

What is Forest School?

Forest Schools originated in Scandinavia where the concept is now well established as a way of learning. Forest Schools move the "classroom" into the outdoor environment and there are many widely recognised advantages of this approach to early years education. At St. Peter's Nursery we have always placed a high importance on outdoor learning but for this half term we will be extending this approach by introducing Forest School sessions for our children every Friday.

The Forest School approach to learning is exciting and inspirational in which children participate in a series of sessions in the natural environment. Children are offered rich opportunities to promote their well being and confidence in the outdoor environment and are given the freedom to develop their own ideas, make decisions, solve problems and take risks.



What are the benefits of Forest School?

- Children are given the opportunity to experience the elements and enjoy "real" experiences
- Offers opportunities to learn that caters for different learning styles – learning is more informal and stimulates thinking forming the basis of life long learning
- Space and freedom to move around and develop physical skills – active learning
- Develops risk taking and more importantly develops the understanding of risk in a managed way
- More time to explore and investigate and develop own ideas
- Open – ended with no pre-requisite end result – develops self esteem and sense of pride in own achievements
- Provides opportunities for real creativity and imaginative play
- Physically challenging with associated health benefits
- Is fun!

What happens at Forest School?

Children spend the majority of the session in the “forest”. They will be supplied with suitable protective clothing (waterproofs) so that sessions will take place regardless of the weather. Parents are asked to ensure that their children have other suitable outdoor clothing ie hats gloves coats so that the children are adequately prepared to face the elements.

Sessions take place in the private wooded garden next to the school (by kind permission of Caroline, our church vicar). All equipment necessary for the session is taken with us including water bottles and snacks.

The exact detail of the session will depend on the children but they are likely to be involved in activities such as

- Storytelling
- Mini beast hunts
- Den making
- Circle time
- Collecting/sorting
- Investigating
- Recording
- Mark making
- Listening