

Forest Schools A Parent's Guide



William Read Primary
School

What is Forest School?

Forest school offers regular visits to a wooded area for children to be inspired in child led activities that allow social skill development and team building.

This environment nurtures spiritual and moral development allowing children to grow in self-esteem and gain emotional strength. It challenges them to become responsible and manage risks for themselves while strengthening their fine and gross motor skills.

Forest School is about exploring, experiencing and respecting the natural world through practical activities. This stimulates creative thinking and problem solving whilst the children are playing. The children make the visits in all weathers, all year round, learning from the seasons and environmental changes.

Why is Forest School such a great opportunity for your children?

- It is proven from research that learning that takes place in the outdoors is much more powerful and memorable as all the senses are involved.
- Forest Schools develop children through a child led approach.
- Children are taught how to assess risks for themselves.
- Children are able to develop their speech and language, social skills and empathy.
- They learn to respect and appreciate the countryside.

Clothing

The school has invested in water proof jackets and trousers to keep the children dry. However, it is essential they have welly boots with thick socks to keep their feet warm and layers of clothing including warm jumpers in cold weather and sun hats and sun cream applied in the warmer weather.

Behaviour

Behaviour will be dealt with in line with the schools behaviour policy. We reserve the right to exclude a child from attending Forest School if their behaviour is dangerous to themselves or anyone else.

Getting there

Forest School sessions will be held on a Monday morning and afternoon

(5 weeks for each class)

Autumn term - Year 1

Spring term - Year 2

Summer term - Foundation

What will they do at Forest Schools?

Children will be in the Forest for about an hour and a half each time. The session usually starts with an opening discussion around the fire circle. Then activities available are explained and any safety training given to them. Children will then choose what they would like to do and the session closes with a reflection around the fire circle.

Children will gradually build up to different activities as trust is gained. These may include:

- Mud faces
- Shelter building
- Collecting fire wood
- Using basic tools to make things under supervision
- Using a talking stick for listening and talking to each other around the fire circle
- Nature walks
- Games

How are children kept safe?

There is always a Forest School Leader who is trained in outdoor first aid and has a mobile phone.

In the event of a more serious accident the school and parents will be contacted in line with the schools accident and emergency procedures. There is a high ratio of adults in Forest School.

Children are shown the boundaries of the outdoor learning space and are given detailed instructions on all activities.

How can you help?

- Send in clothing appropriate for the weather
- If you would like to come and help let the office know and we will organise a DBS check.

Cancellation

Forest School will only be cancelled in extreme weather if the site is deemed unsafe or if there are not enough adults to accompany the children.



Forest School Contact - Ms. Power