

What benefits will my child get from participating in Forest School?

Forest School supports the holistic development of the child:

- Health and fitness - Being active in an outdoor, natural environment.
- Increased emotional wellbeing - just being among trees has been shown to have a real and positive effect.
- Social development - Communicating, sharing, negotiating and
- Problem-solving and increased confidence.
- Skills development - Developing fine and gross motor skills and coordination for real purposes.
- Gaining knowledge and understanding - Multi-sensory, real-life learning, learning to care for our green spaces and wildlife.
- Individualised learning - Careful observation allows adults to tailor support to children's own interests and stage of development.
- Curriculum Links - Forest School supports many areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, National Curriculum and the 'Every Child Matters' agenda.

When will Forest School be taking place?

This programme will take place every week on a Tuesday and each session will be at least 2 hours long.

How can I help?

- Make sure your child has the right clothing for the weather - please see clothes list on letter.
- Ask your children questions about their sessions and feed back to us if you would like to, letting us know what they enjoyed/would like to do again.



Longfields Forest School



Parents Guide

What is Forest School?

Forest School is a long term outdoor programme of activities delivered by a trained practitioner within a natural environment, whatever the weather! At Longfields we tailor the sessions 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 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 Longfields Forest School be taking place?

We are fortunate to have developed a Forest School in the far corner of the school field behind the MUGA (Multi Use Games Area). We have raised beds, fire pit area, mud kitchen, seating area and lots more. We will ensure that, at every session, the children are secure in their understanding of the boundaries and of our Forest School rules. The Forest School area has been thoroughly risk assessed and this will be updated regularly.

Who will be staffing the Forest School?

Miss Want will lead all Forest School sessions at Longfields and is currently undertaking training as a Level 3 Forest School Practitioner. As part of her course she has been trained in delivering Forest School sessions, in tool use and fire safety, outdoor First Aid, den building and the environment. She will be supported by class teachers and teaching assistant for every session.



Health and safety.

The health and safety of all participants is central to everything undertaken within a Forest School Programme. Forest School leaders are fully trained in risk assessment and emergency first aid. The Forest School operates under the school's Health and Safety policy and policies and procedures regarding safeguarding and confidentiality.

In addition:

- risk assessments for activities
- informed adult helpers
- First Aid and emergency equipment.

Some of the activities the children may participate in are 'higher-risk activities' (such as tool use). These activities, however, are not available to the children until certain behaviours and boundaries are established. Children are encouraged and supported in recognising and managing risk for themselves, through real life situations and experiences.

What sort of activities will go on at Forest School?

The sessions for Foundation Stage classes will build on what they are learning currently in their topic and across the curriculum and consolidate prior learning. Whilst there will be some structure, children will also steer their own learning journeys and have the freedom to explore, make their own choices and apply their knowledge and skills. The first sessions will focus on core skills and safety. Activities will increase week on week and may include: games; storytelling; natural art activities; use of tools (if skills and behaviour indicators secured); exploring; nature watching and bug hunting; building dens; mud kitchen; fire lighting; cooking; scavenger hunts and much more.

