

Pixmore

Junior School



Forest School Autumn 2016 Update

All learning together, creating moments to celebrate.

We strive to make Pixmore a happy and safe school where we:

Respect ourselves and others

Embrace individuality

Celebrate culture and diversity

Inspire a love of learning

Over the last term we have been trying to make better use of the beautiful grounds that we have by introducing the children to 'Learning Outside the Classroom' or 'Forest School'. Our aim over the next 18 months is to embed the outdoors as a classroom and teaching opportunity; enhance the curriculum for all of the children and really push a love of learning. By the end of 2017-18, our goal is to become an accredited Learning Outside the Classroom Bronze Award school. This would make us the only school in the North Herts and South Beds area with this recognised award!

As such I would like to share with you some of the learning that we have been taking part in over the Autumn term. We have also put some of our Forest School photos on the school website in the year group galleries and will continue to share these with you over the coming terms.

Year 3

It was Year 3's first chance to explore our wooded area and grounds when we went out at the start of November. We played some team building games to develop our communication and social skills and then 3I took the opportunity to explore the woodland as they took part in an Autumn Scavenger Hunt.



3D went colour hunting where they needed to look for things found in the woodland that were different shades of an autumn colour. They created some lovely collages!

Both classes stopped off at the replica Anderson Shelter built around 5 years ago to link with a World War 2 topic.



Back in the classroom, we used pointillism (an art style where pictures are created using only small dots of colour) to create an autumn tree picture. All of their work and photos went onto a display in the school library along with work from Year 4.



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Year 4

Year 4 went outside as part of their literacy unit on report writing. They followed a blindfolded trail around the woodland to familiarise themselves with the area and as a game to develop their communication and trust. We then played a game of Hide and Seek and discussed how animals camouflage. We predicted that those children in brightly coloured coats would be the first ones found – we were right!

They then played a game called 'Toxic Waste' where they needed to work in teams to get a container of 'toxic waste' (coloured water!) from the top of the school field down to an area by the front of the school without spilling it or touching the container! The game tested their teamwork, communication skills and perseverance. They all had great fun and it was really good to see the children working together to achieve a goal.



Back in the classroom, the children planned and wrote a report explaining what Forest School was and what skills they had learnt.



Year 5

Year 5 had been into the woodland before as some of them remembered Forest School and Gardening club from when they were in Year 3. They followed a blindfolded trail to familiarise themselves with the woodland again and to enhance their communication skills.

In groups, they played 'Toxic Waste' as the Year 4s did, but it was really good to see the progression in communication, problem solving and discussion that went on in the teams as they tackled the task. They also needed to practise patience, tolerance towards each other and their listening skills.



Year 6

Having endured hearing the rest of the school talking about Forest School, Year 6 got their chance at the end of November and thoroughly enjoyed their time in the outdoors. Year 6 had a challenging team building task that involved delegation, leadership, communication and perseverance.



Their task was called 'Woolly Worms'. They had to find the 25 coloured woolly worms camouflaged in the woodland area but to make the task challenging the worms were very well camouflaged (green, dark green, grey, white, yellow and brown)!! The teams had to collect the worms and then tie them altogether to make the longest worm. The winning team earned house points for the longest worm but there were also house points for the teams that showed good communication and teamwork.

Some of the things they had to consider were how they were going to organise their team so that everyone had a job and that their worm started to be assembled while the others were hunting; where they tied the wool together and how far down the piece of wool they tied it. All affected which team was the winning one.



All of the children enjoyed exploring the outdoors and every class that I took out told me that they wanted to do more in the woodland. I had some great feedback from children. Below are just a few quotes:

"I thought the blindfolded game was adventurous and exciting but also scary." Lily-Rose, 4R

"We had lots of fun and I really liked playing hide and seek in the woods. William was really hard to find!" Seth, 3D

"I'd really wanted to play the toxic waste game after Mrs Inman showed us what she was doing with the Year 5s! The woolly worm game was tricky because they were so well camouflaged." Vicky, 6B

"We had to work well together to find all of the things on our treasure hunt list." Dylan, 3I

"That was the best afternoon!" Logan, 6C

Even the staff got involved on 5th January as part of our INSET training!!!



We've got lots of activities planned for the Spring and Summer term including individual classes with specific curriculum focuses, using some of the activities as Golden Time activities as well as having a Forest School Week planned for each year group, so look for a Forest School letter coming home with your child!

If there are any parents or carers who would like to join groups or classes as they go out in the woodland, please let your child's class teacher or myself know.

In addition, we are also looking to build up our bank of Forest School resources so if you have any of the following that you could donate to the school, they'd be very much appreciated:

- large tarpaulins
- aeroplane masks/blindfolds that we could use for our trails
- any nature/woodland identification guides or posters

Lots of exciting activities planned for the coming term, keep an eye on the newsletter and school website galleries for Forest School updates, photos and dates.

S. Inman

Mrs Sarah Inman

