



A parents Guide to Forest School

Forest school is an opportunity for your child to experience nature and the outdoor environment in a safe, secure and hands on way. Our 'forest' is a small woodland approx 3 acres in area and located just outside Bredon. There is a path leading from the road which is deliberately left a little overgrown so as to deter local youngsters from exploring the area which is on private ground. The area known as base camp contains a large shelter, a digging area, a small open glade (planted with wild flowers & grass), a

climbing area, a maths area and a sound area. A mixture of sycamore, beech, pine and oak trees about 40 years old gives a reasonable top canopy with young wych elm, hazel and elder bushes giving plenty of lower level cover (ideal for hide & seek). There are old wood piles to attract insects and small mammals. Rabbits, Foxes, Squirrels, Deer and birds are evident everywhere! The children are encouraged to investigate & explore but also to respect all living things.

Children learn best from first hand experiences. Exploring, playing and so learning using a range of activities (both designed by the leader and instigated by the children themselves) is what forest school is all about.. Building a sense of independence, high self esteem and team work are important parts of forest school, but health and safety considerations are always of paramount importance. (A personal details & medical record form must be filled out before a child can attend - see your child's teacher, leader or contact Deb Manns)

The woodland we use is fairly dry but has a lot of sticks and nettles underfoot. A lot of hard work has gone into clearing and preparing the main base camp area and is an ongoing commitment - (volunteer nettle pullers always welcome) but for the comfort and well being of your child the following clothing and equipment is recommended.

Clothing

The thickness of clothing will depend on the season :-

Sturdy trainers, boots or wellies, Thick socks.

Long trousers, Long sleeved top. (nettles and brambles are always present)

Waterproof jacket, waterproof over trousers (or a spare pair if wet)

A light water bottle (fruit shoot size ideal).

A small rucksack.

Hat. (sun or winter)

An extra layer is useful in the rucksack in case weather changes or wind has a chill. Even when sunny and warm at the start a cold wind can make a big difference and the woodland is shady and exposed to wind across adjoining farm land.

Rain will not cause a cancellation unless accompanied by wind.

More thin layers are best for warmth and can always be removed if too warm.

Please use old clothes and let your child know that at Forest School they CAN GET DIRTY and you don't mind! Sun cream should also be applied if weather is hot.

Names on clothes would also be useful.

Transport

The children are transported to and from the woodland by local mini-bus. Seat belts are fitted and there are always at least two adults on the bus and transport remains at the site in case of emergencies. If you are not at home please make sure a staff member has a contact number for you. Home numbers and mobiles are stored in the leaders mobile phone (no. 07825749201)

A ratio of 1 adult to 4 children is normally maintained by regular staff & volunteers who ensure that our policies and procedures are adhered to. (see forest school handbook available at your setting or email deb@djmanns.com) Web Site www.forestschool.org

Deb Manns (Owl) - Forest School Leader tel.. 01684 773148 for any more information .