

BFiS
Forest School

FOREST SCHOOL

PARENT INFORMATION

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

what is forest school?

Joanna Moppett
Outdoor Learning Leader

Forest School is an outdoor program of learning experiences delivered by trained practitioners within a natural environment, regardless of the weather!

The ethos of Forest School allows learners the time and space to develop skills, interests and understanding through practical, hands-on experiences in the natural world. It allows practitioners to step back and observe the children in order to encourage and inspire individuals to achieve through careful scaffolding and facilitation.





Where will it take place?

BFIS is fortunate to be located close to Collserola, parks, and other natural areas. Initially, sessions will take place on the BFIS campus, but we will begin to venture off campus over time.

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Who will be teaching Forest School?

Miss Joanna Moppett, leader of outdoor learning at BFIS, will be leading sessions with the support of the classroom teachers. She is passionate about the great outdoors and the benefits of outdoor learning for all children. She is trained in tool use and fire safety, outdoor First Aid, den building, and teaching in an outdoors environment.

What learning experiences occur at Forest School?

Whilst at Forest School, students will enjoy a range of activities, as well as closely supervised unstructured play. Learning plans are kept open and fluid so they can be guided by what the children see, learn, and want to do during their time in the forest. Each experience is a unique one, although they often include some of the following:



- Games/Team Building
- Storytelling
- Natural art activities
- Use of tools
- Exploring, nature watching and mini beast hunting
- Climbing, rolling
- Practical woodland skills
- Building dens
- Time to be quiet, reflect or talk

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How safe is Forest School?

The health and safety of all participants is central to everything undertaken within a Forest School Program. Forest School leaders are fully trained in risk assessment and emergency first aid. The Forest School operates under BFIS' Health and Safety policy and procedures regarding safeguarding and confidentiality.

Each site and activity has a risk assessment and the site is assessed before, during and after each Forest School session. First Aid and emergency equipment is taken with the leader on each session and is located where all participants have access. At each session, initial activities ensure that children are secure in their understanding of the boundaries and of Forest School rules. 'Higher-risk activities', such as tool use, are only available to the children when certain behaviors and boundaries are established, and training has occurred. Children are encouraged and supported in recognising and managing risk for themselves, through real life situations and experiences.

What are the benefits of Forest School for my child?

Forest School supports the holistic development of the child:

- **Health and fitness**- being active in an outdoor, natural environment
- I**ncreased emotional wellbeing**- just being among trees has been shown to have a real and positive effect
- **Social development**- communicating, sharing, negotiating and problem-solving and increased confidence
- **Skills development**- developing fine and gross motor skills and coordination for real purposes.
- **Gaining knowledge and understanding**- multisensory, real-life learning, learning to care for our green spaces and wildlife.
- I**ndividualized learning**- careful observation allows adults to tailor support to children's own interests and stage of development.

When will Forest School take place? How should my child be dressed?

This program will take place on specific days of the week depending on the grade level of your child. Sessions vary in length, from 45 mins to 2 hours initially, but will develop to 1 full day a week by the end of the year.

Please make sure your child has closed-toed water/mud-proof shoes, a warm layer as the weather gets cooler, and a waterproof coat. We recommend the clothes be suitable for getting dirty!

An integral part of the forest school experience is that children will experience the outdoors in all weathers. With the exception of high winds and thunderstorms, please assume that your child will be outside when they take part in Forest School, even if it is a shortened session.



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If my child is unwell, do they need to attend Forest School or can they join a different class at school that day instead ?

Forest School is a regularly-scheduled part of the school week and student participation is expected. If a child is unwell and can't attend Forest School, they should remain home until they have recovered and can participate fully in the school day.



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