



Forest School Information for Parents at Yealand Primary School

Dear Parents,

We are now in a position to run a Forest School within our school curriculum. It is planned that all children should have a 'Forest School experience' during their time at Yealand. The location will be the strip of woodland to the west of Silverdale Road which Luke's dad has kindly said we could use. The Leader of Forest School is Kirsty Beswetherick. Please read the following important information.

Information about Forest School

Forest School is run by trained Leaders and aims to build up children's skills, abilities and confidence week by week through practical hands-on activities in the outdoors. It gives them the chance to explore, learn and discover at their own pace in a safe and supportive space. Forest School uses natural resources to stimulate imagination, creativity and investigation. Sessions will occur on a regular basis in **ALL WEATHER CONDITIONS EXCEPT FOR HIGH WINDS**; this ensures children receive time to explore the wildness of the environment amongst their everyday experiences.

What we will do...

In our Forest School the Children will be in the forest for about two to three hours each time. The session usually starts with an opening discussion around the fire circle which includes the safety rules:

RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT

STAY WITHIN THE FOREST SCHOOL BOUNDARY

RESPECT OTHER PEOPLE

LOOKING EYES, LISTENING EARS

After this the activities available are explained, and the children then choose what they would like to do. A snack and drink are included in the session. The session closes with a review and a reflection of what we have learnt, usually back at the fire circle.

Children will gradually build up to different activities. The ethos of Forest Schools is that it is very much child led so we will be observing the children very closely to enable us to plan from their needs and interests. The very first sessions will include learning about boundaries and how to keep safe by playing games and finding things for ourselves. As the sessions progress and the children become more confident with their surroundings different opportunities will be established. This may include:

Woodwork using tools, e.g. making musical instruments, jewelry, decorative items, Natural art, Fire lighting, using knots and lashings, Shelter building and Bug hunts.

There are many benefits to Forest School. For example, it can:

- Develop physical abilities and help participants to stay active and healthy.
- Heighten self-awareness and improve emotional and social skills.
- Promote co-operative and group working.
- Encourage children to take care of themselves and others.
- Foster care, appreciation and respect for wildlife and wild places.
- Broaden knowledge and understanding of the natural world.

Safety at Forest School

There is always a high adult to participant ratio at Forest School. All activities are thoroughly risk assessed before the start of each session and Leaders continue to monitor the safety of the group as activities progress. There is always a trained first aider present at each session and a written emergency plan to follow.

Who will be running the Forest School sessions?

Sessions will be overseen by Forest School leader Kirsty Beswetherick. They will be assisted by Yealand school staff and volunteers.

What your child needs to wear for Forest School

The Forest School sessions will take place entirely outside in the woods whatever the weather. We will provide a shelter from the elements, but it is still important that your child wears clothes that are waterproof and warm and that are OK to get wet and muddy.

To ensure our children are comfortable and prepared, please bring the items listed below to school on the session days, labelled with your child's name.

Please note: on days when there is any **rain or drizzle**, as we often encounter lots of mud on our way into the forest, we would ask you to drop the children off with their waterproofs.

On **sunny days**, we ask you to apply a layer of sunscreen before you drop your child off.

"There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing!"



kit lists

Children will need a **named water bottle** and a **backpack** that is suitable for outdoors that your child can carry.

What to wear (Spring / Summer)

- One pair of comfortable trousers (jogging bottoms or leggings)
- One long sleeved t-shirt or top
- **Lightweight Waterproof jacket**
- **Spare socks**
- Wellies or sturdy closed toe shoes (which you don't mind getting wet and muddy!)
- Carrier bag to be able to put wet clothing into if necessary
- **Sunhat/Cap**
- **Suncream to be applied at home before coming to school**

What to wear (Autumn / Winter)

- Waterproofs
- One pair of comfortable trousers (jogging bottoms or leggings)
- One long sleeved t-shirt or top
- One thick jumper
- One school Hoody (in the backpack, just in case)
- Two pairs of socks. One thin cotton sock, and the top, a thick wool or fluffy bed sock
- Wellies or sturdy closed toe shoes (which you don't mind getting wet and muddy!)
- Spare trousers & socks in backpacks (more than one set of each plus underwear if toilet training)
- Carrier bag to be able to put wet clothing into if necessary

I hope you will be as excited as I and the children are and that you enjoy supporting your child's learning through this scheme. If you have any questions regarding the sessions or clothing, please speak to Mrs Beswetherick

Forest School Consent forms

Name of child:

I give permission for staff to administer first aid and seek professional advice or instruction in the event of an emergency:

Signed:	Date:
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I give permission for staff to use antiseptic treatment and plasters on my child:

Signed:	Date:
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I understand that my child must bring appropriate clothing and footwear to all Forest School sessions. Failing this my child cannot attend the session.

Signed:	Date:
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I give permission for my child to attend Forest School sessions with members of staff and volunteers all of whom are DBS checked.

Signed:	Date:
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