



## **Information for Helpers and Assistants**

### **What is Forest School?**

The Forest ethos is one of being child led, having fun and connecting with nature. In Forest Schools children are not taught how to solve problems but find out through trial and error.

Risk is an important part of Forest Schools and it is essential that children are allowed to experience risk taking without the visible interaction of adults.

### **Activities**

The children will be participating in Forest School sessions regardless of the weather, so it is important that all participants come correctly dressed for the weather conditions. The minimum clothing that all should participants should have is a hat, waterproof jacket and suitable footwear.

During Forest school sessions children can participate in a variety of activities if they wish, or decide not to participate at all! The choice is entirely theirs.

Examples of activities are:

- Shelter building
- Making mud faces
- Getting wet and dirty
- Constructing rope swings
- Bug hunts

Adults are encouraged to take part in activities, but not take over them. The only time that an adult should step in is if the level of risk reaches an unacceptable level.

### **Helper's role**

The role of an adult helper is to guide a child whilst they are taking part in the Forest School experience. You are there to help the child gain independence and self esteem, supporting them when necessary. Remember Forest Schools are about children taking risks, so it is okay to take a step back and let the child try something new.

Let the child take the lead in situations and ask them questions about what they are doing to help them develop communication skills.

Always make positive comments and avoid judgemental reactions.

**Finally, if you are asked by the participants to join in, then please remember to let them take the lead... and then Get Involved, Get Dirty and Have Fun!**