



FOREST SCHOOL AT PLAYHOUSE PRESCHOOL



Forest School will take place every Friday morning for all Butterfly children.

WHAT IS FOREST SCHOOL?

The inspiration for Forest School comes from Sweden and Denmark where it has become a valued and important part of the school curriculum. Forest School provides learning opportunities through practical activities in an outdoor environment. It gives children the freedom to play, explore and experience the natural world in all seasons.

Forest School seeks to develop problem solving skills, risk taking, creativity and teamwork through sessions planned to promote independence, empathy, and communication. Above all though, the aim is that the children will have fun outdoors!

VISITS THROUGH THE SEASONS

Regular visits are important to help the children to build a relationship with the woodland site. The children visit throughout the seasons and see the changes. Skills introduced during the initial sessions (den building or using tools for example) are developed over time. Planning is done in response to the children's interests and needs.



TAKING RISKS

Safety and welfare are of primary concern of course, but the programme allows the children to take risks. Boundaries are set together so that the children recognise the need for rules and learn how to be safe outdoors. In time, they begin to assess risk for themselves and decide how to cope with challenges, for example, tree climbing, using tools and splashing in puddles! To achieve this, high adult to learner ratios are necessary. Children can be supported to have a go and encouraged to keep on trying.

WHEN AND WHERE

We will use the Secret Garden on the School Site and the lane beside our Pre-school are both perfect spots for pre-schoolers to explore and play. We will have weekly sessions, in small groups, lasting for one to two hours. The sessions will take place whatever the weather! High winds may stop us going into the Secret Garden, but in this case, sessions will take place in the preschool's outdoor area.

WHAT TO WEAR

We ask parents/carers to dress children in weather appropriate clothes.

- Wellies – even in summer as nettles and brambles can sting and scratch (wellies should already be at preschool)
- Long trousers and tops – in summer as well
- Warm socks – 2 pairs to keep wellies warm
- Plenty of layers - vest, long sleeved top, t-shirt, fleece, sweatshirt, jacket, waterproof coat, gloves and woolly hat/sun hat as the weather dictates.
- We provide all in one water proofs for children to wear on wet days



If the weather is particularly warm, please also put sun protection on your child in line with our sun protection policy.

Children who are not adequately dressed will not be permitted to take part.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The sessions are led by our Level 3 Forest School Leader - Zoe who also holds Outdoor First Aid Qualification. The Forest School Leader is responsible for risk assessments to cover the site and activities, in addition to ensuring that the Pre-school's child protection and health and safety procedures are adhered to. Copies of the policies are available upon request.

HOT CHOCOLATE

Don't underestimate the value of a cup of hot chocolate and a biscuit outdoors! We always have a drink and a snack with us, with the possibility of lighting a fire to toast marshmallows as a grand finale to our sessions.

