

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

Forest Schools supports the holistic development of the child:

- Health and fitness - Being active in an outdoor, natural environment.
- Increased emotional wellbeing - There is research available supporting this.
- Social development - Communicating, and negotiating with peers and adults to solve problems and share experiences.
- Skills development - Developing fine and gross motor skills and coordination for real purposes.
- Gaining knowledge and understanding - Multi-sensory, real-life learning.
- Individualised learning - Careful observation allows adults to tailor support to children's own interests and stage of development.
- Curriculum Links - Forest Schools supports many areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, National Curriculum and the Every Child Matters agenda.

Health and Safety

The health and safety of all participants is central to everything done within a Forest Schools programme. Our Forest School leader is fully trained in risk assessment and Paediatric first aid. Victoria Road Primary & Nursery School have a Health and Safety policy; a seasonally and daily risk assessed site; risk assessments for activities; trained adult helpers; first aid and emergency equipment. Some of the activities the children may participate in are 'higher-risk activities' (such as campfire cooking or tool use). However, these activities 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.

★ Let the children PLAY
stomp in PUDDLES climb trees
Dig in the Dirt go on a
bug hunt make mud pies
ROLL DOWN a HILL build
a cubby make a Daisy chain
create a garden for fairies
PLAYING outside makes CHILDREN
★ smarter
healthier
happier

Let the children PLAY <http://progressiveearlychildhoodeducation.blogspot.com>



The best way to get a child outside is to go with them.

Victoria Road Forest School Handbook



Forest School Leader
Jane Weatherston

Wild Tribe Practitioner
Bryony Targett

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What is Forest Schools?

Forest Schools has developed from the Scandinavian education system and is about children and young people building self esteem and independence through exploring and experiencing the natural world. Forest Schools is a long term programme delivered by trained practitioners within a natural environment (not necessarily a Forest!). Each Forest School programme is tailored to meet the needs of individuals within that group and is continuously developed as the children/young people grow in confidence, skills and understanding.

The ethos of Forest Schools 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/young people in order to then encourage and inspire individuals to achieve through careful scaffolding and facilitating.

Where will my child be going?

Victoria Road Primary & Nursery School is lucky enough to have a small woodland area within the school grounds. We also have a pond; a mud kitchen; a campfire circle, vegetable patches, an outdoor classroom and a pizza oven. Victoria Road Primary & Nursery School has natural features around the environment such as sticks, logs, leaves and seeds. Our Forest School area is thoroughly risk assessed and managed appropriately by our trained Forest School Leader: Jane Weatherston and Wild Tribe Practitioner: Bryony Targett. The Early Year's team have also received in-house training enabling them to lead activities with small groups.



Qualified Forest School Leader

Jane Weatherston



Qualified Wild Tribe Practitioner

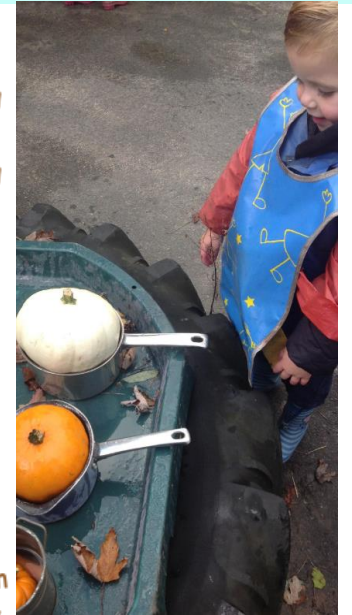
Bryony Targett



What will my child be doing?

The Forest School routine includes; preparing to go outside by dressing in outdoor clothes such as waterproofs; wellington boots; singing special songs and sharing stories. Our Forest School will run all year round and in all weathers (unless weather conditions are dangerous). The child led ethos of Forest Schools means that the children can choose what to participate in, carefully supported and encouraged by trained adults. Possible activities may include:

- Hunting for minibeasts and/or pond dipping
- Natural crafts - making necklaces from elder, crowns or dreamcatchers from willow, collages from natural materials, weaving with long grasses, tree cookies, etc
- Mud sculptures
- Shelter building and knot tying
- Tree climbing
- Using tools for a purpose - such as peeling bark from sticks with potato peelers to make toasting forks.
- Fire building and cooking on a camp fire



Children:
100% washable
Towel dry ★

Sessions are planned around the individual's and group's needs, and built upon each week. Our Forest School Leader is qualified through nationally recognised and accredited training, therefore ensuring Forest Schools is a high quality learning experience. The earlier sessions will concentrate on safety; establishing boundaries and routines. As the children develop in confidence and familiarity with the environment the sessions focus on the development and consolidation of skills and understanding.