

A Parent's Guide to Forest School

Forest School is an opportunity for your child to experience nature and the outdoor environment in a safe, secure and hands on way.

Our 'Forest' is a fenced area within the school grounds. It is a new development with ongoing plans for future building of shelters, Rope Walks, tree planting and many more projects.

At Forest School we have a Base Camp, a Fire Pit, a Toilet Area, Digging Areas, a Bug Hotel and lots of space to investigate, scramble, balance and jump over!

Your child's safety is paramount and every week we do a safety sweep of the site, prior to entering, when children and adults are told of any hazards.

At the start of every Forest School session we talk about the rules of Forest School and the reasons why we have them.

The area is surrounded by Hazel fencing and gates and the first rule that the children learn is that they have to stay within the boundaries.

The children are encouraged to investigate and explore but also to respect all living things.

Children learn best from first hand experiences. Exploring, playing and so learning using a range of activities (both designed by the leader and other adults and instigated by the children themselves) is what Forest School is all about.

Building a sense of independence, high self-esteem and teamwork are important parts of Forest School, but health and safety considerations are always of paramount importance.

The natural environment provides a wealth of opportunity to expand young children's learning through multi-sensory exploration, experimentation and adult supervised play.

Forest School provides a safe outdoor 'classroom'. It is supervised by trained Forest School leaders, where children are encouraged to explore all aspects of the natural world. Their own interests and play ideas will be the basis of activities, to extend their learning.

Materials will include:- Mud, sticks, logs, leaves, stones, string, collecting buckets, spades, forks, rakes, magnifying glasses, binoculars, tarpaulins, books, pictures, paper, water and imagination!

Activities will include :- Circle Time, Hide and Seek, den building, picture making, bug hunting, collecting and sorting, singing, listening, observing growth and decay, noting changes in seasons, cooking on the fire and much more.

Clothing

For your child to get the maximum benefit from Forest School it is essential that he/she is dressed correctly. Your child will need to wear wellington boots/snow boots and waterproof clothing. The thickness of clothing underneath their waterproofs will depend on the season.

During the very cold weather thermal trousers, socks (at least two pairs) and vests will really help to keep your child warm. More thin layers are best for warmth and can always be removed if too warm.

Jeans are not suitable, jogging trousers or leggings are comfortable and warm gloves, hats are also essential.

Please use old clothes and let your child know that at Forest School they **CAN GET DIRTY** and you don't mind! Please provide us with a named 'bag for life' to wet/dirty clothing to be returned to you.

Lots of spare clothes are very useful including pants, socks and gloves.

Names on all clothing is essential!