

What do others say about our Forest School activities?

'I'd like to pass on our thanks to you and your team for such a great Forest Schools year. The children have been so lucky to work with you in our lovely outside area and you've given them lots of memories which I'm sure they will carry with them through their lives.' (Year 6 Teacher)

'Thank you so much for today. It was brilliant! The children had a great time and the parents who came were very enthusiastic. It is amazing to think that many of the children were unfamiliar with those surroundings even though they are so near. As a staff we did not really realise what was on our doorstep and are keen to go back with the children. The activities were lovely and simple but encompassed so many skills. One parent said her son couldn't sleep that night because he was so excited about the forest school.' (Foundation Stage Teacher)

'Thank you so much for today. The children had a great time, the staff are raving about the day, and parents loved it. The activities were very well thought out. Children have role played making a fire and cooking marshmallows in forest role play area back at school. I think it's interesting how parents see this as a trip! I am also struck how this seems to appeal to dads in a way I have not seen before, and children always remember what happened last time!' (Foundation Stage Leader)

'Children talk about Forest School well after the event and always remember what they did last time. We can really see progress in the children's creativity in telling stories and their confidence in making up stories. These skills are so vital to reading and writing.' (Year 1 Teacher)

'I love the fact that it takes place near school. There are no coaches to organise and its somewhere that families can return to.' (Year 4 Teacher)



'Thanks for a fantastic session. I love how you take a theme and run with it, creating an exciting range of woodland activities which all link in beautifully. There really was something for every one of our children to engage with and it was a joy to watch.' (Learning Mentor)

'Thank you for a brilliant day! The ideas you gave us were really inspirational but simple and easy for us to implement into our sessions. I've already made plans for a mud kitchen in the garden and the kids are so excited.' (Child Minder)

The best thing about Forest Schools is 'learning a lot of new skills and being outside', 'spending half a day outside of school and making things', 'learning loads of stuff about wildlife', and 'toasting marshmallows on a fire with my friends.' (Year 6 pupils)

Please contact Helen Oades (0114 2813761, helen.oades@sheffield.gov.uk) for more information about the Forest School activities and how your school could benefit.

Forest School



Exciting and engaging personalised
learning for all, in a stimulating and wild setting



Activity and programme information for schools

2017/18



What is Forest School?

Forest School is all about giving children and young people of all ages and abilities, the opportunity to learn through positive experiences in exciting, challenging, woodland settings. Forest School sessions traditionally run consecutively over a number of weeks in all weathers (except very high winds and icy conditions). They are run at a site close to the school/setting to encourage repeat visits by school and parents/carers.

Research has demonstrated that these repeated visits to the same woodland site support the development of self-confidence, motivation, concentration and sound social and emotional skills. Feedback from our sessions mirrors this.

Forest School has a clear theoretical basis which acknowledges the philosophy of Montessori, Steiner and the Reggio Emilia model. Its use of outdoor spaces and flexible approach mean that all learning styles are engaged and encouraged, making it a truly inclusive activity. This helps to explain its rapid development and popularity with all types of school.



What do you do at Forest Schools?



Activities range from den building, tree climbing and team games, to environmental education, craft activities and cooking on an open fire. Tools such as bow saws, hand drills and knives can be used as appropriate within a controlled environment to create wood craft items such as kazoos, woodland benches and medallions.

Sessions are designed to be age and ability appropriate and in conjunction with the current topics, themes or curriculum areas of school if necessary. The sessions are designed to be learner led, and there is a strong emphasis placed on choice, therefore allowing Forest Schoolers to take ownership of their own learning, guided along the way by Forest School Leaders. Sessions

typically include games, stories and craft resulting in the children having something to take away each time. All sessions are fully risk assessed and insured, and delivered by level 3 qualified leaders with enhanced DBS checks and first aid training with an outdoor specialism.

What provision can you offer to us?

We are able to deliver bespoke Forest School sessions tailored to your budget and needs from individual sessions to year-long programmes. We provide all equipment and resources needed. We have worked with children from Foundation Stage in combination with their parents and carers, to pupils in primary and secondary phases. A number of sessions have been delivered to smaller groups of children with additional needs. We have also delivered outdoor play information sessions to groups of child minders from across Sheffield, as well as twilight and INSET days for school staff. Prices start from £280 per day (includes preparation and planning time for site risk assessments, etc.) but please contact us to talk through the options as we can tailor the activities to your budget. We may be able to support funding applications to finance your activities with us.



Activity Menu

The sessions can be tailored to meet your age groups, curriculum areas, Ofsted priorities, etc. and can be half days, full days, weekly or one-off sessions – please talk to us! These activities are only a sample of the hundreds available and are designed to give a flavour of the variety on offer. Some are included in the daily price while others incur a small surcharge to cover resources.

Leaf Art	Use locally sourced natural items to create a piece of art	Elder jewellery	Use elder wood and wool to create beads and jewellery
Tree ID/Leaf collection	Collect leaves then use the key to identify trees from their leaves	Woodland Talismans	Weave coloured wool in a pattern to create a talisman
Storytelling	Children gather objects and collate them for the creation of a story incorporating them.	Camp fire cooking – marshmallows, bread, stew and mini pizzas	Fire lighting demo and toasting marshmallows and cooking bannock bread, vegetable stew or mini pizzas
Woodland puppets	Use natural objects to stick together and then onto a straw to create 'creature' puppets to use in a story (either 'real' or created by group)	Bird feeders	Pinecones loaded with bird feed and hung in trees
Going on a Bear Hunt... (or similar)	Storytelling around the site (based on the book), using different activities, movements, props, etc.	Flags/banners with natural dyes	Individual flags/banners decorated with natural dyes (spices, beetroot, leaves/grass, charcoal, mud, etc.)
Woodland Creatures	Create creatures using calico material and locally sourced items.	Medallions	Use bow saws to cut discs of wood (or use pre-cut discs as appropriate), then palm drills to drill holes. Decorate with various items
Mini dens	Build mini-dens for Woodland Creatures or Hazels	Clay Creatures	Use air-drying clay to create woodland creatures
Large dens	Use locally sourced kit to create dens to sit inside	Bug hotel	Learn about the habitats of different bugs then build them a suitable home
Tree climbing	Guided tree climbing activity	Mud Café	Let imaginations run wild creating and running a mud kitchen and café!
Treasure Hunt	Small groups hide bag of 'treasure' in the woods and leave a trail for another group to follow to find the 'treasure'		
Fire lighting	Teaching children safe and controlled ways to light (and extinguish) mini fires		

