



Forest School

Forest School is an exciting approach to learning outside the classroom. The sessions are not activity based but instead are led by the interests of the learners and may include experiences such as:

- building dens
- telling stories
- cooking over small fires
- climbing trees
- hunting for minibeasts
- making mud pies
- splashing in puddles

Forest School builds on the natural instinct to learn that everybody is born with. It offers opportunities to make choices, initiate learning and take risks, and encourage positive attitudes and behaviour. The concept was developed in Scandinavia, and operates on the principle that children of all ages benefit from the learning opportunities present in a woodland environment.

Forest School sessions are practical. They emphasise the development of self-esteem, communication and social skills, personal responsibility and citizenship. These skills feed-back positively into other work in schools and settings. When embedded in the setting's curriculum Forest School enriches and links to all areas of development and learning.

Many children have few opportunities to be outdoors; Forest School offers them a challenging and, enriching learning experience in a natural environment during all weathers and seasons. Through regular weekly or fortnightly sessions in the same Forest School site with a qualified Forest School Leader, high adult: child ratios children develop:

- personal confidence and self esteem
- communication and social skills
- the ability to assess and manage risk
- gross and fine motor skills
- a deeper understanding of their own natural and made environments



- enjoyment of the natural world alongside awareness of wider environmental issues
- innate motivation to learn
- positive attitudes to learning and citizenship

(taken from Forest School, Oxfordshire County Council,
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/forest-school*)*