



DIOCESE OF SOUTHWELL
& NOTTINGHAM

MULTI ACADEMY TRUST



St Peters Cross Keys C of E Primary Academy

Forest School Policy

St. Peter's Cross Keys Primary C of E Academy

Our Vision

'Rooted in love we flourish and grow'

'Jesus said that the kingdom of God is like a little mustard seed. This seed is very tiny at first but this is just the beginning of something. When this little seed is planted it grows into a huge tree, a tree so big that birds come and sit on its branches!'

Matthew 13: 31-33

Jesus teaches us that all good things must start with small beginnings.

At St. Peter's we believe that learning continues throughout life and that we should develop the skills that enable life-long learning to take place. We believe that all children should be inspired and enthused by the challenges we present to them, and feel secure and supported so that they can try new and difficult experiences. We believe that through our teaching, we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. Central to this is the commitment that inclusion for all children is at the heart of our vision with the belief that removing barriers to participation and learning allows everyone to benefit fully from the educational opportunities we provide.

Our Mission

As a school, we have a strong focus on supporting children to develop an understanding of themselves, and crucially, an understanding of how they operate and develop as learners. All staff have a key role to play in nurturing self-esteem to support children in developing:

- A clear sense of belonging.
- Ambition for their future.
- The attributes of Critical Thinkers, Problems Solvers, Team Players and Resilient Learners.
- The knowledge and understanding to be a champion for change in our local community and to be a positive influence in the community and for themselves.
- Their personal, moral and spiritual development within a Christian framework

Our Core Values

Community

Peace

Hope

Wisdom

Dignity

Joy

Statement of Intent

St Peters Cross Keys aims to use the natural outdoor woodland area to offer the children an insight into the Forest School ethos. This approach to outdoor learning encourages children to become independent, use their imagination, take appropriate risks within boundaries and initiate learning for themselves. Forest School is a holistic approach to learning, incorporating children's individuality and develops their skills for lifelong learning. It can cover many areas of learning, including the emotional and spiritual aspects of learning where self-esteem and self-confidence can grow and positive relationships with peers can be formed. Forest School explores the outdoors and the natural environment with practical, useful activities all year round. It develops peer learning with the adults providing support and enabling

activities to take place. The child's interest will be at the heart of any activity.

St Peters Cross Keys has many additional policies which will be adhered to alongside this policy during Forest School sessions:

Behaviour Policy
Safeguarding Policy
SEND Policy
Health and Safety Policy

Implementation

Our Forest School sessions will be delivered by qualified Level 3 Forest School leaders Nick Rhodes-Yeomans and Tracey Simpson. They deliver this program following the guidance set out in this document. Staff will be aware of and understand all policies and procedures will be taken into the woodland on each visit, this contains vital information needed for each session which includes procedures in the event of an emergency etc.

Equality and Diversity:

All children will be included with all activities and no form of discrimination will take place, reasonable adjustments will be made to make it inclusive for all. Inclusion is a thread which runs through all of the Forest School activities regardless of a child's ability, disability, gender, race, culture, etc. St Peters Cross Keys has an Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy and an Equal Opportunities Policy which will be adhered to during Forest School sessions.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Forest School Leader will have the overall responsibility for:

- Risk assessments for each session, pre-visit site checks and continuous safety monitoring.
- Planning for sessions, differentiation for individual children's needs.
- Ensuring that once on site rules are followed and continue to risk assess during the session.
- Ensuring necessary equipment is taken into woodland.
- Administration of first aid and checking first aid kit.
- Supervision of fire use, following procedures set out in this document
- Supervision of tools use, cleaning and storing.
- Organising emergency procedures.
- Ensure site is left as it was found after every session

Staff/ students / volunteers: will model good practice throughout the session, carry out delegated roles and responsibilities, extend children's learning where appropriate by asking extending questions, support children to manage their own risk, remind children of rules and boundaries, be aware of dangers within Forest School and monitor levels of safety at all times, support the Forest School leader to run the sessions.

Health and Safety Policy:

Forest School sessions by their nature encourage children to develop their own risk management skills and will support them to become responsible for themselves and others around them. Children will be reminded of rules and safe play if they are considered too dangerous. Ratios within the woodland area will be 1 adult to 15 children. Risk assessments have been carried out before each visit and for the use of all tools and equipment. The Forest School Leader will assess weather conditions regularly and will evacuate the area if they become too extreme. All children and adults will wear appropriate clothing depending upon the weather conditions. An open fire risk assessment has been carried out before a fire is allowed and protection procedures followed. A Forest School Leader will be present at all times and children will be reminded of safe practice. The school has a Health and Safety Policy, Safeguarding Children Policy etc. to enhance aspects of health and safety

Risk Assessments will include:

- The site of the Forest School/impact of weather on site
- Equipment and Activities
- Open Fire
- Individual Risk Assessments for tools (bill hook, bow saw, mallets, knives), where applicable

Emergency Procedure:

In the event of an emergency the following will happen;

- Emergency Whistle blown
- Children advised to put tools down by other adults in surrounding areas and to await further instructions.
- Forest School Leader to assess situation and remove any hazards.
- Once any hazard has been removed the leader will deal with the incident or follow the first aid procedures in the case of an accident.

First Aid Procedure:

- A number of staff within the school (including the current Forest School Leader) are qualified first aiders and will administer the care needed.
- First aid kit will be taken to all sessions and will be checked regularly
- Whilst dealing with a first aid incident, the leader will ensure the safety of all other children within the group by advising other adults present of the situation and ask them to monitor the other children, if alone children will be called to the area that the leader is in and if necessary all children will be taken indoors.
- Seek emergency help if needed.
- There will be a first aid kit taken into the woodland area and extra first aid equipment is located within the school.
- Contact the parents and complete the accident report forms
- Ensure all staff are aware of medical conditions of the children and inhalers, epi pens etc. are taken into woodland.

Child Protection:

Any suspicion of abuse will be promptly and appropriately dealt with in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Children Policy.

Behaviour Procedure

The Forest School leader will follow the school's Behaviour Policy, however if the behaviour of an individual, or group of individuals is such that it puts their own and others safety at risk then the individual(s) may be required to return to the school building with an accompanying adult. This will be at the discretion of the Forest School leader.

Weather conditions

Following the Forest Schools ethos of 'there is no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing!' Children

are advised to dress warmly and wear waterproofs if necessary. However, there are some occasions where it may not be safe or practical to go ahead with a planned session due to extreme weather;

- In the case of high winds of 25mph or more determined by the met office online.
- In the case of extreme temperature determined by a met office amber weather warning
- In the case of extreme cold of below '0' a session will be cancelled if it is near to this we will ensure children are appropriately dressed, sessions will be made shorter and activities will be planned to ensure children are kept moving.

Food safety and Hygiene Procedures:

Children at Forest Schools are taught a strict NO eating rule, unless it is a specific activity led by an adult to prepare and cook food. Initially, when children are ready they will participate in simple cooking on the fire activities which include; toasting marshmallows/waffles and making s'mores. There is always a staff member present with food hygiene training, when food is being handled and prepared.

Food Preparation, transport and storage;

- Hands will be washed thoroughly and any cuts/grazes covered in the correct manner (blue plaster or ideally gloves) before handling and preparing food.
- Any food needing preparation will be prepared in the school kitchen e.g. bread dough
- Food will be stored in clean containers and transported in a cool bag to and from the site, with any clean utensils and cooking pans required. The box will remain closed in between use with food covered in bags or boxes; to avoid attracting flies and other insects.
- Raw meats will be stored separately to any other foods.
- All 'use by' dates will be checked on foods before eating.
- Water for cooking will be provided in cleaned sealed storage container.

Handling, cooking and eating Food;

- A fresh, clean, bucket of warm soapy water will be available for children to wash their hands before handling food or utensils
- Children are taught how to cook food safely following the activity risk assessment and fire procedure. All food will be checked by an adult to ensure it is fully cooked before eating.
- Children will be asked to sit still around the fire circle or to move to a designated eating area from the fire to keep numbers to a minimum near the fire circle.

Clearing away and cleaning up;

- ALL food not eaten or cooked will be placed in black bin bags and disposed of in the school bin at the end of the session by one of the adults.
- The area is checked to ensure there is no food traces to avoid vermin being attracted to the area.
- ALL utensils and pans will be washed at the station in hot soapy water and stored away correctly.

Use of Tools procedure

- Children and adults will be informed of rules, safety and trained in the use of each tool before they use it. Tool use guidance documents will be carried by the leader during each session and tool use ratios will be at the discretion of the Forest School Leader. Ratios will be set out in the session risk assessments.
- Relevant personal protection equipment will be worn at all times.
- Tools will be counted in and out and checked against an inventory.
- Tools will be stored safely and kept out of the reach of children.
- They will be cleaned after each use to prolong their life, broken and damaged tools will not be used.
- The Risk assessment will be followed throughout this activity

Use of Fires procedure


- A Forest School Leader must always be present when a fire is lit and the fire must never be left unattended. There must always be water available to extinguish the fire.
- Fires will be built in a designated fire area: if a tarpaulin is placed above the fire it should be approximately 5 foot above the fire and seating will be at a distance of 1 meters. Relevant personal protection equipment will be used.
- Children will be reminded of the fire pit procedures at each and every visit.
 - Walk round the edge of fire close to the log seats.

- Never step over log seat.
- Children are not allowed to cross the fire circle (adults should be role models of this).
- The fire box containing fire retardant gloves, first aid kit and burns kit should be placed close to the fire circle along with a covered bucket of clean cold water.

Policy reviewed: July 2025

Next renewal: July 2027

Signed: Chair of Governors:



Date: 7/2025

Headteacher:



Date: 7/2025

Forest School Leaders read:

Name	Signature	Date
Tracey Simpson	T.Simpson	21/7/25
Nick Rhodes Yeomans	N. Rhodes-Yeomans	21/7/25