



Buxworth Primary School Forest Schools Policy

“And into the forest I go, to lose my mind and find my soul”

- **John Muir**

Aims and Objectives

Our objectives in the teaching of Forest Schools are:

- To provide an experience that encourages an appreciation, awareness and knowledge of the natural environment.
- To learn to respect and care for the local environment both within our school eco area and within the wider community.
- To develop self-esteem, independence and imagination whilst taking appropriate risks within set boundaries.
- To work harmoniously within a group or independently, respecting the views and ideas of others.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

At Buxworth Primary School, we make Forest Schools an enjoyable learning experience. We encourage children to participate in a variety of outdoor experiences through which we aim to build up the confidence of all children.

We teach them to be resilient in facing their challenges and encourage them to take risks in a safe and controlled manner. As children get older, we introduce them to the use of tools and because they can maintain their concentration for longer they are taught how to safely light a fire and to leave no trace of one by extinguishing it safely.

We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- We will set tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- We will set tasks of increasing difficulty (not all children complete all tasks);
- We will maintain a safe environment in order to maximise the learning experience in the outdoor setting.
- We will ensure that during all Forest schools sessions all people are treated equally regardless of ability, age, culture, race or gender.
- We will ensure all people will be included and offered the chance to take part in the activities in a nutrient and caring way.

- We will promote the value of working together by respecting others views and ideas.

THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

We teach Forest Schools in the Reception Class as part of the topic work covered during the year. As the Reception Class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, the children's experiences link to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Forest schools contributes to a child's personal and social development. Counting sticks fosters a child's mathematical ability, and exploring their natural environment and animal habitats increase a child's knowledge and understanding of the world.

Forest Schools and Inclusion

At our school, we offer Forest Schools to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. We have staff who are both forest school and SEN trained alongside parent helpers to provide a good ratio of adults to children, therefore providing additional support to those children who may need it. We also take into account special dietary requirements and ensure alternative snacks are available where necessary.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Teachers will assess children in Forest Schools by making informal judgments as they observe them during the sessions.

We use our class Golden Books (and Study Books in Y6) to showcase some of their experiences in Forest schools , we also display photos in school and on the class webpage.

RESOURCES

There are a wide range of resources for all Forest Schools teaching in school. We keep most of them in a central area in school but the Forest School leaders may also bring equipment in for their sessions. These can be easily accessed and be returned each day. At various points in the year we are able to buy more resources such as hammocks, flint and steels, ropes and tarpaulin.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The coordination and planning of Forest Schools is the responsibility of the L3 qualified Forest School leaders within school who also:

- support colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in Forest Schools and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- gives the head teacher an informal summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in music and indicates areas for further improvement;



This policy was written: June 2020

Reviewed: September 2024

Next review: September 2026

This policy will be reviewed: Every two years.

Subject Lead: Mrs Rudder