

Subject: Forest School

Subject Leader

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National Curriculum

Forest School has a developmental ethos which has been shared by thousands of trained practitioners around the world, who are constantly developing their learning styles and skills to support new and imaginative learners. Forest school began in Scandinavia and arrived in the UK in 1993 and has grown ever since. Forest school is a child-centred learning process, which offers opportunities for holistic growth through regular sessions. It's a long term program that supports play, exploration and supported risk taking. Forest school aims to develop confidence and self-esteem through the learner being inspired, having hands on experiences in a natural environment. Here at Kingsmead we have introduced forest school to our nurture pupils which help with their holistic development whilst providing a rich, practical/theory based curriculum centred on the great outdoors. This is designed so it can help improve teamwork, communication, independent risk-taking, SEMH skills and many more, all of which has the potential to compliment the wider curriculum at Kingsmead.

The process of forest school is to help and facilitate more than knowledge gathering, it helps the learners develop socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically and intellectually. Forest school creates a safe, non-judgemental nurturing environment for learners to try out things they would never try before and also take risks. Forest school aims to inspire a deep meaningful connection to the world and an understanding of how a learner fits within it. With the aim of forest school, the approach to risk taking means that learners expand on their abilities by solving real-world issues, building self-belief and resilience. At forest school the risk is more than just physical harm, as there is risks to everything we do, but we grow as people by overcoming these risks, so therefore forest school helps the participants to become more healthy, resilient, creative and independent learners.

A quality forest school is all about the delivery to the six key principles that shape and govern the ethos of forest school and these are.

1. Forest school is a long term process of regular sessions, rather than one-off or infrequent visits, the cycle of planning, observation, adaptation and review are key to each session.
2. Forest school always takes place in a woodland environment to support the development of a lifelong relationship between the learner and the natural world.
3. Forest school uses a range of learner-centred process to create a community for being, development and learning.
4. Forest school aims to promote the holistic development of all involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.
5. Forest school offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.
6. Forest school is run by qualified forest school leaders, who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.

By having all these 6 principles working together you will truly see the value of forest school.

In summary the learners at forest school are:

- Equal, unique and valuable
- Entitled to develop a strong, positive relationship with the natural world
- Able to explore and discover

- Entitled to develop positive relationships with themselves and other people
- Entitled to experience appropriate risk and challenging situations
- Entitled to choose, and to initiate their own learning and development

Curriculum Intent

At Kingsmead, we teach forest school lessons so that all the children who participate have the chance to develop a wide range of skills that they wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to do so within the classroom. These are the following:

- Nature Awareness which is to develop a relationship with nature by sharpening up your senses. Be aware of the smell in the air just before a rainstorm. Sitting silently under a tree and observing the nature around you, take a fresh wild blackberry and eat it, feel how the bark of an oak tree feels on your fingers. By letting yourself open up to nature she will then show you a whole new magical world of adventure.
- Bushcraft this is a way of thriving in the natural environment. It's all about learning how to enjoy and make use of the wild countryside around us. Bushcraft is all about developing skills that help you adapt to your surroundings which could be from cooking on a campfire, to making dens and practical crafts using natural materials.
- Wild food – there's nothing more delicious or satisfying than a meal sourced 100% from nature. When you know what to look for you'll soon see that at the right time of the year 'Mother Nature' provides us with a fabulous feast for the picking.
- Games, you don't need lots of equipment to have fun outside, just a few ideas, some simple rules and the willingness to be a bit silly in the wide open space. Games are a great way for children to exercise and bond together in a shared experience.

It's important that the subject works alongside our schools core values of 'RESPECT'. We aim for our students to show **Responsibility** by showing nature the care and attention and respect that's required to allow the great outdoors environment to flourish and grow, allowing wildlife to come into our area. We at Kingsmead aim for our students to feel a sense of **Empowerment** as they become more independent in the outdoor space, allowing them to choose what they like to achieve in forest school. Forest School is an alternative approach to learning that supports pupil progress in more traditional academic core subjects. We aim to allow our students a **Sense of Belonging** by allowing them to have the freedom of the outdoor space, as they can prioritise what they like to learn and achieve in Forest School. This helps promote independence, confidence and self-esteem in our students. By having a 'can do' rather than 'cannot do' attitude, this will help the students achieve **Personalised Learning** which is something we are keen to promote in our lessons, this is because all students have different strengths, needs and abilities. In our theory lessons we aim to build **Empathy** and understanding of how nature grows and lives, we want our students to understand the impact that nature has on our daily lives and the world we are living in, by doing this our young people will show a great deal of empathy towards nature in a different light so they can make our world we live in a better place. Each Forest School Lesson we want our young people to consistently produce high quality work in both practical and theory lesson so they can be proud of the work they achieved. This will provide the **Consistency** that will boost their confidence knowing that anything is achievable if they put their mind to it. Finally we aim to build **Tolerance** through lessons, nature takes time to grow, wildlife take time to come into the area so this requires patience as not everything goes to plan. So this will give our young people the opportunity to build resilience and give many opportunities for self-improvement at school and in their lives beyond Kingsmead.

The Kingsmead school are always committed to the personal and social development of our pupils. We recognise the importance of wellbeing for our young people and healthy lifestyles choices. Kingsmead will aim to use the forest school programme to provide our learners with the knowledge, skills and resources

to make informed, positive decisions during the years and in the life beyond Kingsmead. By having forest school at Kingsmead it will broaden the learning experiences and hopefully contribute to their positive wellbeing and self-esteem. At Kingsmead during forest school we aim to promote the following through the curriculum.

- Personal Development
- Team Working
- Health and Wellbeing
- Use of tools
- Skill Building
- Community Engagement

We recognise that learners may benefit from a bespoke and tailored programmes of learning that are suited to their individual needs and are committed to providing such a programme. It is to be delivered in a practical way this is so we can provide the best learning opportunities and methods that are difficult to create in the classroom environment. Forest school is all about a 'hands on' learning experience.

Curriculum Implementation

<u>Term</u>	<u>Content/Topics</u>	<u>Assessment</u>
<p>Autumn Term</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction to Forest School – including general ethos, environment, and settings, outdoor spaces ‘leave no trace’ ethos and Forest School principles continuously embedded. 2. Highlighting the importance of Forest School, its benefits if engaged and participated in to the best of each pupil’s ability. 3. Health & Safety induction – understanding risks around forest school and how to manage these to keep themselves and others safe – immediate constant risk and dynamic risks on weekly basis. 4. Expectations throughout forest school – behaviour, attitude, opportunities, overview of activities and experiences. 5. Teamwork/Teambuilding activities and games – scavenging hunts, Blind guide, where’s my tree? These are just some examples. 6. Natural Representations – using the natural elements to represent something for example favourite sport or activity, scariest or most excited moments, friendship etc. 7. Practical and crafting skills – opportunities to create a variety of craft items using string, wool, cord, paint and elements of nature e.g. Leaves, bark, branches, large logs etc. 8. Lose structure builds – with initial guidance on stability, pupils given opportunities to create their own shelters/dens and continue to develop these week after week. <p>As the weeks progress, less adult involvement will be incorporated and an increased emphasis on child-led decisions and opportunities. Each number point above represents a potential activity – the nature of forest school lends more towards change and adaptation therefore sessions will change depending upon preferences of the participating pupils.</p>	<p>Witness statements and observations relating to holistic development of pupils e.g.</p> <p>Social/communication – Improved/more effective communication, ability to form mutually satisfying relationships with others, improved manners, ability to take turns and listen to others, showing kindness and sympathy, learning to lead and follow and when to do each, expressing needs clearly and respectfully and co-operation with others.</p> <p>Physical – Fine/gross motor skills, hand-eye coordination, improved position in space, midline crossing and bilateral coordination e.g. ability to use certain tools, pass and move objects independently or in a pair/group.</p> <p>Intellectual – Information processing, language development, picking up mental concepts and cues, improved listening skills and attention, sequencing.</p> <p>Emotional – Improved ability to understand and manage emotions, independence, and improved self-esteem, improved feeling of competency and ability to succeed, and developed perseverance, ability to cope with disappointments and difficult challenges.</p> <p>Spiritual – Development of own moral code, improved sense of right and wrong, developed personal value system, improved sense of worth and positive outlook.</p>
<p><u>Term 2</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reiteration of general ethos, environment we live in, forest school principles – continuously embedded. 2. Health & Safety reiteration – understanding risks around site and how to manage these to keep themselves and others safe – immediate constant risks and dynamic risks on weekly basis. 3. Reiteration of expectations throughout forest school – behaviour, attitude, opportunities, overview of activities and experiences. 4. Halloween based creative opportunities using elements of nature. 	<p>Witness statements and observations relating to holistic development of pupils e.g.</p> <p>Social/communication – Improved/more effective communication, ability to form mutually satisfying relationships with others, improved manners, ability to take turns and listen to others, showing kindness and sympathy,</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Remembrance day activities – create a remembrance garden. 6. Christmas Crafts – Create Christmas related decorations, using natural elements, to compliment the forest school site or take home. 7. Weather observations – What is the weather like today? Will it affect what we do? How will it affect what we do and how we move around the site? 8. Practical and crafting skills – opportunities to create a variety of craft items using string, wool, cord, paint and elements of nature e.g. leaves, bark, branches, large logs etc. <p>As weeks progress, less adult involvement will be incorporated and an increased emphasis on child-led decisions and opportunities. Each number point above represents a potential activity – the nature of forest school lends more towards change and adaptation therefore sessions will change depending upon preferences of the participating pupils.</p>	<p>learning to lead and follow and when to do each, expressing needs clearly and respectfully and co-operation with others.</p> <p>Physical – Fine/gross motor skills, hand-eye coordination, improved position in space, midline crossing and bilateral coordination e.g. ability to use certain tools, pass and move objects independently or in a pair/group.</p> <p>Intellectual – Information processing, language development, picking up mental concepts and cues, improved listening skills and attention, sequencing.</p> <p>Emotional – Improved ability to understand and manage emotions, independence, and improved self-esteem, improved feeling of competency and ability to succeed, and developed perseverance, ability to cope with disappointments and difficult challenges.</p> <p>Spiritual – Development of own moral code, improved sense of right and wrong, developed personal value system, improved sense of worth and positive outlook.</p>
<p><u>Spring Term</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health & Safety reiteration – understanding risks around forest school and how to manage these to keep themselves and others safe – immediate constant risks and dynamic risks on weekly basis. 2. Reiteration of expectations throughout forest school – Behaviour, attitude, opportunities, overview of activities and experiences. 3. Weather observations – What is the weather like today? Will it affect what we do? How will it affect what we do and how we move around the site? 4. Park walks with varying themes/focus, listening and adventurous games dependent upon the time of the year e.g. Tree distribution and types in different areas of the park, leaf identification, seasonal observations e.g. new bud growths on plants, increase number of leaves and colour changes, general changes and observations within the park. These are just a few examples. 5. Free play around the forest school site, giving the pupils opportunities to have a mini adventure, play games they want to play, climb trees, go for a wander with little or no input from adults unless asked. 6. Start to identify animals that can be found within the forest school site, identify types of birds within the forest school site, identify eating habits and design/build a bird feeder. <p>As weeks progress, less adult involvement will be incorporated and an increased emphasis on child-led decisions and opportunities. Each number point above represents a potential</p>	<p>Learning to lead and follow and when to do each, expressing needs clearly and respectfully and co-operation with others.</p> <p>Physical – Fine/gross motor skills, hand-eye coordination, improved position in space, midline crossing and bilateral coordination e.g. ability to use certain tools, pass and move objects independently or in a pair/group.</p> <p>Intellectual – Information processing, language development, picking up mental concepts and cues, improved listening skills and attention, sequencing.</p> <p>Emotional – Improved ability to understand and manage emotions, independence, and improved self-esteem, improved feeling of competency and ability to succeed, and developed perseverance, ability to cope with disappointments and difficult challenges.</p> <p>Spiritual – Development of own moral code, improved sense of right and wrong, developed personal value system, improved sense of worth and positive outlook.</p>

	<p>activity – the nature of forest school lends more towards change and adaptation therefore sessions will change depending upon preferences of the participating pupils.</p>	
<p><u>Term 2</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reiteration of general ethos, environment we live in, the ethos of forest school principles – continuously embedded. 2. Health & Safety reiteration – understanding risks around the site and how to manage these to keep themselves and others safe – immediate constant risk and dynamic risks on weekly basis. 3. Reiteration of expectations throughout forest school – behaviour, attitude, opportunities, overview of activities and experiences. 4. Natural representations – using branch picture frame, design a picture using natural elements to represent something. 5. Practical and crafting skills – opportunities to create a variety of craft items using string, wool, cord, paint and elements of nature e.g. leaves, bark, branches, large logs etc. 6. With increased levels of trust and responsibility, independence and trust, increased outdoor adventurous trips to national parks and undesignated areas that are of interest. <p>As weeks progress, less adult involvement will be incorporated and an increased emphasis on child-led decisions and opportunities. Each number point above represents a potential activity – the nature of forest school lends more towards change and adaptation therefore sessions will change depending upon preferences of the participating pupils.</p>	<p>Learning to lead and follow and when to do each, expressing needs clearly and respectfully and co-operation with others.</p> <p>Physical – Fine/gross motor skills, hand-eye coordination, improved position in space, midline crossing and bilateral coordination e.g. ability to use certain tools, pass and move objects independently or in a pair/group.</p> <p>Intellectual – Information processing, language development, picking up mental concepts and cues, improved listening skills and attention, sequencing.</p> <p>Emotional – Improved ability to understand and manage emotions, independence, and improved self-esteem, improved feeling of competency and ability to succeed, and developed perseverance, ability to cope with disappointments and difficult challenges.</p> <p>Spiritual – Development of own moral code, improved sense of right and wrong, developed personal value system, improved sense of worth and positive outlook.</p>
<p><u>Summer Term</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reiteration of general ethos, environment we live in, the ethos of forest school principles – continuously embedded. 2. Health & Safety reiteration – understanding risks around the site and how to manage these to keep themselves and others safe – immediate constant risks and dynamic risks on a weekly basis. 3. Reiteration of expectations throughout forest school – behaviour, attitude, opportunities, overview of activities and experiences. 4. Weather observations – What’s the weather like today? Will it affect what we do? How will it affect what we do and how we move around the site? 5. Teamwork/Team building activities and games – Scavenging hunts, what’s my tree called? These are just a few examples. 6. Free Play – Pupils are given opportunities to have a mini adventure, play games they want to play, climb trees this is done with little or no input from adults unless asked. 7. Practical and crafting skills – opportunities to create a variety of craft items using string, wool, cord, paint and elements of nature. 8. With increased levels of trust and responsibility, independence and trust, increased outdoor adventure trips. <p>As weeks progress, less adult involvement will be incorporated and an increased emphasis on child-led decisions and opportunities. Each number point above represents a potential</p>	<p>Learning to lead and follow and when to do each, expressing needs clearly and respectfully and co-operation with others.</p> <p>Physical – Fine/gross motor skills, hand-eye coordination, improved position in space, midline crossing and bilateral coordination e.g. ability to use certain tools, pass and move objects independently or in a pair/group.</p> <p>Intellectual – Information processing, language development, picking up mental concepts and cues, improved listening skills and attention, sequencing.</p> <p>Emotional – Improved ability to understand and manage emotions, independence, and improved self-esteem, improved feeling of competency and ability to succeed, and developed perseverance, ability to cope with disappointments and difficult challenges.</p>

	<p>activity – the nature of forest school lends more towards change and adaptation therefore sessions will change depending upon preferences of the participating pupils.</p>	<p>Spiritual – Development of own moral code, improved sense of right and wrong, developed personal value system, improved sense of worth and positive outlook.</p>
<p><u>Summer Term 2</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding and collection of three types of tinder – utilisation of tree barks (birch), inner bark from dead tree and fine fibrous organic materials. 2. Identify and collect correct size kindling (small, medium and large) for small fire. 3. Safely and appropriately split larger log to correct size for kindling (small, medium, large pieces). 4. Continue to understand the importance of the philosophy and country code – leave no trace. 5. Continued use and skill development of various edged tools – folding saw, bow saw, knife and hatchet. 6. Demonstrate three different sources of ignition in fire making, and understand the different uses for fire in Bushcraft (match, flint and steel, bow and drills). 7. Effectiveness of tinder. 8. Understand and explain differences between several types of fire – what are their uses? How are they different? Why are they important? Link back to 4 key elements of survival. 9. Basic food hygiene – Link to food technology. 10. Effectively and safely light and maintain a fire to: maintain burn long enough to cook over open fire, boil water and maintain fire burn for at least 10 minutes. 11. Understand and demonstrate effective environmental impact of fire-lighting in natural environment. 12. Understand where three sources of water is available in the natural environment. 13. Understand the need for water when in the wilderness and the importance of its purification. 14. Purification of naturally sourced water by a recognised technique. 15. Identify trees/bushes which are seasonal providers of edible flowers, nuts or fruit. 	
<p><u>Throughout the school year</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health & Safety induction – understanding risks and how to manage these to keep self and others safe (Edge tool safety, fire safety, food hygiene, environmental risk) – immediate/detailed and ongoing/brief. 2. Introduction to the features of different types of environments i.e. wilderness, mountain, river and relevant health and safety considerations. 3. Understand the principles of public spaces and environments and how they interlink. 4. Four elements of survival: Shelter, fire, water and food (importance and key aspects). 5. Shelter building – natural and tarpaulin, considering key aspects and safety. 6. Introduction to essential knots/cordage/rope required for shelter building key uses. 7. Knot based activities to re-affirm knowledge and technique. 8. Edged tools and Bushcraft. 	

9. Develop understanding of different edged tools, their uses, related health and safety considerations and cutting techniques.
10. Progressive, gradually introduced practical edged tool assessments and ongoing practical projects.
11. Focus on the importance and use of relevant PPE (various gloves types, safety goggles etc.)
12. Research and discussions around UK knife law.
13. Utilising skills, the learner will create a Bushcraft item for camp (wooden pegs, mallet) depending upon confidence and ability.
14. Develop deeper understanding of the woodland environment – develop knowledge regarding tree protection and appropriate and responsible pruning techniques.

Pupil led period of sessions utilising various developed skills throughout the academic year – including whole group/individual projects which utilise the following skills wherever necessary:

- **Edged tools – bow saw, folding saw, hatchet, knife.**
- **Cordage/rope/tarpaulin – attempt to set up untried shelter configurations.**
- **Fire-lighting – may incorporate edged tools.**
- **Cooking of food or making of hot drinks for the group.**

These activities are subject to level of progression in forest school, risk assessments and general level of trust and respect.