



# Penwortham Primary School



## Forest School – a Guide for Parents

## What is Forest School?

Forest School programme is an approach to outdoor, child led learning through children building self-esteem and independence while exploring and experiencing the natural world. The sessions will provide children the opportunity to explore new environments, develop new skills in the great outdoors and foster a love for nature. Using practical hands-on experiences, exploring and playing are at the heart of our Forest School ethos. This gives pupils opportunities for learning through play, activities and exploration in our school outdoor environment. Outdoor experiences enable pupils to develop their curiosity, confidence, self-esteem, creativity, empathy, communication skills, knowledge of the natural environment and ability to assess risk.



Our Forest School aims to provide all pupil's a safe environment that they can explore, nurture, and make self-led discoveries in outdoor learning. Sessions will aspire pupils to challenge themselves and achieve their own goals. To achieve this, we expect our pupils to be ready to learn, respectful to their surroundings and peers while being responsible for exploring their own learning.

We will provide a quality Forest School experience by following these six principles:

- ✦ Forest school is a long-term process with weekly sessions during a half term time will ensure it remains frequent and regular of each class. These sessions will be held at different periods of the year so each year group will experience diverse Forest School throughout their Penwortham Primary School journey.
- ✦ Forest school will take place outside; we will utilise our on-site Forest School area and outdoor classroom.
- ✦ Areas of child-led learning that will be explore include intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and creative development.
- ✦ We will assist pupils in taking appropriate risks suited to their environment and abilities. However, we will not push them beyond their capabilities, as this could potentially endanger them.
- ✦ Forest school is a child-led process where we follow children's interests through planned activities. This may involve modifying or omitting lesson plans if the activities do not engage the participants.
- ✦ A qualified Forest School practitioner will consistently lead the sessions, with continuing professional development strongly encouraged to enhance the learners' experience.

## Forest School Activity Examples

Our Forest School activities are planned on the individual group's needs. Some examples of Forest School activities are:

- Learning about plants and wildlife.
- Building dens and structures.
- Fires and cooking.
- Games and imaginative play.
- Nature crafts.
- Using tools such as whittling and saws.
- Scavenger hunts.



## Forest School Staffing

A qualified Level 3 Forest School Leader Practitioner will deliver Forest School sessions. At Penwortham Primary school this is Mrs L Barlow and Mrs R Duke. The practitioner will be assisted by different staff members based on the age and requirements of the group attending the sessions. The health and safety of all Forest School participants is central to every activity. Both Mrs L Barlow and Mrs R Duke are Forest School Paediatric First Aid trained.

## Forest School Weather Conditions

We will follow the Forest School ethos 'there is no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing!' Pupils will need extra clothing and waterproof coats and trousers depending on weather. Please see the last page for clothing needed to attend sessions. Extreme weather may make it impractical to run a Forest School session such as high winds, lightening, freezing or hot temperatures may cause Forest School sessions to be changed or cancelled.

## Forest School Timetable for Pupils

Each year groups are to participate in Forest School sessions for a half term with all years staggered appropriately across the full school year. Forest School runs on a every Thursday afternoon throughout the school year. Forest School timetable for the academic year:

Year Group	School Term
Pre-School and Reception	All year as part of EYFS Program
Year 1	Autumn Term 1
Year 2	Autumn Term 2
Year 3	Spring Term 1
Year 4	Spring Term 2
Year 5	Summer Term 1
Year 6	Summer Term 2



If you require any additional information, please contact school by either telephone 01772 743321 or emailing [bursar@penwortham-pri.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:bursar@penwortham-pri.lancs.sch.uk).



## Penwortham Primary School

### Forest School Clothing Check List

Forest School runs throughout the year and in ALL weather. It is important that your child/ children have the appropriate clothing. On the day, your child has Forest School they will need to come to school in their PE kit (NO shorts even in summer).

**Please ensure all your child/children's clothing is clearly labelled with their name.**

Waterproof Coat:	<p>Hooded Waterproof Coat – with a hood for protection from rain. A thick and warm waterproof coat in winter (or use an extra fleece layer underneath waterproof coat).</p> <p>A thinner hooded waterproof coat for warmer months but please remember a fleece to go underneath if temperature is cool/cold.</p>
Trousers:	<p>Waterproof trousers – these are essential especially with our lovely British weather. All-in-ones can be used but child must be able to dress themselves.</p> <p>Extra layers – for under waterproof trousers such as leggings/tights or thermals. Ski trousers allowed.</p>
Tops:	<p>Jumpers – warm jumper without a hood.</p> <p>Layers – at least three extra layers for colder months. Example t-shirt/jumper/fleece under coat. Thermals and base layers allowed.</p>
Waterproof Shoes or Boots:	Wellies, Snow Boots or Walking Boots – Please make sure these are waterproof. No trainers!
Warm Socks:	Warm socks as feet will get cold so an extra pair of wool/ fleece/ fluffy socks (Normal socks in wellies are not warm enough for cooler weather).
Hats:	Wool, bobble, or thermal style hats can be worn. In warm weather a sunhat.
Gloves:	Thermal and waterproof gloves – not knitted gloves they once they are damp or wet the gloves do not keep hands warm.
Summer Sessions:	Appropriate footwear, waterproof trousers, and hooded waterproof coat are still essential. Please apply suncream and ensure child can reapply suncream themselves in hot weather.

The correct clothing for Forest School is essential and is part of our school uniform. Without this clothing your child may not be suitably dressed to join some of Forest School activities. School has a limited supply of spare waterproofs and wellies. If you require help in gaining these extra clothing items, please contact the school.

Please consider donating your old, outgrown waterproofs and wellies so we can provide these sessions for all the pupils within our school.