



Principles of Forest School

Principles & Criteria for Good Practice

- Forest school is a long term process of frequent and regular sessions in a woodland environment rather than a 'on-off' visit Planning adaptation observations and reviewing are integral elements of Forest School
- Forest school takes place regularly with the same group of children over an extended period of time encompassing the seasons
- Forest school has a structure which is based on observations and collaborative work between learners and practitioners
- The initial sessions of any programme should establish physical and behavioural boundaries as well as making initial observations on which to base future development
- Forest school takes place in a woodland environment to support the development of a relationship between learner and the natural world
- Forest school aims to foster a relationship with nature through regular personal experiences in order to develop long term environmentally attitudes and practice in staff and learners

- Forest school uses natural resources for inspiration to enable ideas and encourage intrinsic motivation
- Forest school aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved fostering resilient confident independent and creative learners
- Where appropriate the forest school leader will aim to link experiences at Forest school to 'in school' education
- Forest school programmes aim to develop the physical social cognitive linguistic emotional and social aspects of the learner
- Forest school offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves
- Forest school opportunities are designed to build on an individual's innate motivation positive attitudes and interests
- Forest school uses tools and fires only where deemed appropriate to the learners and dependent on completion of a baseline risk assessment
- Any Forest school experience follows a risk/benefit process managed jointly by the practitioner and learner that is tailored to the developmental stage of the learner

Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice

- Forest school is led by qualified Forest school practitioners who are required to hold a minimum of an accredited Level 3 Forest school qualification
- There is a high ratio of practitioners/adults to learners
- Practitioners and adults regularly helping at Forest school are subject to relevant checks into their suitability to have prolonged contact with children
- Forest school is backed by relevant documents which contain the policies and procedures required for running Forest school
- The Forest school leader is a reflective practitioner and sees themselves as a learner too

Forest school uses a range of learner centred processes to create a community for development and learning

- A learner centred pedagogical approach is employed by Forest school that is responsive to the needs and interests of learners
- The practitioner models the pedagogy which they promote during sessions through appropriate dialogue activities and relationship building
- Play and choice are an integral part of the Forest school learning process and play is recognised as vital to learning and development at Forest
- Forest school provides a stimulus for all learning preferences and dispositions
- Reflective practice is a feature of each session to ensure learners and practitioners can understand their achievements develop emotional intelligence and plan for the future
- Practitioner observation is an important element of Forest school pedagogy Observations feed into 'scaffolding' and tailoring experiences to learning and development at Forest school

A Definition of Forest School

- *Forest school allows young people the opportunity to learn through experience within a woodland setting in a 'hands on' manner to develop their self-esteem and confidence*

The Forest School Vision

- *To enable young people to have the opportunity to develop an inquisitive and positive relationship with the natural world and to achieve their holistic full potential*

The Forest School Philosophy

- *The philosophy of Forest school is to inspire people of all ages through positive outdoor experiences and provide them with an opportunity to appreciate the wider natural world to encourage a responsibility for nature conservation in later life*



Forest School Involves

- *Child initiated learning*
- *Being outdoors*
- *Integration with the School curriculum*
- *Delivery by a trained leader*
- *Fun*

Forest School helps to develop

- *Confidence and self-esteem*
- *Communication and social skills*
- *Physical skills*
- *Greater understanding and awareness of the natural environment*
- *Natural motivation and a positive attitude to learning*
- *The ability to recognise and manage risk*
- *Healthier lifestyle*

Forest School aims

- To provide an opportunity for individuals to develop to learn and to enjoy themselves
- To provide a safe and non-threatening environment in which young people can take risks make choices and initiate their own learning
- To help young people understand appreciate and care for the natural environment
- To provide ways to of developing practical skills in an outdoor environment
- To develop self-esteem confidence and a positive disposition to learning through the completion of small achievable tasks
- To meet the needs of children with all learning styles
- To develop social and team working skills
- To enable children to be independent self-motivated and considerate
- To develop a secure happy and welcoming environment
- To provide stimulation and varied learning activities appropriate to the child's needs and stage of development



Miss Krason-Smith & Abbi are enjoying themselves



Listen Carefully!



*Cerys Tackling the
Great Outdoors*



The Art of Tool Making



What's Matthew Found



References

www.theworldoutside.co.uk

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/Bishopswood

www.forestschooolsassociation.org