**Forest school at St Joseph’s School**

Your child will be able to experience nature and the outdoor environment in a safe, secure and hands on way.

Our ’forest’ is a small redeveloped area within the school grounds. Within the ‘forest’ is an area known as the fire circle where children can socialise, and where we will have campfires. There is also a ‘bug hotel’ and mini beast area, a mud kitchen and digging area. There are two designated beds for planting. We have a tree stump friendship circle. There are established trees and shrubs and we have a plan to add to these by planting new trees and shrubs across the year. The children are encouraged to investigate & explore but also to respect all living things. We will also be using a range of tools in this area under 1:1 supervision for focused activities.

Research suggests that children learn best from first hand experiences. Exploring, playing and problem solving within the forest school aims to encourage learning using a range of activities both designed by the leader and instigated by the children themselves. Building a sense of independence, high self-esteem and team work are important parts of forest school, but health and safety considerations are always of paramount importance.

 For health and safety reasons children need to come to school dressed in their ‘forest school gear’ This will be long sleeves and long trousers in **both** winter and summer to protect them from insect bites, sunburn, stinging nettles and thorns.  Bad weather will not put us off venturing outside so appropriate clothing is essential.

Winter clothing

* Long sleeved top/jumper
* Long trousers
* Warm hat and gloves
* Wellies or trainers (no open toe shoes)
* Waterproof coat or other coat

 Summer clothing

* Light long sleeved top
* Light long trousers
* Sun hat/cap
* Sun cream
* Wellies or trainers (no open toe shoes)

The sessions will include a tasty snack sometimes made over our fire pit. If you have any questions or concerns regarding forest school please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Jordan or your child’s class teacher for more information.

We look forward to working with your child this half term and hope they can share their experiences with you.