



Forest School Association (FSA)

Self-Assessment Checklist: FSA Recognised Forest School Provider Scheme (V7)

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. We have adopted 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>
This means your First Aid qualification needs to have a paediatric element and an outdoor element.
- 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. expect at least one day of face-to-face courses/conferences specifically in relation to an area of Forest School and, in addition, a mix from the following: 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

- Duration and frequency of the **long-term**, year-round Forest School programmes you offer.

Section E: Risk

- Provide a copy of a completed site risk assessment
- 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.
- 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 each of the 6 principles
- A communication of the role of supporting adults in FS
- Health and safety policy
- Emergency planning procedures (to include lost child, first-aid and illness/injury of Level 3 leader)
- 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 (to include site location, environmental impact assessment, overall management objective, management plan, basic species list, monitoring and enhancements to ecology of the site)
- 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