St Margaret's CEP School

The holistic approach to Learning and Developing

Our Ethos

'A rich, open environment will continuously present alternative choices for creative engagement.' (Robin C. Moore)

Forest School is based on a fundamental respect for children and young people and for their capacity to instigate, test and maintain curiosity in the world around them. It believes in the childs right to play; the right to access the outdoors (and in particular a woodland environment); the right to access risk and the vibrant reality of the natural world and the right to experience a healthy range of emotions through all the challenges of social interaction, in order to build a resilience that will enable continued and creative engagement with their peers and their potential. It is an approach to education that makes use of the outdoor environment to create a unique learning vehicle.

Forest School sessions provide increasingly diverse opportunities for children to benefit from a supportive curriculum that can help children build positive values and attitudes about themselves, about learning and the environment in which they live. Children are given appropriately challenging and achievable tasks that build their confidence, skills and independence and are given the time to thoroughly explore their thoughts, feelings and relationships. This time and reflective practice develops inter- and intra-personal skills, which are well-documented as being directly linked to learning skills.

The Holistic Approach

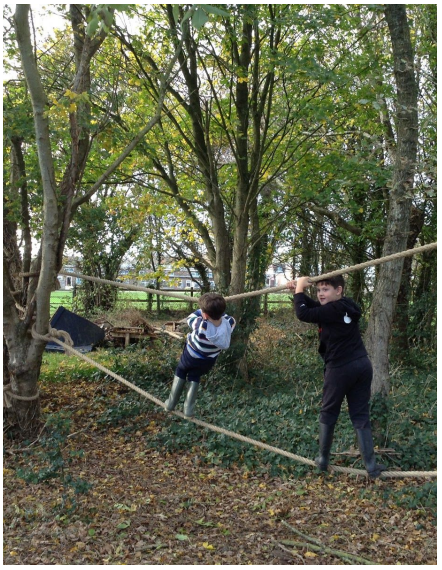
The whole child is made up of their physical, social and emotional - self esteem, confidence, emotional intelligence, resilience, spiritual, and intellectual - creativity and independent learning parts.

This leaflet shows how children can experience these areas of development in our Forest School.

Physical

- Developing strength
- Sliding

- Holding and moving logs together
- Positioning securely
- Balancing



- Pushing and pulling body weight and positioning to keep the forward and backward motions going

- Fine motor skills
- Scooping
- Pouring
- Lifting
- Positioning and balancing

- Gross and fine motor skills
- Collecting, moving, positioning

Self Esteem

Building confidence in one's own worth or abilities

- Free flow play choices
- Sharing and using ideas
- Trusting their abilities
- Having positive experiences

Digging together to create a deeper puddle to build a bridge over.

- Enjoying a well deserved hot chocolate together after an afternoon of Forest Schooling
- Having enriching times

- Exploring own ability to balance

Confidence

The feeling or belief in oneself….. "I can do this."

- Making own choice to practise and learn how to use a fire steel
- Persevering with task
- Setting own challenge to keep going
- Experiencing success

"I can create fire sparks"

" I can design and make my own axe."

- Independent decision making, managing level of independence and when to ask for help.

"I can use a trowel to dig for treasure."

- Freedom to explore
- Time to play
- Making own choices
- Managing own risks

"Look at the precious stones that I found."

Emotional Intelligence

Understanding, managing and responding to ours and others emotions

Choosing to have some alone time to sing and drum and enjoy own company.

Showing an interest and asking if they can help.

- Interacting with others and resolving challenges
- Having solitary times
- Showing empathy, compassion and interest
- Sharing joyous moments
- Asking for help
- Handling frustrations

Weaving to make wands, handling the frustrations of tangled wool and design challenges.

Sharing the joy

Resilience

Capacity to bounce back and recover quickly from difficulties

When the seat came off, it was picked up and put back again.

- Trying again
- Keep going
- Having persistence
- Problem solving

From creating sparks to lighting cotton wool.

Designing and building a shelter together

Spiritual Development

Understanding, caring and protecting natural outdoor areas and life

Pond dipping together.
When the pond life had been investigated, they were gently returned to the pond.

- Connecting to nature
- Awareness of nature
- Sense of awe and wonder
- Respect and care of the environment
- Protecting the environment

Having a careful closer look at a local spider

Seeing how much ivy is covering the tree and removing any "suffocating or dead" parts.