

## **Forest School**

### **What is Forest School?**

Originally a Scandinavian idea, Forest Schools operate on the principle that children of all ages can benefit greatly from the hands-on learning opportunities inherently present in a woodland environment. It offers them a way to learn and experience a broad curriculum in a woodland setting, with regular visits throughout the year.

During Forest School sessions the children get the opportunity to:

- Enjoy self-led learning
- Engage with nature
- Learn new skills
- Play in a natural environment
- Recognise and manage risk
- Work independently or as part of a team



### **What happens at Forest School?**

The children are encouraged to get themselves ready before walking together as a group to the Forest. We always start the session by discussing the rules that keep us safe, any weather conditions that might affect our session or life in general!

We also introduce an activity that the children might like to try during their session for example leaf rubbing. The children are then invited to go and explore the area where they choose what they would like to do which may include:

- Den building
- Tree climbing
- Craft with found objects
- Mud pies in the mud kitchen
- Bug Hunting
- Story telling
- Hide and seek

We want the children to feel 'looked after' at Forest School and with this in mind we usually pause the session halfway through for a drink and snack. During this time, the children are encouraged to share what they have been doing during the session and we try to resolve any issues as a group. We sometimes have a nature story.

At the end of the session the children understand that we must leave the area as we found it and we work together to tidy away any resources we have used.

### **Where is Forest School?**

We are fortunate to have a wild area in the corner of the school grounds where we have a collection of native shrubs and trees. We also have a pond which supports wildlife including frogs and newts.

### **Who and when?**

All reception children will be given the opportunity to attend a Forest School session on Tuesdays



The sessions are run by Deborah Baum

Early Years teacher currently training to be a Forest School Leader (Level 3)



and Emma Farthing

who has been involved in Forest School for over 5 years.



### What do the children need to wear?

We go **outside in all weathers**, the only exceptions being extremely high winds and thunderstorms.

On **Tuesdays** which will be **Forest School** days **children should come to school** wearing some old clothes appropriate for their session. You will be able to dress your child according to the weather conditions each week adding layers as it becomes colder bearing in mind they will be outside for a considerable time. These should include:

- **Long** trousers (whatever the weather)
- **Long sleeved** top (a long sleeved tshirt is ideal)
- Layers of clothing for example a hoody or fleece appropriate to the temperature and season
- Woolly/Sun hat depending on the season
- Gloves and neck warmer /scarf (season depending)
- **An extra pair of thick socks or welly liners** these are important as the weather gets colder (feet can get cold very quickly in wellies!)
- They need to have their wellies or walking boots(usually kept in school)



We provide the children with waterproof trousers and coats, but please bear in mind, these are thin and whilst are waterproof offer little warmth. If your child has a waterproofs already you are welcome to send them in.

Please ensure **all clothes are named**.

