



Forest School 23/24

Intent

At Lake Haven, we view Forest school as an integral part of our weekly routine. Children experience and engage in nature with an openness to try new skills, problem solve and embrace what our idyllic surroundings have to offer. In this time, we enable children to work independently or with their peers, to build, construct and view what nature has to offer. Many of the learners that arrive at Lake Haven have a negative view of education and forest school provides an escape from the classroom environment, however, the subliminal learning that takes place is of paramount importance to gaining new intrinsic skills. We find that the newly found confidence provides our children with the opportunities to foster resilience and become independent and creative learners. We do not shy away from taking supported risks appropriate to the environment and themselves under the careful eye of our fully qualified, Level 3 Forest School Lead.

The primary aims of this curriculum will be:

- To build self-esteem and confidence in children.
- To build resilient, determined and independent learners
- To develop children's personal, social and emotional development.

- To develop children's and encourage creativity
- To encourage collaboration.
- To develop and build the ideas of risk management and risk benefit
- To improve children's life skills and experiences
- To enable children to gain a respect for the natural environment and wildlife.
- To transfer negative behaviours into positive ones.
- To let children be children

These aims will be covered with a variety of Forest Schools and outdoor learning strategies that not only seek to aid the children in their learning but also be provided in a positive, enjoyable, creative, reflective and inspiring manner that will allow them to transfer the skills and knowledge from the outside lessons into the classroom leading on to life outside of school.

Implementation

To ensure that this outside curriculum reaches the high standards of teaching and learning that we pride ourselves on at Lake Haven, we have implemented a progressive curriculum that begins in LKS2 and continues and grows until its culmination, when children leave at the end of KS4. Discrete outdoor learning lessons will be timetabled for each cohort per week to ensure that all children access quality outdoor learning weekly. This will be in addition to separate outdoor learning the children will engage in with their class teachers, the farm and life at Lake Haven. Forest school is a globally recognised teaching system that aims to meet the intent of this curriculum through holistic learning. It is through this

method that we strive to provide our pupils with the widest range of skills and opportunities available to us. Due to its child-led nature and focus on social development, Forest School engages children in a manner that is hard to imitate in the classroom. This creates new opportunities for learning and development that might not be accessed during regular day-to-day schooling. As we know, every child is different, as are their learning habits, something that here at Lake Haven we recognise, encourage and utilise.

At Lake Haven, we are blessed with a beautiful outdoors learning environment ranging from the schools forest area to the schools allotments and 83 acres of lakes and surrounding woodland. It is here the majority of the learning will take place but it is our aim to also expand our outdoor learning into the wider community and environment to give the children a wider range of experience and allow them to become more familiar with the world surrounding them.

Impact

After the implementation of the robust outdoor learning curriculum, children at Lake Haven will become more well rounded and prepared pupils and individuals. They will not only be more confident and resilient learners, they will become more caring and supportive peers due to the heavy focus the curriculum places on understanding and generating empathy. This will allow children to become more able to regulate their social, mental, emotional and spiritual health, meaning the children can perform better in collaborative learning and tasks, arming them with the skills necessary to improve themselves in their schooling career and life in the wider world.

As children grow in confidence in their abilities in the outdoor

environment, they will begin to understand, assess and manage their own risk and safety. This will allow the children to become more independent and show them that life comes with not only risk but also rewards. It also teaches them what their own limits are and that they can push through them. They will see that sometimes we don't always get the desired result the first time but that doesn't make us a failure, it helps us to grow, forcing us to try again in a different way. It encourages problem solving, logical thinking and self-reflection and evaluation but most of all the pupils will see that mistakes aren't failures; they are a part of learning, that they are, ultimately, human.