



# Lime Tree Primary Academy

BRIGHT FUTURES EDUCATIONAL TRUST

## Forest School Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
Feb 2022	Feb 2025	Janet Green	Sarah Daw

### Introduction

Forest School takes place regularly, with the same group of learners, over an extended period of time, if practicable encompassing the seasons.

A Forest School programme has a structure, which is based on the observations and collaborative work between learners and practitioners. This structure should clearly demonstrate progression of learning.

The initial sessions of any programme establish physical and behavioural boundaries as well as making initial observations on which to base future programme development.

### Procedure

- All sessions will be lead or overseen by a level 3 Practitioner (minimum qualification)
- All sessions will have a minimum of two staff when delivering per 10 children, but this may be a higher ratio according to the individual needs of the group.
- Risk assessments will be completed yearly and updated throughout the year as necessary for all activities. These include: general welfare, collecting materials, den building, rope use, tree climbing, tool us (bow saw, loppers, sheath knife, Bill hook and secateurs)
- There will be a minimum of one forest school first aider at every session and they will be responsible for carrying a first aid kit and following the Lime Tree first aid policy
- Practitioners will be responsible for ensuring the site used on the grounds and outside of school are managed and have a management plan for use
- Practitioners will adhere to and update the siting of fires policy
- Practitioners and teachers are responsible for ensuring that children and staff have to correct clothing and PPE available at each session
- Practitioners will adhere to the forest school principles stated below and will be responsible for educating the wider staff team about good practice

## Principles

**The Nature Principle** - Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural wooded environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.

- Whilst woodland is the ideal environment for Forest School, many other sites, some with only a few trees, are able to support good Forest School practice.
- The woodland is ideally suited to match the needs of the programme and the learners, providing them with the space and environment in which to explore and discover.
- A Forest School programme constantly monitors its ecological impact and works within a sustainable site management plan agreed between the landowner/ manager, the forest school practitioner and the learners.
- Forest School aims to foster a relationship with nature through regular personal experiences in order to develop long-term, environmentally sustainable attitudes and practices in staff, learners and the wider community.
- Forest School uses natural resources for inspiration, to enable ideas and to encourage intrinsic motivation.

**The Holistic Learning Principle** - Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners

- Where appropriate, the Forest School leader will aim to link experiences at Forest School to home, work and /or school education
- Forest School programmes aim to develop, where appropriate, the physical, social, cognitive, linguistic, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of the learner.

**The Risk Principle** - Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.

- Forest School opportunities are designed to build on an individual's innate motivation, positive attitudes and/or interests.
- Forest School uses tools and fires only where deemed appropriate to the learners, and dependent on completion of a baseline risk assessment.
- Any Forest School experience follows a Risk–Benefit process managed jointly by the practitioner and learner that is tailored to the developmental stage of the learner.

**The Leadership Principle** - Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.

- Qualified Forest School practitioners, who are required to hold a minimum of an accredited Level 3 Forest School qualification, lead Forest School. Find more information on Forest School qualifications [here](#).
- There is a high ratio of practitioner/adults to learners.
- Practitioners and adults regularly helping at Forest School are subject to relevant checks into their suitability to have prolonged contact with children, young people and vulnerable people. Practitioners need to hold an up-to-date first aid qualification, which includes paediatric (if appropriate) and outdoor elements.
- Forest School is backed by relevant working documents, which contain all the policies and procedures required for running Forest School and which establish the roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers.
- The Forest School leader is a reflective practitioner and sees themselves, therefore, as learners too.

**The Community Principle** - Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning

- A learner-centred pedagogical approach is employed by Forest School that is responsive to the needs and interests of learners.
- The Practitioner models the pedagogy, which they promote during their programmes through careful planning, appropriate dialogue and relationship building.
- Play and choice are an integral part of the Forest School learning process, and play is recognised as vital to learning and development at Forest School.
- Forest School provides a stimulus for all learning preferences and dispositions.

- Reflective practice is a feature of each session to ensure learners and practitioners can understand their achievements, develop emotional intelligence and plan for the future.
- Practitioner observation is an important element of Forest School pedagogy. Observations feed into 'scaffolding' and tailoring experiences to learning and development at Forest School.

### Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has:

- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

### Role of the Head of Academy

The Head of Academy will:

- ensure that the nominated member of staff is suitably trained, has sufficient time to undertake their role and an adequate budget to purchase any equipment required;
- monitor and evaluate this policy

### Monitoring the implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed every 36 months or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Head of School and the nominated governor.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for the improvement will be presented to the Governing Body for further discussion and endorsement.

<b>Head of School:</b>	Clare Larkin	<b>Date:</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> February 2022
<b>Chair of Body:</b>	Dan Jagger	<b>Date:</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> February 2022

