



NORTHSIDE Primary School



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Dear Parents/Carers,

This Summer term, Year 4 will be taking part in 'forest school' sessions at Friary Park.

What is a Forest School?

Forest School is an outdoor programme of activities delivered by trained practitioners within a natural environment- whatever the weather! The programme will be tailored to meet the needs of the children as they 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 outdoors.

Where will it take place?

Due to limited space and lack of green space on the school grounds, we will mostly be using Friary Park but will occasionally use our pond area. We will ensure that, at every session, the children are secure in their understanding of the boundaries of Forest School rules. All areas have been thoroughly risk assessed and this will be updated regularly.

Who will be staffing the Forest School?

Miss Millwood will lead the sessions, supported by Mrs Reeves. As part of Miss Millwood's training, she has been trained in delivering Forest School sessions; developing skills in tool use and fire safety, den building, understanding the environment and has 'outdoor forest school' first aid training.

Health and safety

The health and safety of all pupils is central to everything undertaken within a Forest School Programme. The Forest School Leader is fully trained in risk assessment and emergency first aid. The Forest School sessions operates under the school's Health and Safety policy and policies and procedures regarding safeguarding and confidentiality.

Some of the activities the children may participate in are 'higher-risk activities' (such as tool use where the children may use knives). These activities, however, 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.



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What sort of activities will go on at Forest School?

The first sessions will focus on core skills and safety. Activities will increase week on week and may be linked to a book, Geography or Science to include: games, storytelling, natural art activities, exploring, nature watching and bug hunting, climbing, rolling, practical woodland skills (e.g. willow weaving), building dens and a time to be quiet, reflect or talk.

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

Forest School supports the holistic development of the child:

- Health and fitness – being active in an outdoor, natural environment.
- Increased emotional wellbeing – just being among trees has been shown to have a real and positive effect.
- Social development – communicating, sharing, negotiating and problem-solving and increased confidence.
- Skills development – developing fine and gross motor skills and coordination for real purposes.
- Gaining knowledge and understanding – multi-sensory, real-life learning, learning to care for our green spaces and wildlife.
- Individualised learning – careful observation allows adults to tailor support to children's own interests and stage of development.
- Curriculum Links – Forest School supports many areas of the National Curriculum and the 'Every Child Matters' agenda.

When will Forest School be taking place and how should the children be dressed?

Children will participate in the Summer term with the first session starting on Friday the 1st of May. Group 1 will attend the first sessions and Group 2 will start their session the following week. This will take place every Friday afternoon. The class will be split into 2 groups with 15 children going on alternated Fridays; therefore, your child will attend every other week. Each session is up to 2 hours a week. Children should bring old clothing and old comfortable trainers/shoes in a labelled bag (suitable for the weather and that you don't mind getting messy) on the day that they do their Forest School sessions. Pupils will also be provided with waterproof clothing as and when needed. You will be informed as to which group your child will be in.

How can I help?

- Make sure your child has the right clothing for the weather.
- Ask your children questions about the experience and feedback to us.

Please give permission that you are happy for your child to attend on Arbor.

Kind Regards,

Miss Millwood



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