



## Forest School Association (FSA)

### Self-Assessment Checklist: FSA Recognised Forest School Provider Scheme (V5)

This document is a quick-reference sheet that outlines the benchmarks that FS providers need to meet in order to be recognised by the FSA.

#### Section A: Your details

- Be a setting, nursery, school or organisation (including sole-trading freelancers) which has at least one Level 3 trained FS practitioner
- Demonstrate that you have been offering FS experiences for at least 6 months. We will sometimes accept providers who have facilitated 6 sessions in their current setting.

#### Section B: Your qualified Forest School staff & their Forest School planning

- Provide a copy of the Level 3 qualification certificate for all Level 3 practitioners, be they staff or volunteers. Please refer to question 13 on the application form for more detail about acceptable level 3 qualifications
- Provide copies of current 16 hour First Aid qualification certificates for all level 3 practitioners. NB best practice is for this to include an outdoor element AND if you work with pre-pubescent children, the qualification must include a paediatric element. Ideally your training complies with the IOL statement of good practice for Outdoor First Aid at Band 3: <https://www.outdoor-learning.org/Good-Practice/Good-Practice/Guidance-for-Outdoor-First-Aid>
- Provide evidence of your planning for two recent consecutive sessions, for each of your Level 3 practitioners, that includes:
  - Date/Session number (e.g. 7 of 34)
  - Special and additional needs
  - Current needs of the group (e.g. struggle with transition, fascinated by pullies, lacking respect for woodland space)
  - Outline of possible plan/activities in response to needs (to include use of natural materials & free play)
  - Session start/end time
  - Names of supporting adults
  - Number of children
  - Age of children
  - Special kit required
  - Associated reflection (what went well, what didn't, considerations for next time)
- Provide a set of observations for six consecutive sessions relating to two individual participants

## Section C: Your Continuing Professional Development

- Provide a summary of the CPD (relating to FS practice) that each of your Level 3 practitioners has completed over the last 2 years. This cannot include Level 1, 2 or 3 Forest School training or First Aid qualifications. We expect a mix from the following: face to face courses, conferences, accredited online courses, local groups, online forums, reading books/journals/online content, participating in projects, discussions with peers and/or attending skills-sharing sessions.

## Section D: Your Forest School sessions

- Provide a summary of the **long-term** Forest School programmes you offer, to include: length of each session (hours), frequency of sessions and duration of programme

## Section E: Risk

- Provide a copy of a completed site risk assessment (to include a prioritisation and a review date)
- Provide a scan or photo of a completed (we assume hand-written) daily site check
- Provide 3 examples of risk-benefit assessments. Two of the three will need to relate to a 'higher-risk' activity. There will need to be a clear section about perceived benefits and some sort of prioritisation.
- Share a suitable approach to dynamic risk assessment

## Section F: Your Handbook

Provide a copy of your operational handbook, presented as a single file, that includes:

- An explanation of FS ethos and principles
- A communication of the role of supporting adults in FS
- Health and safety policy
- Emergency planning procedures
- Safeguarding policy
- Confidentiality information
- Your approach to behaviour in Forest School
- How you deal with instances of bullying in FS
- Complaints policy
- Sustainability or Environmental policy

## Section G: Your site(s)

- Provide a copy of a document that shows how you conserve and manage your woodland space
- Declaration that you care for your woodland sites
- Declaration that you have formal landowner permission to use your site

## Section H: Your communications

- Evidence that you prepare parents/carers and supporting adults for Forest School experiences