

Shaftesbury Park Primary School



Forest School Handbook

A handbook for staff and volunteers working with children at Forest School.

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Contents

1. Forest School Development
2. Forest School and the Early Years Curriculum

1. Forest School Development

(Action Plan- Appendix 1)

The Forest school approach is an exciting and new venture for Shaftesbury Park Primary School.

The Forest School initially began in the Zebra nursery class and has now expanded to the Reception class.

The Forest School will take place once a week with some sessions being held on the school grounds whilst other sessions taking place at Battersea Park.

The Shaftesbury Park Forest School aims to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum in a stimulating and ever changing natural environment.

Children enjoy the outside environment where they experience space and the natural world which they can interact with and investigate freely.

Forest School will support a child's natural desire to explore, investigate, problem solve, play, discover and question. Children will be encouraged to work as part of a team with their peers and also tackle and complete tasks independently.

Forest school will specifically support learning and development across the EYFS. It will support and build on developing children's self-confidence and self esteem and making relationships. It will also further develop language and communication skills, physical skills, creative skills, mathematical skills, literacy skills and provide children with a greater understanding of the world in which they live.

Forest School aims to teach children about their natural world and develop a greater awareness of the environment and how to take care of it.

2. Forest School and the Early Years Curriculum

Forest School is an amazing provision for children where they can freely explore the natural environment and space.

All areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum can be administered within Forest School.

Forest School sessions are carefully planned by the Forest School Leader to ensure links are made with the EYFS. (Appendix 2, examples of planning)

Forest School also promotes and provides activities which support children's schemas. (Appendix 3, what is a schema?)

Characteristics of Effective Learning

'The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment - playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically - underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.' DFES

Forest School encourages children to engage with other people through team building activities e.g. working together to create a piece of natural artwork or building a shelter.

Forest School ensures that children actively engage with their environment. Forest School provides a safe and secure setting where children are encouraged to explore the natural environment, activities which support this are those which involve collecting and identifying what is found.

Forest School encourages children to learn through play such as creating 'small worlds' or making mud pies.