

Whatever the weather!

Children are encouraged to work out problems for themselves and take the lead, whether through identifying safe trees to climb or discovering and mapping ants' nests. They go out whatever the weather: snow, hail or sunshine.



Forest School has been shown to:

- Increase self-esteem and self-confidence
- Improve co-operation, communication skills and awareness of others
- Increase motivation, self-discovery and positive attitude towards learning
- Encourage ownership and pride in the local environment
- Encourage a better understanding of the outdoors
- Increase skills and knowledge.



FOREST SCHOOL



Forest School is an inspirational process that offers all ages regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence through hands-on learning in a woodland environment

Murray and O'Brien, 2005

What is Forest School?

Forest School is a child-led approach to learning that incorporates children's right to play, to access the outdoor environment and to feel success. It consists of regular outdoor sessions in natural environments to enable children to develop confidence through hands-on learning. Forest School is an important part of our curriculum at St Thomas à Becket and it is something in which we believe every child is entitled. We offer each class at least two afternoons of Forest School every term (12 sessions each year). These sessions are lead by our Forest School leader and take place in a wonderful woodland setting close to the school.

Benefits

Forest School can increase a child's confidence and self-esteem through exploration, problem solving and being encouraged to learn how to assess and take appropriate risks depending on their environment. The use of learner-led outcomes means information is retained better and also increases curiosity and motivation to learn. This motivation can have a positive impact on attitude to learning in school.

Learners also gain a respect for nature through many small interactions and noticing changes around them through the seasons. Providing students with an opportunity to appreciate the wider natural world encourages a responsibility for nature conservation in later life.



The Key Principles of Forest School

Forest School is a long-term process with frequent and regular sessions rather than a one-off visit.

Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural wooded environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.

Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.

Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.

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

Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning.

Forest School is fun!