



# Forest School

*Magic moments, memories for life*



A Forest School is an innovative educational approach to outdoor play and learning.

A Forest School maximises the learning potential of local woodlands or our own wilderness gardens through regular visits throughout the year.





*"Forest School supports and develops  
my child's learning and builds a bridge  
between the outdoors and indoors".*

Mother of Child aged 4



# What is Forest School?

Forest Schools in Britain began in the mid 1990's, they are based on a Scandinavian idea that considers children's contact with nature to be extremely important.

Set within the individual nursery a Forest School is an innovative educational approach to outdoor play and learning. A Forest School maximises the learning potential of local woodlands or our own wilderness gardens through regular and planned visits throughout the year.

The woodland environment allows the children to grow in confidence, independence and self-esteem and also to develop an ability to assess risks for themselves.

With the freedom of exploration within the site the children learn to become independent and responsible for themselves, peers and the environment.

The sessions are led by a qualified Forest School Leader and are planned to be structured not directive and schedule achievable tasks and outcomes that work in conjunction with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We use natural materials and available resources in a hands-on approach to influence learning. Tools are used in Forest Schools in a traditional woodland manner and are introduced to the children in a safe, structured way.



For more information on Forest School activities, please speak to our nursery managers or visit the individual nursery websites.





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## Our ethos

Our Forest Schools promote free-flow play to allow the children to explore and experiment following their curiosity and ideas in a natural environment.

Children develop their social skills by learning and playing with peers and their love of nature from practitioners who challenge them in a safe inspiring environment.







*"Thank you for taking the time outside your working day to arrange a get together at forest school. It was so nice to see our son and his friends at home in such a natural setting. You have created something truly unique for the children".*

Mother of Child aged 4yrs



# Forest School Activities

Activities are planned to challenge and encourage the children and include:

- Whittling – starting with carrots
- Building and lighting fires
- Sawing
- Mud painting and mud faces
- Magnifiers and mirrors
- Digging and exploring
- Worm dances and minibeast hunts
- Environment – differences and changes and our impact
- Making stickmen and brooms
- Making charcoal and charcloth
- Risk taking - crossing and playing in the streams
- Making spider's webs and fairy houses
- Woolly worms and leaf snap
- Listening games and stories
- Collecting – colours, textures etc.







# Forest School Sessions

Your child will build up their time at Forest School so when they are in the pre-school group they will attend for a whole morning a week on a continuous basis.

Prior to this your child will go to Forest school once a week for 6 week blocks. They begin by walking to the Forest School site to familiarise themselves with the environment and terrain.



Once they are confident they 'enter the gate' and have a short session to get used to the environment. They progress to a full session where they learn the Forest School rules and boundaries and widen their experiences.

By the time your child leaves to go to school they will have had the opportunity to build, light and cook on and extinguish a fire, use tools safely, investigate and learn how to identify flora and fauna, explore the environment, understand and assess risks and to experience a wide and varied range of learning opportunities.

Once the children have gained these important life skills they will be able to take on the world confidently!

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A number of studies have shown Forest Schools:

- Increase self esteem and self confidence
- Help develop physical skills
- Demonstrate an improved relationship with and understanding of the outdoors
- Increase levels of creativity and imagination
- Increase levels of motivation and concentration
- Help develop language and communication skills




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