

## Introduction to Forest Schools

### What is Forest schools?

The ethos of Forest schools is based on a fundamental respect for children and young people and their capacity to investigate, test and maintain curiosity in the world around them. It believes in children's right to play, the right to access the outdoors, access risk and the vibrant reality of the natural world, the right to experience a healthy range of emotions through all the challenges of social interaction, to build resilience that will enable continued and creative engagement with their peers.

Forest schools is based more on the process of learning than it is on the content - more on the how than the what.

This means that Forest school practice steps out of the limitation of planned activities and ventures into the realms of the unplanned, unexpected, and ultimately unlimited.

Children are encouraged to direct their own learning. This often involves the Forest school leader, stimulating play in the outdoors or through scaffolding a child learning or observing children in the outdoor environment.

Significantly a woodland environment is central in supporting this dynamic approach to learning; the passage of time from the changing of the seasons, to learning about the lifecycle of a tree, the dynamic nature of an outdoor environment - an infinite source of textures, sounds and tastes, a range of visual stimuli from near to far, high to low, big to small and the layers of historical, cultural, spiritual significance that speaks of our deep relationship with trees and woodlands through the ages.

At Crown Meadow First School and Nursery the focus of Forest Schools is firstly, to develop children's collaborative working skills, self-esteem, confidence and practical skills, which can then be transferred into the classroom. Secondly, to make learning practical, fun and enjoyable so that children develop an enjoyable attitude towards school and learning.



## **Forest School Rules**

In the first Forest School session, children become involved with the setting and understanding of the Forest school rules to ensure their safety. At the beginning of every session a quick recap of the rules is reinforced by the children.

It is important that the adults involved try to help children understand the importance of these rules, and support children in understanding that Forest School will become too dangerous if these rules aren't followed, which may mean that Forest School sessions have to end.

### **Forest School for All**

**Walk within the Forest School Area**

**Keep everything out of your mouth**

**Stay within the boundary**

**Do not throw anything**

**Drag sticks behind you**

**Care for nature**

**Ask an adult before you use a tool and follow the tool rules. Have FUN!**

**Always wash hands following a session.**

**Forest School Leader - Mrs Webster**

Forest School OCN Level 3 in Forest School Leadership

