

Forest School at Kingswood Primary School

Intent

Forest School provision at **Kingswood Primary School** enables us to extend our learning beyond the classroom giving children the time, space and freedom to explore, discover and grow, fully utilising the natural classroom of our wonderful grounds.

Forest School is an immersive and supportive approach to learning that encourages children to be inquisitive, embrace challenge, take appropriate risks and discover what they are capable of. Through regular experiences in nature, children foster a deeper connection with the world around them.

Building *Knowledge*

Children develop a rich, in-depth and wide knowledge base through first-hand experiences at Forest School. Learning is brought to life as children investigate, observe and discover the natural world for themselves.

The opportunities for curriculum links are extensive. In Science, children can discover the needs, habitats and life cycles of living things by observing them in their natural environment. In Mathematics, children might compare the heights and ages of trees, measure natural materials or solve practical problems using the resources around them.

Across the curriculum, Forest School enables children to apply what they know, make connections and deepen their understanding through purposeful, practical and engaging experiences.

Learning with *Purpose*

We believe that quality outdoor experiences are an essential part of childhood and learning. Forest School sessions are carefully planned around children's interests, needs and developing skills, while allowing the freedom and flexibility to follow their curiosity.

Reconnecting with nature gives learning a sense of purpose. What better way to understand seasonal change than to step outside and witness it happening? What better way to explore habitats than to discover the plants and creatures that live within the habitats we have right here at school?

Through activities such as litter picking, caring for natural spaces and learning how to interact safely with living things, children develop an understanding of their role as responsible stewards of the environment.

Forest School is a joyful, engaging and often wonderfully relaxed learning environment. Children may be so absorbed in building, creating, observing and investigating that they hardly notice just how much they are learning.

Aiming for *Success*

Every Forest School session offers new challenges, interesting problems to solve and opportunities to try something unfamiliar. Children learn that success does not usually mean getting it right first time; often it means having another go, trying a different approach or simply refusing to give up. Perseverance is required when, for example, using a bow saw takes longer than expected to cut through a piece of wood, or when trying to create a spark requires us to strike a fire steel again and again.

Success is personal to every child and is celebrated by all. Through these experiences, children develop resilience, independence, confidence and determination, discovering that they are capable of more than they may have first believed.

Ultimately, Forest School nurtures curious minds, confident learners and a lifelong appreciation of the natural world.

Implementation

We go out all year round as our Forest School site provides a rich and naturally stimulating environment. Every class will have one Forest School session per half term, totalling six sessions over the course of the school year.

A typical Forest School session includes...

Getting ready: children get themselves ready as independently as possible. Trousers are a must, even in warm weather, as they help protect against scratches, stings and bites. Children will need weather-appropriate clothing including waterproofs and wellies when it is raining, and warm layered clothing when it is cold. We go out whatever the weather!

Safety Circle: we talk about how to stay safe in the woods including demarcating boundaries and practise 1,2,3 come to me!

Exploration and Challenges: activities are linked to individual learning and/or to curriculum.

Set up a Tool Circle or Fire Circle depending upon learning. Introduce an adult led task such as palm drilling discs or cooking over a fire.

Self-care: children help themselves to their own water bottles and use the hand washing tippy tap.

Reflection: finish by sharing our challenges, celebrating how we have overcome difficulties and reflecting on new learning. This often includes a story.

Impact

The calm Forest School environment allows children to learn at their own pace, become absorbed in activities and develop their ability to concentrate and focus. Climbing, balancing, digging and using tools develop coordination, strength, agility and physical confidence.

The impact of Forest School links to our school values:

Determination

We embrace challenge, take appropriate risks and learn from mistakes. Children develop resilience, confidence and self-belief by having another go and trying different approaches.

Enthusiasm

We are curious, active learners who are confident to explore and experience new things. Children develop a love of nature and the outdoors while building knowledge through first-hand experiences.

Friendship

We work together, building teamwork, communication and positive relationships. Children develop their vocabulary and learn to share ideas, solve problems and support one another.

Independence

We encourage children to become confident and responsible learners. Children develop self-reliance, resilience and decision-making skills by exploring the outdoors, taking appropriate risks, making choices and discovering what they can achieve for themselves.

Kindness

We show compassion, care and understanding towards others. Children develop empathy, friendship and positive communication by recognising and responding to the needs of people, animals and the natural world.

Respect

We value ourselves, others and the world around us. Children develop tolerance and understanding, celebrate diversity and recognise the rights and needs of others, the wider community and our environment.

Forest School at Kingswood Primary School aims to nurture confident, capable and compassionate children who are ready to learn, grow and make a positive contribution to the world around them.