



FOREST SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

What is Forest School?

Forest School is a child-centred inspirational learning process that offers opportunities for holistic growth through regular sessions. Forest School supports play, exploration and supported risk taking. It develops confidence and self-esteem through learner inspired, hands-on experiences in a natural setting.

What is a Holistic Approach in Forest School?

Children having the space and freedom to be themselves and being in charge of their own learning. Having fun, taking risks, solving problems, learning new skills and achieving their own goals. Forest School is child led, they are in charge and sessions are planned and developed around their interests, abilities, and choices.

Heronsgate Forest School at Heronswood

Fire Circle area



Tree house area



Craft area



Tools area



Mud kitchen area



Relaxing area





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Spring 1 term at Forest School

Last half of term at Forest School Year 3 and 4 came up to Forest School in regular whole classes sessions. There were also some small group sessions up at Forest School.

All the children enjoyed using the resources up at Forest School. Such as climbing in the tree house, building dens, arts and crafts, the new 'relaxing area' and playing with the tyres. The new mud kitchen and the newly donated toy tractors were particularly popular.

Whole class sessions

Week 1 – The children enjoyed exploring the newly laid out Forest School site and building small dens for teddy bears.

Week 2 – The children were given the opportunity to work in the new tool area and saw some wood and make pet logs.

Week 3 – Cooking on the fire – The children enjoyed toasting bread on the fire and eating it with butter and jam if they chose to.

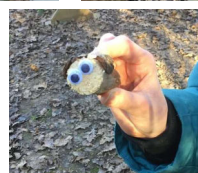
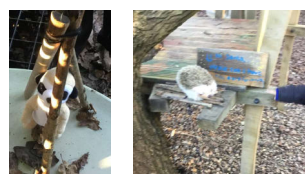
Week 4 – Topic week –

Year 3 – Rocks, Relics and Rumbles – The children could design and or build their own volcanoes if they wanted to. The children worked in teams to build volcanoes and at the end of the session we made the volcanoes erupt.

Year 4 - Misty Mountain and Winding River – The children enjoyed making their own rivers using water channels/drainpipe, once they had built their river they had fun pouring water down the river and watching the water flow from one end to the other.

Week 5 – 'Chinese New Year 2024' – Year of the Dragon – The children could design their own dragons or build them in Forest School. The children that chose to do this had lots of fun.

Week 6 – Hot Chocolate and Marshmallows – The children had the opportunity to have hot chocolate and marshmallows as an end of term treat, which they enjoyed.



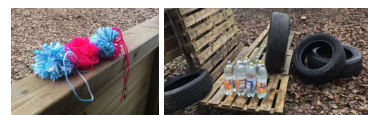


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Small group sessions

In these sessions we followed the children's interests, some enjoyed arts and crafts making things such as Forest School weaving, pom poms and journey sticks.

Others enjoyed working with tools and fire. They enjoyed cooking popcorn, marshmallows and toast on the fire or splitting, sawing or hammering nails into wood.



Some highlights from these sessions –

The children have wonderful imaginations, one group made a bowling alley out of planks of wood, bottles of water and rolled tyres down the wood to knock the bottles over. Some children enjoyed a 'Mcdonalds drive through', using the toy tractors and the mud kitchen. Children made some interesting meals in the mud kitchen such as 'stick chips' and 'spaghetti and snail sausages', please note none of these meals were consumed.



Clothing at Forest School

As I am sure you are aware it has been particularly muddy last term. If at all possible, please can you make sure your children come to Forest School with appropriate clothing, thank you –

Suggested clothing for staff and children (all weathers)

Forest School sessions will take place in all weathers unless deemed unsafe by the Forest School Leader.

'There is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing'

Suitable clothing is essential for all to be able to participate. In their kits children should have:

- Long sleeved T-shirt.
- Trousers, to reduce the risk of bites, stings and scratches.
- Waterproof over trousers and jacket.
- Long socks, **wellies**, warm boots or old trainers (in very hot dry weather).
- During the summer, a sunhat and sunscreen should be supplied.
- During the colder months, extra layers such as a fleece, leggings, tights, hats and gloves etc. are required.
- Please bring clothes in a named bag which should be taken home each week to be washed.



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Forest School donations

If you have anything at home you no longer need that you think may be useful for Forest School, please get in touch. We are always keen for new resources to use with the children. The sorts of things we need are –

- Soft toy woodland animals.
- Craft items – Such as - Wool, string, ribbon, buttons, paint pens, felt tips, craft feathers, pipe cleaners, pompoms.
- Rope for swings
- Wood – off cuts of wood, tree branches, sticks, old pallets, round logs, fir/pine cones.
- Unwanted garden tools, such as spades, trowels, gardening forks.
- Old drain pipe for water channels.
- Tools – Nails, hammers, mallets.
- Old wooden garden benches.
- Pots and pans, cake baking trays.
- Wooden spoons, old cutlery, plastic jugs or plastic measuring cylinders.
- Old toy swing seats.

Or anything you think may be useful for Forest School. Any donations would be greatly appreciated.

Many thanks,
Mrs Wilkes
Interim Forest School Leader

Forest School – Spring 2 term –

This half of term the following classes will be attending Forest School on the following days -

Tuesday - Swans and Herons

Wednesday - Nightingales and Sparrows

Thursday - Moorhens

Friday – Wrens

There will be additional small groups going up to Forest School during the week, a letter of confirmation of if and when your child will be in a group will be sent home with your child.