.

Integral to the school's approach to behaviour is the idea that children should be given the tools and the opportunity to identify and regulate their own emotion and behaviour. We believe this is essential if we are to support our pupils to grow into independent, confident, rights respecting citizens. Children will be directly taught to identify different emotions and to understand that there is no such thing as a bad or good emotion, there are some emotions that are more expected in certain situations than in others. Zones of regulations helps children to identify the expected zone for different elements of the school day and explicitly teaches pupils to identify strategies that help them as individuals to be in the expected zone. At Chorlton C.E, we understand like adults, all children are different and therefore it is impossible to have a one size fits all approach to behaviour. In the first instance, the school will always support and encourage children to make their own choices about how to regulate their own emotions and behaviour.

Chorlton CE Primary Behaviour and Relationships Policy

Behaviour and Relationships Policy at Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School

At Chorlton C of E Forest School, we recognise the importance of creating a supportive, safe, and nurturing environment where all children can develop their emotional, social, and academic potential. Our Behaviour and Relationships policy, whilst also being complimentary to the school policy, is rooted in the Forest School ethos, promoting child-led learning, respect for nature, and fostering self-confidence and independence. The aim remains to support participants to take ownership of

their own feelings and emotions and to have the regulation tools available to keep themselves and others safe at Forest School. We also embrace the principles of trauma-informed practice, recognising that some children may have experienced trauma that impacts their behaviour and emotional responses and build on the Zones of Regulation emotions curriculum that is embedded across the school.

This policy sets out how we will approach behaviour and relationships at Forest School to create a positive, inclusive, and emotionally safe environment where all children can thrive.

Aims of the Policy:

1. **Promote Respect, Kindness and Safety:** Encourage positive relationships between children, adults, and the environment in order that all participants are able to safely experience Forest School without fear of being physically or mentally harmed
2. **Support Emotional Growth and Development:** Create an emotionally supportive environment that recognises the unique needs of each child.
3. **Foster Self-Regulation:** Help children develop the skills to manage their emotions and behaviour in a constructive and safe way.
4. **Build a Trauma-Informed Approach:** Understand and respond appropriately to children's emotional and behavioural needs, particularly those affected by trauma and ACEs.

Principles of Behaviour and Relationships in Forest School

The following principles guide our approach to behaviour and relationships within the Chorlton C of E Forest School setting:

1. **Child-Centred Approach:**
We recognise that each child is unique, with individual needs, abilities, and experiences. Behaviour is understood within the context of the child's emotional state, background, and development and as a form of communication of an unmet need. We aim to create an environment that supports children's social, emotional, and behavioural development in line with their individual needs.
2. **Respect for All:**
Equal, non-hierarchical respect for others and the environment is central to the Forest School ethos. As Forest School is not hierarchical, Forest School leaders and supporting adults are not in a position to judge, criticise, blame, complain, nag, threaten punish or bribe. Instead, they should model supporting, encouraging, listening, accepting, trusting, respecting and negotiating differences. At Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School, we encourage children to show respect for each other, adults, and the natural world and to expect this back in return. By modelling respectful behaviour and reinforcing positive relationships, children learn to value and care for others and the environment.
3. **Building Trusting Relationships:**
Positive relationships between children and adults are key to creating a safe and supportive environment. Staff will build trusting, empathetic relationships with children, offering emotional support and guidance while respecting each child's pace and boundaries. They will meet the child where they are at and be guided by them.

4. **Trauma-Informed Practice:**
We understand that some children may have experienced adverse childhood events or trauma that affect their behaviour and emotional responses. In these cases, we approach behaviour with empathy, recognising that disruptive behaviour may be a trauma response to a perceived threat or a way of communicating an unmet need. We focus on creating a safe space where children feel understood and supported, with staff trained in trauma-informed approaches.
5. **Emotional Regulation and Self-Control:**
Forest School offers an opportunity for children to explore their emotions in an environment that allows for safe self-expression and exploration through play. We encourage children to recognise their feelings, label them, and use strategies for self-regulation. Adults will support children in managing challenging emotions, such as frustration, anger, or sadness, by modelling coping strategies, providing guidance and supporting through co-regulation.
6. **Use of Language and removal of extrinsic motivators/deterrents:** Forest School seeks to allow learners to follow their intrinsic motivations to explore and play. In order for this to happen, adults should be mindful of the language that they use when interacting with participants. Non-judgemental statements are the standard so that learners do not feel compelled 'to please' the adult. Rewards and praise should be discouraged in the same way that chastising, criticising and the use of sanctions should be.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

- **Model Positive Behaviour:**
Staff will model positive interactions, respect for others, and care for the environment. This modelling encourages children to adopt similar behaviours.
- **Active Listening and Empathy:**
Adults will listen actively to children's concerns, validating their feelings and offering appropriate emotional support. Listening helps to foster positive relationships and aids in understanding the root cause of behavioural challenges.
- **Consistent Boundaries:**
Staff will establish clear and consistent boundaries, ensuring that children know what is expected of them. Boundaries will be communicated in a calm and constructive manner, with a focus on maintaining safety and respect for everyone in the group.
- **Ongoing Professional Development:**
Staff will receive regular training on trauma-informed practice, behaviour management techniques, and the principles of Forest School to ensure they are equipped to support children's emotional and behavioural needs effectively.

Responding to Challenging Behaviour

Calm and Compassionate Responses:

When a child exhibits challenging behaviour, we approach the situation calmly and empathetically. Staff will take time to understand the underlying reasons for the behaviour and offer support that meets the child's needs. Our goal is to ensure that all children feel safe, heard, and understood.

De-escalation Techniques:

In instances of heightened emotion or behaviour that may pose a risk to the child or others, staff will use de-escalation techniques, such as offering space, deep breathing exercises, or changing the activity. These strategies aim to help the child regain emotional control in a safe and supportive manner.

Non-Violent Communication: Marshall Rosenberg's Non-Violent Communication is an effective way of communicating to a child that their behaviour is affecting the sense of safety of others in the group in a non-judgmental or threatening manner.

- Make a non-judgemental observation of the behaviour/thing that is causing an issue ("When I see/hear.....")
- Name how it makes you feel ("I feel")
- Explain why it makes you feel like that, based on your needs (".....because I need/value.....")
- Request an alternative, without demanding or blaming ("Would you be willing to...")

Example

"When you wave the knife around, I feel scared as I have a need for my safety and your safety. Would you sheath the knife and put it on the log please?"

Marshall Rosenberg – Non-violent communication. www.nonviolentcommunication.com

Safe Spaces and Regulation Time:

If a child is feeling overwhelmed or needs a break, we support them to find a "safe space" where they can calm down and reflect. This is not used as a punishment, but as an opportunity for the child to self-regulate and regain emotional equilibrium. If appropriate, an adult will support through co-regulation

Trauma-Informed Responses:

When responding to trauma-related behaviour, we ensure that staff maintain sensitivity and understanding. We recognise that some behaviours may stem from past trauma and aim to provide a supportive, non-judgmental environment that promotes healing and resilience.

Team Teach: The safety of the group must be paramount. Should risk-benefit assessment of the situation indicate that a child is so dysregulated that they are a risk to themselves or others, then staff will need to intervene. All staff at Chorlton C of E have been Team Teach trained in de-escalation techniques and are qualified to physically hold a child for their own or others' safety. This should always be as a last resort, and a positive handling form must be completed afterwards.

Individualised Support Plans:

For children who consistently demonstrate challenging behaviour, we will work collaboratively with parents, carers, and relevant professionals to create individualised support plans. These plans will be designed to address the specific needs of the child, using strategies tailored to their emotional, social, and behavioural development.

Potential behaviour being communicated	Non-judgmental strategy to address it	Impact on learning and development
Two or more participants begin to argue	- Observe. Risk benefit assess. Can the learners resolve this themselves? - If necessary, assist the learners to use Rosenberg's communication * - Reflect on which unmet need the learner may have been communicating.	- The learners develop their self-reliance, communication and social skills. They learn so emotionally self-regulate. They begin to control their thoughts and behaviour. - Listening and turn taking skills are developed. Empathy and understanding are developed.
Two or more participants become physical with each other	- Observe. Risk benefit assess. Can the learners resolve this themselves? How serious is it? - If necessary, adult employs Rosenberg's communication * "Your actions are making me feel unsafe" - Should physicality escalate, there is a safeguarding duty to intervene using 'TEAM teach.' - Reflect on which unmet need the learner may have been communicating.	- The learners develop their self-reliance, communication and social skills. They learn so emotionally self-regulate. They begin to control their thoughts and behaviour. - Listening and turn taking skills are developed. Empathy and understanding are developed. - Learners see that adults care for their wellbeing and are intervening in a non-judgmental way strengthening a feeling of love and belonging.
A participant displays behaviour that is unsafe to themselves or others	- Adult employs Rosenberg's communication * e.g. When you climb that high on thin branches, I feel scared because I have a need for my safety and your safety. Would you come down a bit please? - Reflect on which unmet need the learner may have been communicating.	Learners see that adults care for their wellbeing and are intervening in a non-judgmental way strengthening a feeling of love and belonging.
A participant suddenly becomes distressed with no obvious cause	- Remain calm and think. It may not be necessary to act-adult approaching their personal space may potentially escalate. - Are we aware of SEN or ACES? - Does the learner have an unmet need that we can help with? E.G. safety – could mean providing a blanket. Physiological – could mean providing food or drink.	- The participant sees that their behaviour is not met with judgment or fear. 'By responding with empathy and support, rather than punishment, educators help the child feel heard and understood.' (Danny English.co.uk)
A participant displays challenging behaviour such as rudeness, or 'cockiness' which triggers an adult	- Is any action actually necessary? - Adults can use Rosenberg's communication to explain their feelings in a non-judgemental way	- Participant sees that the adult is secure in themselves and their actions don't result in the negative feedback/ attention they may be seeking. - Participant learns that feelings can be communicated without escalation
A participant displays avoidant, reluctant possibly fearful behaviour.	- Reflect on which need is not being met. - Provide opportunities to 'join in' without any pressure to do so - Consider using Rosenberg's communication 'I notice you didn't join in when the other children were playing.'	- Participant has the opportunity to develop social skills, confidence etc. should they feel safe to do so. - Participant learns that their wellbeing is being considered in a non-judgemental way. Over time this may cause trust/ feeling of safety.

Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School



Equality Policy

Policy compiled by V Foreman (Deputy Headteacher)

Policy Written: January 2025

Reviewed and ratified by governors: February 2025

Review Date: February 2026

Introduction

At Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School, we are committed to providing an inclusive, respectful, and supportive environment for all individuals, regardless of their age, gender, race, ability, religion, or any other characteristic. Our aim is to ensure that every participant, whether a child, staff member, or visitor, feels valued, supported, and able to achieve their full potential within the Forest School setting.

This Equality Policy outlines our approach to promoting equality and diversity, preventing discrimination, and ensuring that every individual is treated fairly and with respect.

Aims of the Policy

- To create an inclusive Forest School environment that values diversity and promotes equality for all.
- To ensure that no child or adult is discriminated against, harassed, or treated unfairly on the basis of age, gender, race, disability, religion, or any other characteristic.
- To provide an environment where all participants can enjoy and benefit from outdoor learning experiences.
- To promote mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation among all individuals involved in Forest School activities.
- To ensure that our staff and volunteers are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to promote equality and handle any incidents of discrimination appropriately.

Key Principles

1. Respect and Inclusion

- We celebrate the diversity of our participants and value the unique experiences and perspectives each individual brings.
- All children and adults are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their background or characteristics.
- We will ensure that everyone has equal access to Forest School activities and opportunities, regardless of ability, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, or any other factor.

2. Non-Discrimination

- We are committed to providing a learning environment free from any form of discrimination, including direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.
- All children will have equal opportunities to engage with the activities offered by Forest School, including those with additional needs or disabilities.
- Any discrimination, whether verbal, physical, or emotional, will not be tolerated and will be addressed promptly and effectively.

3. Equal Opportunities

- We will ensure that all children, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or ability, have access to the same learning experiences and opportunities.
- We will provide additional support as needed for children with specific requirements, ensuring that they can fully participate in Forest School activities. This may include adaptations to activities in order to ensure that all learners can participate fully.
- We aim to create an environment where children can grow in confidence, independence, and respect for one another.

4. Staff Training and Development

- All staff members have received training on equality, diversity, and inclusion to ensure they understand and uphold the values outlined in this policy.
- Staff will be trained to recognise and challenge any form of discrimination or prejudice that may arise in the setting, including the use of racist or homophobic language

5. Involvement of Families and Communities

- We will work in partnership with parents and caregivers to ensure that every child's needs are understood and met, and that Forest School is a welcoming environment for all families.
- We encourage open dialogue with families regarding any concerns related to equality, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued.

Implementation and Responsibilities

- **Forest School Leaders and Staff:**

All Forest School leaders and staff are responsible for ensuring that the Equality Policy is implemented consistently and fairly. They are expected to model respectful behaviour, address any issues of discrimination, and promote inclusive practices.

- **Parents and Guardians:**

We encourage parents and guardians to support our equality values by fostering a respectful attitude at home and by informing staff of any concerns or requirements their child may have.

- **Children:**

Children are encouraged to treat each other with respect and kindness and to understand the importance of equality and inclusion in both Forest School and everyday life.

Monitoring and Review

We will regularly monitor the implementation of this policy to ensure that it is effectively promoting equality and addressing any concerns. This will involve:

- Regular reviews of Forest School activities to ensure they are accessible to all children.
- Ongoing discussions with staff, children, and parents to assess the success of our inclusion efforts.
- Collecting feedback from all involved in the Forest School program to identify any areas for improvement.

This Equality Policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if necessary, and any updates will be shared with the school governing body, staff, parents, and guardians

Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School



Environment Policy

Policy compiled by V Foreman (Deputy Headteacher)

Policy Written: January 2025

Reviewed and ratified by governors: February 2025

Review Date: February 2026

Introduction

At Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School, we are dedicated to fostering a deep connection between our students and the natural world. Our goal is to create an environment where students not only engage in outdoor learning but also develop a sense of environmental responsibility.

This policy outlines our commitment to sustainability, environmental stewardship, and the promotion of eco-friendly practices in all aspects of our Forest School activities and facilitation.

Aims of the Policy

- To promote environmental awareness, sustainability, and eco-friendly practices among staff, students, and the wider community.
- To reduce our environmental footprint by minimizing waste, conserving resources, and protecting local ecosystems.
- To provide children with opportunities to explore, understand, and respect nature while fostering a sense of responsibility for the environment.
- To model and teach sustainable practices that students can apply in their everyday lives.

Key Principles

1. Sustainability in Practice

- We are committed to incorporating sustainable practices in every aspect of our Forest School activities, from the materials we use to the way we interact with the land.
- We prioritise the use of natural materials for educational purposes and creative projects, such as using fallen branches for building or leaf collections for art, rather than purchasing synthetic or non-renewable resources.
- We will regularly review our practices to ensure we are minimizing waste and making responsible choices.

2. Respect for Nature

- We aim to teach students to respect all living things, including plants, animals, and insects, and encourage responsible, gentle interaction with the natural environment.
- We follow a “leave no trace” approach, ensuring that our activities do not harm or disrupt local habitats and ecosystems.
- All activities will be designed to ensure that any natural resources used (such as wood, leaves, and stones) are sourced responsibly and sustainably, with a focus on using materials found within the school grounds.

3. Waste Minimization

- We will minimise waste by reducing, reusing, and recycling materials where possible. Students will be encouraged to participate in these practices, making them aware of their impact on the environment.
- Waste disposal will be managed responsibly, with clear guidelines on how to dispose of items correctly, including the use of compostable and recycling bins

4. Biodiversity and Ecosystem Protection

- We will ensure that our Forest School activities do not disturb or negatively affect local wildlife, plants, or ecosystems. Forest School leaders will regularly track and monitor the impact of activities on local flora and fauna in order to identify trends which negative affect the local ecosystem
- Any activities involving animals (e.g., observing wildlife) will be conducted in a way that does not interfere with their natural behaviour or habitats.
- We will also encourage students to engage in biodiversity conservation projects, such as creating habitats for insects, planting trees, and protecting local flora and fauna.

5. Eco-friendly Transportation

- We encourage staff, students, and families to reduce their carbon footprint by using sustainable transportation options, such as walking, cycling, or carpooling when traveling to and from school
- We will actively promote these options within the school community and provide information on local, eco-friendly transport options.

Implementation and Responsibilities

1. Staff Responsibility

- All staff members will be responsible for implementing this Environmental Policy and ensuring that sustainability is integrated into activities and lesson plans.
- Staff will model environmentally responsible behaviour, such as minimising waste, care for natural resources and promoting recycling.

2. Participant Engagement

- Learners will be actively involved in promoting environmental practices through hands-on learning, such as waste reduction, recycling projects, planting, and creating sustainable structures.
- Forest School leaders will encourage children to take responsibility for their environment, guiding them in understanding the importance of eco-friendly practices.

3. Community and Parental Involvement

- We will work closely with parents and the local community alongside the school Eco Team to promote sustainable behaviours both inside and outside of Forest School.
- Parents will be encouraged to participate in environmental projects and activities, such as tree planting or supporting local conservation efforts.
- Forest School leaders will collaborate with the Eco- arm of the school PTA to continue to develop the Forest School site through grants and voluntary planting bursaries.
- Regular communication with families will help ensure that the values of sustainability and respect for the environment are carried beyond the Forest School setting.

Monitoring and Review

We will regularly assess our environmental practices to ensure that we are meeting our goals and effectively minimizing our environmental impact. This includes:

- Regular audits of resource usage (water, electricity for preparing resources and use of natural materials) and waste disposal.
- Ongoing evaluation of activities to ensure they align with sustainable practices and are not having a negative impact on the local flora and fauna
- Seeking feedback from staff, students, and parents about how we can improve our environmental impact.

The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if necessary, and updates will be communicated to staff, students, and families.

Ecological Impact Assessment

	Macro Fauna	Micro Flora	Soil	Ground Layer Flora	Field Layer Flora	Shrub Layer Fauna	Canopy Layer Flora
Fire	LI	LI	LI	MI	MI	MI	MI
Removing Deadwood	N/A All Deadwood Left on Site	N/A All Deadwood Left on Site	N/A All Deadwood Left on Site	N/A All Deadwood Left on Site	N/A All Deadwood Left on Site	N/A All Deadwood Left on Site	N/A All Deadwood Left on Site
Cutting Live Wood	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI
Using Trees for Support	LI	MI	NI	NI	NI	LI	LI
Bringing Materials onto Site	MI	MI	MI	MI	LI	NI	NI
Collecting Flora	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI
Moving around Site	MI	MI	HI	HI	MI	MI	LI

NI= No impact, LI = Low Impact, MI = Medium impact, HI = High Impact

Ecological Assessment Activities

	Macro Fauna	Micro Flora	Soil	Ground Layer Flora	Field Layer Flora	Shrub Layer Fauna	Canopy Layer Flora
Tree Climbing	LI	MI	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI
Tree Swings	LI	LI	LI	LI	MI	LI	LI
Nature Art	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI
Camp Fire Cooking	LI	LI	MI	MI	MI	MI	MI
Natural Crafts (Tools)	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI
Hammocks	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI	LI
Group Games	LI	LI	MI	MI	LI	LI	LI

NI= No impact, LI = Low Impact, MI = Medium impact, HI = High Impact

Detailed Ecological Impact Assessment

Impact Action	Impact on Environment	Mitigation Measures	New Impact	Actions to Contribute Positively
Moving around site	This causes the grassy areas to become muddy and causes erosion and compaction of the soil layer. Negatively impact micro flora and micro organisms.	Woodchip well used pathways to prevent soil erosion Use different paths around site to spread out the impact	Using woodchip from other sites causes risk of introducing pests and disease Children may forget, not bother to do this	Buy new woodchip from a reputable source Regularly educate and re-enforce the importance of spreading out/ reducing footfall
Plants being trampled by play	Reduced biodiversity, affects the food web, reduces habitats.	Protect plants using branches or logs. As part of an eco-survey, identify plants with the children	Overreliance will reduce the amount of standing deadwood on site affecting nutrient levels and reducing habitats. N/A	Be conscious of how much wood is being used from the site. Include use of more sustainable methods such as harvesting willow sunshoots. Include the children in aspects such as protecting plants (above) and creating site maps. This holistic 'big picture' will re-enforce the importance of avoiding trampling plants.
Use of ropes on trees for tree swings, rope ladders, slack lines etc	Damage to tree bark	Buy or make tree protectors to prevent damage from fixed ropes		
Den building	Removes deadwood from the site impacting the field layer, reduces insect habitats	Have permanent standing deadwood piles. Discuss with children that these are separate from	Reduces the amount of wood available for den building	Bring branches from other sites once it has been checked for disease by a professional arborist.

	impacting biodiversity.	den building branches		
Heat and smoke from fires	Damage to canopy layer	Ensure fires are at least 4m from trees Rotate locations of fires to reduce impact	Increased damage to soil layer do to increased locations	Use a fire bowl to keep fires of the ground, protecting the soil layer.
Group games	Damage to soil layer, compaction of the soil due to overuse of certain areas	Rotate areas used for group games to reduce impact	This increases the chance of trampling new plants.	Protect emerging plants with brash. Involve children in site maps, ecological surveys to increase their awareness of protecting flora.
Bringing materials onto site	Risk of introducing invasive species, pests or disease.	Only use wood from own site. Clean and dry anything used on other site e.g. pond dipping nets, wellington boots etc.	Risk of overharvesting from own site, impacting the ecology of the site.	Use sustainable resources such as willow and hazel. Use rotation to avoid over harvesting a particular tree.

Landowners Agreement



**CHORLTON
C of E
PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

MANCHESTER TSA
Trusts & Schools Alliance

Headteacher: Mr P Trohear
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs V Foreman
Vicars Road
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Manchester
M21 9JA
Tel: 0161 881 6798

Website: www.chorltonce.co.uk
Email: admin@chorlton.manchester.sch.uk

Dear Vicki Foreman and Mike Hudson,

Re: Permission for Forest School Sessions on Chorlton C of E Primary School Site

I am writing to formally grant permission for the Forest School sessions to take place on the grounds of Chorlton C of E Primary School for the duration of your Forest School Level 3 certification. In my role as Headteacher of Chorlton C of E Primary School, I authorise the use of our school site to provide students with this valuable outdoor learning experience.

The sessions will take place in the designated outdoor area, which has been assessed and approved for use. As per our discussions, we are confident that the site is well-suited to support the activities planned, and we are happy to cooperate with you to ensure that all safety and operational protocols are met.

We trust that you and David Appleby, your assistant, will provide supervision and leadership during the sessions, following the Forest School methodology and ensuring the safety and well-being of the students at all times. As a school senior leadership team, we will assist with any necessary logistical arrangements to facilitate the smooth running of the sessions. The toileting facilities in the Nursery building may continue to be used, and water may be accessed from this area also.

We look forward to seeing the positive impact Forest School will have on our students.

Yours sincerely,

Phil Trohear

Headteacher

Chorlton C of E Primary School

3 Year Management Plan

Vision for site			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Anticipated use of site	- Regular fire circle time. - Games (e.g. ninja game, tig) - Free play - Mud Kitchen/ Digging - Den building - Craft making/ tool use	(See year 1) - Tree ladders - Rope Swings - Semi-permanent tarp covering in the corner of the grounds for additional rain sheltered area	(See year 1 and 2) Pond for nature enjoyment, pond dipping.
Mitigating impact	- Rotate fire circle location to reduce impact. - Fires at least 3m from trees - Use fire bowl to protect soil - Rotate areas used for games to reduce soil compaction - Protect young plants with logs/ brush - Involve learners with ecological survey/ site map to encourage awareness of plants - Monitor and join in with free play. Is a particular area sustaining high impact? - Digging is to be carried out on the hills / playing field that borders the woodland area. - Identify the permanent standing deadwood piles with learners, these are not available for den building use. - Use wood chipping to protect well trodden paths - Frequent discussion with	- Buy or make tree protectors to prevent damage from fixed ropes. - Assess the area under the tarp, is there enough light reaching the floor? Is there a negative impact on the flora?	Use ecological survey/ site map to ensure the area used is not a habitat for protected flora. Ensure there are rocks to enable trapped wildlife to exit the water.

	learners about the importance of spreading out footfall • Use sustainable resources for craft making such as willow and hazel. Use rotation to avoid over harvesting a particular tree.		
Plans to enhance bio-diversity	• Carry out regular litter picks. Provide the school's 'litter grabbers', children may want to use them to help keep the site clean and tidy of rubbish/ pollutants, helping biodiversity. • Create 'standing water' for invertebrates and for birds to bath in and drink from. Put pebbles in the bottom of bowls, fill with clean water and leave in various locations. • Allow the grass that borders FS (edge of playing fields) to 're-wild'. Instruct the council to leave a 1m border unmowed. • March – Plant wild flower seeds around the border of FS/ playing fields.	• Create 'brush barrier' by weaving branches or other long, natural materials. 'Planting hedges can help increase biodiversity and act as a barrier to road traffic pollutants. You can create a brush barrier, weaving branches to form a temporary barrier which can encourage brambles or wild plants.' (Cree 2021) • Build bird boxes during FS sessions. Install them in suitable locations around the site. • Create standing deadwood piles to provide habitats for invertebrates and micro-organisms and to release nutrients back into the ecosystem.	• Create a pond. This must be gated/ fenced off due to proximity to school grounds. • Plant saplings in suitable areas to increase the future density of the woodland. Plant hazel and willow as they will provide a sustainable source of wood for crafts.
How can client group be involved	• Discuss the 'needs' of wild life with participants. What could we do to help them? Participants can place standing water and replenish with	• Client group can help collect and weave the resources to make brush barrier. • They can help to build the boxes, their level of input	• Involve participants with the planning process. First a site map/ecological survey, carried out across different

	fresh water regularly. Have you seen any wildlife making use of them? E.g. birds bathing or drinking. • The children can present the re-wilding plan to SLT. Explain the benefits. • They can scatter and water the wildflower seeds.	will vary with age. E.g. hammer half the nail in for younger ones and they finish the hammering with supervision. Older children may be able to saw wood.	seasons to reveal all flora and fauna. Then select appropriate areas to plant saplings/ create a pond. Consider light levels. • Participants can dig, plant and water sapling themselves. They can add protective sheaths. • Participants can help to dig out some of the pond.
Evidence of ongoing monitoring	• Inspect trees/leaves near fire location for evidence of smoke/ heat damage. • Monitor soil layer in well trodden/ play areas. Is it becoming over compacted? • Monitor health of plants, evidence of trampling? • Monitor levels of rubbish/ pollutants. • Monitor health and abundance of trees used for resources.	(See Yr 1) • Assess the area under the tarp, is there enough light reaching the floor? Is there a negative impact on the flora? • Monitor areas around tree ladders/ rope swings. Evidence of damage to trees?, for example where children's feet contact the bark. • Remove tree protectors occasionally to check for damage/ disease/ rot. May need to relocate periodically.	(See Yr 1 and 2) • Regular checks of pond health. Evidence of trapped/ drowned animals? Escape routes in place? • Inspect for healthy plant life, clear water, stable shoreline without erosion, lack of excessive debris, discolouration, excessive algae, dying plants, lack of wildlife.
Biosecurity	• Ensure wood chippings are from a reputable source and have a phytosanitary certificate to ensure free of pests and disease.	• Only use material from on site to create 'brush barrier'.	• Ensure all equipment e.g. pond dipping nets, is clean and dry after use.

Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School



Health and Safety Policy and Procedures

Policy compiled by V Foreman (Deputy Headteacher)

Policy Written: January 2025

Reviewed and ratified by governors: February 2025

Review Date: February 2026

Introduction

At Chorlton C of E Primary School Forest School, the health, safety, and well-being of all participants—including children, staff, and visitors—is our top priority. We are committed to providing a safe, nurturing environment where students can engage in outdoor learning, adventure, and play, guided by the six Forest School principles and our school Christian values.

This policy outlines the procedures, protocols, and responsibilities to ensure the safe operation of our Forest School activities.

Accident and Emergency Protocols

In the event of an accident or emergency, the following procedures will be followed:



Accident Reporting:

- All accidents and injuries will be recorded in an accident book in line with school policy. Details will include the name of the injured person, nature of the incident, and any treatment provided or advice given. Parents of the child will be spoken with in the case of any impact or trauma to the head or face, regardless of whether the child is deemed able to remain in school. If a member of staff is injured, this must be logged in the school accident book with the School Business Manager who will complete any RIDDOR report if required.



Emergency Contacts:

- Each child's emergency contact details, including medical information, will be stored securely and easily accessible in the Nursery area. Staff will carry a list of emergency contacts during any off-site activities.



First Aid:

- All school staff are trained in basic first aid and CPR. The Forest School leaders have also completed a 16 hour Outdoor First Aid qualification. A fully stocked first aid kit will be carried by staff at all times. The school's defibrillator is stored in the main school building in the School Business Manager's Office.



Emergency:

- **Serious injury/ accident:** In case of a serious incident affecting one participant, one member of staff will escort all other participants over to the Nursery building. Further assistance will be requested from staff in the main school building and emergency services will be contacted if required.
- **Fire Alarm:** If the school fire alarm sounds, all participants will follow the Forest School leader over to the fire assembly point on PG1.
- **Emergency Evacuation:** Where it is necessary to conduct an emergency evacuation of the forest school site, all participants will be called together by the Forest School leader and instructed to follow the Fire Alarm protocol. Head count by the Forest School leader as leave the site and then further head count once lined up on Playground 1. Emergency services to be called if required
- **Lockdown protocol:** If staff become aware of a threat to the school site, lockdown protocol will be enforced. FS leader will escort the group to the Nursery building, where the door will be locked, blinds will be drawn and participants will shelter beneath tables until the threat has cleared.

2. Cooking (Including Food Hygiene)

Cooking and sharing of food together forms a fundamental part in the community element of Forest School. It also ensures that participants basic needs are being met, allowing them to reach their full potential in sessions.

Forest School cooking activities will be carried out in a safe and hygienic manner. The following protocols will be in place:

-  **Food Hygiene:** All staff will be trained in food hygiene and safe cooking practices. Forest School leaders have completed a Level 2 Food Hygiene qualification. The storage and handling of food will be done according to recommended guidelines to prevent contamination.
 - Food will be stored in airtight containers, refrigerated when necessary, and used within recommended time frames.
 - Hands will be washed thoroughly before handling food and after handling raw ingredients.
 - Utensils, cooking equipment, and surfaces will be regularly cleaned and sanitized.
-  **Cooking Equipment:** All cooking equipment, including stoves, open fires, and utensils, will be used under strict supervision and in a safe manner.
 - Cooking will take place in designated areas to minimize risk.
 - Only trained staff will handle cooking equipment such as open fires, stoves, or sharp tools.
 - Participants will be fully supervised when cooking, with a ratio of 1 adult to maximum of 4 learners.

3. COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health)

We will ensure the safe use, storage, and disposal of any substances that may pose a health risk, such as cleaning products, paints, or chemicals used in educational activities. For general Forest School sessions, the only chemicals that will be in use are hand sanitiser and washing up liquid. These will be responsibly sourced in line with the environmental policy, using only natural and biodegradable products which will have a minimal impact on the surroundings.

-  **Risk Assessments:** Any hazardous substances used in the Forest School setting will be risk-assessed for potential health risks.
-  **Storage:** Chemicals or hazardous materials will be stored securely and labelled clearly, away from children's reach.
-  **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Staff will use appropriate PPE (e.g., gloves, goggles) when handling hazardous substances.

4. Extreme Weather Protocols

In the event of extreme weather conditions, the safety of students and staff will be carefully considered:

- 🌱 **Monitoring Weather Conditions:** Weather conditions will be monitored regularly to ensure the safety of all participants.
 - 🌱 **Weather-Related Decisions:** Forest School sessions may be rescheduled or cancelled in extreme weather conditions (e.g., heavy snow/ extreme low temperatures, high winds, or extreme heat). If adverse weather is predicted, activities will take place in sheltered areas with careful monitoring of the welfare of participants.
 - 🌱 **Heat and Sun Protection:** During hot weather, students will be encouraged to wear hats, sunscreen, and drink plenty of water. Rest breaks will be provided in shaded or cool areas.
 - 🌱 **Cold Weather Protection:** In colder weather, staff will ensure that students are wearing appropriate warm clothing, such as waterproofs, thermal layers, gloves, and hats. Additional blankets and hot water bottles are available for the comfort of participants, should they be required.
-

5. Fire Safety

Fire is often used as part of Forest School activities such as cooking, however it also serves a central role in building a sense of community, as a source of comfort and warmth and in grounding participants understanding of themselves as part of a shared history of the space.

The following procedures will be followed to ensure fire safety:

- 🌱 **Fire Safety Training** L3 Forest School leaders have received fire safety training, including how to safely light, manage, and extinguish fires. This will be disseminated to supporting adults before sessions begin.
- 🌱 **Designated Fire Areas:** Fires will only be lit in designated areas, away from flammable materials.
- 🌱 **Fire Extinguishers and Safety Equipment:** A pair of fire gloves, bucket of water, and a fire blanket will always be kept nearby. Fire safety protocols will be reviewed with children at the beginning of each session.
- 🌱 **Evacuation Plan:** In the event of a fire emergency, the evacuation plan (detailed above) will be in place, with students and staff moving to Playground 1 in line with the whole school fire protocol.

Fire Protocols:

Location:

- 🌱 Only agreed areas will be used for fires. These will be at Squirrel Camp (Larger, uncovered Forest School circle) or Owl Camp (sheltered area)
- 🌱 The fire pit will be enclosed by logs or large stones to prevent the spread of fire and to mark the area
- 🌱 All campfires will be lit in a raised fire bowl to avoid damage to the soil
- 🌱 Fires must not be set under low hanging branches.
- 🌱 Fires must not be placed directly on concrete or on peaty ground.

Positioning of children and adults

-  A fire will never be lit without an adult present. All fire lighting equipment will be safely stored in accordance with the Fire risk assessment.
-  The fire will be set in a raised fire bowl
-  Students will be made aware of all safety procedures and encouraged to self-risk assess.
-  A 1 metre boundary will be set by the Forest School Leader, indicated by logs/ stones and clearly defined to the students. Students and Leaders to walk around the boundary. Only person to go inside the boundary is the leader/person lighting fire.
-  Entry into the boundary (i.e. for cooking/to feed the fire) only on invitation and on a 1:1 basis.
-  Once lit an adult will remain close to the fire at all times
-  Seating will be organised around the outside of the fire boundary and participants should enter the circle from outside of the seating area and should not walk across the inner circle whilst the fire is lit.
-  Children will not be allowed to throw anything on the fire. Any fuel can be carefully placed on the edge of the fire and with close supervision and only when the child is wearing a heatproof glove.
-  We will ensure that the ratio of children to adults is at least 1:6 around the fire boundary area.
-  Children will be advised on the appropriate way for dealing with smoke: they are advised to move out of the direction of the fire. They could also be advised to turn their head to one side, placing their hand across the face for 30 seconds
-  If there is a clear wind direction, seating in the line of smoke is to be avoided.

Safety and Responsibility:

-  In the first instance, only adults are permitted to light fires. This will usually be the Forest School Leader.
-  Fire proof gloves to be used when tending to the fire. Nothing is to be placed on the fire without the use of these gloves.
-  It may be that, after several sessions in an extended Forest School block, it is considered safe and appropriate that older/more mature children should help with fire building/ lighting/maintenance. This will be discussed prior to the session with all relevant staff members and decided for each child on an individual basis, taking into account the child's personal risk assessment. It will be made clear to all participants that helping with a fire will be assessed on an individual basis and is dependent on conduct and safe behaviour.
-  Children will be supervised at all times when surrounding the fire (1:6 ratio) and on a 1:1 basis when assisting with fire/ adding fuel.
-  Sticks/wood must be placed, not thrown, from the side of the fire. Hands should never go over the fire.
-  Only one child will assist at one time – the rest will remain seated at the boundary.
-  Fires are lit using cotton wool, natural kindling and matches or fire steel.

-  In the event that the fire is hard to light, a small amount of petroleum jelly may be used with the cotton wool to aid lighting of the fire.
-  Only natural materials to be burnt – no rubbish or plastics.

Extinguishing:

-  All fires must be extinguished at the end of a session.
-  A 5l bucket of water should always be to hand during campfire sessions, along with fire gloves and a fire blanket.
-  Whenever possible, all fuels should be burnt off to ash.
-  At the end of the session, the fire must be doused down with water and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased.

6. First Aid

The school has a comprehensive first aid policy which can be found on the school website here:

Chorlton C of E Primary First Aid Policy

All school staff, including Forest School Leaders and assistants have been trained in accordance with this policy.

-  **First Aid Training:** All staff members are hold a Level 1 Basic First Aid qualification, including the use of CPR. L3 Forest School leaders have also completed a 16 hour Outdoor First Aid qualification.
-  **First Aid Kits:** A fully stocked first aid kit will be present at the site, and will be transported for any off-site activities. The kit will contain bandages, cleansing wipes, plasters, burn cream, and any necessary medical supplies specific to participants' health needs. Due to the proximity of the Forest School site to the Nursery building, access to a more comprehensive First Aid kit is moments away
-  **Emergency Medical Support:** In the event of a serious injury, emergency medical services will be contacted, and staff will follow the emergency procedures. The school defibrillator is stored in the Main School building in the School Business Manager's office.

7. Insurances

As Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School falls within the school offer, it is covered through the school's insurance policy with RPA from the Department for Education.



Department
for Education

Confirmation of risk protection arrangement (RPA) membership

The Department for Education's risk protection arrangement (RPA) is a voluntary arrangement for academies, free schools and local authority maintained schools. It is an alternative to insurance through which the cost of risks that materialise will be covered by government funds.

The following local authority maintained school is a member of the RPA.

NAME OF MEMBER ORGANISATION:	Chorlton CofE Primary School
MEMBERSHIP NO/URN:	105487
MEMBERSHIP PERIOD:	01 April 2024 to 31 March 2025
RPA MEMBERSHIP RULES:	VC

(1)	EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY
Limit of Indemnity	Unlimited
(2)	THIRD PARTY PUBLIC LIABILITY
Limit of Indemnity	Unlimited
(3)	PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY
Limit of Indemnity	Unlimited
(4)	PROPERTY DAMAGE
	Loss of or damage by any risk not excluded to any property owned by or the responsibility of the Member including property the responsibility of the Member due to a lease or hire agreement Cover
Limit	Reinstatement value of the property

NOTES:

1. Indemnity is subject to the RPA membership rules.
2. In accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of Schedule 2 of the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/2573), the Secretary of State for Education hereby certifies that any claim established against the named member organisation above in respect of any liability to the employees of the kind mentioned in section 1(1) of the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969 will, to any extent to which it is otherwise incapable of being satisfied by the aforementioned employer, be satisfied out of moneys provided by parliament.
3. A General Principles Clause is included.

Signed:

Dated: 01 April 2024

Susan Dawson
Director of Commercial for Sector and Commercial Operations

1. Does the RPA cover Forest School activities?

The RPA will provide cover for the forest school activities. The Employers Liability section will provide an indemnity to the school if the school is legally liable to pay damages or compensation to a school employee if they are injured in the course of this activity. The public liability section of the RPA will provide an indemnity to the school if the school is legally liable to pay damages or compensation to a third party, if the third party is injured or third party property is damaged in the course of this activity. Pupils and non-school pupils etc. would be deemed third parties.

The RPA will only provide an indemnity to the school, if the school for example is using another organisation in the provision of this activity that organisation will need to have in place third party public liability insurance and you would need to obtain permission, if you've not done so already, to use non-school areas to carry out the forest school activities.

The animals will not be covered under the RPA and separate insurance will be required, if needed. However, we can confirm that the RPA will provide indemnity to the member school when handling the animals to the extent that the school are legally liable (negligent) in causing injury to school staff under the Employers Liability section and injury to third parties (including pupils etc.) and damage to their property under the Third Party Public Liability. The RPA will defend claims and provide damages or compensation that the school is legally required to pay to the claimant.

8. Manual Handling

- Safe Lifting and Carrying:** Staff are trained in safe manual handling techniques, especially when lifting or moving heavy objects such as logs, branches, or equipment. A wheelbarrow is available for transportation of heavier materials and resources.
- Children's Participation:** Children will be encouraged to use proper lifting techniques and will only be asked to carry lightweight objects appropriate for their age and strength.

9. Risk Management:

- Risk management will be a continual process, where risks are assessed, monitored, and controlled to prevent harm.
 - All staff members will be involved in identifying and managing risks associated with Forest School activities and participants will be encouraged to take a role in this as they grow to know the site more intimately over time
 - A daily site check will be completed by the Forest School leader before the session, identifying any areas of the site that may pose an increased risk. Part of this site check will also consider any current or forecast adverse weather conditions, which may affect the general risk assessment.
 - Regular safety audits will be conducted alongside the School Business Manager and Premises Manager, in order to plan for maintenance and development of the site and safety protocols will be reviewed and updated as necessary.
-

10. Risk Assessments:

In line with school policy, all risk-assessments will be conducted alongside our Health and Safety partner at Compliance Education and the School Business Manager (school Health and Safety officer). Risk-assessments must be signed off by the SBM in line with the school insurance policy.

- Risk assessments will be carried out for all Forest School activities, including off-site trips and excursions.
 - Risk assessments will be documented, and appropriate action plans will be developed to reduce identified risks.
 - A review of risk assessments will be conducted following any accidents or near-misses.
 - Specific attention will be given to potential risks such as uneven terrain, wildlife, weather, and potential hazards from tools or equipment.
-

11. Risk Benefit Analysis:

- Each activity or experience will undergo a risk-benefit analysis to weigh the benefits of the experience against potential risks. The aim is to identify learning opportunities while ensuring that risks are managed appropriately.
- Participants will be involved in discussions about risks and how to minimize them, encouraging personal responsibility for safety.

12. The Use of Tools

Forest School often involves the use of tools for learning and play, such as fixed blade knives, saws, secateurs, loppers and hammers. The benefits of tool use are wide ranging and well-documented and Forest School is an ideal place for learners to explore the use of tools in a purposeful environment. The use of individual tools will be risk-assessed, with clear processes and procedures for the safe use and storage of different types of tools. Decisions to allow participants to use tools will be made using a risk benefit analysis based on knowledge of the child and their individual age and stage of development and will involve high levels of supervision. The following safety measures will be in place:

-  **Tool Use Training:** Only trained staff will supervise children when using tools. Children will be shown proper handling and safety techniques before using tools. This will be on a 1:1 ratio until the Forest School leader is confident in technique and safe use where ratios may be adjusted in line with the risk assessment.
-  **Age-Appropriate Tools:** Tools used by children will be age-appropriate, designed for outdoor use, and kept in good condition.
-  **Tool maintenance:** Tools will be regularly checked for damage and defects
-  **Supervision:** All tool use will be closely supervised, and children will be taught the importance of respecting tools and safety rules.
-  **Storage:** Tools will be stored and used in a designated, roped off area. Tools must be counted out and in at the beginning and end of sessions and when not being used must be returned to their designated storage place. At the end of the session, tools will be locked away in a secure storage area.

13. Transport to and from the Forest School Site

-  The forest School site is situated on the school grounds and so involves a walk from the main school building over to playground 1. The full route remains within the school grounds and there is no public access or access to vehicles.
-  On occasions, the Forest School leader may decide that it would be beneficial for learners to participate in an off-site excursion. In this instance, the school's usual policy for planning and conducting an off-site visit would come into effect, and would need to be risk assessed in line with school policy.

14. Welfare (Including Toileting, Clothing, PPE, and Food and Drink)

-  **Toileting and Hygiene:** Toilet facilities will be available at the Forest School site, and children will be encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Staff will supervise children during toileting if necessary, ensuring privacy and dignity are maintained.
-  **Clothing and PPE:** All children will be required to wear suitable outdoor clothing for the weather conditions (e.g., waterproofs, hats, gloves) and to

wear sturdy, closed toe footwear with a good grip such as wellington or walking boots. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as gloves, will be provided when necessary.

-  **Food and Drink:** Drinking water and snacks will be available throughout the session for children and participants will be reminded to stay hydrated. Cooking and sharing food together will be a regular feature of forest school sessions as part of community building. Forest School leaders will pay close attention to any allergies or dietary requirements of the group (collated with permission) when considering the food and drink on offer.
-  **Meal Hygiene:** When cooking or eating outdoors, appropriate hygiene practices will be followed, including washing hands before meals and using clean utensils.

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any significant incidents or changes in regulations. Staff, children, and parents will be informed of any updates.

Chorlton C of E Primary Forest School



Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

Policy compiled by V Foreman (Deputy Headteacher)

Policy Written: January 2025

Reviewed and ratified by governors: February 2025

Review Date: February 2026

Introduction:

This Safeguarding Policy outlines the principles, procedures, and guidelines that ensure the safety and welfare of all children and adults attending the Forest School. We aim to create a safe and supportive environment, where children are free from harm, bullying, and abuse.

The policy includes our approach to safeguarding, reporting procedures, and various responsibilities for staff, visitors, and others involved in the school community and adheres to current UK safeguarding regulations and guidance.

This Forest School Safeguarding Policy supplements and should be read in conjunction with existing whole school policies, which have been written in collaboration with Manchester City Council and have been ratified by the Governing Body:

-  Chorlton C of E Safeguarding Policy
 -  Chorlton C of E Behaviour and Relationships Policy
 -  Chorlton C of E Online Safety Policy
 -  Chorlton C of E Anti-Bullying Policy
-

1. Anti-Bullying Policy:

-  Definition: Bullying is intentional, repetitive behaviour intended to harm, intimidate, or coerce others. This can include physical, verbal, emotional, and cyberbullying.
 -  Prevention: All staff will actively encourage positive relationships, respect, and empathy through discussions, activities, and group dynamics. The community element of Forest School aims to develop a safe place for participants to develop in a supportive manner.
 -  Procedure: Any reports of bullying will be treated seriously. If a child or adult is experiencing bullying, they will be encouraged to report it to a member of staff immediately. Staff will then investigate the incident confidentially and take appropriate action, including engaging parents and carers if necessary.
 -  Support: We will provide support to both the victim and the perpetrator to address the underlying issues and promote positive behaviour.
-

2. Confidentiality:

-  Principles: All personal information shared by children, parents, or staff will be kept confidential, unless there is a risk of harm or abuse. In such cases, it may be necessary to share information with relevant authorities (e.g., social services, police) to safeguard the individual.
 -  Sharing Information: Confidential information will only be shared with those who have a legitimate need to know, and in line with statutory requirements. This includes safeguarding concerns or where there are legal or regulatory obligations.
 -  Record-Keeping: Any concerns regarding safeguarding should be documented and stored securely on CPOMs in line with school policy. This will ensure a clear record is available if any follow-up is required.
-

3. Child/Adult at Risk Protection:

- Definition: A child or adult at risk is anyone who is in a vulnerable situation and may be at risk of harm due to their age, disability, circumstances, or experiences.
- Procedure: Any concerns regarding child protection, neglect, or abuse will be taken seriously. All staff must report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or to a Deputy DSL.
- At Chorlton C of E Primary these people are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- Phil Trohear (Headteacher)

Deputy DSLs:

- Vicki Foreman (Deputy Headteacher)
 - Tom Butler (Assistant Headteacher)
 - Claire Gunn (SENDCo)
 - Laura Bethel (Key Therapist)
 - Massie Ashtiany (Treehouse Manager)
-
- Staff Training: All staff, including volunteers, will receive appropriate training in child protection and safeguarding, including identifying signs of abuse and how to report concerns. Every adult participating in the Forest School sessions must have read Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1.

4. Data Protection and Personal Data Handling:

The school is committed to ensuring that all personal data is handled in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

- 🌱 Storage of Data: Personal data, including medical information, contact details, and safeguarding records, will be stored securely on SIMs, the school system. This is password protected and can only be accessed by staff. This data will only be used for its intended purpose and will not be shared without consent, unless there is a safeguarding or legal requirement to do so. Should there be a requirement to print any copies of personal data, for example contact details for an off-site visit, then all copies will be disposed of in the white, secure waste bin in the staff room.
- 🌱 Access: Only authorised staff members will have access to personal data. All data handling processes will be regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with data protection laws.
- 🌱 Retention: Personal data will not be kept for longer than necessary and will be disposed of securely once it is no longer required.

5. DBS Checks:

- Staff and Volunteers: All staff and volunteers working with children will undergo enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks before being permitted to work in the school setting. This ensures that individuals do not have a criminal record that would make them unsuitable for working with children.
- Regulation: DBS checks will be updated regularly in accordance with school policy and legal requirements. Staff DBS numbers:

Victoria Foreman	001810916263	12/12/2022
David Appleby	001813282030	08/01/2023
Michael Hudson	001546933429	27/02/2023

- Visitors: Any external individuals or organisations who work with the children (e.g., visiting speakers, contractors) must provide proof of their DBS clearance.

6. Disclosure:

- Procedure: If a child or adult discloses that they have been harmed or are at risk of harm, staff should respond with sensitivity, reassurance, and without judgment.
- Action: The staff member should immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and record the disclosure in writing on CPOMs. The child or adult making the disclosure should not be pressured or questioned beyond what is necessary for them to share the facts. They should not be asked leading questions. When reporting the disclosure, the person reporting should only report the facts and where possible record the words used by the person disclosing exactly as they were said.
- Confidentiality: Information regarding disclosures will only be shared with relevant safeguarding professionals. Staff must never promise to keep a disclosure secret.

7. Lost or Missing Child Protocol:

If a child is found to be missing or lost during an activity, staff will follow these steps:

1. The child's name will be called out and an immediate headcount will be conducted.
 2. The remaining children will be returned to their classrooms and back into the care of their class teacher.
 3. School staff will search the immediate area, checking toilets, all school buildings, and any other places the child may have gone within the school grounds.
 4. If the child cannot be located, the school will notify the police, and parents or guardians will be contacted.
 5. A full report will be made of the incident, and an investigation will be carried out to prevent recurrence.
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8. Social Media:

All school staff, parents and pupils sign an Acceptable Use Agreement, which establishes protocols for the use of technology both in and out of school.

-  Online Sharing Permissions and photographs: **The school no longer has any active social media outlets; however, it does have a website where key information about the school is shared. All parents are required to give permission for their child's image to be shared on the school website and these permissions are shared with all score staff. Pupils who do not have internet sharing permissions must not feature in any photographs that are uploaded to the school website. All parents have given permission for their child's image to be shared on the school's home/school learning platform, Seesaw, and images of learners taking part in Forest School sessions may be shared with parents and carers in this way. Photographs should only be taken using school equipment. Personal devices should never be used to capture moments at Forest School.**
-  Staff Guidelines: Staff members should never use social media to communicate with children or parents in a professional capacity. Personal social media profiles should be kept private and separate from professional roles.
-  Parental Guidelines: Parents and children will be advised not to post images or personal details about other children or staff on social media.
-  Safeguarding: Any concerns or incidents related to social media, including online bullying or inappropriate behaviour, must be reported to the DSL.

9. Staff Ratios, Roles, and Responsibilities:

- **Ratios:** We adhere to a staffing ratio of a maximum of 6 children to 1 adult (1:6) during Forest School intervention sessions to ensure the safety and supervision of children.
- This ratio may be adapted based on the age and developmental needs of the cohort to allow for a greater level of supervision and support for participants. This will be done in conjunction with the School Business Manager (Healthy and Safety Officer)
- **Where a participant has identified SEND, and personal risk assessment deems it necessary, additional adult support may be enlisted to provide 1:1 support** to allow the child to access Forest School sessions safely.
- In line with risk assessments, some activities, such as tool use, and assisting with the fire/ cooking on fire will require a lower child to adult ratio. Please see individual activity risk benefit assessments for details.
- **Staff Roles and Responsibilities:** All staff are responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with the Forest School's safeguarding policies and procedures. In addition to their teaching roles, staff members must:
 1. Observe and report any signs of child abuse or neglect.
 2. Follow the school's safeguarding procedures, including record-keeping and reporting to the DSL.
 3. Maintain a professional and appropriate relationship with children at all times.
 4. Attend safeguarding training and updates as required and have read the most up to date KCSiE guidance.

10. Visitor Protocol:

-  **Registration:** All visitors to the Forest School must sign in at the school reception upon arrival and sign out when they leave.
-  **Identification:** Visitors will be required to wear a visible identification sticker during their visit.
-  **Supervision:** Visitors who are not part of the regular staffing team must be supervised at all times when interacting with children.
-  **Access:** Visitors must not access any areas of the school where they do not have permission to be, and they must comply with the school's safety and safeguarding protocols.

Risk Benefit Assessments
(See Additional Document)

Stakeholders

Landowner/ Manager:

The land forms part of the playing grounds of Chorlton C of E Primary School, Chorlton, Manchester and is owned by Manchester City Council. Head Teacher; Phil Trohear.

School Management Team:

Head Teacher; Mr Phil Trohear.

Deputy Head; Mrs Vicki Foreman

School Business Manager and Healthy and Safety Officer; Joanne Derbyshire

Premises Manager; Martyn Haslam

Neighbours:

The Forest School grounds run along the perimeter of the school grounds, backing onto multiple back gardens of houses on Kingshill Road, separated by fences. There is no direct access onto the Forest School site from any neighbouring properties.

Other Site Users:

The site is used by the School's whole class Forest School/ Outdoor Learning provider. Some areas of the site are accessed by the school children during lunch time play. After school clubs, including the school-run wrap-around care club and various clubs run by external providers, also access some of the site before and after school.

The main playground and astro-turf, which border the Forest School site, may be used for PE lessons and break-times during the school day.

Participants:

Selected children from Chorlton C of E Primary School

The pupils involved in the small group Forest School intervention sessions have been selected in collaboration with class teachers and the school SENDCo.

Parents/Carers:

Parents and carers will give permission for their child to participate in the small group Forest School intervention sessions. Parents and carers will not participate in the sessions.

Staff:

Mrs Vicki Foreman, trainee Level 3 Forest school Leader

Mr Michael Hudson, trainee Level 3 Forest school Leader

Mr Dave Appleby, supporting adult

Volunteers:

The school welcomes the support of volunteers from the wider community. If a member of the public expresses an interest in volunteering to support Forest School sessions, they must complete a volunteer application form in line with the school's [Volunteer Policy](#)

Any other interested parties:

Chorlton C of E Primary School Governing Body

Chair of Governors: Rev Ken Flood