

Forest School

Vision and Ethos

We are very excited to be offering Forest School at Grovelands School. This information provides an overview of what will be taking place this year as the program develops.

Forest School reinforces the six learning powers promoted across the school: 'engagement, co-operation, challenge, resourcefulness, determination and creativity'. Sessions provide a less structured learning context where children can freely explore and develop these skills helping them to become resilient and reflective learners.



Our priority at Forest School is to give children stimulating, exciting and fun outdoor experiences and to support them to explore and discover the natural world.

Forest School at Grovelands

We are fortunate at Grovelands to have spacious and diverse grounds this natural environment lends itself perfectly to Forest School.

The different settings within the school grounds offers a range of opportunities; sessions take place in the woodland, pond, willow area or on the large fields. These natural green spaces provide a less structured learning environment and is an opportunity for children to enhance their knowledge and skills.



As well as building motivation, confidence and self-esteem, Forest School makes links with the classroom curriculum and enables practical and nature-based learning to take place beyond the classroom.



Children's hands on experiences with nature has many benefits.

Activities are adapted to meet the individual needs and interests of each child. Forest School supports different learning styles and encourages children to make discoveries using all the senses.

Sessions use a child centred approach, which is an empowering process for children. It allows them to take responsibility for their learning and development and evaluate risks for themselves.

This can raise aspiration, motivation and inspire creative thinking.

Forest School Curriculum

Forest school enriches the learning that takes place inside school and can enhance knowledge and understanding.

Children love having stories read to them outside.

LITERACY Children are encouraged to use a broad vocabulary to describe the natural environment and the different activities helps extend their language. Speaking and listening opportunities occur through incidental conversation and opportunities to talk and share ideas through *circle times, games* and *team building* activities to encourage collaboration with peers. Children learn about their surroundings from information books and their imagination is fostered through exciting fictional stories.

Wildlife Books

Story Telling

Listening Games

Plant identification



Children wrap up warm and embrace the British weather!



SCIENCE It is easy to see how Forest School supports knowledge and understanding of science especially as *sessions takes place outside in all weathers all year round*. The encounters children make with the different elements allows them to experience the *seasons and changing weather patterns*. Children learn about the diversity of the living world in their woodland and pond.

They learn how to identify plants, birds, animals and other living organisms and how to support the local wild life.

Foraging

Bug Hunts

Bird Feeders

Pond Dipping

Children experience the seasons and learn about where they live

GEOGRAPHY: Sessions are a great opportunity to study the geography of the forest school sites, school grounds and surrounding area. Activities include creating *3D floor maps* using natural objects and *journey sticks* to record physical, human and environmental features and creating *micro maps from an 'ants' point of view*. Children enjoy experiencing the changing weather patterns first hand; a 'snowy' woodland is a particular favourite.



Sensory Trails

Guided Walks

Rope Mazes



DT: Children are taught how to use tools safely and develop practical skills with equipment they would not normally have access to. As well as learning woodland craft, their skills are linked to focused topics, such as **building bird boxes**.



Children learn how to use *loppers, secateurs, peelers, hand drills, bow saws* and an *axe* as well as lashing and how to tie different types of knots. They can apply their skills in mini self-directed projects. These activities help children build strength and co-ordination supporting *physical development*.

ART: Art projects take on many forms at Forest School. The woodcraft products they create with tools can capture children's imagination and have multiply uses as ideas evolve. A whittled stick can become a *magic wand* then be used to *cook marshmallows*. A *mallet* a child makes can be used for making *Leaf Print art*. Children can design and



create *sculptures* out of naturally found objects or make *charcoal pencils* and *natural paint*. They can use their self-made art materials to produce *observational sketches* and *drawings of their environment*. This is a great way to capture and record their experiences. Children enjoy representing their favourite fictional



characters as *stick men*, learning to *weave* and *making sticky weed crowns*. Working in the outdoors and with the natural environment can be an inspiring

process for children and give them the freedom to imagine, design, construct and think creatively.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH AND CITIZENSHIP



Children support each other and work together as



a forest school community. They follow rules and understand how these keep them safe. They work together using tools like the bow saw. Children collaborate in projects such as **building dams, den building**, and making **play equipment**. Group activities support social communication skills; children negotiate, share ideas and listen to others.

Other Projects



We help
Environment
Hailsham
brighten up the
town. Twice a
year we are
invited to help
Environment
Hailsham plant
spring and



summer bulbs. The year one children worked hard to plant hundreds of bulbs, which were seen flowering all across the town. They love visiting the poly tunnels and finding out about garden plants from a wonderful group of Environment Hailsham volunteers.

Weather and Clothing Policy

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Forest school happens in all weather conditions, unless the weather is extremely poor. There is no such thing as bad weather, just weather, and all we need to do is dress appropriately.

Children lose heat much quicker when wet and once they are cold, children find it harder than adults to get warm again.

We expect children to get muddy and wet at times therefore inexpensive and old clothes are most suitable. The following kit list is a guideline for parents.

1. Water Proof Jacket
2. Water proof Trousers (useful all year round)
3. All in one waterproofs (useful only if you already have these)
4. Long Trousers and Long Sleeve Jumpers (to protect skin from stings and scratches)
5. Layers - (3 or 4 in winter) T-shirts, long sleeve vest & jumper (hoody)
6. Coat
7. Wellie boots, waterproof shoes (for colder/wetter months), trainers, strong shoes
8. Two pairs of socks during colder months.
9. Woolly hat, scarf,
10. Gloves
11. Spare socks
12. Sunscreen (summer)



Forest School memories

"Eating roasted marshmallows"



"Making a campfire"

"Telling stories around the fire"



"Playing games in the trees"

"Making a wooden necklace"

"Looking for things that the fairies have dropped in the woods"

"Climbing a tree"

"Playing in the mud and rain"

