

Forest School Frequently Asked Questions

How did Forest School begin?

Forest School originated in Scandinavia in the 1950's when learning went outside the classroom. This had such a positive impact on children's development that its reputation brought it to the UK where it is meeting many educational needs.

What is 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. Learning outside offers opportunities to build on and extend skills taught and acquired inside. It also offers the chance to take on new challenges and risks and to investigate in a different way. Children often learn best from first hand experiences. Experiencing the weather, searching for insects, climbing a tree or working on a very large scale is learning that can only happen outside. During Forest School sessions, health and safety considerations are always of paramount importance.

Forest School is not just learning about nature and the environment. It helps children to develop their social skills, language, self-confidence, self-awareness, team work and independence skills by participating in a range of activities (both designed by the leader and instigated by the children themselves). The children are encouraged to investigate and explore but also to respect all living things.

When does it happen?

Bumblebee class attend Forest School on a Thursday afternoon and Ladybird class attend on a Friday afternoon every week.

We are hoping to offer Forest School sessions to other year groups in the near future, where half a class (15 children) will be taken per session. This is dependent on additional staff undergoing Forest School training.

Is it part of the school curriculum?

Yes. We are really pleased to be able to offer Forest School as part of our Early Years curriculum as we believe it has an extremely positive impact on the children's learning in all other areas. We are hoping to offer it across all year groups in the future.

Do the children enjoy it?

Yes! Ask any child at the school and you will get the same answer – 'Forest School is fun!'

What do I need to do?

Please can you make sure your child has a pair of named Wellington boots in school all the time. We offer a waterproof jacket and trousers that the children wear over their clothes.

Ideally the children should have long trousers/leggings and a long-sleeved top in school to wear during Forest School sessions underneath the waterproof clothing. Any clothing needs to be named.

In the winter the children may need extra clothes eg long johns/leggings and they will definitely need gloves, hat, scarf and extra socks (please make sure that their wellies are big enough to accommodate the extra socks!).

In the summer please send in a long-sleeved T-shirt and long trousers or jogging bottoms and a sun hat so that your child stays protected but cool. Any sun cream will need to be put on before school or during school by your child. Staff are not allowed to apply sun cream.

For further information on clothing, please see the Forest School Clothing Guide.

Where is Forest School?

Our new Forest School Site is on our school premises at the back of the school field.

Are the children safe?

Yes, very much so! It is obviously our top priority. The children also spend a lot of time learning the rules and how to keep safe.

Can I help at Forest School?

Yes – we welcome parent helpers during our Forest School sessions. Any helpers must refrain from using mobile phones or taking photographs.

If you have any other questions that are not covered in this document, please ask at the School Office. If they cannot answer your questions immediately, they will find out the answer/s for you.