

Forest School Norfolk Guidance on Forest School Mentor Scheme

Norfolk County Council's Environmental and Outdoor Learning team are looking to train qualified Forest School leaders of good practice to become 'Norfolk Forest School Mentors'. These mentors primarily will be supporting students undertaking level 1 and 2 Forest School training by providing a Forest School for students to observe. If you are interested and meet the requirements you are invited to apply by completing the application form.

Benefits of becoming a Mentor

- On successful completion of the induction (which may require certain actions to be taken) mentor will be recognised by NCC by a Norfolk Forest School logo.
- Mentoring work will be paid for
- Free training/induction
- Free CPD training – based on mentor's individualised action plan
- Free support completing national Forest School Quality Assurance scheme

Mentor application requirements:

1. Qualified Level 3 Forest School Practitioner
2. 72 hours of Forest School delivery experience (eg. 36 sessions (year) x 2 hours).
3. Currently running Forest School – and able to receive visitors to observe sessions
4. Keep Forest School Handbook (as per Level 3 course) up to date and regularly reviewed, and are willing to allow visitors view the document
5. Good communication skills
6. Willing to attend and complete all elements of Mentor Induction programme

Induction Programme

After a successful application has been made the practitioner will participate in an induction programme. Once this induction has been successfully completed the practitioner will become a recognised Norfolk Forest School Mentor. The Induction is outline below:

1. Application received and successful candidates acknowledged
2. Candidates complete initial SEF to aid reflection and produce an individualised action plan – this is sent to coordinator and CPD programme developed
3. Initial meeting – Monday 20th July all day (venue TBA).
4. Peer visits and observations – visiting 4 other Forest School leaders sessions
5. Creation of a 'All about me' bio page
6. CPD received as required via individualised action plan
7. Final Meeting – Thursday 1st October all day (venue TBA)
8. Successful mentors recognised and awarded logo

The National Forest School QA scheme may also be included once it becomes available.

How the Forest School Mentor Scheme will work

Once mentors are fully trained and recognised they will be expected to support level 1 and 2 students complete their qualification. The level 2 qualification is yet to be developed in Norfolk so initially the students will be those completing level 1. The system will be as followed:

1. Students undertake 2 day level 1 training course
2. Coordinator matches students to available mentors
3. Mentors contact students to arrange visit
4. Students (in pairs) visit mentor at their site for 1 day – half day observing a Forest School session and half day advice and support (paid from NCC at an £80 supply rate).
5. Mentor completes visit form and returns to Coordinator
6. Student completes evaluation form and returns to Coordinator
7. Coordinator passes evaluations on to Mentors.
8. Student completes training course

Ongoing commitment

Mentors will be expected to have an ongoing commitment to reflect on their own practice and developments within Forest School. Therefore the following will be expected of the mentor:

- Attend an annual mentor meeting
- Attend at least 1 Forest School Leaders meeting a year
- Keep their Forest School handbook regularly reviewed
- Keep their First aid qualifications up to date
- Keep their SEF regularly reviewed
- Keep updated on National and Local Forest School developments

If you have any questions about the mentor scheme please contact;

Louise Ambrose
l.ambrose@mail.com
07787930030