



Acorn
Education Trust

Acorn Forest School Safeguarding Statement

Updated April 2021

Vision for SEND:

We believe that every child in every school should aspire to achieve their potential. We embrace the philosophy of learning for all and strive to prepare the children in our schools for their future in their time.

What is Forest School?

Acorn Forest School is an outdoor learning provision run by Acorn Education Trust. Based at Kingdown School in a wooded area at the top of the site, Forest School is open every Friday of term time. Allowing all children to achieve whilst developing confidence and self-esteem, students have the opportunity to work in a hands-on fashion in a natural environment.

Safeguarding at Forest School

Our primary concern at all times is the welfare and safeguarding of the children in our care at Acorn Forest School. All staff working at Link 2 have undergone the necessary safeguarding checks upon appointment to the post including enhanced DBS clearance. We follow Acorn Education Trust's safeguarding and child protection policy (available on the Trust website). Staff at the forest school will refer to the home school's safeguarding and child protection policy if concerns arise and report issues via the home school's online safeguarding procedures (MyConcern). The responsibility lies with the home school DSL as they have the child on their school roll.

Should the staff at Forest School be unable to reach the home school DSL in an urgent situation, they will contact Sue Fulbrook (Head of SEND and DSL trained) or Jo Ronxin (Head of School Support including lead on safeguarding.)

Mr Widger, who leads forest school, also has DSL training.

The information which follows details the arrangements for safeguarding children during their time at Acorn Forest School.

How do we safeguard children at Acorn Forest School?

Before a child starts at Acorn Forest School

- 1) Schools are contacted when a child is allocated a place on the Forest School programme to request information such as personal risk assessments and safeguarding concerns.
- 2) If there is a concern, a discussion will take place between the lead teacher at Forest School and the home school in order that necessary information is shared.
- 3) If there is an open Child Protection (CP) case, a meeting will be convened at the home school for the lead teacher at Forest School to read the CP file and to be updated by the home school's DSL.
- 4) The CP file will continue to be held at the home school.
- 5) If there is an open CP case, the lead teacher for forest school may provide advice or attend in person at core group meetings and case conferences.

If a concern arises during a child's placement at forest school

1. The staff member at Acorn Forest School will complete a "MyConcern" form online on the home school account.
2. This will be followed-up by the home school DSL who will respond to the Forest School staff by the end of the following school day at the latest either via email, phone or MyConcern.
3. Should the Forest School staff not hear a response in this time frame, they will telephone the home school to check up.
4. If a serious welfare concern is raised, the Forest School teacher will telephone directly to the home school DSL. Where this person is unavailable, the Forest school teacher will contact either the Head of SEND for Acorn Education Trust or the Head of School Support for Acorn Education Trust. In the unlikely event that none of the above people are available, and the situation is an emergency, the Forest School teacher would ring MASH.
5. The Forest School teacher will inform the Head of SEND of any MyConcerns registered.

Attendance

- 1) If a child does not arrive at Acorn Forest School for their session, the home school will be notified by phone.
- 2) Parents are asked to telephone their home primary school in the event of their child being too ill to attend who will inform the lead teacher at Forest School by phone. Any planned absence should be reported to the lead teacher at Forest School.
- 3) Attendance at Forest School is reported on the weekly update spreadsheet to home schools.
- 4) If a child who is on a child protection plan does not arrive at Acorn Forest School at their designated time and session, a telephone call will be made to the child's social worker. The home school will also be notified.

Within the setting

- 1) A risk assessment has been carried out on the setting and is available from the lead Forest School teacher.
- 2) Staff are well-versed in these procedures.
- 3) Any incidents of peer on peer abuse or bullying and any racial incidents will be logged. Home schools will be notified via MyConcern.
- 4) Personal risk assessments for individual children are logged and adhered to.

Staff training

- 1) Staff receive safeguarding training and this is updated every 3 years as a minimum, but usually annually. This ensures staff within Acorn Forest School understand their role in safeguarding. Staff also receive regular safeguard updates and training from the safeguarding lead for Acorn Education Trust.
- 2) The Head of School Support and safeguarding lead for Acorn Education Trust circulates details of updates to all DSLs and chairs a termly DSL network meeting across the Trust.

If concerns arise over staff conduct

- 1) Should a child or another member of staff raise a concern over the conduct of a member of staff, the DSL for the home school and the Trust lead for safeguarding will be informed.
- 2) The case will be referred to the DOFA.
- 3) The DSL will investigate.