

Woodland (Forest) Schools

A Woodland School is an innovative educational approach to outdoor play and learning in a woodland environment.

The philosophy of Woodland Schools is to encourage and inspire individuals of any age through positive outdoor experiences over an extended period of time



Woodland Schools originated in Europe – post WW2 – through lack of classroom space.

It is a long-term child-led, educational process that promotes, observes and explicitly supports the social, emotional and physical development of children, young people and adults in an outdoor, preferably woodland, environment.

Woodland Schools' strengths lie in its ability to deliver significant learning outcomes relevant to the whole breadth of the curriculum.

Redbourn Infant & Nursery School Woodland Schools Ethos

"Loving Learning, Respecting All" is embedded and reflected in all that we do, and is the premise on which we wish to build our Woodland Schools ethos.

In promoting a caring and sharing philosophy, we are committed to ensuring that all children are respected and valued for their individuality.

Through nurturing independence, self-esteem and sense of responsibility, within our safe learning environment, we are enabling the children to be risk takers and to problem solve, all of which are offered by the Woodland Schools philosophy.

By instilling these skills and qualities from an early age we can scaffold and prepare them for their journey through life, and in doing so promote, an inner motivation based on a love of learning, eagerness to make discoveries and to explore their natural world.

We believe that our enriching curriculum provides the children with the keys to unlock their inner creativity, whilst engaging all children in their learning. Communication, confidence and a caring attitude for themselves, others and the natural world will ensure that children will connect with the world around them and enjoy the opportunities that outdoor learning offers.



The Benefits of Woodland Schools

A common acronym associated with holistic child development is SPICES. This is used to highlight the areas of growth and development that Woodland Schools are aiming to improve. Woodland schools empower children and promote growth in all areas of learning listed in the table. They empower children to take responsibility and to be independent learners. They offer the children the opportunity to use/transfer their learning into the outdoors whilst scaffolding as they start to explore and learn in a less structured environment.

Social	Physical	Intellectual	Communication	Emotional	Spiritual
<p>Creates time for the children to interact with their peers and leaders.</p> <p>Learning Through Play opportunities – within small groups.</p> <p>Groups can scaffold each other.</p> <p>Develops children’s confidence working in a group.</p>	<p>Gross and fine motor opportunities created – tree climbing, picking up stones, seeds, etc.</p> <p>Values all learners and learning styles - engaged and using their senses to make discoveries and observations.</p> <p>Kinaesthetic learning.</p> <p>Gross and fine motor learning – tree climbing, collecting stone – variety on offer. -develops co-ordination skills.</p>	<p>Time to stop, think and decision make.</p> <p>To risk take in a safe environment.</p> <p>The learning offered is part of a process rather than an end product.</p> <p>Develops children’s ability to concentrate.</p> <p>Encourages creative thinking and problem solving.</p>	<p>Time to think, listen and talk.</p> <p>To ask questions and to answer them – independently.</p> <p>To develop and use their language skills/vocabulary – to transfer learning from within the classroom and to make connections and transfer language and vocabulary.</p>	<p>Develop confidence, self-esteem, independence</p> <p>Individual learning opportunities created by inclusion for all.</p> <p>Respect – promotes self-respect, mutual respect and respect for the natural world and what it provides now and in the future and how the children have a place in that world making them responsible for now and the future protection of the world.</p> <p>Learners progress at their own rate – unlocks their individuality and potential.</p>	<p>To be one with nature and to think of its origins, the fun it provides, the learning it offers and the future of the ever evolving world.</p> <p>The focus is on the process of learning rather than having to produce an end product.</p>

