



Forefield's Forest School

Parent Information 2020

The children will experience Forest School on a regular timetable in smaller groups. The class will be split into two groups for the afternoon, with group one taking the first half of the afternoon and then group two the last half.

What is Forest School?

Forest School is a long-term, outdoor scheme of activities delivered by trained practitioners within a natural environment and whatever the weather! Our Forest School will be tailored to meet the needs of the children as they grow in confidence, skills and understanding. The ethos of Forest School allows learners the time and space to develop knowledge, skills, interests and understanding through practical, hands-on experiences. It also allows practitioners to step back and observe the children in order to then encourage and inspire individuals to achieve through careful scaffolding and facilitating.

Where will Forest School be taking place?

Within our own school grounds, we are fortunate to have some established trees and we also have our younger trees that were donated to us last year. The children will learn more about these varied habitats and the animals that live in them. When we are able and it is safe to do so, the school may also visit the local park and take advantage of Rimrose Valley. We will ensure that, at every session, the children are secure in their understanding of the boundaries and of our Forest School rules. All areas will be thoroughly risk assessed prior to the sessions.

What happens during the Forest School session?

The children will come to school wearing their PE joggers and hoodie with their own forest school kit in a bag.

In the afternoon, when it is their session time they will get dressed into their kit. Once the class teacher has registered and checked that all the children are wearing the correct attire (see attached clothing letter), the group walks down to the Forest School area. Each session begins around the Fire Circle, where we talk through the safety rules for working outdoors and about respecting each other. For every session we have a lesson plan which includes a variety of small group activities linked to the term's topic. The children move around a variety of activities throughout the session and are given opportunities throughout the day to sit around the fire circle if it is lit. Finally, the class returns to class for pick up as normal.

If it is cold or raining will Forest School still take place?

Forest School takes place in all seasons and weather, bar very extreme weather conditions.

If it is cold, please ensure that the children are wearing an additional layer, ie thermal, under their PE kit. We can easily remove layers when we are out and remove a hoodie during the morning if it is hot.

What if the children are cold or wet?

It is important children are wearing suitable clothing. We have a detailed list of suitable clothing that can be layered to maintain body warmth, and just as important is suitable waterproof outer wear as this is the final protective layer to enable the children to stay dry during the sessions.

Before the Forest School session starts, the children are reminded of the importance of telling an adult if they are cold or wet. During the session the children are carefully monitored by the supervising adults who are aware that some children will not speak out, and so are vigilant as a team to look out for signs of a child being cold or unhappy. If a child does become wet, then an adult will ensure that they change into spare clothing from school.

What about during hot weather?

We will encourage the children to drink plenty of fluids and there will be frequent drinks stops throughout the day. We are aware of the lack of shade on the field and in the Forest School area so the Forest School leader will (with the help of the children!) build shelters to keep the children out of the sun, so that they can still enjoy the activities outside.

I have no waterproof clothing or wellies for my child!

We do ask, if you can, that you provide wellies and waterproof trouser and coat, however we are aware that this may not be possible for some families. If you do not have all the correct clothing for outdoors then we do have some spare items in Forest School including a very large range of wellington boots and some waterproof trousers. We make sure all children are wearing the correct clothing before we go outside. No child will be permitted to go outside if their clothes are not suitable for the conditions to ensure they are safe and warm.

Any questions or queries then please email the class selfie address.

The Kit

- Waterproof and warm over-jacket
- Waterproof trousers or dungarees
- Baseball hat, *keeps the rain and sun out of the eyes*
- Beanie hat that can be worn over baseball hat.
- Mittens, snood (no scarves please)
- Wellies or snow boots
- Long sleeved Thermal top and long pants (leggings)
- School t-shirt, School jumper/PE hoodie,
- PE tracksuit bottoms

If you are concerned on colder days about your child's warmth, please put another layer in the bag ie thicker socks or a fleece, as it is easy to remove layers once out in the Forest School.