



## **ALDERMAN JACOBS PRIMARY SCHOOL (ACADEMY TRUST)**

### **Forest School Handbook Policies and Procedures**

#### **Health and Safety Policies and Procedures**

At Alderman Jacobs Primary School, the health and safety of all children, staff and visitors is our Primary concern. The following policies and procedures within this handbook are in addition to the main school policies and procedures and do not replace them.

Forest school is held on the school premises, within our forest school area and is attended by the children from school.

The Forest School Leader is responsible for the safe running of the Forest School. However, all adults are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure children are safe. Before a Forest School session all staff involved have access to the activity planned and risk assessments associated with the activities.

Provided below are additional key points and measures, which are directly related to Alderman Jacobs Forest School sessions.

- There is a high staff to child ratio at Forest school, with ratios being a maximum of 1:8 children. This allows participants to safely experience activities, such as walking across logs blindfolded, lighting of controlled fires and the use of a range of tools which are usually considered too risky in other situations. A high staff to child ratio also allows for the Forest School Leader and staff members to give individuals one-to-one attention when needed and lead small group work.
- All the activities carried out at Forest School are risk assessed and continually monitored throughout the activity. There is always a trained first aider present.

#### **Daily Procedures**

To ensure the safety of all the children and adults attending Forest School, it is the

Forest School Leader's responsibility to ensure that a daily risk assessment (safety sweep) of the site is completed before each session. The Forest School Leader will make the site safe by removing hazards.

The following daily health and safety checklist provides a reminder of all daily procedures. This must be used each day.

### **Pre-visit checks**

- Run through the site risk assessment, make changes and amendments as and when necessary.
- Remove all visible litter and faeces.
- Remove trip hazards and mark off areas as out of bounds where appropriate.
- Remove/cut overhanging plants and vegetation from paths and walkways.
- Ensure risk assessments are completed for all activities.
- Set up Kelly kettle in the fire circle
- Set up the hand washing station.
- Check Forest School first aid kit and dated fresh water
- Check that you have three fully charged school radios. One will be left at reception, in the classroom and one for the Forest school group
- Check that all equipment and tools planning to be used are in a good working condition.
- Check that you have all the materials and resources needed for planned activities.

### **At the beginning of Forest School Session**

- A register will be taken
- Remind children about the boundaries of the Forest School area and that they must stay in these.
- Remind children of fire safety.
- Remind children of Forest School rules, how they should stay safe and behave.

### **Throughout the Forest School Session**

- All staff will be vigilant
- Children will be reminded of how to stay safe and highlight potential risks.
- Children will be asked to let an adult know of any potential hazard they spot.
- Observations will be made.

### **At the end of Forest School Session**

- Come together and talk about and evaluate the session.
- Clear the fire area and ensure it is safe to leave. Remove ash.
- Count and pack up all resources and equipment.
- Carry out a head count and escort the group back into school.

## **Transition to and from Forest School**

### **Preschool, Early Years and Year one**

The above year groups will travel to the forest school area through the garden gates and via the field to the Forest School area

The same route will be used after the Forest School Session.

### **Years two to Year six**

The above year groups will travel through the school, using the nature garden door and access the Forest school area crossing the road. The Forest School lead will check to ensure no deliveries are coming into school via the access road.

The same route will be used after the Forest School Session.

### **Access road and entering the nature garden.**

When accessing the nature garden, the Forest school leader or a member of staff will accompany the children across the road to ensure there are no delivery vehicles. The Forest School area is fenced off along the access road and cones are placed at the end of the driveway before the nature garden gate to ensure no delivery vehicles go beyond that point. The cones will be kept in the Forest School shed where the Forest School leader can access them.

There will be a radio left with reception staff for them to alert the Forest School staff of any deliveries that may be made during the Forest School session.

### **Clothing**

It is the Forest School Leaders responsibility to ensure the children are appropriately dressed. Any child not wearing appropriate clothing will not be able to participate. Preschool children will be provided with a waterproof all in one to protect themselves and clothing from the elements. The older children will provide their own waterproof clothing a coat, trousers and wellies,

Parents/carers of all year groups are to provide wellies, spare clothing, coats, socks and gloves and sunhats

Here are some possible items the children could wear:

### **Winter**

Long sleeved top/ hooded top/ fleece or thick jumper.

Thick socks/two pairs of thin socks.

Trousers, wellington boots, hat, scarf and gloves

### **Summer**

T-shirt (long sleeved preferable)

Trousers, socks, trainers, sturdy boots or wellington boots. (sandals, flip-flops are not suitable footwear) Sun Hat

During the Summer term the Sun Protocol policy will be followed.

### **Toileting**

All children will be asked to use the toilet before leaving their classroom and reminded they may not be able to go straight away.

### **Preschool, Early Years and Year one.**

Children in the above year groups will access the toilets near their year group classrooms.

### **Year two to Year six**

Children in the above year groups will access the toilets by year three, entering school via the nature garden door and be accompanied by a member of staff across the access road.

### **Food and Eating Policy**

Children will participate in simple cooking on the fire. Which can include: toasting marshmallows/pancakes/waffles. Wild food foraging is not carried with Preschool children, as an activity to avoid confusion amongst the children, with which foods are safe and unsafe.

Children are taught how to cook food safely following the activity risk assessment and fire policy. The Forest School leader has level 2 food hygiene.

A fresh bowl of water and antibacterial soap is available for children to wash their hands before having a snack, handling food or utensils.

### **Behaviour**

It is the responsibility of all forest school staff members to ensure that all children feel safe, respected and valued. Rules and expectations will be made clear at the beginning of the first Forest School session by the Forest School Leader and the main points will be recapped at the beginning of every session thereafter. If a child's behavior puts themselves or other children at risk, they will be asked to stop, and Forest School staff will intervene following the school Behaviour and Discipline policy. However, if the unsafe behavior continues the Forest School session may have to end. All the children are expected to follow the Forest School rules and behave accordingly. The children are expected to respect the plants and wildlife and help to maintain our Forest School area.

### **Safeguarding children**

Alderman Jacobs Forest School takes safeguarding of children and young people seriously. The same guidelines will be adhered to as in Alderman Jacobs Primary School

Safeguarding Policy.

### **Lost/ Missing Child**

Boundaries and expectations are made clear to all children at the beginning of the session. The Forest School Leader and all staff members are responsible for maintaining regular headcounts throughout the session. If a child is discovered missing, the group will be called back using 123 where are you? The Forest School leader will search the Forest School area, calling the child's name, whilst the other member of staff will keep the group together in the forest school classroom and notify school senior management via the radio. When senior management are present the staff member will take the group back into school via the nearest entrance near the nature garden or via Preschool. The Alderman Jacobs School Critical Incident Policy will then be followed.

### **First Aid and Emergency procedure**

The Forest School Leader is Pediatric first aid trained as well as staff members. Both the Forest School Leader and staff members will carry out first aid, following the First Aid policy using the Forest School First aid kit, located in the Forest School classroom. The first aid box is checked at the end of each session and will be taken and replenished by the school first aid lead to ensure the correct amount of equipment is present.

Inhalers will be taken to the Forest School Area with children's names clearly labelled on an individual bag.

In the event of a serious accident, The Forest School lead will inform senior management and an ambulance will be called via the school. The Forest School lead will remain with the casualty and the other member of staff will take the children back into school.

In case of a serious accident involving the Forest School Leader, the additional member of staff is aware of where the radio is located and will notify senior management. The children will be called using 123 where are you? And asked to wait in the forest school classroom until more support arrives, so they can be escorted back into school.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Alderman Jacobs Forest School strives to maintain equal opportunities for all children and young people. The Forest School Leader will aim to make the session as inclusive as possible and will adhere to Alderman Jacobs School, Equality Information and Objectives policy.

### **Tools Handling Policy**

### **Tool Usage**

Alderman Jacobs Forest School is about scaffolding new skills. The children will not be using tools until the Forest School Leader and the group have gained each other's trust. The forest school has specific ratios for tool usage and Personal Protective Requirements for adults or children when using any tools.

All tools are prepared and checked at the beginning of a session and are completed by the Forest School Leader. If any of the tools are unsafe, they are marked with tape and placed in the locked shed so they are not used.

**Tools available at Forest School are:**

**Bowsaw, Loppers, Billhook, Axe, Mallet, Gimlet/Palm drill, Potato peeler/knife,**

- All tools are cleaned, maintained and stored securely by the Forest School Leader in the Forest School shed.
- Before use, the Forest School Leader will check the tools for damage, instability and sharpness.
- Tools are transported from the Forest School shed by the Forest School Leader to the working space.
- How to use all the tools safely will be demonstrated on a group basis and then the activity will be carried out on a 1:1 basis with the Preschool children. The older children will follow the tool ratio for the activity, under the Forest School leaders guidance.
- The Forest School Leader will decide when individual children are ready to use a tool.
- Children will be assessed and must be able to understand the 'tool-talks' seen in the Tool Handling Policy.
- Children will not use any tools until the children are ready in every way; emotionally and physically.

**Tool Handling Policy - Axe**

Tool used for	To Chop and split wood to a certain size
Transportation	Carry holding by the handle at your side with the blade facing the floor (handbag position) Forest school leader to transport to safe working area
Inspection	Visual observation by Forest School Leader Check for splits or cracks in the handle Check join of the axe head to handle, by grasping handle and head and twisting Check sharpness of the blade Ensure user has no gloves or scarves on and no dangling hair
Personal Protective Equipment	Strong boots/footwear. Trousers

Safety equipment	None
Ratio: adult/child	1:1 for all children
Working space	Forest school knee (one knee on the floor and the other bent) before removing the blade cover Two arm lengths and tool length working space.
Method of use	Use a stable, level chopping block of wood. Use the axe ensuring to keep it straight/level hitting in a down motion with the mallet. Hold the axe at the end of the handle to ensure stability. When using with another person ensure good communication and eye contact is made before hitting with the mallet. When the axe is not being used place the axe in an agreed safe place with blade facing against block of wood
Cleaning and Maintenance	Use a wire brush and then wipe with an oily rag.
Storage	Store in locked shed

### Tool Handling Policy - Bowsaw

Tool used for:	Cutting green or dead wood. Blades are different for each type of wood. Gaps in the blade: green wood Raker tooth blade Uniformed blade: dead wood peg tooth blade
Safety Equipment	Blade guard when bowsaw is not in use. Plastic handle to hold. Store in locked shed
Personal Protective Equipment	Glove on the hand that is not holding the saw. Long trousers/overalls. Working boots.
Ratio: adult/child	For younger children 1:1. Older children can be supervised when using the bow saw, 1:2 ratio
Transportation	Carry holding the top and at your side with the blade facing down with the blade cover on. Pass to other people using the handle.
Working Space	Two arm lengths and tool length between others using tools. Forest school knee position.
Method of Use	Secure the wood and lean on a low sturdy piece of wood or low tree stump. Participants need to be facing each other. One person holds the handle and one person holds the opposite end, the bowsaw should pass along the users thigh. Before cutting, make eye contact with each other. Then three backwards strokes to start the cut followed by me to you action to complete the cut.

	When finishing the cut make sure the blade is on the floor in case when working with children, they go to grab the wood quickly.
Inspection	Check blade is secure, not damaged and is not blunt. Check blade cover is not broken and is effective.
Cleaning and Maintenance	Clean the blade after use, with a wire brush and cloth some oil. Replace blade guard if its broken
Storage	Store with the blade guard on in a locked shed

### Tool Handling Policy - Gimlet /Palm drill

Tool used for	To drill holes in to green or dead wood to the size of the gimlet or palm drill
Safety Equipment	Handle to use to turn
Personal Protective Equipment	Glove on the hand which is holding the wood.
Ratio adult/child	1:1 with younger children. The older children supervised 1:4, working in pairs.
Transportation	Carry at side with drill bit pointing towards the ground in a gloved hand.
Working Space	Two arm length and the length of the tool. Drill into the ground of a low old tree stump. In the forest school knee position.
Method of Use	Mark the wood where you are going to drill, turning the drill clockwise once. Then apply more pressure to the top of the gimlet/palm drill turning clockwise. Removing the drills turn anti clockwise pulling upwards.
Inspection	Check the drills are not damaged.
Cleaning and Maintenance	Wipe clean using an oiled cloth making sure the handle is kept dry
Storage	Store in the shed in a tin with a dry cloth to absorb moisture.

### Tool Handling Policy - Bill hook

Purpose	Used for splitting green wood. Hedge laying and coppicing.
Safety Equipment	Wrap blade in a cloth when not in use. Handle to hold
Personal Protective Equipment	Glove on hand that is holding the blade. (non-working hand) Long trousers, overalls and boots.
Ratio: adult/child	1:1 for young children, working with an adult holding the blade, children can control hitting with the mallet. Older children 1:2 when safe working in pairs.

Transportation	Carry covered with cloth, at side with the cutting edge facing down. Pass using the handle.
Working Space	Two arm length and the length of the tool. A secure base to stand an object for cutting, such as a low tree stump.
Method of Use	Log that is going to split is placed on a secure surface, a billhook is placed on top where you want to cut and then hit with a wooden mallet. Making eye contact with the person using the mallet and giving them instruction, as to whether to hit soft, hard or medium.
Inspection	Check the handle is not loose. Blade is not blunt before use.
Cleaning and Maintenance	Clean the blade after use to remove sap. Get the blade sharp using a cigar sharpening stone
Storage	Wrap in a cloth and store tray in locked shed

### Tool Handling Policy - Mallet

Purpose	For striking equipment that are cutting or going into wood, ground
Safety Equipment	Handle to hold
Personal Protective Equipment	Glove on hand that is holding wood.
Ratio: Adult/child	Supervision for all children 1:2
Transportation	Carry by the handle at side, with head facing down and not swing around
Working Space	Two arm lengths and tool length from others
Method of Use	Hold handle and use a striking action so that the head contacts the object.
Inspection	Check for damage such as handle not secure.
Cleaning and Maintenance	Wipe away dirt and lose bits of wood. If broken, create another mallet
Storage	In tray in shed

### Tool Handling Policy - Loppers

Purpose	To cut branches up to approximately 2cm diameter (smaller than your thumb)
Safety Equipment	Handles to hold. Always close the loppers when finished.
Personal Protective Equipment	Glove on hand holding the wood. Long trousers/overalls, strong boots.
Ratio: adult/child	1:1 for younger children. Older children can work in pairs with adult supervision.
Transportation	Carry at your side with your hand on the bottom shaft. Pass to others handles first.
Working Space	Two arms length plus the tool, trip hazards and obstruction.

Method of Use	Measure the piece you want to cut, using your thumb as an indicator. Use the length of the shaft to get as much leverage as possible. Ensure wood is as far into the jaws as possible and then cut, pulling handles together.
Inspection	Check grips are not damaged or loose. Make sure the extension locks. The cutting edge is clean, hinge free to open and close sufficiently
Cleaning and Maintenance	Clean cutting edge after use. Wash and clean. Use a wire brush to clean the blade. And sharpen using a flat file. Oil using a cloth.
Storage	Store in a tray and in a dry shed/storage unit.

### Tool Handling Policy - Trowel/Spade

Purpose	For digging and moving soil, sand, stones
Safety Equipment	Handle to hold
Personal Protective Equipment	Overalls/long trousers and boots.
Ratio: adult/child	Supervision of all children
Transportation	Carry by handle at side, not swinging around and not dragging spades along the floor
Working Space	Two arm length and tool length away from others. Check for trips/hazards.
Method of Use	Apply pressure and push the spade/trowel into the ground and move soil, sand etc safely from one place to another.
Inspection	Check handles are not loose from spade end, cracked or damaged.
Cleaning and Maintenance	Wash dirt off periodically and check for damage.
Storage	In shed

### Tool Handling Policy - Bit and Brace

Purpose	Used to drill holes into green or dead wood, up to a size depending on the drill bit size.
Safety Equipment	When not being used, the drill bit should not be in the chuck and stored in a container.
Personal Protective Equipment	Gloves on both hands if required. One glove should be worn when holding the piece of wood that the drill bit is going into.
Ratio: Adult: child	1:1 for younger children. Older children can work together with adult supervision.

Transportation	Carry by their side, ensuring that the drill bit is removed and carried in a gloved hand.
Working Space	Drill into a flat piece of wood or the ground. Ensure that two arm length and the length of the bit and brace away from others. Forest school knee position.
Method of Use	Find a firm base close to the ground. Secure the drill bit in the chuck before using and make sure that is tightly fitted. Line up the drill and the wood that is going to be drilled. Use one hand to apply pressure to the top of the drill, use the other gloved hand to hold the piece of wood. The other person can turn the U-shaped crank handle in a clockwise position. If wanted, the role of who holds the wood can be changed. Ensuring that the person wears a glove when holding the wood. When removing drill from wood, continue turning clockwise but pull up instead of applying pressure.
Inspection	Check the drill bit for damage and the chunk for wear, paying attention to how it holds the drill bit.
Cleaning and Maintenance	Lubricate all moving parts of the bit and brace to remove sawdust or dirt. Do not use it if the chunk is worn. Use non damaged drill bits.
Storage	Store drill bits in container, and bit and brace in a tool bag

### Tool Handling Policy - Potato Peeler/knife

Purpose	To shape, de-bark and carve wood.						
Safety Equipment	Hold the handle./knife guard.						
Personal Protective Equipment	Glove on the holding hand. Long trousers/overalls						
Ratio: Adult/child	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Potato peeler</td> <td>Knife</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1:2 for younger children</td> <td>1:1 for younger children</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1:4 for older children</td> <td>1:2 for older children</td> </tr> </table>	Potato peeler	Knife	1:2 for younger children	1:1 for younger children	1:4 for older children	1:2 for older children
Potato peeler	Knife						
1:2 for younger children	1:1 for younger children						
1:4 for older children	1:2 for older children						
Transportation	Make sure that the bladed end is pointing towards the floor and held at your side using the handle , if the knife has a guard keep it on unless in use . Pass using the handle.						
Working Space	Two arm lengths and the tool distance from the others. Sitting position with elbows on knees whittling to one side of the legs						
Method of Use	Sitting position. Elbows on knees in a locked position into the body and move the blade away from the body.						

Inspection	Check the blade is secure, and the handle is not loose at join. Check blade is not blunt before use.
Cleaning and Maintenance	Wash and clean off sap, clean with a wire brush. Keep blade sharp using a wet flat sharpening stone then oil
Storage	Store in a locked container/knife safe in a locked shed.

## Fire Safety

Fires will only be lit by a Forest School Leader following the Fire Safety Policy when the children are ready.

Considerations before having a fire:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wind direction</li> <li>• No combustible materials near by</li> <li>• No overhanging branches</li> <li>• Ground conditions (very dry)</li> <li>• Fires will be lit in the firepit or Kelly kettle in the fire square.</li> </ul>
Safe sitting:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire will be lit by the Forest School Leader when the leader feels confident the group understands and are able to carry out instructions safely.</li> <li>• The fire will be lit in the designated fire square. The area will be cleared of dried leaves and wood.</li> <li>• A fire pit will be used to prevent the spread of fire.</li> <li>• Fires will be lit using the fire steel, cotton wool and Vaseline. They will be stored in a tool box.</li> <li>• The fire will never be left unattended.</li> <li>• A bucket of water will be available before the fire is lit in case of an emergency burn/scald, a fire blanket and a watering can will be available to extinguish the fire.</li> </ul>
Safe extinguishing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pour water over gently using a watering can</li> <li>• Stir and spread out the ambers of the fire</li> <li>• Check the fire is out before disposing in the compost/hedge row.</li> </ul>
Emergency:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alderman Jacob's Fire Policy will be followed in an emergency.</li> </ul>

## Parental consent

Parents/guardians are required to fill out a consent form before the start of Forest School covering the use of tools and fire with close supervision. Administration of first aid/medications, emergency contact details and the use of photography are covered by the permission granted at the start of school.

## Cancellation Policy

### Weather conditions;

Forest School will continue in most types of weather with the exception of

- high winds of 25mph or more determined by the met office online.
- Extreme temperature determined by the met office amber warning
- Extreme cold of below '0'.

If the temperature is near to this, the children are advised to dress warmly and pre school will be provided with waterproofs. Sessions will be made shorter and activities will be planned to ensure the children are kept moving.

### Staff ratios;

A Forest school session will be cancelled due to staff illness or other circumstances if it is going to compromise the adult to child ratio.

Statutory/Non-Statutory							
Created/Reviewed/Updated		Ratified		Review Frequency	Next Review Date	Signed by	
By	Date	By	Date			Head	Chair
Z Whitwell M Freeman	24.05. 2021	Trustee Meeting	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2021	Annually	Summer 2022	<i>Cathy Carlisle</i>	<i>Whitwell</i>