

Forest School Information for Parents

We will provide you with the dates for Forest School sessions and send out reminders by text where required.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff.

Forest School is a wonderful opportunity for our children and we feel sure they will enjoy the experience.



Garretts Green Nursery School



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Dear Parents,

We are very fortunate to be able to offer on-site Forest School sessions to our children.

The principles that under-pin Forest School are important to us all and feature in all our practice.

We hope that your children enjoy Forest School and are able to benefit from all that these opportunities offer.

This booklet explains the principles and gives you a little information about how we work at Garretts Green Nursery School.

If you would like further information please speak to Emma Jarman, Debbie Bushell or Lesley Martin.



Thank you.

Lesley Martin and the Nursery Staff Team.

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OPPORTUNITIES

In a world where it is often impossible to allow children to explore the countryside or forest independently and where many children have limited access to outdoor spaces, Forest School sessions provide an important opportunity for children to take risks, to learn from their own mistakes and their own experiences and to develop a 'have a go' spirit.

SAFETY

It is important to stress that the risks are all pre-determined and assessed for potential hazards, with safety measures put in place to ensure that no harm befalls the children in our care. Children are also taught rules for safe use of materials and for behaviour.

WEATHER and CLOTHING

Our experience has taught us that the children generally are not at all bothered about the weather even when the staff are!

We do use the Forest School throughout the year in all types of weather, sun, rain, wind, hail and snow.

The children wear waterproof trousers and jackets over their clothes, keeping them warm and dry.

We ask you to provide wellies in a named bag placed on their peg. Please send your child in their usual shoes.

(We have spare wellies if you should forget)

We do tend to offer shorter sessions in extremely cold or wet weather and we supplement the outdoor session with time under the Forest School shelter, making natural art creations, for example.

Forest School Principle 6

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

At Garretts Green Nursery School we:

- **Provide a wide range of experiences which encourage children to direct their own learning, to explore and investigate at their own pace, following their own interests.**
- **Staff know when to intervene to develop learning even further but also know when to stand back and allow children to explore and experiment.**
- **Children are all encouraged to 'have a go' and develop positive attitudes to learning.**



Forest School Principle 1

Forest School is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions in a woodland or natural environment, rather than a one-off visit. Planning, adaptation, observations and reviewing are integral elements of Forest School.

At Garretts Green Nursery School we:

- **Visit our Forest School frequently and regularly throughout the year.**
- **Use the area at the front of the school, behind the Sensory Room, as an alternative site to allow more frequent access to the natural environment.**
- **Plan sessions in Forest School in order to maximise the learning opportunities, building on previous learning and experience.**
- **Encourage children to be involved in developing their ideas and reflecting on their own learning.**
- **Adapt our learning opportunities based upon our observations of children during exploratory play.**



Forest School Principle 2

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.

At Garretts Green Nursery School we:

- **Have our own very small site which was developed to our specifications from derelict or overgrown land owned by Severn Trent and donated to us.**
- **Allow the area to grow wild and it is developing its own character over time.**
- **Remove or cut back dangerous plants or those which may harm children, such as foxgloves, brambles or nettles, ensuring children's safety.**
- **Encourage children to take notice of the natural landscape and the features of the space throughout the year.**
- **Encourage children to use the landscape and the natural materials they may find to develop their learning.**
- **Develop a sense of respect for the natural environment, encouraging children to take care of the natural world and ensure sustaina**



Forest School Principle 5.

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

At Garretts Green Nursery School we:

- **Have ensured that two members of staff have attended full Forest School training spanning a year of instruction, compiling documentation, assessments and practical application of learning.**
- **Both members of staff have attended full First Aid training and have outdoor first aid qualifications.**
- **The majority of the staff have also attended a day training session.**
- **Only the fully qualified Forest School Leaders deliver sessions using tools or where fires are lit.**
- **Sessions are well-planned and well-organised and ensure that children are supervised appropriately with limited numbers of children using the site at any time.**



Forest School Principle 4

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

At Garretts Green Nursery School we:

- Ensure that activities are risk-assessed, well-led and well managed in order to allow children to take supported risks without endangering them.
- Encourage children to see risks for themselves and to make decisions, with support, about the dangers that a task may pose.
- Ensure that sessions are led by staff who are specifically trained to manage the risks, with support staff who are experienced and responsible.
- Allow the children to climb trees which we know are within their capability and which are situated in a safe environment with adult supervision on hand.
- Allow children to use tools such as saws and hand-drills to make tree cookies, for example, safely supported in a one-to-one situation away from other children.



Forest School Principle 3

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

At Garretts Green Nursery School we:

- Provide children with opportunities for developing skills of cooperation, encouraging them to work as part of a team to achieve a goal that they could not reach alone.
- Encourage children to be inventive and creative in their outlook and attitude to solving problems and seeking out solutions independently.
- Encourage children to be inquisitive with a desire to find answers themselves.
- Encourage children to respect each other's ideas and ways of working.
- Provide experiences which develop thinking skills.

