



Forest School Statement

Intent – What is the Forest School Ethos?

At St George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery school staff aim to educate our children to understand that the Forest School ethos is:

'An inspirational process that offers children, young people and adults regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland environment'.

Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL) and Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (CLOT), 2002

Implementation – What happens at Forest School?

During Forest School at St. George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery, children will participate in a range of learning opportunities to explore the six Forest School Principles:

- In nature – Forest School takes place in our own natural woodland environment and pupils are supported to foster a love of learning within the natural world.
- Learner led – Forest School planning is heavily focussed on being in the moment and child led. It follows the children's interests with some skills and tool led progression as children transition from nursery through to year six.
- Long term – Forest School is a long-term process with six or more regular sessions in our woodland environment across the seasons.
- Holistic – During a visit to Forest School the session aims to support the development of all children, staff and volunteers. It focusses on building children's resilience, confidence, independence and creativity as learners.
- Trained leaders – Forest School is led by a qualified Forest School teacher who continuously maintains and develops their own and other adults' Forest School practice.
- Risk taking – Forest School is inclusive in that it allows all children access to a safe environment and allows them to consider benefits appropriate to the woodland and to themselves.

Impact – What are the benefits of Forest School?

The children will benefit from regular sessions at Forest School. Children will gain:

- Experience in an outdoor woodland environment that will support the children's physical development.
- Sensory experiences that will support the children's personal, social and health development, including their mental health and well-being.
- Opportunities to develop their strengths and interests in a natural environment.
- The knowledge of how to assess and manage their own risks.
- The freedom to choose their own learning whilst developing their communication and language skills
- An understanding of tools and fires and how these should be respected and safely used for a purpose.
- A love of the outdoors and interest in looking after and respecting the natural world around them.
- An awareness of the rules and boundaries within the Forest School setting.

'Never settle for less than your best'

Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' John 8:12

Ways to explore Spirituality in Forest School

At St. George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery we believe that our curriculum should provide opportunities for children to develop a love of learning, so that they go on to make a positive difference to themselves, their community and the wider world. We have developed a definition of what we believe Spirituality is:

'Spirituality is...an understanding of how beliefs, values and experiences shape the identity of individuals, their spiritual disciplines and connections with life.'

Our Forest School provides opportunities for spiritual development through/by:

- *Creating opportunities for reflection on personal growth, resilience and developing identity through challenge and exploration.
- *Exploring moral choices in relation to risk-taking, cooperation and caring for the environment and one another.
- *Teaching that promotes stewardship, perseverance, courage and respect for God's creation.
- *Allowing safe spaces for discussion, shared problem-solving and valuing the contributions of others within the outdoor environment.
- *Making links between Forest School experiences, Christian values and everyday attitudes towards responsibility and service.
- *Allowing time for stillness, awe and wonder in nature, including opportunities for quiet reflection and prayer.
- *Enabling reflection on spiritual growth through hands-on experiences, teamwork, leadership and connection with the natural world.

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