



What is it all about?

Do you remember the fun you used to have outdoors when you were a child? That is the experience we want children and young people to have at Forest School. Free play and exploration outdoors in a supported environment with a trained leader is one of the best ways for children to learn and grow.

The Forest School movement has been developing in the UK since its introduction in the 1990's, even though it has been established in the Scandinavian education system as far back as the 1950's.

More recently, schools in the Rother Valley have realized the potential for a child centered, outdoor learning programme within our locality. There is a strong network and community of Forest Schools within the area, and having now moved to our new site we feel the time is right for Easebourne C E Primary School to become part of the Forest School movement.



What makes Forest School different to other learning in school?

The Forest School ethos is:

- To allow children access to a wooded area for an extended period of time (Usually a minimum of 6 sessions spread over the duration of six weeks).
- To provide opportunities for children to assess, experience and manage risk.
- To offer child-led learning experiences, often based around a flexible focus thus allowing the freedom to develop their own ideas and skills.
 - Encourage children to investigate and explore the natural environment with access to suitable resources and equipment.
- To place a strong emphasis on self-reflection allowing children to accept and appreciate the person they are.
- Develop a love of nature and thirst for knowledge about the world around them.
- To provide a high adult to child ratio to ensure safety, led by a qualified Forest School Leader.



What do you actually do at Forest School?

As part of the learning experience of Forest School children will develop their knowledge and skills through taking part in exciting experiences. Here is just some of the knowledge, skills and experiences your child will become familiar with during Forest School.

Knowledge & Skills

- Knot tying
- Tool use- Bow saw, Axe and Fixed blade knives
- Fire lighting
- Shelter building
- Whittling
- Tree and plant ID
- Woodland management

Experiences

- Rope swings
- Natural Art
- Self-reflection
- Storytelling
- Cooking over a fire
- Sharing hot food and drinks
- Imaginative play

How will participating in Forest School benefit my child?

Forest School allows learning to be set in different contexts for children where they can undertake a range of practical activities and carry out small achievable tasks. At Forest School children can develop their independence as well as team working skills.

Research indicates that children who participate in Forest School are stimulated by the outdoors and typically experience, over time, an increase in their self belief, confidence, learning capacity, enthusiasm, communication, problem-solving skills and emotional well-being.



Where will Forest School take place?

Having moved to our new site earlier in the year, Easebourne Primary School is privileged to have its own onsite woodland. Forest school sessions will take place within our woodland which is situated next to the main school building.

The woodland site.



What does my child need for Forest School?

As Forest School sessions take place outside in almost all weathers (unless the weather presents a danger), it is important to bring the following:

- Comfortable shoes/trainers which can get dirty
- Waterproof jacket and waterproof trousers
- Hat (either woolly or sun, depending on the weather)
- Sun cream if hot
- Old clothes you do not mind getting dirty which fully cover legs and arms



Will my child be safe at Forest School?

Full risk assessments of the site, tools used and all core activities have been carried out to ensure that Forest School sessions are as safe as possible and the risks involved in the activities are properly managed. The use of tools will be introduced only when children have developed confidence within the forest setting and it will be on a strictly 1:1 adult to child ratio.

Where can I find out more about Forest School?

The best source of information regarding Forest School is the recently established network found online at:

www.forestschoollassociation.org