



**FUN, FRIENDS  
AND FIRM  
FOUNDATIONS**

**PLAXTOL NURSERY SCHOOL, MEMORIAL HALL, SCHOOL LANE, PLAXTOL, SEVENOAKS TN15 0QD**



# Health and Safety Handbook

### Handbook Review

Date of review	Signed by	Comments

### **Rules of Forest School:**

- Do not pick anything growing
- Do not put your fingers or anything else in your mouth
- Stay within the forest school boundary unless instructed by an adult
- Always walk in forest school
- Be very careful with sticks, no throwing or swinging things around. They may hurt someone.
- Show things you find to the grown-ups. They are always interested.
- Look after your Forest School and have fun

### **The Countryside Code: (Forest School is on site but this code needs to be observed when we use other sites)**

There are five sections of The Countryside Code which we need to think about when doing Forest School.

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Check that dogs are under close control
- Consider other people

### **Procedures to be carried out before each session:**

- A thorough sweep of the site will be done before each session to check for and litter, glass animal faeces, etc. Any such items should be collected using plastic bags and disposable gloves.
- A written record will be kept of each sweep. This should state if any hazards were found and how they were dealt with.
- Trees will be checked for any broken or dead branches which may fall.
- Weather conditions will be checked and if there are high winds or a thunder storm then Forest School will have to be cancelled.

### **Session Plan:**

- Put on appropriate Forest School kit in classroom.
- Walk to our Forest School entrance
- Use sticky elbows to count children in
- Read a story book
- Children carry out a site sweep risk assessment of their own and return back to base camp to discuss how they will manage risks.
- Children are introduced to a new activity, if appropriate they are shown the area that this activity will take place in and the range of activities available previously are still offered
- Children are offered hot chocolate drink
- Game of 1,2,3 where are you? (if there is time)
- Children reform circle and reflect on what they enjoyed in Forest School during that session
- Return to classroom

### **Procedures to be carried out at the end of each session:**

Clear everything away

- Count equipment back in
- Feedback to class teacher and give observation and/or opportunities to use Forest School learning in the classroom

## Legislation and Health and Safety Procedures

Forest School sessions will consider the responsibility to maintain the Health and Safety of: all adults working in the area in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974: all children working in the area under the Children's Act 1989 and seek to ensure the Every Child Matters values are upheld. The main considerations relevant to Forest School sessions are detailed below:

- Adults (Forest School Helpers) will be asked to read the Forest School handbook, particularly the risk assessment, at the beginning of the session.
- The Forest School Leader will carry out a Forest School site assessment (safety sweep) immediately prior to the session and notify Forest School Helpers of any changes in conditions from the general risk assessment.
- The Forest School Leader will inform the Forest School Helpers of the activities and inform them of any special safety considerations.
- To ensure staff and pupil safeguarding, any accidents and incidents will be recorded and reviewed to determine whether they could have been avoided and appropriate changes to procedures or policies will be made if necessary.
- The Forest School Leader is a qualified First Aider and will have a first aid kit and administer first aid. In the event of more serious incidents see 'Emergency Procedures' pages.
- To support the Forest School Leader in maintaining care for the health and safety of pupils and staff, Forest School Helpers are asked to actively manage risks by reporting them or removing them when possible or safe to do so.

All people attending the Forest School session are required to wear the appropriate clothing to carry out Forest School activities safely. For guidance see the 'Clothing list and Equipment List'

## **Essential Equipment List**

- Register with emergency numbers/ contact numbers
- Medical forms
- Mobile phone
- Newspaper
- Matches
- Wet wipes
- Protective gloves
- Sun cream
- Plasters
- Bandages
- Scissors
- Water bottle with water for drinking/ washing
- Thermal wrap sheet
- Pamphlet on hypothermia and first aid
- Container for inhalers
- Carry bag for dirty/ wet clothing

## **Clothing List for Everyone**

- Woolly hat/sun hat
- Gloves
- Jacket/waterproof coat
- Fleece/sweatshirt
- Long trousers
- Square socks
- Sturdy shoes/wellies/boots
- An emergency change of clothes and a carrier bag for dirty/wet clothing

## **Sun Policy**

- Ensure the children have plenty of fresh drinking water on site,
- Children are wearing caps or hats
- They have sun cream
- There is plenty of shade or if not erect a tarpaulin to create shade
- Time outside is kept to a minimum

## **Travel Policy**

The children will leave the classroom and will walk across the big garden playground to the Forest School Site. If the children were to leave the premises then the school's standard risk assessment and travel procedures will be put into place.



## FUN, FRIENDS AND FIRM FOUNDATIONS

**Plaxtol Nursery School, Memorial Hall, School Lane, Plaxtol, Sevenoaks TN15 0QD**

Dear Parents/Carers,

Plaxtol Nursery School has developed a Forest School within the Wildlife garden of Plaxtol School Ground. We are really lucky to have Mrs Rowley's (Headteacher of Plaxtol School) permission to use the space for our forest school activities. Forest School gives children the unique opportunity of experiencing first hand, play and learning in a controlled outdoor environment. Adedayo Olufote holds a Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership; Post Graduate Certificate in Education and a Qualified Teachers Status. I will be leading a series of two Forest School sessions weekly with a small group of children on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons commencing after half term the *28th October 2019*. We keep a smaller adult ratio of 1 adult to 4 children.

### **What is Forest School?**

Forest School is an ethos which encourages the development of children's emotional and physical development through outdoor play, activities and exploration in a woodland environment. The philosophy of Forest School is to encourage and inspire individuals of any age through positive experiences and participation in engaging and motivating achievable tasks and activities fostering:

- Independence
- Confidence
- Communication Skills
- Self-esteem.

Originally a concept developed in Denmark, children attending Forest Schools were found to have developed strong social skills, the ability to work in groups effectively and generally had high esteem and confidence in their own



capabilities. These attributes proved to be an effective foundation that raised academic achievements and is therefore an excellent way to support the National Curriculum and consolidate learning in the classroom.

### **Forest School at Plaxtol Nursery School**

Forest School takes place outdoors whatever the weather. With the exception of very high winds and thunder storms, please assume that your child will be outside when they take part in Forest Schools, even if it is for a shortened session. Therefore, waterproof clothing will be provided for your child. We ask you to supply wellington or walking boots, and on sunny days, a sun hat and sun cream; on colder days, warm clothing. Please bear in mind your child could possibly get muddy!

We will undertake activities such as shelter building, bug hunting, den making, knot tying and other creative tasks. Many activities will be spontaneous, based upon the children's interest. Forest School activities involve the lighting of fires and the use of tools such as peelers and small bow saws. However, at this early stage, your child will **NOT** be using tools or lighting fires. You will be notified in advance of any tool or fire work planned.

Finally, we have a large amount of risk assessments and policies in place, which you are welcome to read through. Some of these are listed in our handbook to assure you that all risks have been reduced to an acceptable level. All of our activities will be checked for safety and risk assessments will be carried out. If you are happy for your child to take part in Forest School, then please complete the attached consent form. If you have any questions, I will be happy to talk to you.

### **Clothing List for Everyone**

- Woolly hat/sun hat
- Gloves
- Jacket/waterproof coat
- Fleece/sweatshirt
- Long trousers
- Square socks
- Sturdy shoes/wellies/boots
- An emergency change of clothes and a carrier bag for dirty/wet clothing

We thank you for your support during this exciting time for your child and the Nursery

Yours faithfully,

Adedayo Olufote

Forest School Leader

Cut.....

I, being the parent/carer of.....

agree/do not agree for my child to participate in the Forest School activities at Plaxtol Nursery School.

Signed ..... Date.....

### Forest School Medical Information Form

Child's Full Name	
Date of Birth	
Contact Name and relationships to child	
Home Address	
Phone numbers	Home Work Mobile
Doctor	Address  Phone

Has your child had any of the following?

Illness	Comment	Medication needed Please specify
Asthma/ Bronchitis		
Sight/hearing difficulties		
Heart condition		
Diabetes		
Epilepsy		
Allergies: e.g. hens, feathers, pollen, nuts, materials		
Have you ever been stung by a wasp or bee? If yes, describe the reaction		
Date of last tetanus injection		

I give permission for my child ..... to receive First Aid/ medical attention as needed whilst in the care of a representative from Forest School

Any other information you would like us to know:

Signed:

Date:

### Safety Sweep Evidence

Before each Forest School session there will be safety sweep of the Forest School site to look for and assess immediate risks. All safety sweeps will be recorded and filled by the Forest School Leader. Safety sweeps will be recorded and stored in the Health and Safety folder.

Date:	Time:	Weather:
Name of Forest School Leader:		

Checklist	Yes/No	Comments
Fallen branches		
Low branches		
Protruding thorns		
Brambles/nettles		
Slippery areas		
Broken glass/ needles		
Vandalism/ intruders		
Weather effects		
Standing water		
Boundary line/ fence		
Base camp		
Tool area roped off		
Emergency rucksack		
Equipment ready		
Square clothes		

**Other hazards identified:**

**Action taken:**

## **Risk Management of Tools and Equipment**

Risk management of sharp tools:

- Equipment will be checked at the beginning of each session
- Tools such as knives should be kept in a locked box
- Tools should only be used in a clearly designated area
- Children should be using tools in a low supervision ratio. 1:1 for peelers.
- When children are using tools, they should be sat with no one close to them (the blood bubble)
- Children should know that if they enter the tool area that they must proceed with caution not entering the blood bubble
- Knives and peelers should be used away from the body and children should be sat away in a balanced way
- Bow saws and pruning saws should always be used with a glove on the non-sawing hand
- Tools should be cleaned before they are put away
- Tools would be counted back at the end of the session

Risk management of other tools:

- Equipment will be checked at the beginning of each session
- Tools such as trowels should be used appropriately and in designated areas
- Although children will not be closely supervised the expectation is that the children will use the equipment appropriately
- Children should be aware of others if using tools and vice versa
- Tools will be counted back at the end

Risk management of other equipment:

- Equipment will be checked at the beginning of each session for safety
- Although children will not be closely supervised the expectation is that the children will use the equipment appropriately
- Equipment will be counted back at the end
- Damaged and broken equipment will be removed and eventually replaced

**No tools should be taken out of Forest School during the session.**

**All tools should remain in the Designated tool area during the session**

## **Incident procedures during a Forest School session**

### **Major:**

- Forest School leader to call 999 and give appropriate first aid
- Other adults (1 and 2) to get the children back to base camp and then organised to return to classroom
- Adult 1 to watch out for and direct ambulance
- Adult 2 sent to notifies parents of child and gets support
- Incident recorded on a major incident form and reported to the local authority.

### **Minor:**

- Forest School leader to decide whether to administer first aid or to delegate to helper 1, if first aid trained, Incident recorded in log book
- Nursery first aid procedure followed. If head bump a letter home with child etc.

### **Missing child (Forest School on site but this procedure should be observed when using outside site)**

- Forest School leader returns children to base camp
- Adult 1 begins looking for missing child
- Adult 1 to immediately check the pond area and ensure the barrier are still in order and no child is in or near the barrier or pond.
- Adult 1 check the 3 gates to the Wildlife garden, also check if any part of the 1m high fence has been pulldown
- Adult 2 reports missing child to others practitioners in nursery and gets back up support
- As the site is secure the child should be on school property. If it is suspected that the child has left the property then the policy states the police should be called, this should be done at the discretion of the most senior member of staff on site.
- Forest school leader to occupy the children, story, discussion etc. return them to classroom as and when the issue has resolved

### **Evacuation of the site: General and specific to Fire**

- If appropriate, the Forest School leader returns the children to base camp briefly. Follow Nursery Fire Evacuation Procedure.
- Once assembled children should be swiftly directed to the nearest safe exit and the usual fire assembly point on the school site, or inside if it is more appropriate. Adult 1 should be the last person out.

### **Lookdown procedure**

- On hearing the lockdown signal the FS leader calls the children back to base camp briefly
- Once assembled and counted children should walk swiftly back into classroom if safe, where the children will hide and wait for the all clear
- If it is unsafe to return to classroom then everyone should hide, keep quiet and contact the nursery/999

## **Designated person responsibility**

### Forest school leader role

- Risk assess Forest School site, activities and use of tools. Risk assessment conducted, signed and dated termly.
- Complete safety sweep before the session and make sure the Risk assessment is in date and signed
- Plan, lead and facilitate learning, sharing session plans with teaching staff
- Administer First Aid or delegate to an appropriate first aider
- Ensure everyone is wearing the correct clothing
- Make observations of the children

### Forest school assistants' role

- All adults should make themselves aware of procedures and emergency procedures.
- Liaise with Forest School lead over the session plan
- Be a non-interrupting aid to learning, to scaffold all children learning
- Make observations of children as directed by Forest School lead
- Take photo evidence of session and observations of children
- Help with snack/ drink
- Be a positive role model
- Toileting children according procedure



**Adult 1:**

Today, please can you help by observing the children, scaffolding their learning and taking photos to document their learning.

In case of major incident –

- to get the children back to base camp and then organised to return to classroom
- direct the ambulance. The postcode is TN15 0QD

In case of minor incident – please report to the Forest School Leader.

In case of an evacuation – please leave Forest School walking behind the children

If a child needs to go to the toilet, the child will need to be accompanied to the classroom as agreed with FS leader

It is an important part of your role in Forest School to facilitate and observe the children, enabling them to learn independently and to make their own choices.

**Adult 2:**

Today, please can you help by observing the children, scaffolding their learning and taking photos to document their learning.

In case of major incident –

- help to get the children back to base camp and then organised to return to classroom
- sent to notifies parents of child and gets support

In case of minor incident – please report to the Forest School Leader.

In case of an evacuation – please leave Forest School walking behind the children

If a child needs to go to the toilet, the child will need to be accompanied to the classroom as agreed with FS leader

It is an important part of your role in Forest School to facilitate and observe the children, enabling them to learn independently and to make their own choices.

## Toileting

- Children should be allowed to the toilets as usual in nursery toilet. Notifying the FS leader.
- Children should report back to the person that sent them when they return, and notify the FS leader.
- No tools or equipment should be taken from the forest school site.
- Ratio management- Adult with Forest school leader should remain on site and call for help from other adults in the room for support.
- **Volunteers** - If a child needs to go to the toilet, please don't take the child yourself however, inform the FS leader who will inform one of our staff members to help.

## Insurance Requirements

Forest School takes place on the school site and is covered by the nursery insurance policy.

### Ecological impact and 3-year sustainability plan

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Find site: Plaxtol School Wildlife Garden	Review/Evaluate- involve children- what do they like, use the most or least	Review (repeat all from Year 2)
Plan site with children. The areas for different activities such as digging, base camp etc	Maintenance	Rest areas / rotate
Resources – logs, sticks, fencing for the pond, barriers, children clothing, binoculars, magnifying glasses etc	Maintenance	Expand
Photograph seasonally	Photograph again	Alternative site
Create habitats bug hotels/log pile	Assess and repair damages- may need to reorganise as a result	
Risk Assessment - termly and safety sweep before each session	Check right time to cut branches and prune (November to February)	

## Ecological Impact of Forest school activities on some areas

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Walking	This may wear the earth surface.	Create a new path and allow other path to rest. Allow the whole site to rest and plants to grow before new forest school session starts.
Playing	This might cause disturbance to the plant and hopefully no pulling of plants	Remind the children of the no picking, no licking forest school rules and ensure both adult and children follow the rules.
Finding insects	This may disturb the habitat that live in our forest school site.	Ensure that children carefully observe the habitats and return animals to their habitats.
Noise level	It might have impact on birds that live in the trees.	Encourage the children to keep the noise level low and let them know the reasons.
Digging	May have impact on creatures that live underground. It might also damage the earth surface.	Assess the area after each session. It might be necessary to allow the area earth surface to rest or create a new area if necessary.
Tree climbing and shelter building	May cause damage to trees	Assess each tree to ensure we use trees at will be suitable.
Collecting natural materials	This may have impact on some plants and animals and their habitats.	Ensure only fallen items are collected and ensure the children are not picking.
Snack Time	Use of wet wipes and tissues.	Ensure nothing is left behind in the forest school site and use biodegradable tissues.

## Risk Assessment of Plaxtol Nursery Forest School Site (Wildlife Garden)

Date assessed \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Hazard	Potential Harm	Risk Level L, M, H	Existing measures / New measures	Who will do it? When?	Risk Level after control L, M, H
Very cold, hot, wet or windy weather	Exposure and dehydration, hypo/hyperthermia	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advise all to wear appropriate outdoor clothing.</li> <li>- Wear sun cream and sun hat if very hot.</li> </ul> No forest school if it is very or too windy or shortened session	Forest school leader (Dayo)  Before forest school session.	M
Pond and bridge	Slip into pond and wobbly bridge	H	A new 1meter high fence put round the pond and bridge to prevent children accessing the pond and bridge  In addition. A 1 meter high fence/ barrier for forest school boundary.	Forest school leader (Dayo)  Check the fence before forest school session	M
Uneven / slippery ground	Slips, trips and falls	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- wear appropriate outdoor footwear</li> <li>- Safety talk to be given at start of activity</li> <li>- Recommend no running</li> <li>- Children put into groups when necessary for activities &amp; supervised by an adult</li> </ul>	Forest school leader (Dayo)  Pre-visit site check carried out.	M

Tools	Cuts, grazes, amputation	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tools stored away in locked storage out of site.</li> <li>- Strict supervision (1:1 ratio), correct use of tools.</li> <li>- Separate risk assessment for each tool.</li> </ul>	<p>Forest school leader (Dayo)</p> <p>Designated area for tool activities.</p>	L
Mud / dirty hands	Infections, cuts etc	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide wet wipes and water</li> <li>- Use antibacterial gel</li> <li>- Ensure hand cleaning before snack time in forest school and lunch and at end of session</li> </ul>	<p>Forest school leader (Dayo) to provide water, antibacterial gel and wipes.</p> <p>All adults to supervise the children.</p>	L
Stinging and biting insects	Possible allergic reaction, poisoning, choking	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Find out about known allergic reactions within group.</li> <li>- Warn children about wasps.</li> <li>- Discuss poisonous plants and fungi – warn children not to eat anything or put fingers in mouth.</li> <li>- Everyone to wash hands before lunch.</li> <li>- Carry antiseptic wipes</li> </ul>	<p>Group leader to find out about allergies and do safety talk</p>	L
Medical conditions	Asthma, diabetes, epilepsy etc	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Find out about known conditions before session.</li> <li>- Have children medication on site.</li> <li>- First aid on site</li> </ul>	<p>Group leader to take responsibility for medical conditions of children and to bring equipment eg inhalers</p>	M
Tree roots and stumps	Tripping	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inform all to take care in woods, clear walkways of tree roots.</li> </ul>	<p>All adults on site</p>	H

Tree branches	Branches falling, children falling	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pre-visit &amp; continuous risk check, remove hanging dead wood.</li> <li>- Remind children of risks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forest school leader (Dayo)</li> <li>- Prior to &amp; on visit.</li> </ul>	L
Missing child	Exposure, injury, panic and shock	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure the fire exit gate is shut and clear.</li> <li>- Highlight boundaries using 1 meter high fence.</li> <li>- Staff familiarise themselves with Lost or Missing Person Procedure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forest school leader (Dayo)</li> <li>- All adults on site</li> </ul>	L
Sticks/ Stones	Hitting and throwing	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inform children of rules.</li> <li>- Use a stick no longer than your arm.</li> <li>- No hitting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All adults</li> <li>- At the beginning of each session</li> </ul>	M
Chicken on site	Allergy and contamination	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boundary to cut out the area with the chickens.</li> <li>Children aware of not to put things into their mouth.</li> <li>Medical information acquired prior to sessions start</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forest school leader (Dayo)</li> <li>- All adults on site</li> <li>- All children</li> </ul>	M
Faeces (especially chicken, fox and bird)	Contamination	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- During sweep, remove any faeces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All adults.</li> <li>- At the beginning of each session</li> </ul>	M
Debris / rubbish	Glass, metals.	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ask children not to pick up rubbish, but instead to inform an adult if they find something.</li> <li>- Adult to remove safely.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All adults.</li> <li>Prior to and during each session.</li> </ul>	L
Ropes and swings	Falls	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Check quality of ropes &amp; knots.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All adults.</li> </ul>	L

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure children do not go through the boundary.</li> <li>- First aider on site at all times</li> </ul>	Prior to and during each session.	
Food preparation	Food poisoning, allergies	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Check medical forms for allergies.</li> <li><b>-No raw food cooking.</b></li> <li>- Ensure all food is stored correctly prior to cooking. -</li> <li>- Ensure all children use hand sanitizer before cooking.</li> <li>-Ensure all cooking equipment is clean.</li> </ul>	Forest school leader (Dayo) and all adults during each session.	L
Fire	Burns, sparks	M	<p>Fire activities will be very limited or no fire activities.</p> <p>Children will sit 1.2 meters from fire and 1:1 during fire activity.</p> <p>Separate risk assessment for fire activity</p>	Forest school leader	L

#### Emergency Arrangements

**Serious Accident:** Seek additional adult help, provide first aid, call ambulance 999, inform parents (next of kin). Return all other children into the classroom, keep them calm, read stories, sing songs etc. Write up accident report form, inform HSE, assess risk assessment and make new adjustments for future.

**Minor Accident:** Provide first aid, complete accident report form, inform parents (carer), assess risk assessment and make adjustments for future.

**Weather change:** Make dynamic risk assessment, seek shelter or return to classroom.



Emergency Arrangements
Safety Advice
<p><b>Clothing:</b> long trousers and long sleeves, warm clothing in cold weather, waterproof clothing in wet weather. Spare clothing available in the classroom for emergencies.</p> <p><b>Communications:</b> Mobile phone or member of staff to use land line in office.</p> <p><b>First Aid:</b> Nursery first aid kit to be taken for each visit. *See <i>handbook for full list of what is needed.</i></p> <p><b>Food and Drink:</b> wash hands before eating, sit for eating and drinking, take snack and drink for full sessions, take cups, wet wipes and kitchen roll.</p> <p><b>Children's safety advice:</b> remind children of rules being outside.</p> <p><b>Staff safety advice:</b> Staff to discuss any worries before entering the site before each session and decide if it is safe to enter as a team. Consider weather, environment, state of site etc.</p>
Further Comments
<p>The overall hazard rating for the site is low as we are on site and as long as health and safety guidelines are followed. *Forest School Handbook contains the operational plan for Forest School sessions.</p>
<p>Review site assessment form and update annually or before should incidents or changes occur.</p>

### Appendix:

- Legalisation sheet
- Lyme disease information
- Hypothermia information
- Poisonous plants sheet