



About Us

Little Sticks Forest School offers children the opportunity to spend all day enjoying the great outdoors in our woodland setting. Our camp consists of a forest cabin with toilets, kitchen and cosy area. The outside space includes a fire area (aka the fire circle) where we gather for lunch, marshmallows, stories and cooking. Children are encouraged to respect the fire and quickly learn how to stay safe around it. There are many structures around our camp that encourage imaginative play and physical development and we have the luxury of being able to change these regularly to meet the needs of the children. We are lucky enough to be able to explore the whole of the Woodland Trust site situated next to our camp and will regularly be taking walks to observe the abundance of wildlife, including birds, rabbits, owls and the occasional deer.

Within the camp the children will very quickly learn how to use the resources that the environment offers to aid their play and will become highly creative and imaginative.

We will be teaching the children how to use tools safely, so they can help chop wood for the fire, whittle sticks to toast marshmallows on or snip the saplings using the secateurs. Each day will be child led so no two days will be the same.

We will spend a lot of time encouraging positive relationships between children and will talk about feelings and emotions when the situations arise. For example, if a child falls over and is upset, once they are ok, we will talk about how nice it is to have friends that help each other when one is hurt.

The children will take part in routines of snack and lunch time around the fire and story time. They will visit familiar sites within the woodland throughout the seasons and will watch and discuss how they change.

We follow the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage), which sets out the learning and welfare requirements for all children between 0 and 5 years. You can find out more about the EYFS at www.foundationyears.org.uk. We are inspected by Ofsted in the same way as all educational settings.

The Forest School Ethos

Forest School settings provide an incredibly unique education for children. Essentially, they are all about nurturing children and providing opportunities where they can develop confidence, self-esteem, emotional and personal skills. Over time, through regular visits to the woodland and participating in Forest School activities we aim to develop the 'whole child' and help them become, more confident, independent and creative learners. We hope they eventually see nature as an extension to their home, where they feel totally comfortable and at peace. Over time children become

resilient, capable risk takers where they are skilled at assessing their own risks and develop an awareness of their own safety and that of others.

Our ultimate priority as a Forest School is that our days in the woods are child-led where the children are given the opportunities to foster their interests and ideas, become passionate about what they love and develop a thirst for knowledge. We hope that the setting is a place where children feel safe and happy and we can develop and grow as a Forest School community/ family.

Staff

Little Sticks Forest School is run by Danielle Field. I am a primary school teacher and am also paediatric first aid trained and have up to date safeguarding training. I have a Master's in Early Childhood, I am a Level 3 Forest School leader and qualified in outdoor first aid. I taught in the early years at primary school for ten years and then spent two years at a nursery which ran Forest School sessions. After many years in school I was ready to approach teaching children in their early years in a different way. Forest School was the perfect fit for me as it encourages children to learn in a developmentally appropriate way. They learn skills for life in a calm and nurturing environment and are encouraged to think about how important our natural environment is to us all. I hope that through Forest School the children will develop a love of our natural environment that will last a lifetime. It is also so much fun and no day goes by without a good belly laugh!

Karen "I have always enjoyed the great outdoors and I am passionate about Forest School. I have a wealth of experience in the early years sector and hold the following qualifications – Level 3 Playwork, Levels 3 & 4 CCLD, Level 5 Leadership and Management and Level 3 Forest School Leader. As a Forest School Leader I love observing the spark and excitement children display as they explore the amazing learning opportunities the outdoors have to offer. The best part of my job is seeing the children progress and become happy, confident, resilient learners with mud on their faces but always a sparkle in their eyes".

Emma joined us in February 2022 and is a fully qualified primary school teacher and our SEN (Special Educational Needs) Lead and is currently working towards her level 3 Forest School Leader qualification. Emma is passionate about the Forest School Ethos and loves being outdoors whether that be at work or time spent with friends and family.

Sarah joined us in May 2022 and is a level 3 Forest School Leader. Sarah has previously been the main Forest School lead in her previous role at a day nursery and is really passionate about the outdoors and benefits of delivering Forest School sessions.

We place a high emphasis on quality interactions between children and staff and ensure we have average ratios of 1 adult to 6 children. As mentioned above we have highly qualified staff which includes at least one qualified teacher every day plus at least one level 3 Forest School Leader. Our ratio is unlike most Pre-School settings which enables us to really get to know the children in our care and meet their individual needs.

Kit list

“There is no such thing as bad weather only inappropriate clothing.”

(old Swedish saying)

For the children’s comfort and safety, it is essential that your child is dressed appropriately for every session. If a child is not dressed ready for the weather, unfortunately they will be unable to join us in the woods. Signing your child up to Forest School means making a commitment to purchase the correct clothing in order for them to enjoy their day in the woods, even in the worst weather.

In your registration pack we have included a Winter Layers Information sheet that details what clothing and footwear your child should have for the session. Please ask a team member if you have any questions or need recommendations on suitable clothing and footwear

Please dry all clothing ready for the next session. Please follow the care instructions carefully, never leave the waterproofs wet in a bag for too long, always dry on a warm radiator (inside out) or in the sun. If needed wash them on a short, cold rinse cycle (without powder) or hose them down. Do not hang them outside in freezing conditions. If you look after the waterproofs, they will last the whole year and beyond.

Children will also need:

Additional clothing

- Good fitting baseball cap (to keep rain out of their face and for shade in the summer).
- Waterproof/ showerproof rucksack. Please make sure everything they need is packed into this bag as they will need to carry it themselves. The outside pocket should contain the things they need through the day e.g their hat, gloves and a plastic bag for muddy wet clothes.
- Wellies (tall if possible) with thick socks (character wellies with images stuck on are not suitable, they split after a very short time). We recommend ‘Bogs’ (rubber/neoprene) wellies or visit www.warmwellies.co.uk (Please ask for our 10% discount code) as they are suitable for very cold weather whilst being waterproof. If your child has Bogs or Warmwellies, they can wear them all year round. They are slightly more expensive; however, you will not need to purchase snow boots as well.
- Water bottle attached to their bag with a carabiner if possible, so they can easily access it. Please do not send box drinks, cans etc.
- Packed lunch that can fit in their bag. In winter their lunch may need to be packed in a separate bag as their backpack will be full of spare clothes.
- Hot chocolate mug (unbreakable).
- Change of clothes within a plastic bag (socks, underwear, trousers, long sleeved top and spare warm jumper). In the winter make sure they have a full set of clothing to change into if needed (including extra layers).

Things they always need:

- Lunch in an insulated lunch bag (with ice pack in warm weather).

- Waterproof dungarees and coat. (Please dry as soon as you get home and read care instructions carefully)
- Wellies (as detailed above Warmwellies or Bogs are recommended during winter)
- Mug for hot chocolate (named)
- Drinks bottle (one that can be opened easily)
- Plastic bag (or similar) to place wet gear in (keep in the outer pocket of their backpack)
- Waterproof mitts
- Full set of spare clothes (including socks)
- Baseball cap (great for sun and rain)
- And layers depending on temperature.

In cold weather (below 8 degrees) the children will need:

- Thermal base layers (leggings, long sleeve top)
- 'Heat Holder' socks or similar
- Extra layers depending on how cold it is. (It is always a few degrees colder under the canopy so it is best to put on too many layers rather than too few)
- A warm woollen jumper or fleece
- Jogging bottoms or similar comfortable trousers
- Waterproof mittens (we provide) with spare magic gloves
- Thin gloves or 'Magic gloves' please label as these always get muddled up
- A warm hat (without a bobble) or balaclava and or a snug fitting snood (no scarves or hats with long dangly bits please as these can be dangerous when climbing and when cooking on a fire)
- Warm gilet
- Emergency foot warmers (the ones that you peel the back off and stick to their socks) for when their feet get cold (only usually needed when extremely cold)

In warm weather the children also need:

- A sun hat
- Long sleeve top
- They always wear their dungarees even in the summer, so on very hot days they can wear light shorts under them but still with long welly socks.
- Jumper or sweatshirt in case the weather turns colder

- Sunscreen and insect repellent (please apply these in the morning when needed)

*******Please write their name on everything that is removable, otherwise things do get lost.*******

Please try to keep everything in their back packs (except lunch) as we do not have much storage space for extra bags.

Extreme Weather

Please be aware that we may have to close Forest School at short notice if we deem the weather to be too dangerous. This will be if:

Gusts of wind over 40mph are forecast

Snow prevents safe travel to and from the site

A weather warning is in place for torrential rain that could cause flooding

Most weathers are fine to open as normal but please be aware we may not be able to provide care when we have the weather conditions listed above.

We will keep in touch using the Family app to update parents on weather and clothing requirements so please make sure you have your phone handy on the morning of Forest School.

Sessions & Cost

We offer full day sessions (8.00am to 5.00pm) at a cost of £48 per day and half day sessions (morning 8.00am to 12.30pm, afternoon 12.30pm to 5.00pm) at a cost of £24 per session.

*All sessions are charged at £4.50 per hour with an additional session cost of £3.75 for half days and £7.50 for full days. (The additional session cost is included in the overall session cost of £24 for half day sessions and £48 for full day sessions)

Funded children

We accept 2, 3 and 4 year olds who are funded (15 or 30 hours). *A daily supplement will still be payable.

Additional Session Cost*

On top of the basic hourly cost (including funded children) we charge an additional cost for all children.

This covers additional insurance costs for adventurous activities, snacks and drinks, printing photographs (for learning journeys), extra staff costs (so we have small ratios and level 3 forest school trained staff), and helps keep our setting small and viable (this fee may be increased when there is a rise in national wages or a decrease in funding rates).

Fees are paid monthly or weekly in advance of the sessions.

We accept childcare vouchers, and tax free childcare.

Holidays

We are open 46 weeks of the year and follow the Wigan term dates for our holidays:

Spring Term 2022

Spring Term Begins: Tuesday 4th January 2022

Spring Term Ends: Thursday 31st March 2022

Summer Term 2022

Summer Term Begins: Monday 11th April 2022

May Day: Monday 2nd May 2022

Half Term: Monday 30th May - Friday 3rd June 2022

Forest School Re-opens: Monday 6th June 2022

Summer holiday: Monday 15th August - Friday 27th August 2022

Autumn Term 2022

Autumn Term Begins: Tuesday 30th August 2022

Autumn Term Ends: Friday 16th December 2022

Spring Term 2023

Spring Term Begins: Tuesday 3rd January 2023