



The Handbook

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Signed by: Hayley Gee

Andy Hallworth

Lucy Connors

Emma Yates

Sue Phillips

Table of Contents

Our Forest School Ethos	4
A Brief History.....	5
Roles and Responsibilities	6
Procedures and Risk Assessments	7
Lost / Missing Child.....	8
Accident and Emergency.....	10
Fire safety and Methodology.....	11
Toileting and Handwashing.....	14
Food Hygiene & Cooking.....	15
Tool Use Policy.....	16
Weather Contingency.....	17
Environmental Considerations.....	18
Pond Dipping.....	19
Den Building.....	19
Tree Climbing.....	20
Manual Handling.....	21
Beekeeping.....	23
Pizza Oven.....	26
Data Protection / Consent.....	28
Other Policies.....	29
Insurance Agreement.....	29
Evaluation Procedure.....	29
Review.....	30

Declaration from adults involved with Forest School

I declare that I have read the Forest School handbook and that I will refer to it in regards to all policies and procedures. I will carry out all the roles and responsibilities set out within this document.

Name	Signature	Date

Review Date	August 2026
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Our Forest School Ethos

At Dial Park Primary School, we aim to give children and staff a shared understanding of the ethos of Forest Schools. We aim for everyone to experience this unique approach to learning and development which enables children to be independent, self-motivated, resilient, empathetic and risk aware individuals who are set up for life-long learning. We believe that the Forest School approach supports the development of the child in a holistic way. This is achieved through addressing the social, physical, intellectual, communicative, emotional and spiritual (SPICES) development of each and every child.

This development may be achieved through:

- Developing independence.
- Developing self-confidence, self-esteem, self-awareness, and self-regulation.
- Developing positive relationships with others.
- To develop children's skills to cooperate with their peers and adults.
- To develop a child's understanding of risk and ability to manage their own risk.
- For children to be able to experience the changing seasons and all weathers to help develop resilience.
- To help foster a love of the outdoors and the natural environment and understand how to care for and respect the natural world.

How we achieve our aims to deliver our Forest School Ethos

- Each child from Nursery to Year Six will have allocated weekly sessions in the forest throughout the year.
- We will provide children with the opportunity of time, freedom, and space to learn, grow and develop in a holistic way.
- We will encourage children to take ownership of their learning and provide opportunities for children to develop skills and learn in a variety of ways.

- We value the importance of play and give children the opportunity to explore, learn and develop through play.
- We will enable children to develop their knowledge and understanding of a woodland environment, to experience it through the year and develop their emotional and spiritual attachment to the outdoor environment.
- We will give children the opportunity to challenge themselves, developing their resilience and being able to manage risks.
- We will plan sessions which allow time for reflection and review, for learning new skills through games, activities and through encouraging time for

A Brief History

independent child led learning.

Forest School is a unique approach to outdoor learning. Developed over time, the approach has incorporated many different theorists who have recognised the benefits to children being outdoors. The children are regularly based within a woodland or outdoor space where they are encouraged to explore, take risks and learn new skills in a nurturing environment.

Forest School originated from Scandinavia in the 80's where the specific learning approach started in the Early Years. Forest School was introduced to the UK in 1993, following an educational visit to Denmark from Bridgewater College. The students recognised the benefits to the outdoor approach and looked at how it could successfully be introduced and adopted in to the UK.

Since this time Forest School as an ethos and approach to learning, has grown quickly and can be found across the UK. It is now no longer purely a concept for Early Years Education but has been adopted and introduced throughout many primary schools, private and independent early years settings, secondary schools and other educational facilities.

At Dial Park we have 3 Forest School sites. One is situated on the playing field off the main school site and is used by Reception up to Year Six. The second site is a small, wooded area in Nursery and is used only by Nursery children. The third site is beyond the school grounds, in a small valley next to the school, called Poise Brook. This site is only accessed by Years Five and Six. Each site is led by a qualified Level 3 Forest School Practitioner all

Roles and Responsibilities

Forest School Leaders

with up to date Outdoor First Aid Training.

- Responsible for creating and keeping up-to-date policies and procedures.
- Responsible for ensuring that the policies and procedures are adhered to by staff and children.
- Responsible for the health and safety within each site used by:
 - Carrying out weekly site risk assessments, checklist and dynamic risk assessments on the day for children and staff taking part in the sessions.
 - Delivery of the sessions in a safe and fun manner enabling all children to access it if they wish to do so.
 - *Ensuring adults and children are dressed suitably for all weathers and correct PPE is worn during activities such as fire and tools.*
 - Guiding the children to become more resilient and independent learners through scaffolding of their interests and supporting their unique learning paths.
 - Evaluating every session and making changes to suit the learners needs ready for the next session.

Additional Supporting Adults

- Being willing to learn as an individual and work as a part of a team.

Additional adults who support the session should support the children's exploration, provide knowledge where possible and supervise activities. Furthermore, the supporting adults should:

- See themselves as a learner.
- Participate in activities and games as the children would.
- Be enthusiastic and encourage engagement with children who are more reserved.
- Feedback to the leader and reflect on observations taken and their own experience.

Parents

- Parents should send the children into school with the appropriate clothing for the time of year, taking daily weather changes into account.
- Encourage a positive mentality to being outdoors and try to adopt as much

The Children

outdoor activity as possible helping to foster a love for the natural world.

The children should be able to feel safe and ready to explore, feeling confident at trying new experiences and taking risks appropriate to their ability.

- They should be able to openly ask for support where needed.
- They should be able to take responsibility for the appropriate clothing suitable for the weather.
- They should be able to assess risk or begin to make pathways to learn this skill.
- They should be able to look after themselves, others, and **the environment**, treating them with respect
- Learn how to work independently and **or** as **part of** a team.

There is a separate '**Site Risk Assessment**' which highlights the possible risks within all three sites and the procedures we follow to reduce the likelihood of them

Procedures and Risk Assessments

happening. The assessment also states the benefits of carrying out or taking part in the risk.

An **'Open Fire Risk Assessment'** has been carried out to assess the risks when having a fire. The methodology has been laid out to demonstrate safe practice and reduce any fire hazards.

An **'Activities Risk Assessment'** has been carried out which highlights safe practice and procedures when using the tools, how they are stored and the benefits of using the tools, *off the ground equipment, the mud kitchen, loose parts and many other activities which happen on site.*

Lost or Missing Child

Dial Park Forest School will follow the same school policy for Lost Children 2020.

If at any time during the school day a child is noticed as missing the following procedure will take place:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing start a 10-minute timer, staff will alert a senior member of staff.
- The senior staff and any other available staff will carry out a thorough search of the school buildings, playground and other outdoor areas including the field and any wilder areas of the school grounds.
- The registers will be checked to make sure no other child is missing.
- External doors and gates are checked to establish whether there has been a breach of security.
- If the child is not found within 10 minutes, the parent/guardian is contacted, and the missing child is reported to the police (999) The police will want to know:

1. Where you are.

2. The name of the child.
3. The next of kin of the child.
4. A detailed description of the child (going from head to toe, clothing etc.)
5. When they were first noticed missing.
6. When and where they were last seen.
7. Circumstances of the disappearance (any trigger, arguments etc.).
8. Who is looking for the child at the time, where they are and their mobile phone number.

When the police arrive, they will co-ordinate the search and staff will comply fully with

Poise Brook Lost Child Procedure is as follows:

their instructions; staff should continue to search unless instructed by police to stop.

If a child goes missing from an educational visit where parents are not attending and responsible for their own child, the following procedure applies:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the visit ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
- One staff member will search the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The staff contact the police using a mobile phone and report the child as missing. The person in charge informs the head teacher who will then liaise with the police, inform the local authority, and contact the family. If appropriate, the head teacher may make his way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support staff. Investigation following the safe recovery of the child. The head teacher, with the support of the police is appropriate, carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time.

An Incident Log Sheet should be completed detailing:

1. The date and time of the report.
2. Staff/children were in the group.
3. When the child was last seen in the group.
4. What has taken place in the group since then.
5. The time it is estimated that the child went missing.
6. Any other relevant details, including the recovery of the child.
7. A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.

If the incident warrants a police investigation all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. The

Accident and Emergency

incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements and to the Local Authority Health and Safety Officer as appropriate.

In the event of an accident the First Aider should attend to the incident and access the situation and administer basic first aid if needed.

If emergency assistance is required:

- Ring 999.
- State the name and age of the child and whether they are conscious or unconscious and details of the incident occurring.
- Give the site location, address, and details of how to get to the location.
- Give details of where you will meet the emergency services.
- Give them a contactable phone number.
- Another adult to contact the school, office or the headteacher, informing them of what is happening.

- If the child is going to hospital action is needed for who will go with the child and who will stay with the rest of the group.
- Inform school / parents of the incident, ask for additional support if required.
- Complete first aid recording sheet.

The nearest hospital for all three sites is **Stepping Hill Hospital, Poplar Grove, Hazel Grove, Stockport SK2 7JE.**

In the event of emergency assistance in Poise Brook, the location will be obtained through using What3words. The words are “**with.shell.flame**”. All other locations will use the schools address and be navigated to causality by a member of staff.

In the event of a fire, the fire alarm will be raised. The Forest School Leader should be contacted by a member of SLT in case an alarm isn't heard on the forest school site. The Forest School Leader will gather all the children and make their way to the playground without entering a school building.

Another adult should carry out a quick sweep of the inside of the Forest School room and

Fire Safety & Methodology

the toilet.

Fire is a huge part of our Forest School sessions. It provides us with a focal point, creating an ancestral atmosphere which gives us a sense of community and belonging. Fire skills and safety are a vital survival skill as well as hugely empowering and confidence building when mastered. Here at Dial Park's Forest School, children learn how to build fires through knowledge and understanding of the fire triangle, fuel collection, construction of the fires and methods of maintaining and extinguishing. Cooking on a fire has also grown to be a huge favourite and has become part of our ethos where the children are able to try new and interesting foods which are linked to either seasonal foraging or the history curriculum. The Forest School Leaders will aim to ensure that adults and children follow procedures to make sure its risk is minimised to make it a positive and enjoyable experience for all.

Benefits

Exposing pupils to safe and proper use of fire, pupils are not only being educated about the potential dangers of fire but most importantly the safe and appropriate use of fire.

Further benefits include:

- Pupils learn to use fire in a responsible and safe way.
- Pupils learn the appropriate use of a fire - during colder months, to provide hot water and hot meals.
- Pupils learn to take measured risk in an environment where they are nurtured and guided to safely create, maintain, and extinguish a fire.
- Pupils learn to respect nature, the impact of having fire and how to reduce the impact this has on the woodland.
- Pupils learn to preserve and co-operate with each other through finding dry tinder and working together to maintain a safe fire during more challenging weather conditions.
- Fire can offer awe and wonder to those who sit around it. It has therapeutic and nurturing qualities that can be felt from just sitting, listening, staring, and talking when sitting around it.

Location and seating

The location of the fire must be taken into consideration. The Forest School Leader should choose a position which is free from a lower canopy so smoke can clear quickly and be out of the way from any nesting birds. A fire pit is preferable however at times when a ground fire is necessary, the soil should be suitable and cleared of any material which could easily ignite. A fire should never be lit on the ground in a coniferous woodland or on an extremely dry ground.

The seating around the fire should be situated roughly 1.5 meters away from the fire pit. The seating used should be sturdy enough for the participant using them. When entering and exiting the fire circle, the participant should step over the seat or find a narrow spot to walk through to the seat. Moving around the fire circle should be done from the outside. Games can be played with the children to reinforce this motion. If smoke from the fire is blowing in an obvious direction, then seating will be taken into consideration, otherwise individuals have the right to move safely through exiting the circle by stepping out and moving to a position where the smoke is not. Entering the circle to the fire pit

should only be done so if invited in by a forest school leader. The amount of people around the fire pit is down to the individual forest school leader and the age and experience of the individuals.

Methodology

For preparing, igniting, maintaining, and extinguishing a fire.

Before lighting the fire ensure that:

- A dynamic risk assessment is taken into consideration if conditions are suitable to light a fire (sunny and dry, high winds, heavy rain).
- A safety square is established using four sticks, roughly 1 meter long on a flat, cleared surface.
- Only the fire pan/ pit sits in the safety square.
- The working area is kept clear and organised.
- Fuel collected and organised into various sizes on the floor but off the ground (i.e. on a plastic bag next to the safety square) with the smallest fuel (tinder) nearest to the fire and the larger fuel (kindling - fuel) furthest away.
- A bucket containing enough fresh, clean water to submerge a body part (5L) is in the designated area (kit zone, which all the children and adults participating in Forest Schools are aware of) along with an additional 5L of water contained in a jerrycan with the top loosened for easy access.
- Additional fire safety equipment is on site, including a fire blanket, pair of heat resistant gloves, specialist first aid kit including burn gels (stored in the kit zone), additional hair ties, **another 5L jerrycan to be kept beside the safety square.**
- Reminders concerning expected behaviour and movement around the fire are communicated. These should include walking around the outside of the log circle, observing the RESPECT position (with a kneeling position with one foot firmly on the ground), all loose hair, jewellery and clothing are secured.
- Correct lighting procedure is communicated/ demonstrated (as detailed below).

When lighting the fire ensure that:

- You are in the RESPECT position (a kneeling position with one foot firmly on the ground).

- All loose hair, jewellery and clothing are secured.
- Striker is used away from the body and used with bare hands.
- Vaseline, cotton wool and other naturally sourced materials can be used to start the fire using a dipper stick if needed as opposed to hands due to its highly flammable nature.
- Heat resistant gloves are **worn available to the user** as soon as the tinder ignites.
- A lit fire is never left unattended (**See Pizza Oven policy for exception**).
- Reminders concerning expected behaviour and movement around the fire are communicated.

Maintaining the fire ensure that:

- You are in the RESPECT position (a kneeling position with one foot firmly on the ground).
- All loose hair, jewellery and clothing are secured.
- Heat resistant gloves are worn to feed the fire.
- Fuel is added in ascending order (tinder to fuel).
- The three components of the fire are continually considered (fuel, ignition, and oxygen).
- A lit fire is never left unattended (**See Pizza Oven policy for exception**).
- Children will use a green stick to cook on the open fire (toast, marshmallow, twists).
- Reminders concerning expected behaviour and movement around the fire are communicated.

Extinguishing the fire ensure that:

- Water is poured directly onto the fire in a circular motion working from the outside in from a standing position with a firm bare-handed grip on the water carrier.
- All embers are fully extinguished. A stick is used to stir the embers and water until no visible signs of smoke remain. A heat resistant glove is worn whilst doing this.
- With the gloves still on the pan can be lifted and the extinguished embers dispersed as directed by the Forest School Leaders.

- Additional water is poured onto the ground within the safety square to ensure the area is completely sodden.
- All equipment is put back into designated boxes in an organised manner for storage.
- Safety square can be disassembled to leave a no trace policy unless inside a permanent fire pit.
- [Separate Pizza Oven Policy and Procedures regarding extinguishing the fire.](#)

Toileting and Hand-washing

All children will be encouraged to use the toilet before they come to a Forest School session.

- Main site- Within the main site there is a toilet situated within the welly room which children have free access to during Forest School sessions after informing an adult. Children will be taken inside and given a change of clothes if a toileting accident occurs.
- Nursery site- The children will be encouraged to go beforehand however if they need it whilst on site, another adult will be called to take the children into the Nursery building.
- Poise Brook- Given the age of the children they should be able to use the toilet beforehand and be able to hold it for the session, until we get back to school. In case of an emergency, a wild toileting bag is available which includes a ground sheet for privacy, a trowel to dig a latrine and toilet paper and alcohol gel for handwashing afterwards.

Whenever possible, soap and water will be used for hand washing at snack time if eating on site.

Food Hygiene and Cooking

All Forest School Leaders will ensure that the school maintains high food hygiene standards in relation to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food.

Food safety and cooking procedure:

Food and drink preparation and sitting together whilst eating and drinking are important parts of Forest School. It creates a sense of community and belonging in an environment which is encouraging for trying new and exciting things.

- We will provide hand washing facilities/anti-bacterial gel at each session where food and/or drink is prepared. This will be used by all adults and children involved in preparing, cooking and/or eating and drinking at the Forest School site.
- We will ensure that all staff, volunteers, and participants are made aware and follow the Forest School food hygiene rules.
- Forest School Leaders who are cooking and providing food within a session will hold a Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate.

Everyone involved in Forest School should be involved in food safety and follow the food hygiene rules below.

When involved in food and drink preparation you should:

- Wash hands before and during cooking.
- Not handle food if they are ill with stomach problems, such as diarrhoea or vomiting.
- Cover sores and cuts with a waterproof dressing. Disposable gloves to be worn if necessary.
- Avoid handling food when possible, and instead use suitable tools and utensils. These tools must be clean and appropriate for the task.
- Tie hair back.
- Keep food that is waiting to be cooked separate from food that is ready to be eaten.
- Use separate chopping boards for preparing different foods, especially raw and ready-to-eat food.
- Food will be kept at the correct temperatures in school prior to being used in a forest school session and leaders will check that all foods are in date and not subject to any contamination by pests, mould etc (termly checks apply).
- Ensure food is both stored and carried to and from site in suitable containers.

- Refrigerated or frozen foods must be kept in chilled food containers and not left outside for longer than 2 hours before being used and once cooked or prepared will be eaten within four hours.
- Prepare food on a suitable surface, e.g., chopping board, cup, saucepan and not on the ground.
- Ensure food is cooked thoroughly before serving. Food should be cooked right through and piping hot in the middle.
- Food will be given time to cool down before being shared, particularly with the younger Forest Schoolers to avoid risk of burning.
- Food will not be reheated.
- Keep utensils clean and regularly wash tea towels and cloths.
- Store food in clean plastic containers with non-leaking lids.
- Take all rubbish and food scraps away at the end of the session to avoid attracting vermin to the site. This waste will be disposed of promptly and correctly.

Food allergies and special dietary requirements:

Forest School Leaders have a duty to be aware of children's specific allergy and special dietary requirements. This information will be found on each child's Parental Consent and Registration forms. This information should be provided by each class teacher prior to starting Forest School sessions each year. Any changes must be shared with the Forest School leaders immediately. This information will be used to plan what food and drink to provide during sessions, ensuring that the food and drink provided is suitable for all.

Tool Use Policy

We promote the use of tools at Forest Schools on a regular basis. Using a variety of different tools supports the development of fine and gross motor skills, communication, problems solving skills, in turn improving a child's confidence and self-esteem. Changing the child's perception of a dangerous or risky activity into a useful life skill is an essential part of tool use. This will instil a sense of pride and achievement through continued use and can be transferred into the classroom or home life.

- Only fully trained and experienced Forest School leaders will ever supervise or use tools in sessions.
- A tool safety talk will consist of the makeup of the tool, how to handle it including, holding, walking, and passing to another person. The intended use, PPE, safe working space, where it is stored. A tool safety talk will be given before the use of any tool that is to be used during a session.
- The safety of the group will be continually monitored throughout. Reminders will be given if deemed necessary. If a child is being unsafe with the tool and reminders have been given, the leader has the right to stop the activity for them and try again another time after a reflective chat has been had.
- Tools will only be used if the Forest School leader is happy that the user is safe and confident enough to use certain tools (age appropriate).
- A safe area will be designated and agreed upon with the class, nobody other than the tool users are permitted in the area when a tool is in use.
- Tools are kept in a designated safe box or cupboard both inside and outside. Tools will be placed back into the safe box/cupboard when not in use.
- Gloves and any other PPE will be available to be used when necessary to do so, any person not using the correct PPE will not be able to continue unless suitably dressed.
- All tools are maintained, cleaned, and sharpened by a Forest School leader before being permitted to use.
- First aid kits will be available and taken out with any tool as a precaution. No tool

Weather Contingency

use is permitted without.

All adverse weathers should be risk assessed before the session takes place.

Wet weather:

- Ensure the children have the appropriate clothes and footwear.
- Seek shelter if needed e.g., tarp.

- Continue to deliver sessions but continue with an ongoing risk assessment.
- If the ground becomes too slippery, move the children to a dryer area. If this is not possible it may be appropriate to end the session early.

High winds:

- Continue to deliver sessions but continue with an ongoing risk assessment.
- If the wind is strong enough (Beaufort Wind Force 7) to impact hearing or make the trees unsafe the session will be ended as it is not safe.

Sun:

- Continue to deliver sessions but continue with an ongoing risk assessment.
- It is the parents' responsibility to put suncream on their children prior to the session. If it is a very hot day (exceeds 20°C), extra water will be provided and a shaded area. The session may be cut short if temperatures reach an unsafe level (variables such as wind and shade will be considered), this will be decided on the day by the leader taking the group's needs into consideration.

Snow:

- Continue to deliver sessions but continue with an ongoing risk assessment.
- If the snow becomes too deep and visibility is reduced, the session will

Environmental Considerations

need to end as it is not safe conditions for the children.

Forest School aims to holistically support the development of a child, however, in doing so an importance needs to be placed on the environmental impact the children have on each site. For further details of how we aim to manage the impact on each site see the 'Ecological Impact Assessment' and 'Site Management Plan'.

Pond Dipping

Pond dipping can be a hugely exciting and rewarding activity for all children and even adults. Finding treasures below the surface, you quickly realise there is a whole other world to discover.

- Access will be controlled with fencing surrounding the site, and the pond effectively closed when not in use. Signs will be placed to alert people of the dangers of deep water.
- Pupils will be supervised at all times when using the site. The ratio of adults to children will be such that each adult can easily supervise those they are responsible for.
- During any activity children with cuts on their hands will be required to cover them with waterproof plasters or wear suitable gloves. Ingestion of water will be avoided through supervision of all pupils. All children will wash their hands after the activity, especially before eating.
- Clear signage will be used at the access points to the pond. For example, a sign stating, '**No unaccompanied children**', or, if ice forms during the winter '**Danger: thin ice**'.
- Children and adults will be made to wear appropriate footwear.
- Any adult acting in a supervisory role should read the pond dipping policy and the accident and emergency policy and procedure.
- A 'Pond Risk Assessment' will be available for further information.

Den Building

All Forest School Leaders will ensure the safe practice of den building throughout each session by adhering to the following rules. Equipment which may be used during den building is pallets, sticks, branches, rope, tarpaulin, and tent pegs.

- Check that all equipment is safe and sturdy enough to use e.g., no damage to the crates, no fraying of the rope.
- Make sure children carry sticks/branches dragging along the ground if working alone, or carefully with a partner holding the other end.
- Heavy items, such as pallets, should be moved with care with a partner to avoid strain or injury.
- Consider the strength of branches being used as part of the den to avoid them snapping and causing harm from falling objects.
- No heavy items to be placed on top of the den to avoid harm from falling objects.
- Consider the weather and therefore the appropriate shelter to be built e.g., wind strength and direction.
- Consider the ground the den is built upon and that it's firm enough to withstand a structure.

Tree Climbing

Climbing trees and being off the ground may be considered one of the riskier activities at Forest schools, but the benefits far outweigh the risks involved. Tree climbing can help with gross and fine motor skills, physical strength, balance, co-ordination, and spatial awareness. Sitting in a tree after scaling it and looking at the surroundings at a different level changes a child's perspective of their environment and can feel closer to nature.

- Rules are prompted at the start of every session during the check in.
- No more than three people are allowed in an individual tree at one time.
- A two-metre height limit is in place and no higher than this is permitted within any tree.

- A three-point contact rule is encouraged to be used when tree climbing. Meaning that three parts of the body, hands or feet must be always in contact with the tree.
- Tree climbing is suspended in particularly wet or windy weather due to the safety of those involved.
- Any damage to trees is to be reported to an adult who can assess if it is safe to continue.
- Forest School leaders will continually monitor for damage, obstacles, or any safety issues regarding trees.
- Dynamic risk assessments will take place throughout the sessions by the Forest School Leaders and changed if necessary.
- Insurance is in place to cover tree climbing and a yearly tree inspection will take

any
wear
from a
professional.

Manual Handling

place,
accessing
signs or
and tear

Manual handling covers a variety of activities including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, and carrying. If any of these actions are not carried out correctly there is a risk of injury. Within forest school, there is greater risk of harm due to the nature of the subject. Therefore, this policy has been created to provide training and procedures designed to support adults and children to carry out these tasks.

Responsibility of Forest School Lead and Employer:

- Follow guidelines in place for your own safety
- Make proper use of equipment provided
- Notify FSL or employer if new hazards arise
- Model correct procedures

- Take care to ensure activities do not put others at risk

Common tasks and operations which may be carried out at Forest School:

- Digging woodchip, soil, stones, and sand
- Lifting and pushing wheelbarrow - Nobody should attempt to lift a load which is too heavy to manage comfortably
- Lifting and moving outdoor equipment all forest school related
- Pushing and pulling of trolleys
- Lifting and moving deliveries
- Loads should be checked before lifting to ensure no sharp objects or possible tears routes are to be obstruction free
- Adults and children should seek assistance if the load is too heavy to lift or move
- Adults and children should not attempt to use tools if beyond their reach. A ladder or stepping stool should be used
- A makeshift device should not be used as a stepping stool or for climbing e.g., a chair.

Guidance is given to children on what they need to consider before or during any lifting. They must always consider:

- individual capacity
- The nature of the load
- Environmental conditions
- And training

If there is a need to lift something manually a recommended carrying technique is:

1. Plan the lift.
 - Decide on where the load is to be placed
 - Can handling aids be used?
 - Get help with the load if required
 - Remove any obstructions from path

- Where possible use a mechanical aid such as a trolley or a barrow
- For a long load, consider resting the load midway on a table or a bench
change grip

2. Lifting technique.

- Feet should be apart giving a balance stable base
- The leading leg should be placed forward in a comfortable position in the direction you intend to go
- Avoid wearing tight clothing or footwear, which may make this difficult

3. Adopt a good posture.

- When lifting from a low level bend your knees
- Do not kneel over flex the knees
- Keep the back straight
- Over the load if necessary to get a good grip
- Keep the shoulders level and facing in the same direction as the hips
- Where possible keep the load as close to the body and make sure the heaviest part of the load is the closest
- Avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways

4. Lifting, moving and placement

- Lift smoothly and keep control of the load
- If turning direction make sure you move your feet and not twist your body
- Put the load down first and adjust by sliding into the desired position

Beekeeping

This policy applies to all beekeeping activities conducted on the school grounds, including the installation, maintenance, and management of beehives. It covers students, staff, visitors, and volunteers involved in beekeeping activities.

- To provide students with hands-on educational experiences related to biology, ecology, and environmental science.
- To contribute to local pollination efforts and biodiversity.
- To ensure the safe handling of bees and hive products.
- To protect students, staff, and visitors from potential bee-related risks and ensure that all safety measures are followed.

1. Location

- The bees have been placed in an unused area of forest school therefore low-traffic.
- There is a playground on the other side of the fence, however a length of screening has been attached to the fence to allow bees to fly over and above this.

2. Hive Management

- Beehives will be maintained by trained staff Hayley, Andy and Lucy.
- Weekly inspections will be conducted to ensure that the hives are healthy and that the bees are free from disease or pests.

3. Safety Measures

- All individuals interacting with the bees must wear appropriate protective gear, including bee suits, gloves, and veils.
- Students and staff will not be allowed to approach the hives without supervision.
- A first-aid kit containing necessary supplies, such as antihistamines, and an epinephrine auto-injector (if necessary) will be in the Bee-bumbag and taken to site every session.

- Emergency contact numbers for medical professionals will be displayed near the beekeeping area.
- Training on bee safety and awareness will be provided to staff and students involved in the program. Beekeepers are to have an up to date first aid.
- **In the event of a bee sting this procedure will be followed:**
 - i. One adult to go out of the bee area with the pupil who has been stung and the other adult to stay with the rest of the group and the hive, ready to close up and end the session if needed.
 - ii. Beekeeper who is to stay with child, remove sting if sting present and apply or administer any further first aid as first aider sees fit including administering anti-allergy medication.
 - iii. Monitor the child for potential signs of anaphylaxis.
 - iv. If symptoms worsen, ring 999 and have the other adult ring office to contact parents and continue to follow the emergency procedure outlined above.
 - v. Take the child to A & E rather than waiting for an ambulance.

4. Educational Component

- Beekeeping will be incorporated into the school's curriculum for students, providing them with an understanding of pollination, ecology, and the importance of bees in the environment.
- Students will be encouraged to participate in beekeeping activities, including hive inspections, observation of bee behaviour, and learning about the products of the hive (e.g., honey, beeswax).
- Workshops, presentations, and field trips may be organized to enhance students' knowledge and interest in beekeeping.

5. Risk Management and Liability

- Risk assessments will be conducted prior to the introduction of beekeeping on school grounds, identifying potential hazards and outlining mitigation strategies.
- Parents/guardians of students who will participate in beekeeping activities must give consent via class dojo, acknowledging awareness of the potential risks involved. Hayley to keep a list of children with consent and allergies.
- The school will maintain liability insurance coverage that includes beekeeping activities to address potential injuries or property damage. Hayley is also a member of the BBKA (The British Beekeepers' Association) which provides insurance cover for third party public and product liability insurance.

6. Bee Removal or Relocation

- If a swarm or colony becomes a risk to students, staff, or the public, immediate action will be taken to safely remove or relocate the bees by Alan Towse, Stockport Beekeeper.
- Swarming bees will be monitored and, if necessary, professionally handled to ensure the safety of the school community.

7. Hive Products

- Any honey or beeswax harvested from the hives will be handled following all food safety guidelines. These products may be used for educational purposes, sold as part of school fundraising efforts, or donated to local community projects.
- Labels will clearly indicate the origin of the products and any potential allergens and not suitable for children under the age of 1.

Pizza Oven

The school's clay pizza oven, crafted with the hands of our children, represents a shared community project and a continuation of ancestral fire traditions. Just as our open fires teach us vital skills, the oven offers a unique opportunity to connect with history, teamwork, and the joy of shared sustenance. Its high, retained heat requires a heightened level of respect and adherence to strict safety protocols, ensuring its use remains a positive, educational, and safe experience for the entire school community.

Benefits of the Oven

The pizza oven extends the educational benefits of our fire sessions by:

- Providing an opportunity to explore food preparation methods linked to history and different cultures.
- Teaching the respect required for high-temperature containment fires and their specific cooling needs.
- Fostering a sense of pride and community ownership in maintaining a school resource.
- Enabling children to taste the fruits of their collected and prepared ingredients.

Location, Access, and Signage

- **Location:** The clay oven is permanently situated in the north-western part of the school site and is protected by a small roof structure to preserve its integrity.
- **Safety Zone:** Whenever the oven is lit or cooling (i.e., until the fire is confirmed to be cold), a physical safety barrier (rope) must be established around the area.

- Warning Signage: Clear warning signs stating "Pizza Oven Lit / Hot Fire Hazard - Do Not Cross Barrier" must be displayed prominently.
- Extended Caution: The safety barriers and signage MUST remain in place until the following day when the designated Forest School Leader or staff member has confirmed the oven is completely extinguished and cool to the touch.

Methodology: Preparing, Igniting, and Maintaining

- Operator Responsibility: Due to the extreme, contained temperatures reached by the oven, only trained and designated adult staff members are permitted to conduct the following activities:
 - Lighting the oven.
 - Managing the fire and fuel within the oven.
 - Any process that requires working at the oven opening or managing the heat.
- Children's Role: Children are welcome to participate in preparing food and managing the *process* of cooking when directed by an adult, but they are strictly prohibited from lighting, managing, or attempting to extinguish the fire.
- PPE: Designated staff must wear appropriate heat-resistant gloves, apron, and closed-toe footwear when operating the oven.
- Fire Contained: The fire is contained wholly within the structure of the clay oven. All other general school fire regulations must be followed.
- Fuel Storage: Fuel must be stored in a dry, designated area safely away from the oven and the rope-off cooling zone.

Extinguishing and Cooling

Unlike the open fire pit which is extinguished with water, the clay oven demands a different and deliberate method of cooling. This process honours the structure of the oven and ensures site safety.

- No Water Extinguishing: Water MUST NEVER be used to extinguish the clay oven fire.
 - The Danger: The intense heat instantly converts water to steam, which expands rapidly (doubling its volume), creating a high risk of severe scalding and injury.
 - Structural Integrity: Rapid cooling by water severely compromises the clay and fire bricks, leading to cracking and structural failure.
- Natural Cooling Protocol: The oven MUST be left to cool down naturally.
 - Where possible, a wooden door or insulated plug will be placed over the oven opening once cooking is complete. This reduces oxygen and facilitates a quicker, though still natural, cooling process.
 - This slow, natural cooling ensures the oven's longevity and the safety of everyone on site.

Communication and Site Awareness

- After-Hours Alert: Designated staff are responsible for ensuring that all individuals who may be on site while the oven is cooling (including staff for after-school clubs, site managers, and external users) are formally alerted that the oven is hot and that the safety ropes and signage must remain in place.
- This information must be clearly communicated and understood by those responsible for supervising children on site during cooling periods.

Maintenance

- The pizza oven must be visually inspected by a designated staff member before each use for any cracks or damage. A thorough structural inspection will be conducted annually.

Data Protection & Consent

School acquires all consent forms in the admission of the child starting school. All details of the children are held at the main office. Updated medical, dietary and photography content are accessible on the 'Staff drive' and will be made known to all Forest School Practitioners on site. New consent forms will be required for the Poise Brook site which holds an emergency contact and will be taken to the site as and when needed.

Other Policies

Although Dial Park Forest School has many of its own policies and procedures, we still adhere to schools' health main procedures in:

- Safeguarding
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Inclusion
- Equal Opportunities Policy

All the above policies can be found on our school main website or can be shown upon request in the schools reception

<https://www.dialpark.stockport.sch.uk/documentation.html>

Insurance Agreement

No transport insurance is required. All sessions are either on one of the school sites or within walking distance. Our insurance is provided by Birnbeck Insurance who cover Forest School activity across all three sites. If there are any changes, the insurance company will be notified, and amendments made where necessary.

Evaluation Procedure

To develop the Forest School program, ensure good practice is maintained and child-led planning is followed we will:

- Evaluate each session looking at what values and SPICES are being developed or need further development.
- Seek evaluation from the children and use this to inform future planning.
- Seek evaluation and opinions from all staff involved within the session.

Review

All policies and procedures are all working documents and will be amended as and when needed, however if no amendments have been made, they will be reviewed yearly to meet the needs of the children attending Forest School.