

Forest School Association (FSA)



Press release - New professional standards for Forest School Trainers

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The inspirational process of **Forest School** has been developing over the past twenty years in the UK, but there has been concern about the variable quality of some **Forest School Training**. As a response to this the Forest School Association has spent five years developing the first set of nationally recognised professional standards for those delivering **Forest School Training**. The Forest School Association is the professional body setting professional standards and managing a new **Quality Assurance (QA) Scheme for Forest School Trainers**.

The Quality Assurance Scheme has been officially launched in consultation with the **Forest School Training community** (over 50 members of the GB Forest School Trainers Network). It was piloted during 2017, resulting in 3 Trainers gaining FSA Registration and a further 5 going on to gain full FSA Endorsement. These Trainers appear on our publicly accessible online map. <http://www.forestschoollassociation.org/find-a-forest-school-trainer/> The FSA has already started to receive new applications.

People wishing to identify **quality Forest School training provision** will be able to consult the map and database of **FSA Registered and Endorsed Trainers**. We anticipate that decision-makers such as Local Authority Advisors and OFSTED will use the scheme as a way of signposting to provision that meets national standards. Through the scheme the FSA are endorsing that trainers are providing **quality Forest School Training** in line with the 'six core **Forest School principles**' and that they are following a quality training process. These Trainers may be recognised by their FSA Endorsement.



Sarah Lawfull, an **FSA Endorsed Forest School Trainer** from Oxfordshire says, "I have relished being part of the pilot Quality Assurance process which has helped me identify areas of strengths and weakness in my own practice. I have gained confidence and been supported through the whole process by the FSA, ensuring I have everything in place to be able to offer high quality training. Endorsed status has already enhanced my reputation with head teachers, giving potential partners and clients confidence in the quality of training I am offering."

Gareth Wyn Davies, Chief Exec of the Forest School Association says "People in the sector have been crying out for some professional standards relating to trainers for years now and we are thrilled to be at the point where we are launching this rigorous scheme. The scheme will enable people looking to train as a Forest School Leader to select their trainer with confidence."

Notes to Editors:

The FSA website: www.forestschoollassociation.org

The **Forest School Association** is the professional body and UK wide voice for Forest School, promoting best practice, cohesion and '*quality Forest School for all*'. Its charitable purpose is "*the advancement of education for public benefit through promotion and support of quality Forest School in the United Kingdom using any means to enable all children, young people and adults to benefit from increased opportunities for high quality and varied educational experiences in the natural world.*"

An inspirational process, Forest School offers ALL learners regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees. It's a specialised learning approach that sits within, and complements, the wider context of outdoor and woodland education.

The six Forest School principles are:

1. FS is a long-term process of regular sessions
2. FS takes place in a woodland or natural environment
3. FS uses a range of learner-centred processes
4. FS aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved
5. FS offers learners the opportunity to take supported and appropriate risks
6. FS is run by qualified Forest School practitioners

Details on how to join the **Trainers Quality Assurance scheme** and its benefits can be found here <http://www.forestschoollassociation.org/membership-options-page/>

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