

Forest School @ Busy Bees – September 2014

What is Forest School?

Forest School takes place in a woodland setting and the philosophy is to encourage and inspire children through positive outdoor experiences. Sessions are led by Forest School Leaders who have undertaken extensive training enabling them to teach safe, enjoyable activities and allow the children time and space to explore and learn. By participating in hands on learning experiences and engaging in achievable activities, children have an opportunity to develop motivation, emotional and social skills. Children's language and vocabulary is shown to develop through sessions due to the rich and stimulating environment. We have a Forest School Helper's guide which you may find useful should you require more information.

What will our focus be?

For this block of Forest School sessions, our focus will be on sticks and we will be reading the stories 'Not a Stick' by Antoinette Portis and 'Stickman' by Julia Donaldson. We will go on our own walk around Forest School looking for sticks, comparing them, finding our favourite, taking time to listen to what we can hear and develop our observational skills by looking for things we don't normally see in bark and under logs, comparing twigs, branches, dead sticks and live ones on trees.

What will your child learn?

Your child will learn social skills including cooperating and sharing which will develop self-confidence and self-esteem. They will feel valued and trusted which will encourage their language, communication skills and independence. Tool use and the session with a fire will encourage responsibility and respect of boundaries. Children will develop a sense of wonder through their observational skills and have pride in their achievements. The fun, challenging activities will allow them to take risks within a safe environment which will improve their confidence and will develop their knowledge and understanding of the World in a natural environment.

Is Forest School safe?

Fay has undertaken Level 3 Forest School Leader training, which includes an outdoor first aid element, enabling her to lead sessions at Busy Bees. She has reviewed and updated our Forest School policies and procedures in preparation and will Risk Assess the garden to enable Forest School sessions to run as safely as possible. There is an element of risk with Forest School but this is very small and part of the process of learning and development for the children – Tools, for example, will only be used on a one to one basis and will be an important learning aid for children to understand about risk and how to ensure their own safety and the safety of others.

Please ask to see our policies if you have any concerns.

Activities:

- Children will be making things using sticks and string.
- We will be making models of some of the characters in the book using natural resources.
- We will walk around the Forest School, finding things we particularly like to show others.
- We will be playing log circle games and singing songs.
- The children will begin to experiment with tools and will use vegetable peelers to whittle sticks
- If the children are able to listen to and respect the boundaries set at Forest School then we will have a fire on our last session and cook our snack.

What do you need to bring?

Forest School sessions will take place in all weathers except for very high winds. In order to participate in Forest School, your child must have wellies and suitable clothing for the weather, a waterproof coat for the wet weather and a hat and gloves if it's cold. Finally in the case of warmer weather sun-cream and a sunhat, but not sandals, trainers may be worn in this case.