

A Year of Forest School – July 2024

It's the end of another academic year and we're really pleased that every child has done at least one session at Forest School. Forest School has run through all the seasons and we've seen sun, rain, wind, frost and snow in our sessions and all the children have been brilliant at adapting to the different weather conditions.

We have made wood medallions, pet rocks, bracelets, ice sculptures, Gods eyes, musical instruments, bows and arrows, wands, clay critters and faces, leaf prints, elderflower cordial, conker creatures, bunting, mini dens, big dens...



We have whittled skewers and on our campfire have cooked damper bread, popcorn, marshmallows, pizza, scones, flatbreads with garlic and nettle butter, smores, malt loaf...



Our mud kitchen has been really popular and the children have made stews, soups, pancakes, cups of tea and even dinosaur spaghetti! All sampled by Mrs Barker and Mrs Woolloff – delicious!!! Some of the children even turned the mud kitchen into a spa, where roles had been planned and allocated in advance and where the clients were given mud face masks.



Allowing the children play and choice are key to our Forest School ethos. We have watched them climbing trees, making rope swings, learning how to tie different knots, chilling in hammocks, playing games of hide and seek, capture the flag, forest fire, the floor is lava and we have seen many den battles and the formation of different tribes.



It has been amazing to see our children try new things, push themselves out of their comfort zones and really embrace Forest School. They have connected with nature and hopefully have started to develop a lifelong love and respect for nature and the outdoors. Our children have built new relationships, grown in confidence and resilience and we have seen parts of their personalities shine through that are perhaps not always seen in the classroom. It has been a joy to witness and we are very much looking forward to welcoming the children back to Forest School next year.

Here are just some of the wonderful comments we got from the children when we asked them what they'd learnt at Forest School:

- *Nature isn't as scary as you think*
- *Covering your face with mud is really fun*
- *Mud kitchens are the best thing ever*
- *Making a bow is frustrating*
- *How to make a good den*
- *How to make a wand*
- *You can make anything out of a stick*
- *Alliances are good*
- *How to tie a clove hitch*
- *How to make a rope swing*
- *How to be a village elder*
- *Forest School has made me feel more confident and to trust myself more. It made my worries float away.*
- *I have learnt more about nature.*
- *It has made me play with people who I wouldn't normally play with.*
- *It has made me push myself out of my comfort zone.*
- *Sometimes my head feels like it's going to explode and in Forest School it doesn't. I wish I could do it every single day of the year!*

