

"We follow in the footsteps of Jesus to love, learn and laugh"



St Werburgh's & St Columba's Forest School Spring Newsletter

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to the first of our termly newsletters about the Forest School project that we have in school. It has been just under a year since we started to develop our new forest school space and, whilst we have achieved a lot since then, we still have plenty left to do. Hopefully these newsletters will give you a great insight into what the staff and children have been doing as well highlighting our plans for the future and how you can help.

Forest School Update

We have finished relocating and stocking our new storage shed which provides a great base for all of the equipment that we use during forest school sessions and well as maintaining the space between sessions. As part of this we have the addition of some new gardening equipment and tools for children to use which was kindly donated by Gary Hayward at Logistics2020. Just before Christmas, we planted some pine trees as part of our Christmas celebrations which the children decorated. The trees seem to have taken well and provide some welcome greenery all year round. We have installed two new bird feeding stations to encourage a wide variety of birds into our forest school space for the children to enjoy. They have been a great success and have attracted some interesting species including redwings, goldfinches and dunnocks!

What have the children been up to?



It has been great to see the children using the space on a daily basis to either engage in forest school activities or in a cross curricular way in other subjects.

Year 5 and 6 have completed a series of sessions where they built their stick frames which they then used to create pieces of art, stick mazes and even looms for natural materials using the space since returning to develop team building skills amongst the children, creating and working with stick frames to complete different activities.



The children in Reception have been making stick magic wands and broomsticks to help the witch from Room on the Broom, searching for leaves of different shapes and sizes, trying out the rope swing, and of course, warming up with delicious hot chocolate!

Year 1 have been exploring the Stick Man book as part of their English work as well as completing some fun active Phonics sessions where they had to search for words around the forest before spelling them out with sticks.



In Year 2, they have had story time under the canopy while listening to the birds, made masking tape nature bracelets and gone on a spring hunt around the forest school area.

In Year 3 and 4, the children have taken part in some mindfulness sessions with Mrs Prendergast and Mrs Chesworth.

Coming soon...

The Forest School is constantly evolving as we think of new ways to develop and improve the space. Over the next few months, we have a number of projects that we hope to complete:

- Thanks to some funding from the PTA, we are going to expand the forest school space so that it runs along the edge of the main field as well. The money will buy fence posts for us to create additional natural fencing to enclose the space.
- Using donated pallets, we are hoping to create some new play areas for EYFS and KS1 children within the forest school so that they can take part in different role play activities.
- In April, tree saplings donated by the Woodland Trust, will be planted by the children to fill the gaps where last year's saplings have not taken.
- We plan to purchase some more hand tools and equipment for the children to use as part of our developing programme of activities as well as other equipment to help maintain the space.
- Finally, we hope to refelt the shed roof so that we can harness the rain water to help provide a free supply of water for a variety of uses within the forest school.

What can you do to help?

There are a number of ways in which you can help and support the work we are doing in the forest school.

- We are still **collecting donations of any unwanted outdoor clothing** so that we can provide as many of children with the clothing they need to access the forest school whatever the weather. These items include wellies, waterproof jackets, waterproof trousers, hats, scarves and gloves.
- There are **lots of other resources that you may be throwing out that we can use** (plus it helps the environment if we can reuse and recycle as much as possible). There is a full list on the website but **any lengths of timber for our building projects or wood from the garden that we can use for our campfires** are always welcome. Even if you have something which we have not listed on the website but you think we might be able to use it in some way then please get in touch.
- There are **some bigger projects** that we hope to achieve over the longer term. If anyone knows of any grants, financial support from companies or organisations you may be part of, access to grants, funding opportunities or anyone who may wish to make a donation then please get in touch with us at school.

Competition Time

We call it 'The Forest School' but we think it might be nice to have a name for the space that is more relevant to our school. We are launching a competition to name the space. What would be a good name for it? It needs to be something that everyone can remember and makes it obvious what we are talking about. You can hand your ideas into your teacher or email them to admin@lovelearnlaugh.org.uk. The closing date will be Friday 23rd April and we will announce the winner after that. Get you thinking caps on and good luck!

Forest School At Home



There are plenty of forest school like activities that you can have a go at over the Easter holidays. How about creating an Easter Egg using natural materials and adding some colour to it using whatever else you have around the house. There are a couple of pictures here to get you started and give you some inspiration but what can you come up with? We would love to see the results of whatever you create.



Thank you for reading our first forest school newsletter and thank you for supporting our exciting project in any way you can!