

# The March Forest School Newsletter Sept wk 4



A BIG thank you to Mrs Hughes-Jones, Mrs Parker and Mr and Mrs Chahboune, our champion volunteers this week. If you are able to help, please come and join us. Please note there will be NO Forest School this week as Thursday is an INSET day for the staff.

Outdoor learning can have a **positive impact on children's development but it needs to be formally adopted**, a report suggests. Childhoods were dramatically changing, with fewer opportunities to spend time outdoors, researchers observed. The loss of exposure to the natural environment would have negative long-term consequences, they warned. Establishing an "outdoor learning hub" would help teachers, and help shape policies and strategy, they suggested. **Long-term risks**-The report highlighted previous studies that showed that busier family lives, combined with an increased sense of fear in society, children were having fewer opportunities to explore their surrounding natural environment. This was hampering children's social skills as well as risking stifling their long-term physical, emotional development and wellbeing. Therefore, it was important that schools did not overlook the opportunities that outdoor learning provided to bridge this gap. "At the moment, if outdoor learning is part of a school's curriculum in England, it is largely because the teachers recognise the value of it," said report co-author, Sue Waite, a reader in outdoor learning at Plymouth University, UK. "With so much focus on academic attainment, there can be pressure on teachers to stay in the classroom which means children are missing out on so many experiences that will benefit them through their lives."

This week the children had a go at 'Ninja Training', travelling along a log blindfold, trying to unseat their opponent with a whispy branch. They had to use all their other senses and develop their core strength to help them balance along the beam without falling off!



Lots of children wanted to make a muddy face from clay for their chosen tree. Some used a flattened piece of clay and imprinted a leaf. This was then allowed to dry out by the fire, then when most of the moisture had gone we put the clay in to the embers to 'fire' it .



The children helped to prepare their own vegetable stew again this week and they tucked into hamburgers and toasted marshmallows to help keep the hunger pangs at bay. All the time the children are well fuelled, they are able to continue with outdoor activities all day long

The children have very quickly adapted to the forest and are demonstrating a growing understanding of how to help keep themselves safe and manage their own risks. They are beginning to make up their own rules (as well as mine!) as we sit around the fire discussing the

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