

### **St Joseph's Forest School – 14/5/26**

Both Beech and Oak classes took part in an engaging and memorable Forest School experience, making full use of outdoor learning opportunities across the day.

#### **Beech Class**

Beech Class began their Forest School adventure with a detailed safety briefing before setting off together, holding the red rope as they walked to Todmorden Park, full of excitement and anticipation.

Before the trip, the children created their own camouflage binoculars using recycled materials and natural decorations, which they were eager to use in the woodland environment.

Once in the woods, the children explored a variety of natural spaces and challenges. They discovered a large fallen tree, where they carefully climbed, balanced, and explored mini beasts living within and around it. They used their binoculars to observe birds and wildlife, and enjoyed moments of calm listening to the woodland sounds.

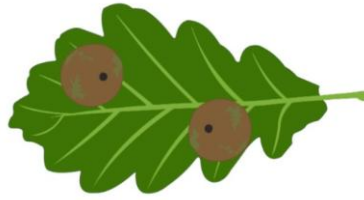
A key learning moment came at a beech tree, where the children discovered beech nuts and learned about how new trees grow. They lay beneath the canopy, observing the branches and leaves above them, with some children overcoming initial hesitation about getting muddy to fully engage with the experience.

The group also explored rivers, crossed bridges, climbed hills, and took part in physical challenges that built confidence, balance, and resilience. Den building encouraged teamwork and creativity, resulting in two structured shelters made from natural materials.

Other highlights included spotting squirrels, discovering natural objects such as moss, oak apples, and horse chestnut flowers, and visiting a wishing well where children made wishes together.

The session ended around the fire circle, where children reflected on their achievements and shared their favourite moments before returning to school.

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### **Oak Class (Year 6)**

Oak Class enjoyed an extended Forest School session in the afternoon to celebrate the completion of their SATs. The focus of the session was independence, responsibility, and developing practical outdoor skills.

The children expressed interest in learning knife sharpening techniques and were taught how to safely use sharpening tools. They demonstrated excellent concentration, patience, and attention to detail throughout the activity.

They also prepared wood for the fire, independently built and lit the fire, and created cooking sticks in preparation for toasting apples. The children worked collaboratively and confidently, demonstrating strong teamwork and growing Forest School skills.

Once the fire was ready, the group toasted apples over the flames and enjoyed time together in a calm, reflective outdoor setting.

Although the session was interrupted by a sudden hailstorm, the children responded sensibly and safely moved indoors. They continued the session by sharing food and reflecting on their achievements.

Overall, Oak Class demonstrated excellent resilience, maturity, and independence, and the session provided a valuable opportunity to apply their outdoor learning skills in preparation for future challenges, including their residential trip.