

Overstone Combined School and Pre-School

Job Description: Forest School Lead (Level 3 Qualified)

Three days per week (preferably Wednesday, Thursday, Friday), 38 weeks per year plus 5 inset days

Job Title

Forest School Lead

Reports To

Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher

Location

Primary School Site and Forest School Area

Job Purpose

To lead, plan, deliver, and evaluate high-quality Forest School sessions that promote children's confidence, independence, resilience, wellbeing and connection with the natural environment. The post holder will ensure all activities are safe, inclusive, engaging, and aligned with the school's curriculum and ethos.

Key Responsibilities

Forest School Leadership

- Lead and deliver regular Forest School sessions for pupils across the primary age range, including Pre-School.
- Develop a progressive Forest School programme that supports learning, personal development, and wellbeing.
- Create opportunities for child-led exploration, risk-taking, problem-solving and outdoor learning.
- Foster positive relationships with children, encouraging confidence, self-esteem and respect for nature.

Planning and Assessment

- Plan sessions in line with Forest School principles and school priorities.
- Assess individual and group needs to ensure activities are accessible and inclusive.
- Observe, record and evaluate pupil progress and engagement.
- Contribute to reports and share progress with staff and parents where appropriate.

Health, Safety and Safeguarding

- Conduct site checks and risk-benefit assessments before activities.
- Maintain a safe learning environment and ensure compliance with health and safety regulations.
- Ensure all safeguarding policies and procedures are followed at all times.
- Manage tools, equipment, and resources safely and effectively.
- Maintain appropriate first aid arrangements during sessions.



Site and Resource Management

- Develop and maintain the Forest School area.
- Monitor and replenish resources, tools and equipment.
- Promote environmental sustainability and conservation within the school grounds.
- Ensure equipment is stored securely and maintained in good condition.

Curriculum and School Contribution

- Work collaboratively with teaching staff to support curriculum objectives through outdoor learning.
- Promote Forest School across the school, and wider, community.
- Support school events, enrichment activities and outdoor learning initiatives.
- Contribute to staff development by sharing good practice in outdoor education.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest School Level 3 qualification e.g. through the Forest School Association (or willing to complete – see training below). • Hold a current Paediatric/16hr outdoor First Aid Certificate (or willing to complete). • Relevant safeguarding training. • GCSE English and Mathematics (or equivalent). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other outdoor experiences and/or qualifications (e.g. Bushcraft).
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working with groups of children at different stages of development. • Recent and significant experience in leading Forest School/outdoor education sessions with children of a range of ages. • A love of working outdoors regardless of the weather, whilst ensuring the safety of the children when working in wet and muddy conditions / uneven surfaces, or in hot and sunny conditions. • Knowledge, understanding and practical experience of Forest School provision for young children. • Proven ability to plan and deliver environmental education-based activities to a wide age range of children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in a school. • Ability to engage constructively with and relate to a wide range of young people and families/carers. • Experience delivering Forest School sessions to primary-aged children. • Experience conducting risk assessments and managing outdoor learning environments. • Experience supporting children's social, emotional, and educational development.



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of safeguarding and child protection procedures.
Knowledge, skills and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and practical understanding of child development. • Strong understanding of Forest School principles and pedagogy. • Ability to engage and motivate children of varying abilities. • Commitment to equal opportunities for all learners. • An understanding of health and safety requirements and welfare issues of working with young children. • An understanding of the importance of confidentiality. • A good general knowledge of wildlife and conservation issues. • Understanding of the Forest School Ethos and be able to apply this throughout all working practice, both with children and staff. • Able to work independently and to manage own time efficiently. • Good organisational and planning skills. • Excellent communication skills, within a wide age range including staff at all levels. • Computer literate for report writing and recording. • Full working knowledge of current statutory and regulatory guidelines related to outdoor learning and education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience working in a primary school setting. • Additional qualifications in outdoor learning, environmental education or child development. • Experience leading staff training or mentoring colleagues. • A good knowledge of growing plants and seasonal changes in flora and fauna.
Personal qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy working with primary aged children from a range of backgrounds and commitment to supporting their physical, social and emotional development through forest school activities. • Commitment to continued professional and personal development. • Professional credibility & commitment to equal opportunities and valuing diversity. • Demonstrate a commitment to supervision and reflective practice. 	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enthusiastic and passionate about outdoor learning.• Patient, adaptable, and nurturing.• Creative and resourceful.• Committed to inclusion and equal opportunities.• Reliable, professional, and reflective in practice.	
Personal Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Warm and caring personality, friendly and approachable.• Ready to learn from and rise to challenges – keen for all children and staff members to thrive.• Creative, practical thinker who works well as part of a team.• Punctual and organised (can organise own work load and that of support staff/volunteers).	
Other attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Right to work in the UK.• Works within guidelines and procedures.• Evidence of a commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.	

Training

If the successful applicant requires training in order to obtain the Forest School Level 3 qualification, the school will release the successful applicant to complete the training. The school will also fund the training in full (at a cost of £950) but the successful applicant would be required to pay that amount back to the school should they leave within 4 years of their appointment.

Working Hours

As agreed by the school, which may include preparation time, site maintenance and attendance at relevant meetings and training.

Safeguarding Statement

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references.

Salary

Dependent on qualifications and experience, in accordance with the school's pay scale.