

Forest School

Forest School is an inspirational process, that offers ALL learners regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees.

Forest School is run by a qualified Forest School Leader (Level 3) following the six guiding principles and criteria for good practice that have been adopted by The Forest School Association:

- 🌳 Forest school is long term and the sessions are regular – throughout the whole year and in all weathers.
- 🌳 Forest school takes place in a woodland or natural environment.
- 🌳 Forest school is child-led.
- 🌳 Forest School promotes holistic development.
- 🌳 Forest School involves appropriate, supported risk-taking.
- 🌳 Forest school is run by qualified Forest School leaders.

Learning at Forest School is 'holistic', this means that children learn many different things that are all interconnected as part of the whole child: communication, physical, social skills, knowledge and understanding, emotional understanding and confidence.

At Forest School we offer a large variety of activities and encourage the children to 'choose' what they enjoy doing or are interested in. We evaluate each session with the children at the end and discuss what they would like to do at their next sessions. Some children enjoy the freedom to just spend time outside whilst others may be more adventurous and want to try something new or spend a few weeks exploring the same activity-there is no right or wrong!

All of our activities are risk assessed both before and during the sessions. We encourage the children to take an active role in this process so that they begin to know what they are capable of, how to assess any situation that they might encounter in everyday life and to know when to challenge themselves to try something new in a safe way. We call this appropriate, supported risk-taking. This is an important skill that children will take with them as they grow and develop.

Some of the activities that we can do at Forest School:

- 🌳 Fire lighting.
- 🌳 Den Building.
- 🌳 Physical play-obstacles, slack line, tree climbing.
- 🌳 Fine motor activities-weaving, threading.
- 🌳 Exploring the natural world-flora/fauna identification, owl pellet dissection.
- 🌳 Games, songs and stories.
- 🌳 Cooking.
- 🌳 Tools-saws, palm drills and peelers.
- 🌳 Art-clay, rubbing, charcoal, sculptures.

Your child will take part in Forest School throughout the whole year, this means that they will experience the forest through all four seasons and in different weathers. For this reason, it is important that they wear appropriate clothing for the sessions:

Cold/wet weather:

Water proof coat/trousers/all in one.

Wellington boots

Warm trousers/leggings

Long sleeve t-shirt

Jumper

Hat, scarf, gloves

Warm socks

Warm/sunny weather:

Long sleeve, lightweight t-shirt/shirt

Long legs/leggings

Sturdy boots/trainers/wellington boots

Socks

Sun hat

Sun cream (applied before school)

Due to the current Covid-19 situation spare clothing will not be available for children to borrow.

We always wear long arms and legs throughout the year at Forest School because this protects from bites, stings and scratches whilst outside. We take the weather very seriously and make on the spot assessments of how the children are coping with the weather, particularly if it is extra cold, hot or wet. We will adapt sessions in the event of high wind and we do not run sessions outside if there is thunder or lightning.

Finally, we welcome any parents, carers or grandparents who would like to come along and volunteer at the Forest School sessions. If you are interested or have any further questions, please feel free to contact the Forest School Leader through the school office.