

Sowing the seeds

Leavening Community Primary Forest School



Reconnecting Children with Nature

1. **What** is Forest School?
2. **What** are the benefits to childrens' learning and development?
3. **Why** start Forest School at Lutley?
4. **Who** attends, **who** plans, **who** staffs the sessions?
5. **How** is Health and Safety regulated?
6. **Where** is our Forest School site?



What has gone wrong and why

Daily Mail

24 HOURS A DAY

<< Back to home Login >> Register >>

Main sections

- News
- News headlines
- World news
- City news
- Mail comment
- Peter Hitchens
- Photos & video
- Mac cartoons
- Joe Martin
- News alerts
- E-editions
- Message boards

TODAY'S POLL



JANE CLARKE WEBCHAT



Put your diet dilemma leading nutritionist, Clarke...[more](#)

News

How children lost the right to generations

By DAVID DERBYSHIRE - [More by this author](#) »
Last updated at 01:03am on 15th June 2007

Comments (23)

When George Thomas was eight he walked everywhere

It was 1926 and his parents were unable to afford the fun of a bike and he regularly walked six miles to his favourite supervision.

Fast forward to 2007 and Mr Thomas's eight-year-old grandson none of that freedom.

He is driven the few minutes to school, is taken by car to and can roam no more than 300 yards from home.



MOTHER: Vicky aged eight in 1979 was allowed to walk to the swimming pool alone half a mile away.

SON: Ed, now eight is only allowed to walk on his own to the end of his street (300 yards).

GRANDFATHER: Jack aged eight in 1950. Able to walk about one mile on his own to the woods.

GREAT-GRANDFATHER: George aged eight in 1919. Allowed to walk six miles to go fishing

Map labels: Chapeltown, Grenoside, Concord Park, SHEFFIELD, Moorgate, Treeton, Orgreave, Beighton, Rother Valley, ROTHERHAM, M1, A630.

Children & nature: some stats



- Only **10%** of children play in woodlands, countryside & heaths (cf 40% for parents)
- **36%** of children don't have a 'patch of nearby nature'
- **85%** of parents want their children to be able to play unsupervised in nature
- **81%** of children would like more freedom to play outside

(Natural England 2009)

Anxious parents?



The screenshot shows the eBay UK website interface. At the top left is the eBay logo with ".co.uk". Navigation links include "home", "pay", "register", and "sign in". Below these are buttons for "Buy", "Sell", and "My eBay". A "Back to homepage" link is visible. The listing title is "OUT OF PRAM BABY KNEE PADS" in a blue banner. Below the title, it says "Buyer or seller of this item? Sign in for your status". A photograph shows a baby sitting on a wooden floor near a window. To the right of the photo, there is a "Buy It Now" price field, an "End time:" field, a "Postage cost:" field, a "Post to:" field, and an "Item location:" field.

Boris backs couple threatened by social services for letting their children cycle to school

By DAVID WILKES

Last updated at 5:27 PM on 17th August 2010

[Comments \(668\)](#) [Add to My Stories](#) [Share](#)

Boris Johnson today slammed 'barry' health and safety rules after a London couple were threatened with being referred to social services for letting their children cycle to school.

Oliver and Gillian Schonrock let their son and daughter, five and eight respectively, make the one-mile trip from their home on their own.

They say it helps to teach the youngsters independence, self-confidence and responsibility.

But other parents and teachers at £12,000-a-year Alleyn's Junior School in Dulwich, south east London, are said to think the practice is irresponsible and dangerous.

Headteacher Mark O'Donnell has met with Mr and Mrs Schonrock and told them the school is under an obligation to consider the children's safety and has a legal responsibility to notify the council if they fear it is being put at risk.





Parent of
child who
attended
Forest
School

Matilda attended Forest School last term and absolutely LOVED every minute of the experience. She is not naturally very bold or fearless and definitely someone who prefers indoor activities, but her experience really helped her love of the great outdoors.

Why does children's engagement with nature matter?



WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE



STORY AND PICTURES BY MAURICE SENDAK



The most significant experiences are repeated, hands-on & playful

What is Forest School?

- Regular visits over an extended period
- Opportunity to play and learn, explore and discover
- Risk-assessed but not risk-free, natural setting with trees
- Clear rules and boundaries but a relaxed pace with lots of choice and creativity
- Children can get hands-on, close to nature and MUDDY!



What are the benefits to childrens' learning and development?

- Mental health benefits
- Physical health benefits
- Social benefits
- Improved confidence and self-esteem
- Improved motivation and concentration
- Improved behaviour



- Risk awareness and self-management
- Increased knowledge and understanding of the world with better connection with and respect for their environment
- Can enhance classroom learning
- Gives new insights to individuals
- Possible 'ripple' effects



Why start Forest School at Leavening?

- All the reasons listed above
- Engage boys
- Utilise our fantastic facilities
- Take the curriculum outdoors
- Inspire young minds
- Passionate staff

Who staff the sessions?

- Our guidelines promote an adult: child ratio of 1:6 or better. This means we will have 4 adults.
- Adult volunteers will have a DSB clearance and will be briefed with regard to policies, procedures and their roles and

How is Health and safety regulated?

- Handbook of policies and procedures on site
- Risk assessment of the site (seasonally + daily checklist)
- Risk benefit assessments of all activities including tool use (1:1 with FSL) and lighting fires
- First Aid certification and First Aid kits on site
- Medical alerts awareness and medicines on site



- Emergency equipment on site and mobile phone
- Adequate adult:child ratios
- All adults CRB cleared and informed of policies and procedures, their roles and need for confidentiality
- Strict rules and boundaries, made very clear to the children and recapped at the start of each session



What activities have taken place so far?

- Familiarisation with procedures and the site
- Learning the Forest School rules and boundaries
- Playing, exploring, discovery, climbing and rolling
- Games and Stories
- Bird recognition , birdsong, bug hunting
- Tree facts and tree identification
- Map reading and orienteering (very simple)
- Natural art, den building and weaving hurdles
- Practical skills- sawing and whittling (1:1)
- Sharing, talking and celebrating



Forest School

A Guide for Parents



**"This is the best kind of classroom,
It's a journey through time and
space,
From the smallest seed to the
largest tree,
This is a Forest and a learning place.**

**This is the best kind of classroom,
Where the seasons don't happen
in books.
Where the learning is watching and
thinking and talking
And everyone notices, everyone
looks."**

**From 'The best Kind of
Classroom' by Ian MacMillan**

What benefits will my child get from participating in Forest School?

Forest School supports the holistic development of the child:

- Health and fitness – Being active in an outdoor, natural environment.
- Increased emotional wellbeing – just being among trees has been shown to have a real and positive effect.
- Social development – Communicating, sharing, negotiating and
- Problem-solving .
- Skills development – Developing fine and gross motor skills and coordination for real purposes.
- Gaining knowledge and understanding – Multi-sensory, real-life learning, learning to care for our green spaces and wildlife.
- Individualised learning – Careful observation allows adults to tailor support to children's own interests and stage of development.
- Curriculum Links – Forest School supports many areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, National Curriculum and the 'Every Child Matters' agenda.

When will Forest School be taking place and how should the children be dressed ?

This programme will take place on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons.

Please refer to the attached timetable to see when your child's class will be involved.

On that day your child can come to school in non-uniform but please make sure this includes old jeans or jogging bottoms (not shorts), a long-sleeved T-shirt, a sweatshirt or fleece and a waterproof coat. We have enough waterproof trousers for every child. If waterproofs are not required their clothes may become dirty but we hope you agree that this is all part of the fun !!!

In summer, a sunhat would be advisable and in winter, a warm coat, extra layers, a hat and gloves.

Where can I find out more information ?

www.forestschools.com

www.foresteducation.org