

# Welcome to Langley Forest School



# What is Forest School?

"Forest School is an inspirational process that offers all learners regular opportunities to achieve, develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment."

*The Forest School Association*

The aim of Langley Forest School is to promote a child's **self-esteem** and to encourage **confident, motivated, independent, resilient, happy** children, who are able to:

- ✚ Concentrate
- ✚ Interact
- ✚ Learn through their play
- ✚ Communicate with one another
- ✚ Understand, care for and appreciate the natural environment
- ✚ Create
- ✚ Improve their fine and gross motor skills
- ✚ Be resourceful
- ✚ Share and take turns
- ✚ Make choices
- ✚ Take on challenges
- ✚ Take risks in a safe setting
- ✚ Develop empathy
- ✚ Reflect on what they have learnt

Children who may have difficulties learning indoors are often able to develop new ways of learning and coping with the world, when in the Forest School setting.

The opportunity to succeed in an alternative environment makes Forest School a great place for so many of our children to shine, and to surprise us with what they are capable of achieving.



Mud monsters

Magic potions



Forest School allows children and young people to use their **initiative, problem solve and work with others**. It allows children to grow and develop at a pace that is right for them: there are no timescales with Forest School. Small achievable tasks give the children a sense of achievement, not failure.

## Our Forest Site

We are VERY lucky at Langley School, to have both a wonderful site leading directly off our playground, and Hollies-our Forest School Classroom. All of our equipment and resources are held here, as well as all the clothing we need to keep us warm and dry in all weathers.



In the forest, we have lots of areas to use and to explore, including...



The Bug Hotel



The fire circle



The



swing

The low ropes  
course

## The digging pit



The tool area



The mud kitchen

Children can also:

- 🌿 Help to look after and maintain our forest
- 🌿 Identify trees, leaves, plants and animals
- 🌿 Hunt and care for mini-beasts
- 🌿 Make dens
- 🌿 Follow trails
- 🌿 Play games
- 🌿 Make forest crafts
- 🌿 Take part in adventures
- 🌿 Make obstacle courses
- 🌿 Discover and explore
- 🌿 Climb trees
- 🌿 Make music
- 🌿 Use ropes, string, knots



And of course...they can choose what to do and make their own fun.  
Which is the best sort of play and learning of all!

# Forest School Rules

Children are taught our 3 important Forest School Rules...



They discuss how to follow the rules and then reflect on how well they all did at the end of each session.

We always choose a Forest School Superstar at the end of a session...it's a real honour to be the superstar for the day!



## Tools and Fires

When the Forest School Leader feels that the children are ready, they will be introduced to **working with tools** and to **making and cooking on fires**.

This is of course a very exciting aspect of Forest School, but is bound by rules which the children must all learn and show an understanding of before being able to take part in.

These are some of our most important Fire Circle Rules:

- 🔥 Always walk around the outside
- 🔥 Step in and sit down
- 🔥 No walking in the area between the fire and the seats
- 🔥 Only approach the fire when requested by the Leader
- 🔥 Kneel down, when helping to feed the fire and cook
- 🔥 A maximum of 2 children at a time to approach/kneel by the fire

When using tools, we use our roped-off tool area. Mostly, this will be on a 1:1 adult/child ratio, unless we are using a bow saw, in which case there will be a ratio of 1:2. Before using any tool, the children must be familiar with and understand the rules of using it. They will learn how to handle and use tools, such as a bit and brace drill, a hammer, loppers, hacksaw...and how to behave when doing so.

They will always use safety equipment and over time, the children will become familiar with 'tool-talks' and be able to communicate an understanding of these. Tools will be stored away safely when not in use. Children will learn to use each tool and practise using them safely to make a range of crafts...and to help to maintain the forest site.

All major aspects of Forest School safety is covered in our [Forest School Health and Safety Policy](#). We have a high adult to child ratio when out in the forest, and the children's safety is always paramount. However, we have full risk assessments for the site, weather conditions, for each tool we may use and for a range of forest school activities, and also an [Emergency Action Plan](#) to ensure that all eventualities have been covered. The Forest School Leader holds a current outdoor first aid certificate and always carries a first aid kit when out with the children.

### **Who runs the session?**

- 🦋 Sessions are run by Deb Smith, Level 3 Forest School Practitioner and supported by class staff.

### **How long do sessions run for?**

- 🦋 Classes will participate in Forest School lessons every week, for at least a whole term on a rotating timetable. They will attend for a full morning per week. Sessions will include a snack and a drink.

### **What do sessions look like?**

- 🦋 Change into waterproofs and wellies in Hollies Classroom
- 🦋 Recap rules
- 🦋 Introduce session (eg. animal habitats)
- 🦋 Head outside for group game
- 🦋 Main activity (eg. building a home for a woodland creature)
- 🦋 Review of the children's work (eg. Looking at and discussing creations)
- 🦋 Snack and drink
- 🦋 Free choice of forest activities
- 🦋 Reflection of session including celebrating the 'forest school superstar'
- 🦋 Return to Hollies to change

If you have any questions, please do get in touch, as Deb Smith will be happy to talk to you. And don't forget to ask your child what they did in the forest...they may be able to tell or sign to you what they have done!

Please also look out on the website for the [Forest School Blog](#), which will be regularly updated. You'll see lots of exciting photos and explanations about what the children have been doing and learning.