

Forest Schools Information



*“Let nature be your teacher”
.....William Wordsworth*



Ethos of Forest Schools

Forest Schools have developed as a part of the **Forest Education Initiative (FEI)** which has been set up by the **Forestry Commission** to increase the understanding and appreciation of the environmental, social, and economic potential of trees, woodlands and forests and of the link between the tree and everyday wood products.

Forest School is an inspirational process that offers children, young people and adults regular opportunities to achieve, and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland environment.

Forest Schools provide play-based learning opportunities for children in forests.

They tailor an educational curriculum to a participant's preferred learning style and interests and are holistic in approach. Forest Schools developed from the early years education system in Scandinavia.

Forest Schools engage children: children of all ages, all abilities and all interests find special places and special things to do in the woods. They find that each of them can **succeed** at something, and they learn new ways of co-operating and communicating. Forest School leaders are finding that this experience is making a **big difference to the lives of children with low self-esteem and lack of confidence**. Children with particular needs and children who find indoor schooling hard to take can develop new ways of coping through working in the woods.

The opportunity to succeed in an alternative environment makes Forest Schools a great place for children of all ages showing challenging behaviour to have a “second chance” in a new environment, supported by suitably skilled and qualified Leaders. Forest Schools can also provide opportunities for an alternative shared family experience which can help these relationships develop.



As well as educational and social benefits, there are health benefits to engaging in outdoor physical activity. Children developing healthy habits can only help to counter obesity, heart disease and osteoporosis in future generations.

To find out more about Forest Schools go to : www.forestschoools.com

Greenfields Community School is a maintained primary school situated in the heart of The Meadows area of the city of Nottingham. Currently it is a single entry school with a 60 place purpose built unit for the Foundation stage children. Our on-site outdoor space is being constantly developed to include a copse area with young planted trees, two grassy mounds, a stumpery, a fire circle and a purpose built log cabin.

We utilise the resources around us on the school site but also travel to Stonepit Woods and Manor Farm for additional sessions. The Greenfields Forest School was officially established in 2011. Greenfields Forest School is insured for Employers and Public Liability under the Greenfields Community School insurance.

All Forest School Leaders are :

- qualified to OCN level 3
- insured
- hold current enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks.
- hold current First Aid certificates for outdoor education.

Site Information

Greenfields Forest School

The copse area is an area of the school grounds. It is located between the main school building and the Foundation Unit. It has a number of young trees, around 10 years old, which have been planted to make a Forest Schools area. The species are Oak, Silver Birch, Wild Cherry and Willow. We have roots of 300year old Oaks from Sherwood Forest clustered together to form the 'stumpery'. It has a wild flower meadow area adjacent with two grass mounds. There is a muddy mound, rustic woodstore and a fire circle. It is ideal as a starting ground for the youngest children to establish boundaries and behaviour as it is on-site. It is also useful for shorter sessions when time is limited. The Log Cabin was built in 2014 to provide an outside classroom to support outside learning and Forest Schools.



Stonepit Woods



The Wood is owned and managed by the Rushcliffe District Scout group. There is a commissioner responsible for maintenance of the wood, with whom we meet regularly to report and discuss any issues and developmental ideas. It is about 8 acres in size and has an adjacent meadow of around 1 acre. It has some history relating to the stone being dug for the church walls and has trees dating back 80 years plus. It was awarded a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation for the way the flora and fauna is maintained and balanced. The variety of trees; Oak, Sycamore, Elm, Horse Chestnut, Ash, Silver Birch, Beech, Holly, Hawthorn, Willow and Elder provides an environment to support a number of birds and wild animals. The woodland also has areas with wild flowers, lichens, mosses and fungi (including rare species of orchid and 80+ other more common ones) which attract and support a myriad of insects.

What is Forest schools?

A gentle safe form of outdoor education in which the children visit a familiar woodland area every week and learn through a range of practical tasks, games and playful activities. It originated in Scandinavia where it is still used as an important part of Nursery education. It has since been developed for use with older children; particularly older children with challenging behaviour. Research on Forest Schools has demonstrated that such learning has a very positive effect on children's self esteem. Small groups – typically 8 children, a half day session , for 6 weeks.

What do the children learn at Forest School?

1. They learn to work and play together.
2. They develop their communication and socialisation skills.
3. The tasks are carefully chosen and broken down into small steps to enable the children to experience success. This boosts their self esteem.
4. They learn to transfer learning from school to the forest and back again.
5. They learn to enjoy themselves.
6. They learn to observe environmental change and thus learn about the forest environment.

