

Forest School

Forest School is a child-led learning approach; holistic learning through play and exploration. Forest School sessions at Wray Endowed Primary School aim to work within the Forest School ethos whilst also making strong links to the National Curriculum where appropriate. We are particularly working to make connections to PSHE, Design and Technology and Science through our Forest School sessions.

Forest School is learning and development in an outdoor setting where, over a period of time, children are provided with a supportive environment to (amongst many other things) develop personal, communication and physical skills, emotional intelligence, grow in confidence and learn to judge risk, learn about the natural world around them, be creative and experimental and have time to follow their own interests. It is a child-led learning environment and so although we often provide ideas or have an introductory activity or challenge as a starting point for sessions, the children can choose to follow these or begin their own activity. The children will be taught about risk and keeping themselves and others safe. They will be taught about their outdoor setting and naturally learn about the seasons and changes to the environment around them. The children will also learn many practical skills such as cooking and using tools - due to the nature of these activities, they will be carefully supervised by an adult to ensure safety procedures are adhered to. As the pupils are able to make decisions and choices for themselves, Forest School sessions tend to have a positive and relaxed feel.

The setting is important and we aim to have as little long-term negative impact on our Forest School area as possible. This instils a sense of respect for the outdoor environment.

Wray Endowed Primary School Forest School Policy

INTRODUCTION

Forest School provides holistic learning and has a child-centred/led approach. Through Forest School sessions children will develop their confidence and resilience, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, problem solving, practical and physical skills, independence and awareness of the natural environment. Tasks provided through Forest School are challenging but achievable and can act as steps to build upon.

PURPOSE/AIMS

To provide children with a range of experiences to enable holistic development.

To encourage self-regulation and risk management.

For children to learn about, to respect and care for the natural environment.

To develop children's self-esteem and self-awareness.

To promote the wellbeing of all the children. Allowing time to enjoy the outdoors and relax if needed.

Additionally, as our sessions are run in our normal school timetable, Forest School sessions are planned to support learning particularly in PSHE, Science and Design and Technology. It provides the children with opportunities to work with each other and with children they may not normally play or work with in the usual school setting.

We aim to always work within the ethos and principles of Forest School learning.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS and CONSERVATION

We want children to enjoy the outdoors and have freedom to explore and learn. This will have an impact on our outdoor setting. Through our management plan we aim to have no long-term impact and will adjust our sessions as necessary to achieve this.

PLAY POLICY

Play is an important element of Forest School sessions. Pupils can lead their learning through play. Play allows for holistic development (Social, Physical, Intellectual, Creative, Emotional and Spiritual) of the participants and provides opportunity to learn; testing ideas, building resilience and self-esteem, exploring emotions and roles (socio-cultural learning) and to have fun.

AIMS

Forest School sessions will:

1. provide opportunity for play
2. allow children opportunity to direct their own play
3. facilitate development of play to extend learning when appropriate
4. ensure pupils know how to assess risk during play.