Results summary FINCH Forest School study

Participant Flow

A total of 143 schools were approached, of which 20 expressed an interest in participating. Eight schools were recruited and randomised (4 Forest School; 4 Control). One school withdrew prior to randomisation and was replaced by a reserve school.

A total of 196 pupils were recruited (108 Forest School; 88 Control). Follow-up data collection was completed at 12 weeks and 24 weeks. Participant and school flow through the study is presented in the accompanying CONSORT diagram.

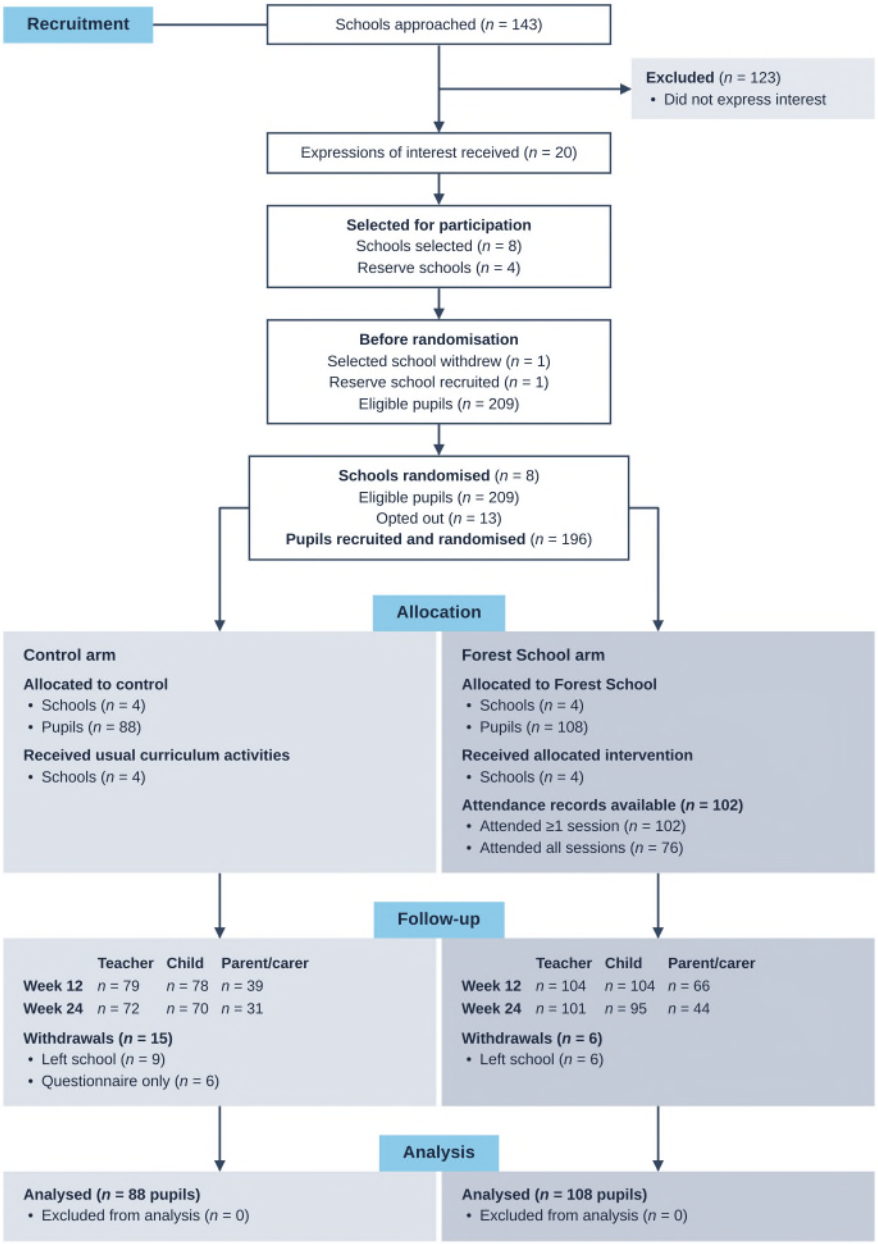

Figure 1. CONSORT flow diagram for the FINCH trial.

Questionnaire completion

Measure	Forest School	Control
Teacher questionnaire week 12	104/108 (96.3%)	79/88 (89.8%)
Teacher questionnaire week 24	101/108 (93.5%)	72/88 (81.8%)
Child questionnaire week 12	104/108 (96.3%)	78/88 (88.6%)
Child questionnaire week 24	95/108 (88.0%)	70/88 (79.5%)
Parent questionnaire week 12	66/108 (61.1%)	39/88 (44.3%)
Parent questionnaire week 24	44/108 (40.7%)	31/88 (35.2%)

Baseline Characteristics

	Control (n=88)	**Forest School (n=108)**	**Total (n=196)**
School Urban/Rural Status, n (%)			
Rural	16 (18.2)	32 (29.6)	48 (24.5)
Urban	72 (81.8)	76 (70.4)	148 (75.5)
Class Year Group, n(%)			
Year 3 or 4	42 (47.7)	59 (54.6)	101 (51.5)
Year 5 or 6	46 (52.3)	49 (45.4)	95 (48.5)
Age			
Mean, (SD)	8.9 (1.0)	9.2 (0.8)	9.1 (0.9)
Median (IQR)	9.3 (1.9)	9.3 (1.0)	9.3 (1.4)
Min, Max	7.2, 10.3	7.2, 10.3	7.2, 10.3
Gender, n (%)			

Male	38 (43.2)	52 (48.1)	90 (45.9)
Female	50 (56.8)	56 (51.9)	106 (54.1)
Ethnicity, n (%)			
White: British	72 (81.8)	100 (92.6)	172 (87.8)
Black or Black British: African	2 (2.3)	1 (0.9)	3 (1.5)
Asian or Asian British: Chinese	1 (1.1)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.5)
Mixed: White and Asian	0 (0.0)	1 (0.9)	1 (0.5)
Mixed: White and Black African	1 (1.1)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.5)
Mixed: Any other Mixed background	0 (0.0)	1 (0.9)	1 (0.5)
Other White ethnic group	4 (4.5)	3 (2.8)	7 (3.6)
Other ethnic group	8 (9.1)	2 (1.9)	10 (5.1)
Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND), n(%)			
Yes	15 (17.0)	19 (17.6)	34 (17.3)
No	71 (80.7)	87 (80.6)	158 (80.6)
Not reported	2 (2.3)	2 (1.9)	4 (2.0)
Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), n (%)			
Yes	0 (0.0)	1 (0.9)	1 (0.5)
No	86 (97.7)	105 (97.2)	191 (97.4)
Not reported	2 (2.3)	2 (1.9)	4 (2.0)
Existing Diagnoses, n (%)			
Yes	5 (5.7)	12 (11.1)	17 (8.7)
No	76 (86.4)	93 (86.1)	169 (86.2)

Not reported	7 (8.0)	3 (2.8)	10 (5.1)
Free School Meals (FSM) status, n (%)			
Yes	20 (22.7)	42 (38.9)	62 (31.6)
No	68 (77.3)	66 (61.1)	134 (68.4)
Pupil Premium status, n (%)			
Yes	18 (20.5)	30 (27.8)	48 (24.5)
No	70 (79.5)	78 (72.2)	148 (75.5)

Outcome Measures

Primary Outcome: Teacher-reported SDQ Total Difficulties Score

Timepoint	Control Mean (SD)	Forest School Mean (SD)
Baseline	7.4	10.4
Week 24	5.8	6.4

Child Health Utility 9D (CHU-9D)

Timepoint	Control Mean (SD)	Forest School Mean (SD)
Baseline	0.79 (0.12)	0.83 (0.10)
Week 12	0.80 (0.11)	0.82 (0.09)
Week 24	0.80 (0.11)	0.83 (0.11)

Nature Connection Index (NCI)

Timepoint	Control Mean (SD)	Forest School Mean (SD)
Baseline	52.5 (26.9)	57.8 (29.3)

Week 12	42.4 (25.8)	58.3 (26.5)
Week 24	42.5 (27.1)	53.3 (30.8)

Inclusion of Nature in Self (INS)

Timepoint	Control Mean (SD)	Forest School Mean (SD)
Baseline	4.8 (1.64)	5.4 (1.61)
Week 12	4.8 (1.78)	5.5 (1.54)
Week 24	4.7 (1.47)	5.2 (1.64)

Attendance

Attendance data were available for 150 participants. Attendance remained high throughout the study period in both trial arms.

Harms/Adverse Events

Event Category	Forest School (n=108)	Control (n=88)
Deaths	0	0
Serious adverse events	0	0
Other adverse events	4	0

The four adverse events reported in the Forest School arm comprised minor cuts/scrapes (n=2), minor head injury (n=1) and transient rash (n=1). No serious adverse events occurred. No participants withdrew because of an adverse event.