



Peter's Patch
Forest School – Day Care – After School Club

Forest School
Parents Information
Booklet

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Please do not hesitate to email us on
peters-patchdaynursery@live.co.uk
or call us on 028 92688005





Peter's Patch

Forest School - Day Care - After School Club

Welcome to Peter's Patch Forest School! Thank you for taking the time to read our information booklet. We hope you find the answers to all your questions inside. If not, please do not hesitate to contact us on: 028 92688005 or email us at: peters-patchdaynursery@live.co.uk

This booklet will give you a little more information about Forest School, it's ethos and how we make it work here in Peter's Patch. More information can be found on our website: www.peterspatchdaynursery.com

Here at Peter's Patch we pride ourselves on leading the way on risky play. Through the use of in the moment planning and risk-benefit assessment, our staff ensure that each child is given the opportunity daily to take suitable risks and learn through their experiences.

Using what nature provides, allows our children to test their boundaries, stretch their abilities and pursue their passions. Staff are on hand to scaffold language, promote opportunities for learning and support resilience when things don't go as planned. Everyday the forest is different, everyday our brains have to be engaged to keep us safe and keep us learning! Everyday we are faced with challenges and every day we are learning and growing as individuals and as a team!

Thank you for considering us in your search for a setting for your little one. We would love to welcome you into the Peter's Patch Family!





Peter's Patch

Forest School - Day Care - After School Club

Set in Hillsborough Forest our Forest School offers a unique opportunity for outdoor learning to our children. Each day from 9.30 - 12pm the sounds of laughter, chatting and exploring can be heard echoing through the tall trees as the children run, jump, dig, swing and learn together in nature.

The site is full of places to investigate and every day it looks and smells a little different. Things can be wet and squishy after the rain, new trees and branches may have fallen in the storm or everything could be dry and crunchy after a dry spell. The constantly changing environment creates new and varying challenges for the children who have to take risks, develop their physical skills and work together to overcome whatever nature has thrown their way.



There are opportunities for den building, cooking in the mud kitchen, climbing trees, balancing and swinging in our hammocks. We even have woodwork on offer with the children being able to build their own special creations to take home from the forest.

The day starts at The Bungalow where the children sign in with their tree cookies and get hooked into the Walk-o-diles which allow us to safely cross the road. Once in the Forest our learning starts as we head to our Forest School Site. A time together lets us go over the rules and listen to a story which aims to inspire our little ones into exciting and imaginative play. Then it is off to play! The children follow their own interests and curiosity with staff on hand to lead and support when they are needed.

A full belly is necessary when out on adventures so snack is provided in the forest before the children head off to play.





Peter's Patch
Forest School - Day Care - After School Club

Ethos

Forest School aims to capture the child's natural desires to be curious, to investigate their world and to learn through doing.

It uses a child lead method of learning with each individual being given the freedom and space to learn in their own way, at their own pace without the constraints of walls and time tables.

Staff are always close by to offer a hand if needed, to ask a relevant question or demonstrate how to do something safely.

Children learn best when they have a go and this is encouraged at every opportunity.



Trying new things is encouraged, as is practicing things you have done before. The forest changes every day depending on the weather and so the children are constantly being challenged to think through what they doing, risk assess, and give it a go.

Our children don't stay with us forever so we aim to develop the important skills they need for school in their forest environment. Skills such as working as a team, emotional regulation, resilience, problem solving and keeping themselves safe develop naturally and there are lots of opportunities for the children to practice physical skills like running, jumping, climbing, painting, balancing and more.





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Practicalities

Using the Toilets

We do have toilet tents and portable potties available to the children but everyone needs to be confident using the bathroom before they can start Forest School.

There are no changing facilities in the Forest so little ones need to be able to let us know when they need to go! There's usually a lot of layers to get off so it is always a good idea to practice at home too!

Snacks

We will provide a snack in the forest, along with fruit and water. During the winter we have hot juice or soup to keep us warm!



The Weather

There's no such thing as bad weather, but there is such a thing as inappropriate clothing!!

Forest School happens in all weather - rain, hail, sun, snow, light winds. The only thing that will stop us heading to the forest itself is very high winds or lightening. If this happens the children will remain in their safe place at The Bungalow and enjoy their Forest School experience a little differently!

Because of this it is very important that your child is dressed appropriately each day!

Everyone must wear their Didrikson Weatherproof suit every day at Forest School - even in the summer. What changes are the layers you add underneath.

Check out our handy guide below!



Peter's Patch

Forest School - Day Care - After School Club

What to Wear in Summer?

Didrikson Suit

- One pair of comfortable trousers
- One light long sleeved t-shirt
- One fleecy zip up jacket
- One pair of socks
- Wellies or sturdy closed toe shoes (which you don't mind getting wet and muddy!)
- A sun hat for sunny days

We recommend on sunny days that children arrive for forest school wearing sun cream

What to Wear in Spring / Autumn?

Didrikson Suit

- One pair of comfortable trousers
- One long sleeved t-shirt or top
- One thick jumper
- One fleecy zip up jacket
- Two pairs of socks. On the bottom, one thin cotton sock, and the top, a thick wool or fluffy bed sock
- Wellies or sturdy closed toe shoes (which you don't mind getting wet and muddy!)

What to Wear in Winter?

- Didrikson Suit
- Base layer - thermals
- Next bottom layer - fleece or other warm tracksuit bottoms
- First top layer - long sleeve t-shirt or thin jumper
- Second top layer - fleece jumper
- Third top layer - fleece jacket
- Neck scarf
- Hat and gloves
- Socks - Two pairs to wear (on the bottom, one thin cotton sock, and the top, a thick wool or fluffy bed sock) or one pair of heat holder socks
- Snow boots or sturdy warm outdoor boots





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Keeping Safe

There are no fences or walls on the Forest School site but the children are given clear boundaries at every session and quickly learn how far is too far. We want to encourage exploration and sometimes that means balancing on the boundary tree or checking out a fallen branch. It's all ok so long as a leader knows where you are and you come back quickly when you are called.

We also have some Forest School rules which we practice each morning including no picking, no licking, kind hands and words and what we should do if a dog comes to say hello.

This is a public park after all so occasionally the children do see members of the public and their dogs walking around. We educate the children on how to react if a dog is nearby, we learn that standing still with their arms folded is the best way to stay safe.



Our Forest School sign lets members of the public know where we are and we are a familiar and joyful sight to the local people of Hillsborough as we head into the forest in our brightly coloured suits each day!

Each morning our wonderful Forest School staff head over to set up the sight for the children. They carry out a detailed risk assessment on the whole area, check for dangerous trees or plants, carry out a litter sweep and make the environment as child friendly as possible.

We attach ropes, tarps and hammocks, lay out paint and pots, pans, spoons and so much more! At the end of the session the children help to look after our things by gathering everything up and tidying it all back into our trailers for the next day.



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Breakfast Club

Breakfast club is available each day from 8.30am and is aimed at those children who attend Forest School and Educational Preschool.

It is an opportunity for the children to join us for a breakfast of cereal and fruit, milk or water and a play before they start their day!

Children who are attending Forest School can come in their normal clothes and we will get them ready for the forest when the time comes.



Lunch Club

Our Lunch Club runs from 12 - 1.30pm each day during term time and offers a little extra time with us and, of course, a delicious home cooked meal. Situated down in The Bungalow it is ideal for children who attend Forest School and our Educational Preschool.

The nursery bus will transport the children to The Bungalow where the staff team will make them feel welcome and help them serve themselves some delicious lunch. All our meals are prepared in the Carnreagh Kitchen by our wonderful Chef before being transported to The Bungalow just a short distance away.

Independence is encouraged at Lunch Club with the children serving their own food, scraping their own plates and serving themselves water. There is always water available during Lunch Club just in case anyone needs a little drink as they play.



Peter's Patch
Formal School - Day Care - After School Club

A Word from Natasha, Nursery Director

Our ethos here at Peter's Patch is based around the knowledge that every child is unique. Each child learns in a different way and, as facilitators of learning, we aim to give all the children the space, time, and environment to learn at their pace while following their interests.

We strive to create an environment which is engaging and safe, while still promoting risk taking when appropriate. Children are offered support and guidance by qualified and highly trained staff who share our passion for learning and development through play.

Parents, guardians, and families are an incredibly important part of our world and at every opportunity we hope to involve them in the development of the children. Whether it is through the termly focus child information sheets, daily feedback via Family or a catch up in the car park - we want to stay connected even when we cannot be physically together in nursery.

It's going to be amazing and we would love to have you join us on the journey!

Natasha Ferson - Managing Director

NOTE: At certain time of the year when it is damp and cold the children tend to get little red dots/circles on their skin (mainly forehead) They appear to be midge like bites. This has never caused any of the children any known discomfort and they tend to disappear themselves with no side affects within a few short days. It has been said that Natural insect repellent works to prevent this if that's something you would want to try.

