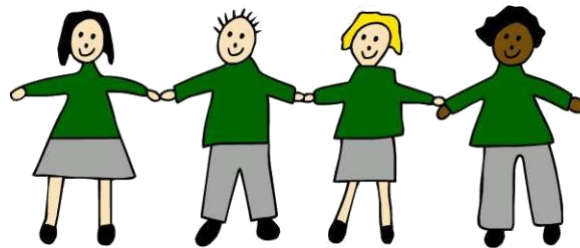


Dovers Green

Forest School



*Information for parents
and carers*

About Forest School



Forest School is an idea which was developed in Denmark in the 1950's. It is an outdoor classroom where children can explore and find out about the natural environment. Forest School is an holistic approach to

learning and gives children opportunities to develop independence, confidence, build self esteem, develop social interactions and work collaboratively together. Through a range of activities the children use taught skills to problem solve and risk take in a safe environment.



Dovers Green Forest School

At Dovers Green, our Forest School takes place in the wooded area that runs adjacent to Lonesome Lane. There is



a base camp or outside classroom where the children start and finish their session and gather together to share their learning. It is a short walk away from the main building along paved paths.

All the children will have access to this outside classroom once a week. Each session will last approximately one and a half hours and will run throughout the year, except in high winds and during a thunderstorm. The sessions are uninterrupted and longer than usual so that the children can explore their natural environment and learn at their own rate.



Before each session, the Forest School Leader will complete a safety sweep and risk assessment of the area. This information is then shared with both children and adults back in class, making them aware of the safety that is needed for themselves and others.



The excitement of Forest School and the active learning experience for all the children begins as soon as they leave



the classroom. The walk to Forest School allows the children to discuss with each other what they see and hear on the way, what they might explore at Forest School and a time to reflect or contemplate the awe and wonder of their natural surroundings.

Rules of Forest School are reinforced at every session. There is an expectation that there will be a high standard of behaviour, a respect for one another and the environment and these values are reinforced through the Forest School approach.

At the beginning of each Forest School session the Leader recaps on previous learning with the children and introduces a new learning opportunity giving guidance about how they can succeed. The children can then use previously taught skills and apply them in independently chosen activities. The children are taught skills such as leaf, tree and minibeast identification, how to tie knots and other joining techniques so that they can build dens. They will also learn how to use tools safely.



The adults are on hand to encourage active learning and participation, supporting the children in their interests. At base camp resources such as flora and fauna identification books, magnifying glasses and digital recording equipment are available for the children to use.

During morning sessions, fruit is available and the children independently help themselves, thus encouraging them to make their own decisions about when they need a refreshment break. Water is always available.

During and at the end of the Forest School session, everyone returns to base camp to talk about their learning at Forest School.



Rules for Dovers Green Forest School

We want the children to explore the environment of our Forest School and most of all have fun! These rules will enable children to be safe as well as taking care of our Forest School area.

Remember

- ✚ No pick, No lick!
- ✚ Always stay within the boundaries *'We don't go over it, We don't go under it, We don't go through it!'*
- ✚ Always wear appropriate clothing.
- ✚ The whistle followed by *'1, 2, 3 base camp!'* means we must return to base camp immediately.
- ✚ We must always hold sticks safely by our sides with our thumbs on the top.
- ✚ To always walk to and from Forest School and in the woodland area.

The Countryside Code

We also teach children the Countryside Code to help us learn how to respect, protect and enjoy our countryside.




- ✚ Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs ✚
Leave gates and property as you find them
- ✚ Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- ✚ Keep dogs under close control
- ✚ Consider other people

What to Wear

Please ensure that your child has appropriate clothing for their Forest School session.....a warm coat, hat, scarf, gloves during cold weather, wellie boots if it is raining and a sun hat to protect them in the summer. Children will need to wear sturdy shoes throughout the year. Trainers can be brought in on Forest School days.

We do have sets of waterproof trousers and jackets together with a selection of wellies that children can wear if necessary.



National Teaching School
designated by

**National College for
Teaching & Leadership**

