

Forest School at Brooklands

(progression of skills/experiences)

At Forest School we focus on the holistic development of each child. We provide a range of activities but enable the children to explore and learn in a way which suits them, observing carefully and engaging with each child in order to inspire and challenge them. At Forest School the children develop cooperation, resilience, the ability to take risks, confidence, self-esteem, and emotional literacy as well as making lots of links with their learning in class. Forest School gives the children the chance to develop these skills through open ended activities, exploration and play which in turn increases their wellbeing and creative thinking skills, as well as their ability to learn and transfer skills to the classroom. On top of this, spending this time outside engaging with nature has been shown to increase general wellbeing, and a sense of calm.

	Nursery	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Introduce basic rules and boundaries Introduce Forest School song (set the tone, sense of belonging/ different way of learning) Teach how to tidy up Hot chocolate and	More complex rules/ boundaries introduced in order to increase levels of freedom Forest School song at the start, reflection/meditation at the end Increase complexity of tidy up jobs (e.g. cleaning tools	More freedom around rules - children to assess risks and begin to make informed decisions Children tidy up with increasing independence Shelter building as a team	Increase in independence around tidying and "resetting". Expected to make decisions linked to shelter building using science knowledge. More in depth discussions take place around	In Year 3 the children embed all the skills learnt so far, with increasing independence. Skills children are less confident with are identified and brought in. More specific activities are planned to link to their Science,

	storytime (handing out to each other, please and thank you, listening attentively) Show awareness of risk – brambles/ nettles/ water Sharing stories set in forests/ woodland/ linked to FS experiences Freedom to explore as much as possible - encourage sensory experiences Instigate and maintain curiosity	before putting away, sorting resources back into containers, packing away shelters) Taking more risks - making sensible decisions with support Work as a team to cooperate and communicate clearly Taking care of the environment (responsibility, empathy) Developing self-regulation skills/emotional literacy. Choosing activities that are exciting or calm, sensory experiences that are calming	Variety of other team building activities/ games Becoming more proactive in taking care of environment (planting insect/bee friendly plants) Learning basic first aid skills	sustainability and how we can proactively take care of our environment (longer term projects around developing insect friendly areas in the Forest, making bird feeders at appropriate times of year, composting and planting trees)	Geography, Art or DT curriculum. Children with specific next steps can be planned for individually or as groups (e.g. fine motor skill development, PSED and collaboration, relationship building, gaps in Science knowledge)
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		(water/mud play, using the hammock etc)			
Shelter building	Introduction to basic shelter building with support Develop teamwork and safe carrying of logs Making mini dens for animals/ fairies/ toys Bug hotel creation Using natural items to create dens	Build shelters as a group (adult support) Mini den building for small animals Supported construction of a tripod style structure (mini den building for an animal) Erect a lean to shelter with some support	Independent use of a tripod structure (mini den for an animal). Links to materials in Science. Demonstrate lashing and frapping techniques to make frames Create a lean to shelter independently or with limited support	Encourage decision making around types of dens. Challenges involving limiting resources (eg no pegs or twine) or making dens waterproof (link to materials Science unit)	
Exploration and play	Introduction to rules/boundaries (introduce rule	Re-enforcement of rules and boundaries	Reminder of rules and boundaries	Build bridges and more complex structures	

	book) How to carry sticks/ logs or other large items safely Free exploration Independent opportunities for learning using found objects Planting and watching things grow Playing imaginative games Seasonal sensory walks Searching for creatures/wildlife Introduce tree house (adult to take in groups)	Travel safely around the forest area and other outdoor terrain Carry sticks/logs or other large items safely Work in a team, co-operate and communicate clearly Discover what life and growth is in the pond Hunt for bugs and insects More complex and cooperative imaginative play- adults model engaging in this Make a daisy chain	Work in a team, co-operate and communicate clearly Build a bridge Bird watching Climb trees Create something using wood Make sculptures Make up outdoor games and teach them to others (2 groups) Treasure hunts Investigate insects living in the forest Make sensory story sticks	Work together to engage in more complex imaginative play/ set up scenarios (eg. a mud kitchen cafe) Increase complexity of games and start to create resources for these Write stories based on imaginative play	
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		Plant/ investigate a herb garden/ den building Tell or act out well known stories in the FS environment Roll down a hill Access to tree house (closely monitored)			
Geographical skills	Follow rules and boundaries Free exploration Following treasure hunt clues to navigate around the forest area e.g. pirate treasure hunt Directional games- moving forwards and backwards	Use simple compass directions with support (North, South, East, West) Use directional language e.g. left, right, near, far Describe location of features on a map Recognise landmarks and human physical	Understand and use compass directions (North, South, East and West) Use locational language Use directional language Use basic geographical vocabulary to refer	Create maps of the forest Follow more complex orienteering instructions Use directional language fluently to give instructions or explain things Begin to identify different soils and	

		features Devise a simple map and basic symbols in a key	to key physical features including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather	rock types	
Understanding the World/ Science links	Observe animals and plants and say why some things occur and change: Observe and talk about seasonal changes Talk about features of their familiar environments and consider how they differ to other environments Observe and identify weather changes	Identify and understand seasonal weather changes and how it affects daily activities Understanding our planets position in relation to the sun, its tilt, northern and southern hemispheres, its tilt and how this all relates to seasons, 'Pass the planet round the Sun" song Identifying birds- binocular skills	Types of animals, classification, and food types (herbivore, omnivore, carnivore) Seasonal changes throughout the year (weather, changes to the environment, deciduous and evergreen trees, how and why we have seasons) Plants (common flowering plants, types of trees, parts of plants and trees,	To explore and observe in more depth the planting, germination, growing and maturing process of plants Learn about the differences between seeds and bulbs Plant seeds, bulbs and seedlings and tend to them using and applying their scientific knowledge Retreive and add to knowledge around	

	Looking for and identifying birds (large scale poster)	introduced and bird books	using a quadrant) Animal life cycles Materials and their properties - describing materials (natural/man-made) and thinking about their properties and using them for a purpose.	different types of plants and trees Extend vocabulary around evergreen and deciduous trees, coniferous trees, ferns	
Using tools	Introduction to tools -scissors -loppers -peelers for whittling -trowels and forks -large spades -rakes -wheelbarrows	Continued use of basic tools with increasing independence As before plus: -bow saw (with very close adult support) -large needles	Continued use of tools with increasing independence As before plus: -hammers -chisels -hand drills	Using a wide range of tools with increasing independence and creativity	
Knots	Simple knot tying with adult support (support in shoe lace tying and then	Introduction to simple knot tying skills and adult support where	Introduce more sophisticated use of knots for attaching structures to trees	Use of knots for more creative, self-directed projects	

	tying for using in shelters or craft)	needed	or creating craft materials. E.g. overhand knot, clove hitch, lashing and frapping		
Fire/ cooking	Be safe around a fire (safety procedures understood but will be supported by extra adults) Contribute to fire lighting by gathering fuel Observe and talk about the fire Using the flint and steel to create a spark with adult support Invited to add wood to the fire by adult on 1:1 basis	Observe and talk about fire lighting procedures, begin to contribute by selecting fuel Safety procedures – fire safety knowledge secure Contribute to starting small fires using flint and steel by lighting kindling with adult support. Invited to add wood to the fire by adult on 1:1 basis Experience using fire strikers to spark	Prepare wood for fire in stages and contribute to starting the fire by using flint and steel and lighting kindling with adult support Light a fairy fire and keep it going (closely supervised) Come up with ideas for simple cooking on fire- create menu/ cook other foods e.g. tortilla pizzas.	Links to DT curriculum through the design, make, evaluate process for cooking on the fire.	

	Watch an adult make popcorn on the fire (talk about what they notice/ see/ hear/ what is happening/ ask questions)	a flame Light a piece of cotton wool (fairy pillow) Toast marshmallows on fire in groups of 2 or 3 with adult supervision/ support			
Expressive Art and Design/ Craft skills	Leafy letters/ people Mud sculpting Bark rubbings Clay hedgehogs Magic wands Fairy boats Nature pictures- small and large scale	Map making/drawing Models of animals Observational drawings of minibeasts/ animals/ plants Transient art using tools Fairy gardens	Sketching skills Watercolour nature paintings Collage Sculptures Daisy chains Bee-vives Nature jewellery	Still-life drawings and paintings Process art with different natural resources Flower pressing for use in sketchbook/ Science learning Planning own craft projects involving a range of skills taught in Art and DT	

	Leafy crowns, fairy doors, elf houses Nature dances Transient art Sticky bracelets				
Stories	Leaf Man Stick Man Little Red Riding Hood Owl Babies Gruffalo Three Little Pigs	Stanley's stick Bog Baby We're Going on a Bear Hunt Wild (Emily Hughes) Window Winnie the Pooh stories Superworm Jack and the Beanstalk Tadpole's promise	Bella the Buzzard The Elder Tree story King of Tiny Things The Oak Tree The Tiny Seed The Wall and the Wild Bud - Laura Hambleton	The Tin Forest – Helen Ward The Last Wolf – Mini Grey Into the Forest – Anthony Browne Where the Forest Meets the Sea – Jeannie Baker The Great Kapok Tree – Lynne Cherry A First Book of Nature – Nicola Davies The Wild Robot – Peter Brown <i>(A longer text that can be dipped into)</i> Tree: Seasons	

				Come, Seasons Go – Patricia Hegarty & Britta Teckentrup Fungus the Bogeyman – Raymond Briggs The Promise – Nicola Davies	
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