

Bapchild and Tonge CE (Aided) Primary School and Nursery

Forest Friends - A Guide for Parents



What will my child be doing at Forest Friends?

The Forest Friends routine varies depending on the seasons, however it may include; preparing to go out by dressing in outdoor clothes such as waterproofs; singing special songs and sharing stories. Forest Friends will run all year round and in all weathers (unless weather conditions are dangerous). We will follow the child led ethos of Forest School which means that once at the Forest Friends area the children can choose what to participate in, carefully supported and encouraged by trained adults. Possible activities may include:

- Hunting for mini-beasts
- Natural crafts – making necklaces from elder, crowns or dreamcatchers from willow, collages from natural materials
- Mud sculptures
- Shelter building and knot tying
- Using tools for a purpose – such as peeling bark from sticks with potato peelers to make toasting forks.
- Fire building and cooking on a camp fire

Some of the activities the children may participate in are 'higher-risk activities' (such as fire lighting or tool use). However, these activities are not available to the children until certain behaviours and boundaries are established. Children are encouraged and supported in recognising and managing risk for themselves, through real life situations and experiences.

What benefits will my child get from participating in Forest Friends?

Forest Friends will support the holistic development of the child:

- Health and fitness – Being active in an outdoor, natural environment. • Increased emotional wellbeing – There is research available supporting this.
- Social development – Communicating, and negotiating with peers and adults to solve problems and share experiences.
- Skills development – Developing fine and gross motor skills and coordination for real purposes.
- Gaining knowledge and understanding – Multi-sensory, real-life learning. • Individualised learning – Careful observation allows adults to tailor support to children's own interests and stage of development.
- Curriculum Links – Forest Friends supports many areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, National Curriculum and the Every Child Matters agenda. Health and Safety



In order for your child to get the most out of this experience please ensure they are dressed appropriately.

Long Sleeves and long trousers ***must be worn at all times.*** Covered shoes (preferably welly boots) and a waterproof coat.