



Forest School

Statement of Intent, Implementation and Impact.

Look deep into nature and then you
will understand everything better!

Albert Einstein

Introduction

Forest school is a valued part of the curriculum, providing a safe learning experience for all children. It can encourage and inspire individuals, through positive and hands on experiences with nature. Essential personal, social and emotional skills are developed and improved through consistent participation in motivational and achievable activities. Our children develop an appreciation for nature, ecosystems and wildlife. Through their practical experiences they learn many valuable skills such as problem-solving handling risks and building self-esteem and confidence.

Intent

Forest school sessions aim to promote the holistic development of all involved, fostering resilient, confidence, independence and creative learners.

The children's interests along with varied natural resources in our forest school area are used to stimulate creative thinking, problem solving and build skills for later in life. Using high quality planned activities, to develop our children's curiosity of the great outdoors.

Forest school is about exploring and experiencing the natural world through practical activities. The children experience all weathers, all year round, exploring and learning from the seasons and environment changes.

To provide opportunities and encourage independence of all children, including SEND, through Forest school sessions.

Implementation

Teachers are qualified Forest school leaders. Forest school builds on a child's positive attitude to learning, offering them opportunities to take risks, make choices and initiate learning for themselves,

The Forest school learning environment provides opportunities for children to:

- Develop self esteem
- Build Self confidence
- Form positive relationships
- Improve fine motor and gross motor skills
- Improve communication skills
- Build teamwork

At St John's this is done through:

- **Outdoor Learning:** Children spend a large portion of the day outside, regardless of the weather (with appropriate clothes), experiencing nature first hand. This can include activities like building shelters, observing wildlife, or investigating plant life.
- **Child-Centred:** The learning is flexible and adapted to the individual needs and interests of the children. Forest school leaders will guide the children's exploration, but allow them the freedom to make their own decisions and discoveries.
- **Hands-On, Active Learning:** The children are actively engaged with their environment, learning practical skills such as teamwork, decision-making, and resilience.
- **Risk and Challenge:** Forest schools encourage children to take risks in a safe, supervised manner. For example, they might climb trees, and use tools. This helps them develop confidence and a sense of responsibility.
- **Connection to Nature:** Forest schools is about fostering a deep connection to the natural world. This often leads to increased environmental awareness and a sense of stewardship for the planet and better community relations.
- **Social and Emotional Development:** The emphasis on group activities and cooperative learning helps children develop strong social skills, empathy, and emotional intelligence.

Impact

The success of Forest school allows the children to grow in confidence as a result of the freedom, time and space they are given in their learning. This encourages children to adopt a healthier lifestyle, breathing fresher air and nurturing the great outdoors. By encouraging physical activity, fostering emotional resilience, and instilling a love for nature, forest schools provide a holistic education that nurtures well-rounded, confident, and responsible individuals.

By having a well led Forest school, we will encourage children and adults alike to foster the World around us and give them the skills and understanding they need to further protect and respect the outside world.

'God said to human beings, 'Fill the earth with people and look after it. Care for all that I have made' Genesis 1:27