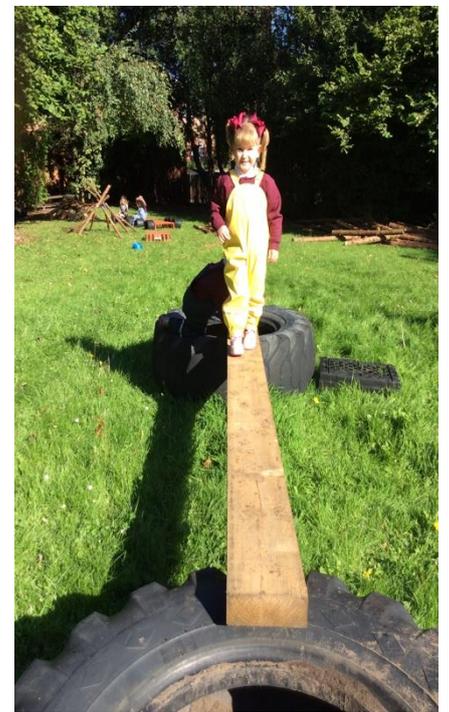


# Forest Nursery Information



Last year we decided to take the “classroom” outside and provide our nursery aged children with their very own forest school experience! As a school we understand the benefits of learning outside the classroom and know how important it is for children to express themselves freely. Playing and exploring outside provides children with a sense of freedom which is fantastic for their individual development, both physically and mentally. Our children have thrived in all areas of learning, and we can’t wait to do it all again this year!

### **The Forest School Approach**

Forest School is a method of working outdoors with children, using the natural environment to promote social and emotional development. It is an inspirational process that offers all children opportunities to develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment. These learning experiences also help to develop children’s communication and practical skills, as well as developing a deeper understanding of the world around them.

### **Thomas Gray’s Forest Nursery**

Our Forest Nursery is situated on the front field in the small wooded area. We have fitted the area with hammocks, tyre swings, trim trails, tyres, crates, pallets, mud kitchens, bug hotels, a fire pit and a range of den building facilities.

The children are in a safe environment where they can succeed, create and use Maths and Literacy skills without them even realising it! Through exploration and discovery the children are able to enjoy and self-initiate their own learning. Children are encouraged to calculate risk in a controlled environment and they learn cause and effect. They are given the opportunity and responsibility under supervision, to use tools and help be part of a team.

At our Forest Nursery children are encouraged to use their imagination and engage in imaginative play with natural resources. There will also be planned adult-led sessions however, the plans will be kept open and fluid so they can very much be guided by events, and by what the children want to do as each Forest School session will be unique.

Examples of the types of structured activities the children will do are:

- Learning about lashing and knots
- Shelter building
- Natural weaving
- Natural art
- Story telling
- Safe tool use
- Tree recognition
- Bird names
- Animal tracks
- Natural games
- Crafts

We make the most of the unique resources available by using lots of natural materials, working (with appropriate levels of adult support) with tools and fires, and encouraging high levels of independence and teamwork.