

## Lipson Vale Forest School



Forest School is an innovative educational approach to outdoor learning, which inspires the children to submerge themselves in high quality, outdoor activities that have a lasting impact on the way they approach learning. By participating in the Forest School, each pupil has an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of both the outdoor environment and what it really means to collaborate. Since our Forest School has been established, we have seen a significant difference in our children's confidence, love for the world around them and their enthusiasm for exploring the unknown. Risk taking, problem solving and team building are all part of the philosophy that supports the Forest School initiative and we feel that our creative curriculum wouldn't be complete without it.

Through the Forest School programme, we aim to develop:

- **Self-awareness**
- **Self-regulation**
- **Intrinsic motivation**
- **Empathy**
- **Good social communication skills**
- **Independence**
- **A positive mental attitude, self-esteem and confidence**

### What do the children do at Forest Schools?

Usually the children attending Forest Schools will take part in a series of 6 sessions, in a group of 10 children, accompanied by a staff member they are familiar with, over a half term. This would be in the form of a half day session once a week.

The program is tailored towards each group taking into consideration factors such as;

- The age of the children
- The maturity of the group
- Any prior experience
- The knowledge of the group about the outdoor environment

For children in the Early Years and Key stage 1 many of the activities are about exploring the natural environment and using the natural resources available in the woodland at the time of year. These activities include;

- Finding and identifying leaves
- Making pictures of objects or people

- Clay faces – bringing the woods alive
- Making small animal dens
- Making fairy homes or villages
- Making forest crowns/hats...

Where possible these activities will be wrapped up in a themed program of study that complements the program of study that the children are following in their classroom setting.

