



Forest Schooling UK

The wild calms the child



SPECIALIST PROVISION

We have created a specialist referral Forest School provision in Kingston Upon Thames. We concentrate on offering support for Primary School children with SEMH. Children that need extra support away from the traditional mainstream school environment and curriculum benefit from spending time in our safe space. We have developed outdoor activities to engage the individual child, encouraging emotional regulation and giving the child coping strategies before a return to their mainstream placement.

Ideally children attend once or twice a week for two terms. To access the provision talk to your child's Head Teacher who maybe able to refer your child through the Education Inclusion Support Service.

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It's like an overdose of nurture

A behavioural specialist

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He absolutely loves Forest School. He comes home very happy and I have seen a huge shift in him. His happy sparkle is back!

A parent

Monitoring

We provide the child's setting with a daily 'tracker' a short report, accessible online. Long term, we measure children's needs and successes using the Boxall Profile, a widely used assessment tool for social emotional and behavioural difficulties for children and young people. We feed this information back to the child's placement at key points.

6 Principles

We follow the 6 principles of Forest School and believe children's social and emotional development is a priority in helping them successfully access a curriculum suited to their needs.

Through child-led activities, we encourage children to develop resilience and build their self esteem and confidence.

Emotional Regulation

We have been described as injecting an "overdose of nurture" to children who struggle with their emotional regulation. We have designed activities that encourage a therapeutic approach to problems.

We incorporate Zones of Regulation throughout our approach, encouraging an emotional toolkit to develop.

Communication

We will involve all interested parties in the child's progress with regular reports and conversations. We actively encourage parents, staff and carers to visit and engage with the child's activity and hold "coffee meetings" allowing parents to observe their children.

We signpost parents to resources and other professionals.



CASE STUDY

John aged 9

John was referred to us in April 2019 due to his aggressive violent behaviour in class. Originally, John took part in an organised session for two hours a week with a group of 7 other children as well as a 1:1 session once a week for an hour. In Autumn 2020 John’s behaviour deteriorated in class to the point he was at risk of exclusion.

Past trauma and attachment difficulties have contributed significantly to John’s emotion regulation difficulties. Unpredictable, aggressive and controlling behaviour dominated, leading to peer rejection and school refusal. Underneath the externalising behaviour, John’s mood would be low at times with big emotional outbursts expressed to trusted adults. A complicated home environment contributed to John’s fragile mental health and the school was finding it increasingly hard to cope with his needs.

In the Autumn of 2020 the SLT and FSUK devised a temporary plan to place him in Forest School every morning as an alternative provision. This involved John staying in the Forest for three hours a day with his TA on a carousel timetable that included academic sessions but primarily emotional/social coaching. A huge input of nurture by three members of staff over the course of 8 months allowed trusted relationships to be formed in a safe environment where John could express himself without the risk of being judged. An emotional toolkit that was suited to John’s needs was introduced alongside positive rewards and scheduled time with his peers.

Over a set period of time John was slowly reintroduced to the classroom with his TA and is able to take part in some academic activities. There have been huge improvements made in his aggressive behaviour and John is now able to play with others without hurting or offending them. Emotional outbursts are still seen but far less than before and John is now able to use his emotional toolkit to help him through difficult times. John still comes to the forest at the end of every day to reflect on his day and stay connected to his trusted adults.

OUR UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT

There is a covered outdoor classroom, a greenhouse and a secure fence and hedgerow to support wildlife and separate the area from the main school. The allotment features raised beds for the growing of food and plants by all the children. We have a large chicken coop and there is a small reflection and sensory garden as well as the Forest School provision. We have added solar and wind power meaning all energy on-site is self generated, and the addition of a rear locked gate into and out of the area allows the exploration of the Hogsmill River to be brought more easily into the program.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

We are based on our secure site at St John’s Primary School, Kingston. We are inspected by OFSTED as part of the school’s SEN provision. St John’s is a "good" school.

Our staff attend regular training sessions in areas such as child protection, trauma informed approaches, and mindfulness. They have over 70 years of experience working with children and families. All of our staff are highly trained in outdoor first aid.



LEARN MORE



St John’s Nursery & Primary School, Portland Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 2SG

www.forestschooling.co.uk

