

Forest School – July 2023

This term at Forest School we have had so much fun as always, getting stuck in to lots of different activities as well as watching the amazing world of nature around us, using all of our senses to maximise the experience!

We finally managed to put up our bird boxes before Easter and on our return we were amazed to see that many of them had birds flying in and out of them, busy building nests and raising their babies ready to fly. One was abandoned as the eggs were destroyed (possibly by another territorial bird) however we used the opportunity to really see how the birds had made the nest and marvelled at how small the blue tits' eggs were.



What do you spy in the sky?? Is it a bird, a plane or a dragon!

We made the most of some donated branches to build a more permanent den which the children have really enjoyed as you can see from the pictures below. They love sitting in there, reading books to one another, making up games or simply sitting looking at the sky. Forest school is all about grabbing opportunities as they arise – we decided to dig up the plentiful nettles and make bracelets out of them. The children were amazed at how they could strip the leaves off whilst wearing gloves and then bind the strips of outer stalk together in a braid. We did the same with some elder branches, chopping them up into bits, coring them out with a peg and using a vegetable peeler to create patterns on the outside until we had a whole pile of beads, ready to thread onto string to make into lovely bracelets and necklaces. If you have lots of elder growing at home, give it a go – you'll be amazed at the results!

The warmer, dryer weather has meant that we have used some favourite items every week – they include the hammock, slackline and rope swing which the children adore and have really improved their core strength, balance and coordination skills as a result. More recently we have also really focussed on the senses and constructed a sensory ladder with many different textures to feel with our feet/hands, a sky spy area and an artists' corner to experiment with coloured chalks. We've enjoyed watching our beautiful wild flowers grow from the seed bombs we planted in the spring and we're not the only ones enjoying them – the bees and butterflies love that corner!



Speaking of butterflies, why not get involved in a national initiative to assess the health of our butterfly population over the summer? You have until the 6th August to take part. The Big Butterfly Count is a UK-wide survey aimed at helping us assess the health of our environment simply by counting the amount and type of butterflies (and some day-flying moths) we see. Follow the link below to take part:

<https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org/>

I am always sad to say goodbye to the Year 1s at this time of year but I wish them all the best on their next adventure in Year 2. Don't forget to get out regularly in nature and do all the things that you enjoy! Climb trees, get muddy, swing in hammocks, play with the fairies and build dens, no matter how old you are! Have a wonderful summer holiday.

Mrs McInnes



