

## Forest School

***'forest school is an innovative educational approach to outdoor learning'.***

Forest School is a way of working with children outdoors, helping them learn, whilst developing physically, emotionally and socially and forming an appreciation and respect for the environment. The sessions are child-led and child-initiated and aim to allow the child to follow their own interests and develop at their own pace.

The sessions are also linked to a number of curriculum subjects and are a valuable teaching resource.

Our Forest School leader is extremely enthusiastic and believes Forest School should be available to all children. She holds the level 3 OCN Forest School practitioner qualification.

Programmes can be adapted to suit any age from 3 years to adults and run on a weekly basis from 6 weeks to a year, lasting 2 hours per session. Costs are dependant on the number of sessions required and the number and age of the group.

### **What are the benefits to children?**

Research has shown that Forest School increases children's confidence, self-esteem, independence, self-awareness, motor and social skills. As the weeks continue, the sessions are built on and the children learn to understand boundaries, stay safe whilst taking risks, explore at their own level and pace and use and develop creative imaginations.

Forest School encourages free play as it is seen to be an essential element to the healthy development of a child. Children's play takes many forms and they should be able to choose where to play, what to do, how to do it and who to do it with. Research has shown that children who have access to regular outdoor play are more confident and independent and do better when back in an indoor classroom environment. Play should allow the child to explore their surroundings and enable them to take responsibility for their own decisions. A child's physical, social and cognitive development are enhanced through play, enabling the child to develop invaluable skills that will help them succeed in life.

### **What will the children be doing?**

The site will be set up with a log seating circle and a tarpaulin shelter in case of bad weather. The children will be out in all weathers to enable them to experience all seasons. The Forest School saying is there is no such thing as bad weather only a bad choice of clothes!! Within the log circle there will be a

small fire lit at the end of the session. Equipment will be provided in the form of treasure chests packed with exciting, stimulating objects for free play.

**A typical 2 hour session:**



Sessions could include bushcraft, painting with berries, making natural musical instruments, senses activities, tree activities..... and so on! The list is endless to what can be achieved and learnt in the forest.

**Please contact the education officer, Helena Perry on 01606 884936 or [helena.perry@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:helena.perry@forestry.gsi.gov.uk) to discuss your individual requirements.**