



## Forest School at Shenley Primary School

### Intent

At our school, Forest School provides an inspirational natural environment where all children — from Nursery to Year 6 - develop confidence, curiosity and self- esteem through meaningful outdoor experiences. Our intent is to nurture the whole child by offering regular opportunities to explore, take risks and learn through hands- on discovery in nature each term.

Forest School is rooted in our core values:

Self- belief – children learn to trust their abilities and celebrate their achievements

Teamwork – they collaborate, communicate and support one another

Aspiration – they challenge themselves and strive for personal growth

Respect – they care for the environment, equipment and each other

Strength in kindness – they show empathy, encouragement and compassion

These values sit alongside our school rules — Be Ready, Be Respectful and Be Safe — which guide children’s attitudes, behaviour and choices in the outdoor environment. Our intent is to create resilient, independent and reflective learners who thrive both in nature and in the classroom.

### Implementation

All children from Nursery to Year 6 participate in Forest School every term, experiencing learning across different seasons to build a long- term connection with the natural world. Sessions are led by trained staff who plan purposeful, progressive activities that promote exploration, creativity and problem- solving.

Forest School sessions:

- Encourage child- led learning, allowing children to follow their interests, make decisions and learn from mistakes
- Provide opportunities for appropriate risk- taking, such as tool use, fire safety, shelter building and natural crafts
- Embed our values through collaborative tasks, reflective discussions and shared responsibilities

Reinforce our rules:

- **Be Ready** – children come prepared and equipped for outdoor learning
- **Be Respectful** – they care for wildlife, the environment and each other
- **Be Safe** – they learn to assess risks and use tools responsibly

Activities are designed to support holistic development, including communication, resilience, independence, determination and emotional wellbeing. Over time, children build a progression of skills that deepen their understanding of nature and strengthen their personal capabilities.



## Impact

Forest School has a powerful impact on children's personal, social and emotional development.

Through regular outdoor experiences, pupils develop:

- Confidence and self- belief, as they overcome challenges and celebrate successes
- Resilience and determination, learning to persevere and adapt
- Teamwork and communication, working collaboratively and supporting peers
- Respect for nature, understanding their role in caring for the environment
- Kindness and empathy, strengthening relationships and community spirit
- Aspiration, as they set goals and take pride in mastering new skills

Children consistently demonstrate our school rules - Be Ready, Be Respectful and Be Safe - both outdoors and back in the classroom. The skills gained in Forest School translate into improved wellbeing, valued behaviour, greater independence and deeper engagement across the curriculum. Ultimately, Forest School helps shape confident, capable and compassionate learners who are ready to thrive in the wider world.