

A black and white photograph of a forest. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating a misty or ethereal atmosphere. The trees are tall and thin, with some bare branches in the foreground. The ground is covered in fallen leaves and twigs.

Forest Schools at St Patrick's RC School

Mrs Wilkins-Campbell

What is Forest School?

“An inspirational process that offers children, (young people and adults) regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence through hands-on learning in a woodland environment”
O'Brien & Murray (2008).

What is the history behind the initiative?

Originally a concept developed in Wisconsin in 1927.

1950s: Introduced in Sweden and Denmark.

1994: Introduced to the UK by Bridgwater College in Somerset and has seen unprecedented growth throughout the UK since.

International curriculums:

- Reggio Emilia, N. Tuscany
- Hi-Scope, USA
- Te Whariki, New Zealand

Research on benefits of Outdoor Education

- Educational Philosophies

- Child-centred education (Froebel)
- Learn by doing linked to real life (Dewey)
- Natural environment feeds creativity (Steiner)
- Importance of space to move (McMillan)

- Educational Research

- Development of Physical Literacy (Whitehead 2010)
- Increased physical activity (Mygind 2007)
- Increased motor development (Fjortoft 2004)
- Better understanding of risk (Gill 2007)
- Improved well being and mental health (Louv 2005)
- Counteract 'toxic childhood' (Palmer 2006)
- Children need to move to learn (Ouvry 2003)
- Sensory integration – food for the brain (Ayres 2005)
- All postural behaviour comes from balance (Goddard Blythe 2005)

The proof is out there...

Why introduce Forest School at St Patrick's RC Primary School?

- * Builds independence
- * Curiosity
- * Spatial awareness
- * Social skills
- * Risk management
- * Problem solving
- * Self-discovery
- * Increased self esteem
- * Exploration of senses
- * Motor development
- * Team building
- * Cross- curricular skills
- * Creativity
- * Imagination

Why is Outdoor Education so important in an ever-demanding school curriculum?



Consider the experience of many children in today's society...

- Play?
- Access to the outdoors?
- Access to nature?
- Access to space?



Why move the lessons to a forest?

Outdoor Classroom Culture

- Discover the information themselves through investigation
- Experiencing topics first hand and relating them to real life situations
- Working in collaboration with others
- Testing one's own limits and learning what is safe
- The unexpected
- Multi- Sensory/ Whole child development
- Physical development

Organisation of Forest School at St Patrick's RC School

- Year 3 will be dropped off at site for 9am and dropped back to site via minibus for lunchtime
- Year two will be transported to site via minibus after lunch and collected from site by parents at 3pm
 - On days where the weather is inclement the children will do forest school activities in school and you will be informed of a change in drop off and pick up via dojo

[illegible]

What to wear?

The children will be taking part in Forest School sessions throughout the year. The weather will not put us off exploring the outdoor area and therefore the children will need to have appropriate clothing.

Suitable footwear needs to be worn throughout the year (NO sandals or flip-flops)

Autumn	Spring/Summer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wellington boots/ trainers• Woolly hat• Gloves• Waterproof jacket• Waterproof trousers• Jumper/Sweatshirt• Complete set of Spare clothes and bag: top/trousers/shoes/socks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sun hat• A thin long sleeved top/ jumper• Trousers• Wellington boots/ trainers• Waterproof coat• Complete set of spare clothes: top/trousers/shoes/socks

Questions

How do I know my child is safe?

- High staff : child ratios
- Fully trained
- experience
- Secure site
- Children learn rules by games & songs
- Children involved in risk assessment
- Safe practise for tool use

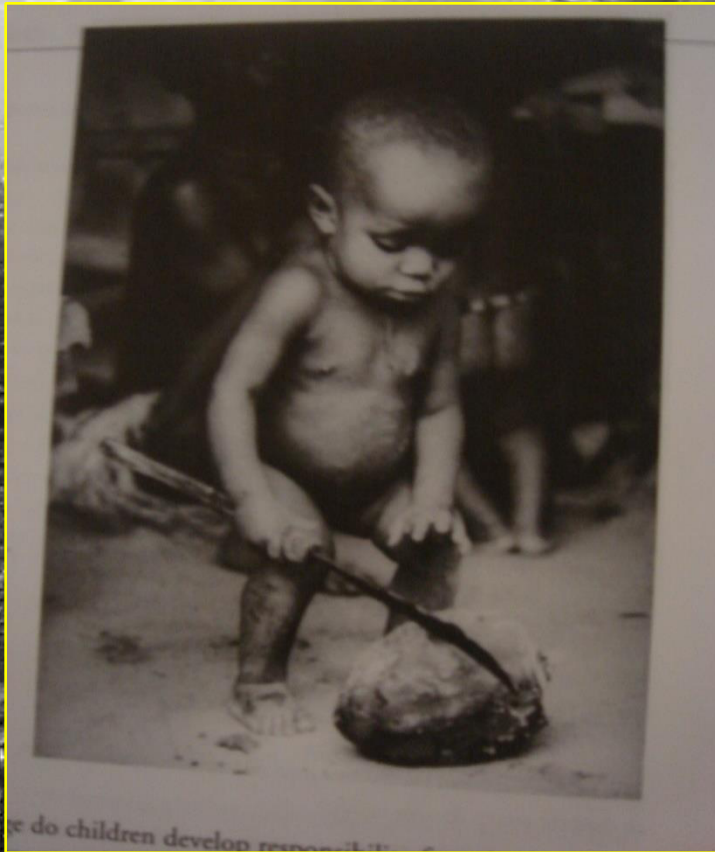
What about toileting?

*** We will have an outdoor toilet available to the children**

Does the weather prevent Forest School from taking place?

- No! (apart from very high winds, lightning)
- Inclement weather will be assessed and parents notified prior to the day

What are our children really capable of if we let them?



An Efe baby (11mths) in Democratic Republic of Congo cuts a fruit skillfully with a machete (Rogoff 2003: 6)



2 yr old child carrying basket during my trek to Everest Base Camp, April 2012.