

Forest School and Outdoor Learning



As you know here at Newtown we spend a lot of time outdoors in our beautiful grounds and we have been making sure that everyone gets the same chance and encouragement to have this experience recently with a focus on our **FOREST SCHOOL** approach.

Participation in Forest School encourages development across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Research has shown that children learn best from first hand experiences. Exploring, playing and so learning using a range of activities led by the teacher and initiated by themselves. This is what Forest School is all about. British Forest Schools have been developed and adapted from the original concept implemented in Sweden and developed in Denmark in the 1990's.



Forest School has been shown to have the obvious benefits of exercise out in the fresh air but also has a really positive impact on children's outcomes in personal, social and emotional development, boosting children's confidence, positive behaviour and social skills. It has been shown to help children build a sense of independence, high self-esteem and co-operation. During Forest School sessions children investigate, explore and discover in a natural but safe outdoor space.



How we work within the principles of Forest Schools

- We have identified our woodland area as a suitable natural environment to be used as the area for our sessions
- This is to support the development of a relationship between the child and the natural world
- We are using Forest Schools as a long term process, planning regular sessions
- Each group has their planned Woodland session every week
- The sessions are observed, reviewed and adapted each week
- We use a range of child-centred processes promoting holistic development by fostering resilience, independence and creative learners
- The activities offer children the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and themselves
- Our activities include creating natural and transient art, identifying plants and wildlife, using tools, making instruments from natural materials, building dens, bridges and shelters, sharing warm drinks and food, team activities and working in pairs, giving and following directions.
- Our activities are often inspired by stories with natural settings, such as, The Three Billy Goats Gruff and The Stick Man. This also contributes to our progress in Literacy.