



Newton Burgoland Primary School



ETHOS OF FOREST SCHOOLS

Forest School is based on a fundamental respect for children and young people and for their capacity to instigate, test and maintain curiosity in the world around them; it is an approach to education that makes use of the outdoor environment to create a unique learning vehicle

We believe in the child's right:

- to play
- to access the outdoors (and in particular a woodland environment)
- to access risk and the vibrant reality of the natural world
- to experience a healthy range of emotions through all the challenges of social interaction, in order to build a resilience that will enable continued and creative engagement with their peers and their potential.

Forest Schools is one part of Newton Burgoland Primary Schools' commitment to learning outside the classroom. It fully supports our commitment to helping pupils to develop as independent learners, prepared for life at and beyond school.

Forest School sessions provide increasingly diverse opportunities for children to benefit from a supportive curriculum that can help children build positive values and attitudes about themselves, about learning and the environment in which they live. Children are given appropriately challenging and achievable tasks that build their confidence, skills and independence and are given the time to thoroughly explore their thoughts, feelings and relationships. This time and reflective practice develops inter- and intra-personal skills, which are well-documented as being directly linked to learning skills.

At Newton Burgoland Primary Forest School, we believe that children learn best from first hand experiences. Forest school activities offer children the chance to learn through play-based learning opportunities that encourage exploration and imagination.

Sessions are planned by the leader with sufficient flexibility to enable pupils to follow their own interests. Observation of pupils in the forest school environment supports planning. We aim to develop high self-esteem, build a sense of independence and learn new ways to co-operate and communicate.

All children of all ages and abilities find special places and things to do in the woods. They learn that they can succeed and gain a feeling of self-worth.

Health and Safety at Forest School

In Newton Burgoland Forest School we will adhere to the school LA health and safety policy August 2015

The forest school leader will

- Tell participants about risks to your health and safety.
- Tell participants how to work/ play safely.
- Ensure that safe working practices and appropriate policies are in place to safeguard its staff and users.
- Inform participants how to get First Aid.
- Tell participants what to do in an Emergency.
- Provide participants with any protection needed to fulfil their roles included safety equipment
- Introduce the adults involved to the activities and inform them of safety considerations.
- Work with the other adults to record any accidents and incidents, and review whether or not they could have been avoided
- Make appropriate changes to procedures and policies, as necessary.
- Have a First Aid kit and will administer First Aid/ ensure first aid is administered by a qualified person.
- Give all staff a copy of the Emergency Procedures at the start of their involvement in Forest School.

Risk Management Policy

Newton Burgoland Primary Forest School aims to develop children's self-esteem, independence and motivation to learn in a safe environment. In order that these aims can be met, the Forest School Leader will:

- Consistently apply the five-step approach to risk assessment for all Forest School activities:
 - Look for hazards.
 - Decide who may be harmed and how.
 - Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing controls are adequate or whether more should be done.
 - Record findings, including daily amendments to standing risk assessments based on site visits or observations.
 - Review assessments on a regular basis (or if circumstances change, which may affect the rigour of the assessment) and revise if necessary.
- Carry out Site Risk Assessments on each site where Forest School activities will take place on a seasonal basis (i.e. four Site Risk Assessments will be completed each year). These will be filed in the Master Forest School File located in the school Office.
- Weekly pre-visit checks will be carried out by the Forest School Leader on sites to be used prior to a day's activity, as near to the start of the activity as is reasonably practical.

- Complete an Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment for activities to be undertaken at Forest School. Completed forms are stored in the Master Forest School File in the Office.
- Ensure all staff and volunteer helpers have read the relevant Site and Activity Risk Assessments prior to a session.
- Move activities indoors if, in the opinion of the Forest School Leader, weather conditions such as high winds or the threat/occurrence of electrical storms make work outdoors unsafe.
- Inform staff, volunteers and children of potential hazards and methods of working in order to minimise their risk further.
- Involve staff, volunteers and children in risk assessment, as appropriate, as part of learning.
- Ensure legal guidelines regarding off-site activities, such as adequate insurance and parental permission are met.
- Ensure that all staff, volunteers and children are aware of the emergency procedures for the Forest School site.
- Be responsible for teaching children adequate skills in order to keep themselves safe, particularly in relation to the use of hand tools and fire.
- Ensure children and adults will have access to drinking water during sessions.

First Aid

The Forest School Leader is responsible for First Aid and is qualified in First Aid at Work, Paediatric First Aid and First Aid Medications.

An Emergency Ruck Sack is carried to all Forest School sessions. This contains the First Aid Kit.

Emergency Rucksack Checklist

Medical Emergency Procedures	Spare socks, hats and gloves (size appropriate for group).
Whistle	Emergency Fire-lighting Kit
First Aid Kit	Accident Book
Foil Blanket	Emergency Contact Details and Medical Records
Toilet Paper in plastic bag	
Clingfilm	

First Aid Kit Checklist

Savlon Dry spray	2 x Triangular Bandage
Glucose Tablets	6 x Safety Pin
4 x Medium Sterile Dressing	2 x Eye Pad Sterile Dressing
2 x Large Sterile Dressing	20 x Saline Cleansing Wipes

1 x Adhesive Tape	1 x Hydrogel Burn Dressing
1 x Hypafix Tape	1 x Tough Cut Shears
6 x Disposable Gloves	1 x Conforming Bandage
2 x Finger Sterile Dressing	1 x Tweezers
1 x Resuscitation Face Shield	

Accident and Emergency Procedure

All staff, volunteers and participants will be briefed on what to do in case of an emergency. A whistle will be blown as a signal to stop what you are doing, gather with a member of staff, be silent and wait for instructions. The Forest School Leader will assess the situation, the nature and extent of the injury/accident. They will ensure that the rest of the group are safe from danger and are adequately supervised. They will attend to any casualties, giving First Aid as necessary. An Accident Form will be completed later at the School Office. A record will be created, along with an Accident Report for any death, serious injury or seven-day injury.

If the Forest School Leader is injured or becomes ill, the Forest School Assistant will take charge of the situation as above and will call for one of the First Aiders from school to attend. They will then follow the procedure below.

In the event of Injury

If anyone sustains an injury or illness which cannot be treated by First Aid on-site and requires medical assistance:

- In serious cases, the Emergency Services should be contacted (see below) using the Emergency Phone carried by the Forest School Leader, then the school will be notified. The School Office will be responsible for contacting the injured party's emergency contact.
- The rest of the group will be supervised away from the incident and if in danger, will be moved to safety.
- One member of staff from school will get the bollard key for the ambulance to get onto the field. They will then meet the ambulance at the Wraggs Yard's entrance and direct the crew to the incident site by the side of the school and onto the field. If required, an additional First Aider from school will be requested to assist at the Forest School site.
- If the injured party is taken to hospital, one member of staff will go with them and the injured party's emergency contact will be updated about the situation by a member of the School office staff.
- In minor cases, the Forest School Leader will arrange to contact the injured party's emergency contact so that they can be collected and taken to the hospital, doctor or home, as appropriate.

Emergency Contact Numbers

Ambulance/Fire Brigade: 999

School Office: 01530 270320

Requesting attendance by Emergency Services (Ambulance)

Dial 999 and ask for an ambulance. Be ready with the following information:

- Emergency Mobile Number **07432156874**
- School Phone Number 01530 270320
- School Post Code LE67 2SL
- Ambulance Access – **school field (wraggs yard)**
- Location Details **Grid Reference SK 37089 09055**

Requesting attendance by the Emergency Services (Fire Brigade)

Dial 999 and ask for the Fire Brigade. Be ready with the following information:

- Emergency Mobile Number
- School Phone Number 01530 270320
- School Post Code LE67 2SL
- Fire Tender Access – **school field (Wraggs Yard)**
- Location Details **Grid Reference SK 37089 09055**

**Dangerous Occurrence**

A record will be created, along with an Incident Report for any serious near-miss incident at or in the vicinity of the Forest School Site.

Cancellation Procedure

Newton Burgoland Primary Forest School will take place at the usual site in all weathers except for high winds or where there is a risk of an electrical storm. In high winds (force 4 increasing to force 5 or more), Forest School will take place on the playing field (Wraggy), away from the trees. Where there is the risk of an electrical storm, Forest School will be cancelled.

Newton Burgoland Primary Forest School will also be cancelled if the correct ratio of adults to children cannot be achieved. Forest School will also be cancelled if the Forest School Leader is absent.

Parents will be advised of the cancellation. Staff will be advised when they arrive at school and will be redeployed to other classes, as required. Volunteers will be advised by a telephone call.

Toileting Procedure

Before a Forest School session, children will be given the opportunity to go to the toilet. During a Forest School session, children needing the toilet will be escorted back to school by a member of staff.

Parental Consent

Parental Consent for Forest School participation will be obtained prior to the first session a child attends.

Use of Photographs

Photographs will be taken in accordance with Newton Burgoland Primary School Statement regarding Photography and Video Recording.

Tool Policy

The Forest School Leader uses a penknife for cutting string and rope. Tools are used with children with 1-1 adult supervision only. The Forest School Leader and Forest School Assistant are responsible for overseeing safe use and maintenance of all tools. A list of the items stored in the Tool Bag and Tool Box is available. These lists are also attached to the Tool Bag and Tool Box and used as checklists to ensure that all items are returned safely at the end of each session.

The Tool Box, will be kept locked at all times. The Forest School Leader is responsible for the safe-keeping of the key. The Tool Bag and Tool Box are kept locked in the Forest School Room when not being used at Forest School sessions. The Forest School Leader and Forest School Assistant will wear steel toe-capped boots/ appropriate footwear for Forest School sessions involving tools. Hard hats and gloves will be made available as Personal Protection Equipment when needed. Activity Risk/Benefit Assessments are completed for all activities involving the use of tools. These are kept in the Forest School File in the school Office. Tool-specific Safety Information Sheets are included in the file.

Fire Safety Policy

Newton Burgoland Primary Forest School aims to ensure that all children and adults participating in Forest School sessions with fires will do so safely and with as little risk to their health as possible.

Location

- Only the Forest School Base Camp area will be used for campfires. The Base Camp will always be sited away from low canopy branches.
- Campfire areas are enclosed by logs to make a Fire Pit to prevent the spread of fire.

Positioning of Children and Adults

- Fire areas are surrounded by benches at least 1.5 metres from the fire pit. Exit paths are available at each corner.
- When the campfire is in use, children are not permitted to access the area immediately surrounding the fire without permission.
- Children will be taught how to change seats by standing, stepping over the log and then walking around the outside of the seating area. They must never cross the inner area.
- Children must walk around the outside of the benches step over to sit down at all times. A fire will not be lit with a group until all children have demonstrated that they do this at all times.
- Once seated around the campfire, the children must remain seated until directed by an adult to move.
- Long sleeves and trousers must always be worn.
- Children are not permitted to throw anything onto the fire.
- Advice on the appropriate way for dealing with smoke will be given to the children.
- If there is a clear wind direction, seating in the line of smoke is to be avoided.
- If wind direction is variable, the leader should rearrange the seating if at all possible.

Fire Lighting

- Training has been provided to the Forest School Leader regarding the way to construct and light a fire.

Safety and Responsibility

- A Fire Blanket, bucket of water and Burns Kit must be sited close to the camp fire. Cling film is carried in the Emergency Ruck Sack.
- Only adults are permitted to light fires, unless children are under the direct supervision of the Forest School Leader or Forest School Assistant.
- Fires are lit using a striker or match to paper and natural tinder. Cotton wool, tinder nests and waterproof matches may be used in extremely wet conditions.
- No flammable liquids are to be used to light or accelerate fires.
- No plastics are to be burnt.

- If sessions involve children adding fuel to the fire, this must be done with one to one adult supervision.
- Sticks/wood must be placed, not thrown, from the side of the fire. The hand should never go over the fire.

Extinguishing

- All fires must be extinguished at the end of a session.
- Whenever possible, all fuels should be burnt off to ash.
- The Forest School Leader and Assistant should ensure that any large remains of wood, especially when using logs, are separated from one another.
- At the end of the session, the fire must be doused down with water using a watering can and rose and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased.
- Large build ups of potash, from several fires, need to be dispersed. This must only be done when it has totally cooled, preferably the following day. It should be finely scattered throughout the woodland to enable natural decomposition.

Food Hygiene Policy

Newton Burgoland Primary Forest School maintains high food hygiene standards in relation to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food.

- A full Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment will be completed for any activity involving the preparing and/or consuming of food items. This will include attention to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of any food items to prevent growth of bacteria and food contamination. Where relevant, reference will be made to the relevant Design and Technology Risk Assessments already in place in school.
- Food/ingredients will be stored at correct temperatures prior to the session and checked to ensure they are in-date and not subject to contamination by pests, mould etc. A cool box will be used to transport and store any ingredients requiring refrigeration prior to use at the Forest School site. All such ingredients must be used within 2 hours.
- Un-refrigerated food will be served to children within 4 hours of preparation.
- All utensils, crockery etc. will be checked to ensure they are clean before use.
- Waste food will be disposed of promptly.
- When food items are to be consumed during a Forest School session, warm water with anti-bacterial soap in a bowl will be provided for hand-washing. One hand towel will be provided for every 6 children and adults. Children and adults will be required to wash their hands immediately prior to preparing any food items and/or eating.
- All medical records must be checked to ensure that no food item or ingredient is given to a child or adult with an allergy to it.
- Cooked food will not be re-heated.

Campfire Cooking Policy

The Food Hygiene Policy will be followed whenever cooking on a campfire.

A Risk/Benefit Activity Assessment will be completed for all activities involving cooking on the campfire.

All hair will be tied back and loose clothing secured prior to cooking on a campfire.

Transport to Forest School

Newton Burgoland Primary School aims to keep all children safe. Children will be transported to and from Forest School on foot. The following procedures will be followed:

- The group will be given a reminder about safe walking before leaving the school site (outward) and before leaving the destination (return).
- The Forest School Leader will assume a position at the front of the line and all children will be asked to stay behind the Emergency Ruck Sack.
- The Forest School Assistant will assume a position at the rear of the line.
- The party will leave school by the gate at the back playground on to the field. The party will cross the field and walk up to the forest school site.

Missing Child Procedure

Newton Burgoland Primary Forest School's overarching priority in everything it sets out to achieve is to keep all children safe. If it is discovered that a child or adult is missing from the group, the situation will be taken very seriously from the outset and the following emergency procedure will be implemented:

- The Forest School Leader shall be informed immediately.
- Activity for the rest of the group shall be suspended in order that up to two members of staff, including the Forest School Leader if appropriate, may be released to conduct a search which shall last no more than five minutes.
- The remaining children will be given a low risk activity to complete, within the Camp area by the remaining adults, being mindful not to increase any anxiety in the group.
- If, after the five minute search, the child has not been located, the Forest School Leader will phone 999 and alert the police.
- Newton Burgoland Primary School Office will be informed so that they can contact the child's parents or adult's emergency contact and inform them of the situation.
- Staff should corroborate details of the situation, including last known position of the missing child or adult and any timings. These will be recorded in the Accident Book carried in the Emergency Rucksack.

Equal Opportunities

Newton Burgoland Primary forest School actively promotes the inclusion of all children and adults into Forest School sessions, and will endeavour to ensure that the opportunities for learning, development and participation are available to everyone, irrespective of race, gender, ability, religion, sexual orientation or age.

Newton Burgoland Primary Forest School will follow the school's Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy. A copy of this policy can be found on the school web site or in this handbook.

Safeguarding Children Policy

Newton Burgoland Primary school Forest School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children. All staff and volunteers are responsible for keeping children safe. In particular:

- Ensuring all children have a safe environment at Forest School in which to learn and develop.
- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of volunteers to work with children at Forest School.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.

Newton Burgoland Forest School will follow the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy. A copy of the Safeguarding Policy (Child Protection Policy) can be found on the school web-site or in this handbook.

Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy

Good behaviour is positively encouraged within Newton Burgoland Primary Forest School, with much emphasis on self-discipline, courtesy and consideration for others. We recognise that children respond well to praise and therefore use it freely to promote good behaviour. We also do all that we can to prevent bullying, by reinforcing the school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. Newton Burgoland Primary Forest School follows the School Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies. These can be found on the school website or in this pack.

Operating Procedure

Before the Session

- A Session Plan form will be completed, taking into account observations, interest areas and learning points from previous sessions. All adults will read the Session Plan form prior to the session.
- Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment Forms will be completed/updated for each planned activity. All adults will read the forms relevant to a particular session before it starts.
- All staff will have read the latest Site Risk Assessment, which will be relevant to the current season.
- The Forest School Leader will check that enough adults are present for the session to go ahead and that the weather conditions allow it to take place.
- The Forest School Site will be visited and the Base Camp area set up (seating, fire pit and additional safety logs for Early Years sessions).
- A Daily Risk Assessment will be completed.
- The equipment required for the session will be assembled, checked and taken to the Forest School site.
- All children will be registered by their Class Teacher. They will then get changed for Forest School, go to the toilet and apply sun cream, where necessary.
- The Pre-Session Checklist will be undertaken (see Appendix F).

During the Session

- A headcount check will be undertaken on arrival at Forest School and whenever the group is brought together.
- Risks will be continually assessed and appropriate action taken to reduce or remove any risks found.

After the Session

- A headcount check will be undertaken at the end of the session, before returning to school.
- If the Tool Bag and/or Tool Box have been taken to the site, the contents will be checked by the Forest School Assistant to ensure no items are missing.
- A further headcount check will be undertaken as the children arrive at the back playground and on entry to the classroom, where they will get changed.
- After the children are back in the classroom the Forest School Leader or assistant will return the penknife to the Tool Box and clean, check and maintain tools, as required. The Tool Box will then be locked and put in the locked storage cupboard.
- A Session Evaluation will be completed by the Forest School Leader, along with any observational records that will be useful to adults working

Emergency Rucksack Checklist

Monthly check	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July
Item										
Medical Emergency Procedures										
Whistle										
First Aid Kit – contents checked										
Foil Blanket										
Toilet Paper in plastic bag										
Clingfilm										
Spare socks, hats and gloves (size appropriate for group)- off site (kept in school)										
Emergency Fire-lighting Kit (off site only)										
Forest schools folder (office)										
Sanitising hand gel/ wipes										

Use of Fire Check list

Criteria	Check
Risk assessment in place and precautions deployed	
Clear purpose for fire lighting	
Sufficient staffing to supervise pupils and attend to fire	
Water/ sand to extinguish	
First aid kit/ burn kit	
Fire blanket	
Designated in/ out/ emergency exit	
Large enough, clear space 1 1/2 bodies from fire to boundary/ seating	
Permanent Fire pit or temporary fire pit with boundary logs	
Sufficient dry wood/ kindling	
Weather conditions safe (wind/ hot, dry summer)	
Fire kit including gauntlet type gloves	
Participant briefing including respect position when cooking	

Use of tools Checklist

Criteria	Check
Risk assessment in place and precautions deployed including adult/ pupil ratio for use of tools and supervision of group	
Participant briefing including respect position	
Toolkit and designated area	
PPE	
Tools checked and maintained	
First aid kit/ rucksack	
Trained personnel	
Correct tool for the task.	

Session Checklist

Date								
Session risk assessment/ benefit in place- precautions deployed								
Session plan shared								
Adults/ pupils briefed								
Boundary clear								
Emergency rucksack								
Individual Medical needs checked Specific medication carried								
Camera								
Session Kit								
Key								
Dog faeces Bags/ Gloves								
Wet wipes/ anti-bacterial								
Parents informed								
Pupil reminder: clothing/ footwear								
Mobile phone								
Drinking water								
Clean mugs								
Paper/ clip board and pen								