



Forest School Leader Level 3 Training Autumn 2026

Qualification: ITC Level 3 Certificate for Forest School Leaders
QAN: 603/3213/X Cost: £1'250 including Forest School First Aid

Level 3 is designed to qualify the trainee to become a Forest School Leader, able to set up and run a Forest School programme. Level 3 covers how to facilitate groups in a learner-centred way, and how to manage a Forest School site sustainably. It also covers the practical skills required of a Forest School Leader.

The course takes around 180 hours of study time, comprising 10 days of face-to-face training and assessment, with an optional visit to assess in your setting, and online support. You are required to complete a portfolio of evidence, including the planning and delivery of a forest school pilot programme. Candidates must hold an enhanced DBS certificate prior to delivery of sessions.

During the face-to-face training days, all necessary tools and safety equipment are provided for trainee use, ensuring they are appropriate and in good working order. Trainees are expected to bring sturdy footwear, outdoor clothing (including waterproofs), and optionally, a camera, which is recommended for documenting progress. We supply each trainee with a portfolio template and reference materials or sources covering all theoretical topics to support learning and written assignments. Additionally, a library of resources is available for trainees to access during the face-to-face sessions.

Assessments and Coursework Portfolio

The assessments conducted during training are designed to accommodate a variety of learning styles and needs, allowing trainees to present evidence in diverse formats, including written work, videos, photographs, and presentations. These assessments include:

- Tutor Observations during face-to-face training days.
- Interim Assignments, which may be completed using different formats to suit the trainee's learning preferences.
- Practical Skills and Peer Assessments carried out during the practical skills training and assessment days.

- Observation of Trainees Delivering Sessions, specifically one of the six sessions from their 'Introduction to Forest School' programme, during the Mentoring Visit.
- Coursework Portfolio, containing evidence for the five units of the qualification.

The portfolio is a comprehensive record of learning and must include a site- and group-specific handbook of policies and procedures. Evidence can be submitted in various formats, such as written reflections, step-by-step guides, visual documentation, or creative presentations, ensuring accessibility for all trainees.

To support portfolio completion, trainees receive feedback from interim assignments, participate in personal tutorials during practical skills assessment days, and can attend monthly online portfolio tutorials. Ongoing support is also available via email, ensuring guidance throughout the training process.

First Aid

To qualify as a Level 3 Forest School Leader, you must hold a 2-day Outdoor/Forest School First Aid (OFA) qualification. This certification equips you to care for infants, children, and adults in both indoor and outdoor settings. Standard 1-day Paediatric First Aid or First Aid at Work certificates are not sufficient. This qualification is included in the course fees.

Workplace Assessment

During your 6-week 'Introduction to Forest School' programme, a tutor will visit your site to observe a session and provide mentoring, guidance, and feedback on safety, leadership, and application of the Forest School ethos. An additional fee of £75 plus 45p per mile applies for sites outside a 50-mile radius of the training venue.

Course Content:

ITC Level 3 Certificate for Forest School Leaders, which is comprised of 5 (Five) Units:

Practical Skills for Forest School Programmes – Focuses on using the outdoor environment as a learning space and teaching a variety of woodland skills to others.

The Woodland Environment – Explores the structure, biodiversity, and sustainable management of wooded areas.

Learning and Development – Examines learning theories, supports holistic development, highlights the value of play, and discusses ways to build self-esteem in participants.

Planning and Preparation for Forest School – Covers the essential steps to establish a Forest School, including creating policies, managing risks, and effective communication.

Delivering Forest School Programmes – Focuses on running and evaluating Forest School sessions effectively.

Training is delivered by Kat Soutar. kat@landandleafcollective.org / 07813079083

Autumn 2026 Cohort: Training and assessment dates

In person training days 8.30am - 5.30pm: All days run at Strunch Hill Wood on the Doddington Estate		
In person training	Introduction to Forest School, learning and development, the woodland environment and practical skills	3rd, 4th and 5th October 2026
In person training	Practical skills	14th and 15th November 2026
Forest School First Aid	Outdoor and Paediatric First Aid	2 days TBC
In person training	Practical skills, planning and preparation, learning and development.	20th and 21st February 2027
Practical skills assessment	Assessing competency of practical skills	11th, 12th and 13th June 2027
Delivery	Trainees deliver a pilot programme of six sessions	May - August 2027
Workplace assessment	Assessor visit to pilot programme to assess delivery.	May - August 2027
Portfolio Workshops and assessment *optional	Portfolio support, reflection, learning journals and assessments	10th July 2027
In person training	Reflective Practice	11th September 2027
Course Completion	Portfolio to be submitted within 12 months of course start date	September 2027
Online portfolio support:	Last Thursday of the month 7pm - 8.00pm	