



Hurst Park Primary School Subject & Curriculum Leadership Report

| SUBJECT / CURRICULUM | | Forest School | Date: |
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| Leader (s) | | P Steer | 3.11.2020 |
| | SECTIONS | SUMMARY EVALUATION | |
| 1 | INTRODUCTION Why do we teach what we teach? | Forest School aims to promote holistic learning and development for all the children that participate. Attending Forest School sessions allows children to lead their own play influenced through their own interests. Being exposed to the natural environment allows children to learn and explore through their senses, gain knowledge about their natural environment and experience the changing seasons. Current research also shows that regular sessions in an outdoor environment has positive outcomes for all children including; enhancing their well-being, increasing their risk taking skills, developing their communication skill, working as part of a team, increasing life skills and builds confidence. | |
| 2 | CURRICULUM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> INTENT (Include reference to SEND and disadvantaged pupils) | Forest School is learning in an outside environment. The adult's role is to facilitate learning opportunities for each child, by providing activities and resources that extend children's knowledge and interests, this is achieved by careful observations on the children's free play. Initial sessions at Forest School will be mostly adult led, but as the children become more comfortable in their natural environment, the ethos of Forest School is that sessions become child led. Forest School provides opportunities for all pupils, including SEND and disadvantaged pupils, to develop their skills, knowledge, understanding, independence and ability to care for their natural environment, whilst attending Hurst Park Primary School and hopefully into adulthood. | |
| | IMPLEMENTATION | Forest School is currently taught to Nursery Children on a weekly basis and Reception children half termly. Each week, the Forest School session follows the same format, allowing the children to learn through repetition and gain confidence by participating in familiar routines. These include; getting dressed and undressed in their Forest School clothes, walking to and walking back from the Forest School area, going over the rules and boundaries, free play, hand washing and snack. Other activities that the children participate in include: tool use e.g. using a mallet in Hapa-Zome art work, a bow saw when making wooden discs, rakes and trowels; Playing team games such as Squirrels in the Trees, What's the time Mr Wolf, Wolf and Sheep game, Mr Crocodile colour game; Planting – Sunflowers, meadow flower seeds and bulbs; Bird watching; Bug hunting; Cooking on an open fire; Natural resource art work; Treasure Hunts; Re-enacting stories e.g. Going on a Bear Hunt, The Gingerbread Man; Den making; Tree Climbing; Easter Egg hunts and end of year parties. The Level Three Forest School Leaders renew their Forest School First Aid Training every three years and also attend CPD courses on a regular basis. Parents are usually invited to come and help at sessions once their children are settled in Nursery/Reception. However, with the current Covid 19 restrictions this is not possible at present, but will resume once these restrictions are lifted. Parents also receive observations of the activities that their children have participated in via Tapestry our online journal. | |
| | IMPACT (Include reference to SEND and disadvantaged pupils) | At the end of Nursery, the children are more confident and enjoy taking care of their natural environment. They are also more independent at getting dressed into their Forest School clothing. SEND and disadvantaged pupils achieve well based on their starting points. | |
| 3 | BROADER CURRICULUM How does this subject promote elements of the broader curriculum, including SMSC, British Values, Eco-Schools, etc.? | Forest School and the activities that the children participate in, cover all the areas of learning that are laid down in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum – Development matters. The Forest School ethos easily incorporates the three prime areas of learning; Personal, Social and Emotional development, Communication and Language and Physical Development, as well as the four specific areas, particularly Expressive Arts and Designs and Understanding the World and with careful planning Literacy and Mathematics can also be included. Eco Schools is a large part of the Forest School teaching and so too is the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of each child, from mainly being exposed to their natural environment. Cultural opportunities are also embraced through cooking and also arts such as Hapa-Zome. As a majority of the activities at Forest School are child-led, this enables each child's voice to be heard and acted upon, with the Forest School leaders responding to each child's interests. | |
| 4 | SUCCESSSES IN THE SUBJECT IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR Focus should include the contribution of the subject to meeting whole school priorities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cooking on an open fire – The children celebrated Pancake Day by making the pancake batter and then watching it being cooked on an open fire. They then participated in tradition pancake races and practicing flipping pancakes ▶ Developing the Forest School area - Children involved in sowing wild flower seeds and planting Spring bulbs to attract more wild life, making a bug hotel - for bugs to live and hibernate, making bird feeders to increase bird species that visit the area. Replacing logs in the log circle. Enabling other classes and year groups to visit the area to experience and learn about the varied and numerous creatures that now inhabit this outside area ▶ Tool use – Using a bow saw to make a wooden disc for a necklace, using a mallet to make Hapa Zone calendars ▶ Personal, social and emotional development – Noticing less confident children, gain in confidence whilst in Forest School. ▶ Risk taking – Climbing trees, swinging from branches, tool use, sitting round an open fire | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ From caterpillar to Butterfly – Rearing 4 Peacock caterpillars - collected from nettles in Forest School, and watching them change into chrysalis and then butterflies in an indoor butterfly net. Then releasing them back to Forest School. | |



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| 5 | ACHIEVEMENT Attainment, progress and the quality of learning for individuals, different groups, including SEND pupils, boys/girls, disadvantaged, CLA. Emphasise key skill development across curriculum | Strengths | Grade 2 | Areas for Development |
| | | ▶ Climbing trees | | ▶ Ability to take and manage their own risks |
| | | ▶ Exposure to the changing seasons | | ▶ |
| | | ▶ Confidence building | | ▶ |
| 6 | TEACHING Teacher subject knowledge and pupil expectations, engagement, motivation, challenge, progress, independence, reading and literacy skills, assessment and next steps in learning. Marking, feedback. | Strengths | Grade 2 | Areas for Development |
| | | ▶ Pupils exposed to, at least, weekly sessions of Forest School throughout the year, enabling them to experience the changing seasons | | ▶ Confidence/subject knowledge of staff – especially new staff/staff new to teaching Forest School this year |
| | | ▶ Evidence of Forest School on planning | | ▶ Differentiation/challenge for all (see above) |
| | | ▶ Photographic evidence and observations of children participating in Session recorded on Tapestry | | ▶ Write an evaluation of each session |
| | | ▶ Risk assessments completed each session and for various activities | | ▶ To be shared with other year groups |
| | | ▶ Written handbook | | ▶ To be shared with other year groups |
| 7 | LEARNING BEHAVIOURS Including behaviour in lessons & around the school, attitudes to learning. Pupils' enjoyment and engagement in the subject, views of pupils/parents. Include SMSC | Judgement | Grade 2 | Areas for Development |
| | | ▶ In line with the schools Eco ethos of the school and expectations are high | | ▶ Continue to develop Forest School across the year groups |
| | | ▶ Almost all pupils view Forest School sessions positively and enjoy attending | | ▶ |
| | | ▶ Parents/members of the local community hold the school in high regard in terms of having a Forest School area within the grounds of the school | | ▶ |
| 8 | LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT How well leaders demonstrate ambition, vision, high expectations, improve teaching and learning, develop staff, sustain improvement. Appropriate curriculum, equal opportunities, parental engagement | Strengths | Grade 2 | Areas for Development |
| | | ▶ Subject leader and SLT have high expectations. SL has the opportunity to teach pupils in the EYFS Forest School Sessions | | ▶ New staff/existing staff new to teaching in the outside environment (including HLTAs) requires additional training |
| | | ▶ Staff receives regular input/support from SL; parents, members of local community and other Forest School professionals contribute to the subject | | ▶ |
| 9 | OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS | Overall, pupils enjoy participating in Forest School and teaching is good. The two level three Forest School leaders support other staff with in the school. Pupils and staff are positive and enthusiastic about Forest School and expectations are high – particularly in terms of care and maintenance of the Forest School area. Having their children participate in Forest School is highly regarded by parents and also a reason for some parents to send their child to our Nursery. | | |
| 10 | WHAT IS A GOOD LEARNER LIKE ON LEAVING HURST PARK? | A good learner feels confident in and enjoys interacting with their natural environment, they enjoy being outside and taking care of it. They have a good understanding and knowledge of many of the mini beasts, birds, trees and flowers that inhabit our Forest School area. They have a greater awareness of seasonal changes. They feel confident to take and manage their own risks and are able to work as a team. | | |
| 11 | KEY AREAS FOR SUBJECT DEVELOPMENT Especially achievement and quality of teaching | ▶ For staff to attend regular CPD training to learn new skills to teach the children | | |
| | | ▶ Develop ways of recording/evidencing achievement in practical Forest School activities | | |
| | | ▶ To lead staff training of a Forest School session | | |
| | | ▶ To roll Forest School out to the rest of the year groups | | |