

# *All Saints' C of E School*



## *Forest School*

*Rachel Corrin and Matthew Charters  
Forest School Leaders*

## Welcome to Forest school, where the journey begins...

We are very fortunate to have a Forest School setting on our school site. We have developed an area specifically for Forest School use, which has supervised access to a small beck. The area is fully fenced in and we are planting 345 trees in and around the area to provide privacy and enhance the learning experience for the children. As part of this the children will help plant the trees and develop the site to meet their learning needs.

Mr Charters and Mrs Corrin are currently undertaking studies to achieve Forest School Level 3 Leader qualification. They are also trained in paediatric First Aid and Additional First Aid Skills specific to Forest school settings. This training will enable the children to learn in a safe environment where they can succeed, create and utilise many skills and develop new expertise.

## What is Forest School?

Forest School is a method of working outdoors with children, using the natural environment to promote social and emotional development. It is an inspirational process that offers all learners regular opportunities to develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees. These learning experiences also help to develop

communication and practical skills, as well as a greater understanding and respect for the environment. For more information see the Forest School Association website at [www.forestschoollassociation.co.uk](http://www.forestschoollassociation.co.uk) Additional information specific to our Forest will be also be added to our Forest School Page of the school website.

## [All Saints' CE Primary School - Forest Schools](#)

## What will my child do?

Every visit to the Forest will be to the same place, yet the story will always change and be different. The amazing memories and adventures that take place in Forest School will always enable children to develop and progress their learning. In our Forest school all children are given the opportunity to access, experience and enjoy learning while working in the outside environment. We take the “classroom” outside and use the beautiful surroundings, weather and sounds to enhance their learning visually, orally and sensually. This holistic approach of Forest School encourages children’s imaginations, build’s self-esteem and creates the desire to understand, learn and respect the natural world around them. Through exploration and discovery the children are able to enjoy and self-initiate their own learning. In Forest School children are able to take calculated risks in a controlled environment. They

learn cause and effect and what may or could happen. They are given the opportunity and responsibility under supervision, to use tools and help be part of a team, creating a fire to keep them warm and cook food. Equality, achievement and self-belief help children to return to the classroom feeling that they can accomplish and succeed in what they do. Every child is valued and their input is vital; we work as a team and they are able to respect and treat each other fairly and as equals. An integral part of our wider schools Christian ethos.

### How can Forest School help my child's learning and development?

It is proven from research that learning that takes place in the outdoors is much more powerful and memorable as all the senses are involved. Forest Schools helps children develop through a child-led approach and teaches them how to assess risks for themselves.

### What happens during the Forest school afternoon?

The children arrive at school in their Forest School clothing and once the class teacher has checked that all the children are wearing the correct attire, the class walks down to the Forest School area with two known adults. Each session begins around the 'Talking Tree', where we talk through the safety rules for working outdoors and about respecting each

other and the environment. For every session we have a lesson plan which includes a variety of small group and individual activities. The children move around a variety of activities throughout the afternoon and are given opportunities throughout their time to huddle up around the fire circle if it is lit. Children are encouraged to take their learning in their own desired direction and the adults are there to facilitate this. Finally the class returns to the 'Talking Tree' for the close of the session including the important reflection of their learning.

### What tools will be used in Forest School?

In Forest School the children use the same tools that they use in school as part of the Design Technology Curriculum. These include; palm drills and when they are competent, small knives and bow saws. The Forest School leader will be the supervising adult when tools are being used and the ratio will be no more than 1:6. This ratio can change depending on groups needs and at the leaders discretion, a plan including a risk assessment is developed prior to each session. The Forest School leader will give the children a safety talk for each session and when appropriate will explain how a tool should be used and when it can be used safely. If a child is not using a tool in a safe manner the activity is stopped and safety instructions will again be given. Gloves are provided and will be worn when the

Forest School leader feels that the child needs to. Gloves can protect the hand if worn on the bracing (supporting) hand but when working the child needs to feel the object and have a good grip at all times. All activities using tools are fully risk assessed.

### What is the adult/child ratio?

As a minimum the ratio is 2:10. Typically the Forest School Leader and a Teaching Assistant. They will accompany and supervise the children at all times. Each adult has a specified role within the Forest School setting.

### Are there First Aiders on the site?

We always have a minimum of 1 teaching Assistant – Qualified Paediatric First Aider and The Forest School Leader – Paediatric and Forest School First Aider. A First Aid kit is kept as part of our kit. If there is an accident requiring further treatment, the child will be taken into the First Aid Area inside the school and parents notified in line with school procedures. Asthma pumps and medication specific to the children are taken down to the forest area for the duration of the session and are supervised by a Teaching Assistant and Forest School Lead.

### What about break?

The children are given a break when they are able to visit the toilets and have their snack and a drink. The children may also visit the toilet at any point during the day after seeking permission from their supervising adult. The facilitates on the school site (learning centre) All water bottles (provided from home) are taken down to the Forest School area and the children are encouraged to drink water throughout the afternoon. During the colder weather the children are given a cup of warm chocolate and an additional snack provided by the school.

### If it's cold or raining will Forest School still take place?

Forest School takes part in all seasons and all bar very extreme weather conditions. If weather conditions are poor the Forest School day will take place (we have invested in large tarpaulin's which we use to cover the floor and make temporary shelters). The Forest School lead will cancel the session if the weather is unsuitable/unsafe for the session to take place, again this is determined by the risk assessments carried out by the Forest School Leader.

### What if the children are cold or wet?

Before the Forest School session starts the children are reminded of the importance of telling an adult if they are cold or wet. During the afternoon the children are carefully monitored by the supervising adults who are aware that



some children will not speak out, and so are vigilant as a team to look out for signs of a child being cold or unhappy. If a child has managed to get wet, then the Teaching Assistant will take them back into school to change into their spare clothes or to borrow clothes from school if necessary.

### What about during hot weather?

During the summer months the children will need to be wearing hats and wear sunscreen that last all day. We will encourage them to drink plenty of fluids and there will be frequent drinks stops throughout the afternoon. The Forest School leader will build shelters to keep the children out of the sun, so that they can still enjoy the activities outside. In addition the children may need to be given an ice lolly during the day to help keep them cool.

### I have no waterproof clothing or wellies for my child!

If you do not have all the correct clothing for outdoors then please speak to a member of staff we are trying to develop a range of spare items for Forest School including a wellington boots, waterproof trousers and jackets so please speak to the class teacher. We make sure all children are wearing the correct clothing before we go outside. No child will be permitted to go outside if their clothes are not suitable for the conditions.

**More questions?** If you have any further questions or concerns, however small, please speak to either Mrs Corrin or Mr Charters they will be happy to discuss these with you. Further information including Risks assessments and photos from the session can be found on the School website: [All Saints' CE Primary School - Forest Schools](#)

## Kit List:

### Autumn/Winter Clothing List

Waterproof jacket

Kagool /water proof jacket

Waterproof trousers

Warm layers, under-layers/sweatshirt, jumper, additional socks

Walking boots/Wellies

Named Water bottle

Hat gloves

Long hair tied back

## **Spring/Summer Months**

All day sun cream applied prior to the session;

Long hair tied back

Leggings/long trousers

T-Shirt

Cap/Sunhat

Jacket/waterproof/ waterproof trousers as needed

As you know weather can change very quickly in Cumbria, we like to always be prepared and send the items with your child each day. Any additional items specific to each session will be asked for prior to the session.

The children will take part in Forest School in Year One and Year Four – if you have any of the above items of clothing you no longer need or could donate for the sessions please let Mr Charters or Mrs Corrin know.

Many Thanks