

Forest School Skills: Character Development

Forest School is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions in our school grounds. Sessions will primarily involve child-led exploration alongside planned learning activities. Adaptation, observations and reflection are dynamic processes involved in creating effective Forest School sessions. Activities linked to each skill support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world. We aim to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners. Activities offer children the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.

Exploration and play

- Development of social skills.
- Positive communication with peers.
- Development of emotional literacy.
- Safely navigate risky play.
- Development of fine and gross motor.
- Foster imagination and creativity.
- Develop curiosity with surroundings.
- Independent problem solving.

Navigation

- Foster teamwork and communication.
- Navigate unfamiliar terrains.
- Think on a wider scale.
- Question decisions respectfully.
- Group problem solving.
- Express ideas and thoughts to others.
- Regulate emotions through failure.
- Find solutions from past mistakes

Shelter building

- Development of social skills.
- Positive communication with peers.
- Development of fine and gross motor.
- Independent/group problem solving.
- Foster teamwork and communication.
- Express ideas and thoughts to others.
- Regulate emotions through failure.
- Regulate emotions through successes.

Using tools / knot work.

- Positive communication with adults.
- Development of fine and gross motor.
- Understanding of how to keep safe.
- Respecting and caring for resources.
- Foster imagination and creativity.
- Use natural resources responsibly.
- Regulate emotions through failure.
- Regulate emotions through successes.

Flora and Fauna.

- Be curious about natural environment.
- Think on a wider scale.
- Safely navigate through risk.
- Identify a range of flora and fauna.
- Verbally explain new learning.
- Feel comfortable in the natural world.
- Reflect on prior learning.
- Treat the natural world respectfully.

Campfire

- Development of social skills.
- Foster teamwork and communication.
- Safely navigate through risk.
- Understanding that fire is a resource.
- Reflect on own emotions.
- Verbally explain new learning.
- Use natural resources responsibly.
- Learn the value of leave-no-trace.

Holistic development at Forest School – S.P.I.C.E.S.

Social

- ❖ Know how to contribute positively to wider society
- ❖ Develop effective social skills.
- ❖ Demonstrate empathy.
- ❖ Show respect to their adults and peers.
Campfire, reflective evaluation, storytelling, listening walk.

Physical

- ❖ Knowledge of how their bodies work in different environments.
- ❖ Understand how to navigate risk safely.
- ❖ Develop strength through gross and fine motor skills.
- ❖ Know the importance of activity and rest to the body and mind.
Tool use, shelter building, wood collection, exploring, free play, den making.

Intellectual

- ❖ Develop curiosity and question their surroundings.
- ❖ Opportunities to think on a wider scale.
- ❖ Solve problems independently and/or with peers.
- ❖ Develop emotional literacy.
Flora and fauna ID, reflection, life skills, obstacles, problem solving, bug hotel.

Communication

- ❖ Feely express ideas and thoughts.
- ❖ Verbal explanations of learning.
- ❖ Non-verbal demonstrations of learned skills.
- ❖ Mirroring of modelled communication from adults.
Shelter building, knot work, reflection, campfire, team challenges.



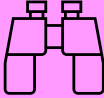

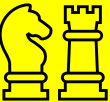










Emotional

- ❖ Know how to regulate emotions using natural world.
- ❖ Develop emotional intelligence.
- ❖ Build a resilience for making mistakes.
- ❖ Develop confidence and empowerment of self.
Reflection, clay faces, knot work, nature walk, cloud bathing, bush craft.

Spiritual

- ❖ Understand their sense of self – who am I?
- ❖ Know right from wrong using past mistakes as guidance.
- ❖ Respect the value of friendship.
- ❖ Learn how to forgive others and forgive yourself.
Campfire reflection, team challenges, bug hotels, cooking.

Types of play

<p><u>Symbolic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Using objects to represent other objects. ❖ Using ideas to represent other ideas. ❖ Using actions to represent other actions. <p>An acorn is a fairy's helmet.</p> 	<p><u>Socio-dramatic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Work with others or alone. ❖ Act out experiences either observed (tv) or experienced (home). <p>Playing house, doctors, teachers.</p> 	<p><u>Exploratory</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Using the senses to explore and discover the natural world. ❖ Experience textures and functions of natural materials. <p>Bark rubbings, leaf ID, listening walk.</p> 	<p><u>Deep</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Experience risk. ❖ Conquer fears. ❖ Explore wonders. <p>Fire lighting, tool use, reflection.</p> 
<p><u>Social</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Situations involving others where it is expected that rules are followed. <p>A game of cub or hunter, mammoth, mouse.</p> 	<p><u>Creative</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Independent exploration of new ideas. ❖ Using imagination without restriction. <p>Multi-story bug hotel with swimming pool!</p> 	<p><u>Recapitulative</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Listen to stories. ❖ Explore history. ❖ Learn rhymes. ❖ Hot chocolate around a fire. <p>Fire, stories, rituals.</p> 	<p><u>Fantasy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use of imagination to enact experiences which are unlikely at their age. ❖ Child's imagination can run wild. <p>Jungle explorer, deep sea diver, astronaut.</p> 
<p><u>Rough and tumble</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Discovery of the body. ❖ Knowledge of flexibility. ❖ Change of risk. ❖ Generally friendly and positive. <p>Climbing logs, falling, scraped knee.</p> 	<p><u>Locomotor</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Movement for the enjoyment of movement. <p>Tag, climbing, digging, stuck-in-the-mud.</p> 	<p><u>Object</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use of fine motor skills to manipulate objects to will. ❖ Repetitive movement. <p>Natural paintbrushes, whittling, hapozome.</p> 	<p><u>Imaginative</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Rules do not apply. ❖ Imagination is free and unlimited. ❖ Child can be or do anything they wish. <p>I am a: bee, bird, stick, mud monster.</p> 
<p><u>Dramatic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Work with others to decide roles to play. ❖ Assigning decided roles. ❖ Acting out the roles as a troop. <p>Fairy queen and magic ladybirds.</p> 	<p><u>Communication</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use of words (verbal) and gestures (non-verbal). ❖ Development of emotional literacy. <p>Telling stories, play acting, reflection.</p> 	<p><u>Mastery</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Controlling the physical environment using learned skills. <p>Digging holes, shelters, den making.</p> 	<p><u>Role</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Representation of ways of being. ❖ Usually relaxed and low-stakes. <p>Every-day activities, brushing teeth, phone.</p> 

Forest School Skills – EYFS

Reception children will explore using the ELG to direct observations and reflection. We aim to end the year with children dressing independently.

Exploration and play

- Introduce to rules and boundaries.
- Promotion of free exploration.
- Promotion of independent learning opportunities/skills.
- Be able to play a range of forest themed games.
- Investigate the natural world.

Navigation

- Follow rules and boundaries, specifically when accessing the pond.
- Promote free exploration and investigation.
- Use positional language. next to, between, behind, under, in-front, over, high, on top, up, in on, first, second, third, fourth.

Shelter building

- Introduction to basic shelter building.
- Mini den building for small animals.
 - Three Little Pigs
 - Goldilocks
 - Little Red Riding Hood

Using tools / knot work.

- Introduction to tools
 - peelers for whittling (if ready).
 - trowels and forks for planting.
 - small hammers.
- Wrapping string around a twig.
- Threading leaves.

Flora and Fauna.

- Show awareness of risk – brambles/nettles/water.
- Know that trees and plants are different.
- Identify the petals of flowers.

Campfire

- Observe and talk about fire lighting procedures, begin to contribute by selecting fuel.
- Safety procedures – fire safety.
- Understand fire safety and its risks

Forest School Skills – Year 1

Exploration and play

- Reinforce rules and boundaries
- Travel safely over terrain.
- Carry sticks safely.
- Discover what is living in different areas of our school.

Navigation

- Use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West).
- Use simple directional language (near and far, left and right).
- Describe the location of features and routes on a simple map.
- Recognise and navigate to landmarks and human and physical features.

Shelter building

- Supported construction of tripod structures.
 - teddy bear picnic.
- Understanding how to make a lean-to shelter with adult support.

Using tools / knot work.

- Continued use of basic tools
 - peeler for whittling.
 - trowel for planting.
 - small hammer for hapazome.
- Introduction to secateurs.
- Introduction to loppers.
- Introduction to figure 8 knot.

Flora and Fauna.

- Discuss awareness of risk – brambles/nettles/water.
- Name the basic structure of flowers and trees.
- Identify a variety of garden plants.
- Discuss the seasons and changes.

Campfire

- Observe and talk about fire lighting procedures, begin to contribute by selecting fuel.
- Safety procedures – fire safety.
- Understand fire safety and its risks.
- Work as part of a team to cook.

Forest School Skills – Year 2

Exploration and play

- Reinforce rules and boundaries.
- Travel safely over challenging terrain.
- Move logs safely.
- Create obstacles and challenges using natural materials.

Navigation

- Use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West).
- Use simple directional language (near and far, left and right).
- Describe the location of features and routes on a map.
- Recognise and navigate to landmarks and human and physical features.

Shelter building

- Independent construction of tripod structures.
 - campfire story
- Use natural resources to create a basic lean-to shelter as part of a group.

Using tools / knot work.

- Continued use of basic tools:
 - peeler. - secateurs.
 - trowel. - loppers.
 - hammer.
- Knots: figure 8.
- Introduction to flint and steel.
- Introduction to clove hitch knot.

Flora and Fauna.

- Discuss awareness of risk – brambles/nettles/water.
- Name the basic structure of flowers and trees.
- Identify a variety of garden plants.
- Discuss the seasons and changes.
- Recognise animal habitats.
- Use the senses to recognise sounds.

Campfire

- Observe and talk about fire lighting procedures.
- Demonstrate understanding of the fire triangle.
- Safety procedures – fire safety.
- Understand fire safety and its risks.
- Demonstrate lighting and extinguishing a fire safely.

Forest School Skills – Year 3

Exploration and play

- Reinforce rules and boundaries.
- Take part in outdoor challenges.
- Engage in a range of play-types with peers.
- Explore sustainably, leaving no trace.

Navigation

- Navigate around site to landmarks and human and physical features.
- Demonstrate understanding of the concept of a basic map.
- Navigate way around a simple orienteering course using compass directions.

Shelter building

- Work successfully as a group to create a shelter using tarps and rope.
- Compare and evaluate the shelters in relation to their sturdiness, durability and weatherproofing.
- Assess if the shelter is fit for purpose.

Using tools / knot work.

- Continued use of basic tools:
 - peeler.
 - trowel.
 - hammer.
 - flint and steel.
 - secateurs.
 - loppers.
- Knots: figure 8 and clove hitch.
- Introduction to timber hitch knot.

Flora and Fauna.

- Demonstrate risk awareness.
- Discuss the function of the parts of trees and plants.
- Identify the parts of a plant which help a flower get pollinated.
- Discuss the seasons and changes.
- Recognise animal habitats.
- Use the senses to recognise sounds.

Campfire

- Observe and talk about fire lighting procedures.
- Demonstrate understanding of the fire triangle.
- Safety procedures – fire safety.
- Understand fire safety and its risks.
- Demonstrate lighting and extinguishing a fire safely.

Forest School Skills – Year 4

Exploration and play

- Reinforce rules and boundaries.
- Experience a range of woodland games.
- Conduct scavenger hunts in different seasons.
- Make use of natural materials to create a sculpture.

Navigation

- Navigate around site to landmarks and human and physical features.
- Use the key on a basic map.
- Navigate way around a simple orienteering course using compass directions.
- Move around the pond area safely.

Shelter building

- Design and build varying sized shelters using tarpaulins and materials found on site.
- Work as part of a group, communicating needs and ideas.
- Compare and evaluate the shelters (sturdiness, weatherproofing).

Using tools / knot work.

- Continued use of basic tools:
 - peeler.
 - trowel.
 - hammer.
 - flint and steel.
 - secateurs.
 - loppers.
- Knots: figure 8, clove hitch, timber hitch.
- Introduction to bow saw.

Flora and Fauna.

- Demonstrate risk awareness around the pond area.
- Discuss the benefits of biodiversity
- Identify food chains on our site.
- Classify animals according to their characteristics.
- Identify how different habitats become homes to different animals.

Campfire

- Observe and talk about fire lighting procedures.
- Demonstrate understanding of the fire triangle.
- Safety procedures – fire safety.
- Understand fire safety and its risks.
- Demonstrate lighting and extinguishing a fire safely.

Forest School Skills – Year 5

Exploration and play

- Reinforce rules and boundaries.
- Experience a range of woodland games.
- Use knowledge of woodland games to design a game for younger children.
- Make natural musical instruments.

Navigation

- Navigate around site to landmarks and human and physical features.
- Use the key on a basic map.
- Navigate way around a simple orienteering course using the 8 compass directions.
- Move around the pond area safely.

Shelter building

- Design and build a tipi shelter using camouflage.
- Work as part of a group, communicating needs and ideas.
- Compare and evaluate the shelters (sturdiness, weatherproofing).

Using tools / knot work.

- Continued use of basic tools:
 - peeler.
 - trowel.
 - hammer.
 - flint and steel.
 - secateurs.
 - loppers.
 - bow saw.
- Knots: figure 8, clove hitch, timber hitch
- Introduction to bowline.

Flora and Fauna.

- Demonstrate risk awareness.
- Identify and improve pollution indicators in different habitats.
- Investigate the animals from different parts of the site.
- Share responsibility for maintaining the school garden.

Campfire

- Observe and talk about fire lighting procedures.
- Demonstrate understanding of the fire triangle.
- Safety procedures – fire safety.
- Understand fire safety and its risks.
- Demonstrate lighting and extinguishing a fire safely.

Forest School Skills – Year 6

Exploration and play

- Reinforce rules and boundaries.
- Experience a range of woodland games.
- Use experience of Forest School to make a time capsule.
- Make geocache pods to hide around the site.

Navigation

- Navigate around site to landmarks and human and physical features.
- Measure the distance between key landmarks to create a scale.
- Navigate way around a simple orienteering course using the 8 compass directions.
- Use grid references to plot geocache points across the site.

Shelter building

- Design and build a shelter for all weathers in a group of 4.
- Evaluate and improve another group's shelter.
- Demonstrate awareness of dismantling a shelter and cleaning/storing the equipment correctly.

Using tools / knot work.

- Continued use of basic tools:
 - peeler. - secateurs.
 - trowel. - loppers.
 - hammer. - bow saw.
 - flint and steel.
- Knots: figure 8, clove hitch, timber hitch, bowline.
- Introduction to taut line hitch.
- Introduction to folding saw.

Flora and Fauna.

- Demonstrate risk awareness.
- Identify and improve pollution indicators in different habitats.
- Investigate native and non-native flora and fauna on site.
- Share responsibility for maintaining the school garden.
- Support the development and sustainability of the site.

Campfire

- Observe and talk about fire lighting procedures.
- Demonstrate understanding of the fire triangle.
- Use fire safety equipment when handling fire (gauntlets).
- Understand fire safety and its risks.
- Demonstrate lighting and extinguishing a fire safely.