

Subject: Outdoor learning

Golden Concept: Taking Responsibility for own Learning

Purpose:

The purpose of taking responsibility for one's own learning at a forest school is to nurture empowerment, intrinsic motivation, self-direction, critical thinking, and a lifelong love for learning. It prepares students to be active, engaged, and independent learners who can navigate and contribute to the world around them.

Personalised Learning: Forest schools often provide a flexible and personalized learning environment. Students can choose activities that align with their interests, strengths, and areas for growth. This individualized approach enables students to tailor their learning experiences to meet their unique needs and preferences.

Resilience and Resourcefulness: Forest schools expose students to the unpredictability of the outdoors, encouraging them to adapt to changing conditions. Taking responsibility for their learning in this context fosters resilience and resourcefulness, as students learn to overcome challenges, make decisions, and find creative solutions.

Fostering a Love for Learning: When students actively participate in shaping their learning experiences, they are more likely to develop a love for learning. This intrinsic passion for exploration and discovery extends beyond the immediate context of the forest school and continues throughout their educational journey.

Assessment:

Assessing the development of students' ability to take responsibility for their own learning at a forest school often involves a combination of formative and summative assessment methods. These assessments aim to capture the students' engagement, independence, decision-making, and overall growth in their learning journey.

Observations: Regular observation by teachers and facilitators is a key component of assessing students' responsibility for their learning. Observations may focus on the students' initiative, self-direction, and engagement with the natural environment.

Goal-setting Sessions: Regular goal-setting sessions where students articulate their learning objectives and reflect on their progress can be part of the assessment process.

Cross curriculum:

Linking the concept of taking responsibility for one's own learning at a forest school to cross-curricular activities enhances the holistic development of students.

English: Students can take responsibility for their own learning by creating nature journals, writing reflective essays, or composing poems inspired by their experiences in the forest. This not only enhances their literacy skills but also encourages self-expression and reflection.

Mathematics: In a forest setting, students can engage in measurement activities, data collection, and analysis. They might measure the height of trees, track weather patterns, or create graphs based on their observations. This integrates mathematical concepts with their responsibility for planning and executing these activities.

Science: Forest schools provide an excellent opportunity for hands-on science exploration. Students can design and conduct their own experiments, observe plant and animal life, and analyse ecosystems. Taking responsibility for these scientific inquiries enhances their understanding of the natural world.

Key Stage or stage breakdown:

Bronze: Pupils begin to take responsibility for their own learning throughout this stage. Activities are provided for pupils to explore and they have to work as a team to find the answers/solve the problem presented to them.

Silver: Pupils are giving more responsibility during this stage and will start to use tools which require listening to safety instructions even more important.

Gold: Pupils will develop into young leaders during this stage which in turn requires pupils to ensure they have taken responsibility for their own learning environment in order to support others.