

Forest School – Autumn 2022

What a packed and varied autumn term we have had here at Forest School! The children have behaved so well and we have had lots of adventures together, learning plenty along the way. I have been particularly impressed by our Reception class this year who have learnt very quickly to become more independent - getting themselves ready, tidying up after themselves and learning to take risks safely. The recent colder weather has further challenged the children and their resilience. Many of them now understand how important it is to wear layers, keep your socks dry in your boots and how much a hot chocolate can help out when you're feeling chilly! It was all worth it - nothing beats the thrill of riding a sledge or clambering up on top of a snowman.



I hope that you enjoy looking at the various pictures, it's so hard to whittle them down as we get up to so much! We started the year by focusing on gratitude, nurturing nature and harvesting. The kids are always thrilled to dig up potatoes from the garden and we made a wonderful gratitude tree in the outdoor classroom where we hung leaves with all the things we are grateful for. We did our best to help our poor hedgerow saplings who had suffered from lack of water over the boiling hot summer. Some of them have survived, we'll see in the spring if any more bounce back! We painted some gratitude stones and enjoyed holding them, thinking about what we're grateful for. The kids did a brilliant job of making some natural bird feeders using pinecones, butter and seeds. We

continue to care for our feathery friends, particularly as it gets colder.

As we moved towards the half term, we enjoyed making spooky leaves to hang from the trees, conker spiders and some wonderful conker webs which helped develop those all important fine motor skills in the children's fingers and hands. The children worked hard at their digging as they planted a new willow tree as well as lots of daffodil and crocus bulbs which we look forward to see growing in the spring.

After half term, we had the pleasure of year 4 joining us for a session as their marble treat. The children loved spending time together, building and lighting fires followed by toasting marshmallows and singing songs together. The little ones loved showing them how to use the hammock and rope swing. Other weeks, we improved our knowledge of local wildlife by playing a bird scavenger hunt game and studying the tracks of various animals that we might find in a forest. We were thrilled to then spot some of these tracks in the snow later in the term! The children showed patience and perseverance as they mastered the use of the hand drill to make their own forest school pendants and displayed real creativity as they all contributed towards the creation of our festive wreaths that we hung up at school.

I'll finish with mentioning the Wildlife Trust who have a festive challenge if you're interested - 12 Days Wild is a nature challenge, encouraging you to do one wild thing a day from the 25th December to the 5th January. In those days between Christmas and New Year, winter wildlife is just waiting to be explored! Your wild acts could be little things to help nature - like recycling your Christmas tree or feeding the birds - or ways to connect to the natural world, like walking off your Christmas dinner in the woods or admiring the beauty of a winter sunset. Follow this link for more information...

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/12dayswild>



I wish you all a very restful, warm and happy Christmas!

Mrs McInnes







