



## Forest School Health & Safety Policy

Date of Approval:	September 2025
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## **St Michaels Catholic Primary School**

### **Forest School Health and Safety Policy**

#### **1.1 Accident and emergency**

A first aid kit is in the outdoor learning classroom and stays in there within each session. The forest school leader is Paediatric and ITC first aid trained. If an accident occurs within forest school requiring further assistance an emergency contact form is held in the office, and a parent or carer will be contacted. During a forest school session, the Forest School leader will carry a walkie talkie at all times to communicate with the class teacher in case of an accident or an emergency. Access to the first aid kit is permitted only to the Forest School Leader and other teaching assistants not to volunteers, visitors or children.

First Aid kit will contain instant ice packs, antiseptic wipes, eye irrigation solution sachets, jumbo plasters, medium plasters, small plasters, bandages, small self-adhesive wound dressings, crepe bandages, pairs of protective gloves, roll micro pore tape CPR face shield Foil Blanket The forest school leader will ensure this is adequately stocked and replenished.

Doors to the school can be opened by fob or class teacher when the forest school leader communicates with the walkie talkie. To ensure that full access is available to any medication required. Staff will be advised of any specific medical information they should be aware of. The leader will also ensure walkie talkie are available in the area during each session.

The leader will have accident forms at each session and record anything that has happened at forest school e.g. fall, trip, scratched, stung and report back to the parent with this information a copy of this will also be handed into the business manager.

#### **Site Risk Assessment**

Before the site is used, a risk assessment will be carried out by the Forest School Leader. The site risk assessment will be approved by Mrs C Chapman (Headteacher) and updated as and when there are any permanent or seasonal changes to the site which are not recorded.

Daily site risk assessment – A daily site risk assessment will be carried out before the site is used to ensure that there are no changes to the site which could cause harm. This should be taken with extra caution following high winds and other bad weather. It will be carried out by the forest school leader who will make the decision whether the session will go ahead or need cancelled until the weather is more appropriate. Following the daily site risk assessment, the FS leader will carry out anything that is needed to make the site safe (e.g. remove any hazards, mark off any unsafe areas). At the same time the forest school lead will consider specific circumstances which make it appropriate to cancel a Forest School Session.

Activity risk assessment – When planning activities for Forest School, any hazards associated with that activity, that are at risk of causing harm, should be considered. These should be recorded on an activity risk assessment with suitable control measures taken to control and minimise the risk.

## **1.2 Cooking and food hygiene**

Mrs Scott, Forest school leader holds a level 2 award in food safety

- All perishable food must be stored in a cool box / bag and wrapped in appropriate packaging to avoid attracting insects and vermin.
- Food must never be left uncovered at any time.
- All unused food stuffs and packaging must be disposed of appropriately.
- Hands must be cleaned before handling food and utensils.
- All water provided By Forest School must be fresh and in a sealed jug.
- Make sure products are used within the 'use by' date.
- Do not handle food items if suffering from colds or similar infections.
- Cover all cuts and grazes in the appropriate manner.
- Clean all food utensils and place in storage.
- Children are only permitted to eat at designated times.

## **1.3 Extreme Weather Procedure**

The 'Poor Weather Conditions' are snow, rain, wind, thunder/lightning storms and heat. At St Michaels RC Primary School, we believe children should experience learning in their environment no matter what the weather, however we understand that it is our responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and adults.

It is the responsibility of the Forest School Leader that local weather information is up to date before preparing session. The Forest School Leader is responsible for continuing or deciding to cancel a Forest School session if the weather is poor.

## **1.4 Fire procedure**

St Michael's Catholic Primary 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. Fires will be held only in the agreed areas (see site map). Campfire areas are enclosed by logs to prevent the spread of fire.

Positioning of Children and Adults Fire areas are surrounded by seating logs at least 1.5 metres from the fire pit. When the campfire is in use, children are not permitted to access the area without permission, and have to stay out of the fire bubble. When allowed to

access the campfire, children must walk around the outside of the seating logs and wait for permission to step over. Once permission has been given, they must sit, ensuring legs are drawn into the log and not outstretched. Once seated around the campfire, the children must remain seated until directed by an adult to move. 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. Long sleeves and trousers must always be worn. Children are not permitted to throw anything onto the fire. If wind direction is variable, the leader should rearrange the seating if at all possible.

### **Safety and Responsibility**

1. Lighting and keeping fires burning, Forest School Leader is permitted to light fires. Fires are lit using sticks, cotton wool and a flint and steel. No flammable liquids are to be used to light or accelerate fires. No plastics are to be burnt. Sticks/wood must be placed, not thrown, from the side of the fire. The hand should never go over the fire.
2. Extinguishing fires all fires must be extinguished at the end of a session. Water should always be to hand during campfire sessions. Forest School Leaders should ensure that any large remains of wood are separated from one another. At the end of the session, the fire must be doused down with water and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased.

In a case of emergency, if a fire was to spread, the Forest School leader will attempt to put out fire with a bucket of water which will be beside the fire at each session, along with a fire blanket and burns kit. First priority is to get children away from the fire as quickly as possible in a calm and sensible way. The teacher or forest school leader will gather the children, do a head count and take responsibility for organising the safe evacuation of all children and adult's present in the Forest School to the designated area on the key stage 2 yard. If a fire was to take place inside school whilst out a forest school we would take a head count of all children and meet together in key stage 1 yard.

### **1.5 Insurance**

St Michaels Catholic Primary School is covered by DFE Insurance which includes a risk protection agreement for academies. Membership number 144971. This document is held in the business managers office.

### **1.6 Manual Handling**

The forest school leader has been trained in manual handling and lifting delegates. Correct handling techniques must be followed to minimise the risks of injury. A variety of injuries may result from poor manual handling. The Forest School Leader is responsible for modelling safe manual handling to the children and assessing their age and ability whether it is safe and appropriate for them to move loads such as logs or rocks, due to the weight, size and shape, taking into consideration factors such as weather conditions.

## **1.7 Tool Policy and Procedures**

Activity Risk Assessments are completed by the Forest School Leader for all activities involving the use of tools. At the beginning of an activity the Forest School Leader will demonstrate and explain the safe use of the tools required to complete the activity planned for that session. This is called a 'Tool Talk'. Any practitioner or child using a tool as part of an activity must wear a glove on their non-tool hand at all times, and will be supervised on a one to one ratio with the Forest School Leader providing the correct level of support for the duration of the activity. The Forest School Leader will be responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of all tools and will wear appropriate protective equipment as necessary when carrying out tool maintenance and will follow the methods they developed from their training.

## **1.8 Welfare Policy**

### **Clothing Policy**

- Appropriate footwear to be worn at all times, ideally these will be wellington boots or walking boots.
- Children must bring a coat no matter what the weather.
- Long trousers and sleeves will be worn at Forest School, this is to protect from getting scratched or stung from brambles, thorns or nettles and insect bites.
- Appropriate waterproofs will be supplied for children in EYFS and key stage 1 which includes a waterproof jacket and water- proof trousers.
- In colder weather parents are responsible to provide their child with warm clothing, hats and gloves (gloves will not be worn when using tools).
- In warmer weather school will provide sun hats and water, please make sure that your child has sun cream applied before coming to Forest School that day.

### **Toileting**

All children will visit the toilet before leaving the classroom. If Forest school leader is on own she will communicate with the teacher about this using the walkie talkie. Any children needing the toilet during the session will use the nearest toilets which are situated in early years classroom or key stage 1.

### **Staff roles and responsibilities**

There are two Forest School leaders. Mrs Scott and Mrs Bonham are experienced teaching assistants/teachers and have completed their level 3 Forest School practitioner training. They hold a food and hygiene and manual handling certificate and an up to date Outdoor First Aid certificate and has an enhanced DBS check.

The Forest School leader has the safety of the children uppermost at all times and is responsible for organizing, planning and observing and will be ready to adapt sessions to meet the needs of the group. The forest school leader is there to guide, nurture, facilitate, keep safe, encourage and reinforce positive behavior towards each other and the environment. A safety check will be carried out before each session. The leader will have a First Aid pack with them at all times and is responsible for all equipment and tools and will ensure that it is checked before use and put back in the correct place after. Accident forms are taken to each session of Forest school anything that has happened in the session e.g. trip, fall, scratched, stung will be recorded and reported back to the parent with this information, and a copy of the incident given to the business manager. The forest school leader can take 8-12 children out in each session, when using a fire with a whole class another adult must be present, when using tools, it is a 1-1 ratio and another adult must be present.