

# **Broadbent Fold Primary School and Nursery**

## **Forest School Policy 2026**



In Partnership with  
**STAMFORD  
PARK TRUST**

Broadbent Fold Values are instilled through our Broadbent Fold Expectations are clearly visible around school. All expectations are child friendly and they are linked to our Rights Respecting class charters.

We want our children to be happy. Children are happy when they:

- feel good about themselves
- are confident in their own ability

Within all subjects taught at Broadbent Fold and in- line with the Equalities Act (2010) we aim to ensure that any child, irrespective of protected characteristics (age, gender including intersex and transgender, ethnicity or sexuality including gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual and transvestite) is treated fairly and with respect. The law states that the public sector equality duty includes a general duty to, "Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not."

### **Introduction**

This policy has been specifically written so that all parents, staff, volunteers and governors at Broadbent Fold Primary School and Nursery have a shared understanding of the Forest School ethos and its implementation at our school.

The contents of this policy should be read alongside the following policies:

Health and Safety Policy

Behaviour Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

SEND Policy

Equality Duty Policy

Within this policy, the term 'Forest School Leader' refers to a member of staff who holds a fully recognised Level 3 Forest School Practitioners qualification.

### **Aims**

The aim of this policy is to provide an insight into the ethos of Forest School as operated at Broadbent Fold Primary School and Nursery. Forest School builds on a child's innate motivation and positive attitude to learning, offering them the opportunities to take risks, make choices and initiate learning for themselves.

Our Forest School learning environment provides opportunities for children to:

- Develop self-esteem
- Develop self-confidence

- Form positive relationships with others
- Develop a growing awareness of their emotional needs and the needs of others
- Develop their ability to improve their cooperation skills and work with their peers and adults
- Develop strategies in order to take risks within the boundaries of safety
- Learn specific skills which link into the curriculum
- Develop knowledge and appreciation of the natural world and a forest environment

Inside Out Forest Schools delivers the curriculum at Broadbent Fold Primary School and Nursery Forest School. [Inside Out | Forest School, Woodland Wellbeing & Eco-Therapy](#)

Their policies can be found: [Forest School Policies | Inside Out Forest School](#)

It is about exploring and experiencing the natural world through practical activities. The children go out in all weathers, all year round, exploring and learning from the seasons and changes in the environment. Suitable outdoor wear should be worn. Children will not be taken out during high winds or lightning as it is unsafe to go into the forest school area under these conditions.

The children's interests along with the varied natural resources in our forest school area are used to stimulate creative thinking, problem solving and skill development, all under the premise of 'learning through play.'

### **Environmental Considerations and Conservation**

One of the principles of our Forest School is to promote environmental awareness and encourage sustainability. The children are taught respect and responsibility for the world around them. Both children and adults are encouraged to respect their environment and to be aware of conservation issues of the woodland around them.

We aim to promote respect for wildlife and our woodland environment. This will be achieved through detailed long-term, medium-term and lesson planning. If possible, reclaimed, recycled and sustainable resources will be used to maintain and develop our Forest School Site.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Please refer to the school's Equality Duty Policy. All people involved in Forest School sessions will be treated with respect and equality. Our priority is to ensure that children and adults have access to a safe and secure environment. We believe that any contributions made by staff, volunteers and participants in our sessions will be listened to and appreciated.

### **Health and Safety Considerations**

Please refer to the Health and Safety Policy. The health and safety of the adults and children is paramount at all times throughout any Forest School activity and session. Safe practice is reinforced through regular reminders. The Forest School programme provides children with opportunities to develop independence and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Whilst being independent in their learning, they will develop early risk assessment strategies and understand that their actions have consequences.

The Forest School Leader and other practitioners regard their duty of care when working with pupils as extremely important. For the safety and protection of all individuals – children, staff and volunteers - we ensure the following:

Staff and volunteers are made aware of the Health and Safety Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Equality Duty Policy, SEND Policy and Supporting children with medical conditions policy.

All members of staff at Broadbent Fold Primary School and Nursery undertake Child Protection training. Any concerns are reported to the designated safe guarding leads to ensure the school's child protection policy is followed. The Forest School Leader and other school staff delivering sessions all have an enhanced level DBS check. Suitable clothing and appropriate footwear must be worn at all times. During the winter months pupils are expected to wear sturdy footwear or wellington boots, hats scarves, gloves and waterproof outerwear. School will provide wellingtons and all in one water proof suits for KS1 children. Older children will be required to bring their own clothes, waterproof outerwear and sturdy shoes or wellingtons.

Sunscreen and hats should be worn in the summer months. It is part of school policy that staff do not provide or apply sunscreen to children, they must do this themselves.

### **Assessing and Reducing Risk at our Forest School**

During forest school sessions we undertake a range of activities which may contain a theoretical degree of risk. Through careful supervision, full training and risk assessments, we aim to ensure that accidents are avoided and that risks are reduced to manageable and acceptable levels.

### **Risk / Benefit Analyses**

While there are risks that must be considered, there are also a wide range of potential benefits that can be gained by those involved. Taking risks is an important part of learning and development and we want to provide a safe and supportive environment in which participants can learn about risks, challenges and personal safety. Consequently, risk/benefit analysis is used in the assessment of the site and activities

The Forest School programme will support young children to develop responsibility for themselves and others. It will encourage early risk management strategies that will ensure that young children start to consider the impact of their actions on themselves and on others which will help them to make better decisions late on in life.

### **Risk Assessments**

Written Risk Assessments are reviewed and regularly updated in order to reflect the safest practice possible at Broadbent Fold Primary School and Nursery.

The Forest School Leader will carry out risk assessments for each activity including for fire and tools (when used) at the beginning of each term and these risk assessments will take account of seasonal changes. Copies of these risk assessment can be found on the school server (P drive), in the school office and the Inside Out website.

We have full written risk assessments in place for:

- Child protection issues
- Slips, trips and falls
- Insect bites and stings
- Infection
- Allergic reaction
- Behaviour
- Fire
- Weather
- Transport
- Building shelters
- Tools
- Activities

### **On Site (Dynamic) Risk Assessment Procedure**

In addition, a dynamic risk assessment will be undertaken before and during each session by the Forest School Leader who will assess the area for any dangers.

There are five steps to risk assessment:

1. Look for the hazards, such as windblown trees or litter
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done
4. Record the findings
5. Review the assessment and revise if necessary

The Forest School site at Broadbent Fold Primary School and Nursery is situated in the willow outside classroom and on the far right of the school field.

### **Fire at Forest School**

If a fire is lit during a forest school session, it is always supervised by the Forest School Leader. Fires will never be left unattended. Safe fire practice is always adhered to. A boundary of 1m from the fire is always adhered to and children will be taught how to sit in the respect position. There will always be adequate water, fire gloves and fire blanket next to the fire.

Children are taught and reminded of the fire circle rules from their first visit to Forest School. These rules are emphasised by games such as 'wood, wood, fire':

- To enter and leave the fire circle: Stand up, turn around and step over the benches or logs
- Walk in a clockwise direction around the fire circle.
- Keep the area around the fire circle free from debris
- NEVER cross the fire circle
- When near the fire, always use the respect position.

### **Cooking and Eating at Forest School**

Forest School Leaders and other adults are aware of the following when cooking and eating at Forest School:

- The respect position should always be used when near the fire.
- Children are reminded to let the food cool before eating it.
- Everyone should wash their hands before handling food and drink.
- All food is stored in appropriate containers.
- Only clean equipment is used.
- Any dietary requirements are noted and catered for.
- Food will be cooked correctly.
- All equipment and waste is cleared away.

### **Tools**

The safety of all participants is of paramount importance. Participants ensure that tools are used safely by adopting the following:

- Tools are stored correctly in a tool box and in a locked shed when not in use.
- After use, all tools will be handed back to the Forest School Leader and/ or placed in the tool box.
- Tools are counted in and checked for damage or wear and tear after each session.
- Rules are set out clearly at the beginning of the tool use session.
- Leaders ensure that safety tool talks are given before any tools are used.
- Children will be asked to carry out their own tool talks to ensure they understand how to safely use the tools.
- Children are supervised at all times whilst using tools of any description and reminded of how to use them safely.
- Inappropriate use of tools will not be tolerated and will result in immediate withdrawal from the task.

### **Activities and resources**

Children are provided with resources and equipment which help to consolidate and extend their knowledge, skills, interests and abilities A number of different activities may be carried out in the sessions. These include:

- Team Games
- Singing

- Role play
- Creative activities - with natural resources, clay, water and wool
- Tool use
- Den building
- Climbing trees
- Scavenger hunts
- Nature hunts – insects, birds, trees and plants.

The forest school ethos means that activities are child led and based around the children's interest. The forest school leader will observe children and plan activities that children will enjoy but the activities will follow the direction in which children choose to take them. They may decide to work independently, working on developing their own problem solving skills and creativity, or they may join up with other children and work within teams. This is excellent for children's social development, as they will learn how to collaborate within a team, and how to share their ideas and to listen to others. Children will learn to challenge themselves and become more resilient as a result.

- We ensure that a working mobile phone or walkie talkie is accessible to all adults.

### **Toileting**

- Encourage everyone to use the toilet before coming on site.
- If necessary children can use the outside toilet. Children will be sent to the toilet in pairs.
- Hand washing facilities are available in the outside toilet but if this is not possible wet wipes and cleaning gel can be used. All wet wipes will be placed in bags and disposed of when back in school.
- Spare pants and jogging bottoms are available for younger children

### **First Aid**

The Forest School Leaders is qualified in outdoor first aid. A first aid kit is always available on the forest school site and in the leader's forest school bag.

### **Emergency Procedures**

It is vital that emergency procedures are adhered to. These are in place to safeguard pupils and adults alike. If a serious incident takes place, it will be essential to carry out an investigation promptly. Please refer to the Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

In the event of a serious incident, which could arise as a result of an injury, illness or threat, emergency services should be contacted and the following procedures followed:

- Secure safety of whole group from further danger. Stop all work/activities if safe. Call in and locate group promptly by adopting the 'Howl' call to ensure the safety of other participants. Participants will be made aware of this procedure for calling everyone together in initial sessions of Forest School.

- The first aider will attend to any casualties with regard for maintenance of required supervision ratios for the rest of the party. At least one first aider must be on site at all times.
- Contact the school office as soon as possible to allow them a) to contact other staff to assist the forest school leader if necessary. b) to alert parents and/or emergency services if necessary. c) to inform the head teacher if the incident requires further medical treatment.
- Emergency services contacted as necessary, ideally by an adult helper/ office staff. Charged mobile phones and a walkie talkie are always carried by the forest school leader.
- A designated adult is to meet the emergency services at the entrance of school to direct them quickly to the casualty.
- Safety of the rest of group will be maintained by the remaining staff and adults away from the scene of the incident.
- The next of kin should be informed as soon as possible after the incident.

If an accident occurs to a pupil, member of staff or visitor that requires help in addition to first aid e.g. Fire, Ambulance and Police then the LA must be informed of the circumstances as soon as possible. An accident form will be completed and a copy sent to the LA.

In the event of serious injury (this includes amputation, serious burns, acute illness, fracture, loss of sight or consciousness, or if detained in hospital over 24 hours, or death); under RIDDOR the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) must be informed. These notifications are a legal requirement.

The 'Accident Report Form' requires a written statement to be made with reference to the sequence of events, actions taken and responses and times of these actions. Names of witnesses should be recorded. The statement should then be signed, dated and given to the Headteacher. A copy will then be sent to the LA. The original form will be kept in school.

### **Insurance**

Insurance for activities within Forest School are included within the school's insurance policy.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Forest School Leader holds a fully recognised Level 3 forest school leader qualification, has fully enhanced CRB and an outdoor first aid qualification that is renewed every three years. The Forest School Leader have the overall responsibility for:

- Safety and risk assessment
- Planning of sessions, evaluation and feedback
- Liaising with school staff and governors
- Administration of first aid
- Responsibility for first aid kit, accident book, etc.
- Supervision of tool use and tool maintenance
- Supervision of fires and cooking area
- Understanding the needs of children with SEND
- Emergency procedures

Volunteers and trainees with support from the Forest School Leaders volunteers and trainees are responsible for:

- Modelling good practice
- Supporting and talking to pupils to extend their learning as appropriate
- Additional support when Forest School leader is supervising tools or fire activities
- Additional delegated jobs

### **Session Routines**

#### **Equipment**

Register including medical information	First Aid Kit
Risk-benefit analysis	Incident log
Emergency Procedure	Mobile phone
Toileting kit	Handwashing kit including wipes.
Fresh water (bottles)	Emergency foil blanket
Spare clothing	Fire blanket (when using fire)
Tools & fire lighting kit (when using fire)	Burns kit (when using fire)

#### **Setting Up**

- Carry out a session risk assessment of site and advise/act accordingly
- Collect necessary equipment and restock first aid where necessary
- Meet and register group
- Check phone signal

#### **Opening**

- Introductions of any new faces
- Make the group aware of new hazards or medical considerations
- Check that they are all wearing suitable clothing and footwear

- Form an opening circle and carry out a review or reflection activity. Carry out a check in to see how everyone is feeling.
- Engage children in the development of rules and guidelines for the day and discuss the session's possible activities

### **During the session**

- Visually check all equipment before use
- Check on pastoral needs of group
- Conduct a head count, as needed
- Ensure appropriate personal protective clothing is worn
- Observe children's interests to help plan for future sessions
- Encourage children to take pride in their own and other's achievements.

### **Closing the Session**

- Extinguish any fires properly
- Count any tools used into their bag and collect any equipment that has been used.
- Tidy and remove structures if appropriate to do so
- Check for litter and remove
- Form a closing circle and conduct a reflection with the group – e.g. Who has helped you today? What are you proud of?
- Thoroughly check equipment for damage or wear and tear

### **Cancellation Procedure**

There may be times when Forest School sessions have to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. These may be:

- Staff illness – which prevents staff / child ratios being met.
- Severe weather conditions.
- Any situation that poses a health and safety risk.
- Events taking precedent in school.
- Timetable changes

We will endeavour to run Forest School sessions whenever possible, however reserve the right to cancel on the day, but will aim to inform the group and their parents/ carers as soon as possible by text message.

### **Evaluation Procedure**

In order to develop the Forest School program and to ensure good practice is maintained, at the end of each term the leader will reflect on current activities and then use this to inform future planning. They will:

- Evaluate the sessions – looking activities and what challenges, creativity and abilities are being developed.
- Evaluate the children's experiences – What do they enjoy? What have they learnt?

- Case studies of specific children will be taken and developed over the year.
- Evaluate all staff that are involved in Forest School.