**FINCH Interview Topic Guide- Forest School Facilitator (Support Staff)**

**Preamble**

* *Thank you for consenting to take part in this interview. It may take up to 45 minutes, but we can stop at any time if you need to.*
* *Just to remind you, you do not have to answer all the questions and there are no right or wrong answers. We just want to hear your views.*
* *I may ask you to explain something further in the interview. This is not because you are not being clear, but because when presenting this work, we need to use your words rather than ours to explain things.*
* *We will audio record this interview but will not name you in any reports or publications arising from this work. The audio files will be stored securely and accessed only by the research team.*
* *Do you have any questions before we start?*

**SWITCH ON RECORDER**

***\*\*\*Complete the consent form verbally if it has not been returned electronically***

**Background**

1. Can you tell me a little bit about you, how long have you been teaching/supporting children?

*[Prompt: Do you have any expertise with particular types of children, e.g., disabilities, SEN children, or are you employed to assist with these children in the classroom?]*

1. How would you describe your relationship with the outdoors and confidence with outdoor learning?

*[Prompt: Did this help with FS delivery/change after taking part in FINCH?]*

**Previous knowledge/implementation of Forest Schools**

1. Had you heard of forest schools before the FINCH study?

*[Prompt: what did you hear, see, know?]*

1. Have you previously been involved with outdoor activities with children at the school?

*[Prompt: where? When? Doing what? How is that different to Forest School]*

**Experience of delivering Forest Schools**

1. Can you give me a summary of your thoughts about the Forest School sessions with your class?
2. Which parts of Forest School did you most enjoy supporting?

*[Prompt: Can you tell me more about that?]*

1. Which parts of Forest School are most difficult or challenging to support?

*[Prompt: How do you normally manage that? How did these challenges impact your approach to the delivery of Forest School? Overall, did you feel confident delivering Forest School?]*

1. Did you attend the Forest School training? Can you please tell me about your experience of this?

*[Prompt: to what extent do you think the training prepared you to facilitate the groups?]*

1. How useful were the practical handbook and Forest School materials?
2. Did you engage in any of the follow-up support available from the Forest School trainers, if so, how helpful was it?
3. Did delivering Forest School get in the way of any of your other work or teaching priorities?

*[Prompt: did it displace any other planned lessons? Is additional effort or work required to deliver Forest School compared to other lessons - and is that extra effort worth it?]*

1. Did you find delivering and learning about Forest School had any benefits to you personally?

*[Prompt: teaching delivery/approaches in the classroom, alternative ways of working, transferable skills delivering other lessons)*

**Impact on children in your Forest School class**

1. What did children/pupils in your class seem to like most about the forest school?

*[Prompt: Do the children they talk about it outside of the forest school lessons?]*

1. What didn’t they like?
2. Do you think the forest school has resulted in any changes in any children?

(more specific questions below)

1. Do you think the forest school had any impact on their mental health?

*[Prompt: confidence, overcoming fears, happiness, concentration, relaxation, interest etc…ask if this was during and/or after the sessions]*

1. Why do you think Forest School impacted on mental health?

*[if applicable, rephrase to why do you think Forest School had not impact on child mental health?*

*Prompt: Were there any particular sessions, activities or topics that stood out to you as having a particularly positive on children’s mental health?]*

1. Has their interest and confidence with nature changed?

*[Prompt: what did they have an interest in? were they cautious/scared of anything at first? Do they have any new knowledge? etc) – in terms of nature include living and non-living natural things such as plants and animals as well as rocks, sticks, hills, water sources) (more specific questions below) (ask if this was during and/or after the session]*

1. Are the impacts you have described the same or different for children with special educational needs and disabilities?
2. Were there any other groups of children who seemed to benefit more or less from Forest Schools?

**Final thoughts**

1. Would you recommend Forest School to other teachers and schools?

[Prompt: would you like to see your school deliver Forest School to more year groups and classes?]

**Ending the interview**

* *Is there anything else that you would like to say or anything you thought you wanted to discuss that we have not talked about today?*
* *Do you have any questions for me?*

**Thank you very much for taking part.**

**SWITCH OFF RECORDER**