

### **Focus on Forest School by Mrs Becky Saunders (Forest School Assistant):**

What a wonderful return to our Forest School Wilderness since half-term! Across the school, children have been making full use of the opportunities to learn, grow and play at Forest School. Some have started to hone their woodcraft skills through sawing, wood splitting, hedgelaying and whittling (see the knives being made by Kestrels this week). Others have created log art using hammer, nails and yarn (see the tree made by a Kestrels pupil). Other seasonal crafts have included making spiders webs, conker spiders and "God's eye" poppies. They've also enjoyed more campfire cookery - toasting sugared cinnamon apples. Speaking of campfires, some children have practiced using the "flint and steel" (see the sparks made by a Squirrels pupil!).

Besides all this, we've observed seasonal changes in our woodland as we are now well into Autumn - a treat for the senses with the changing colours of the leaves (Woodlands class children picked up on their classroom learning and noticed both evergreen and deciduous trees in our Wilderness), the sounds of raindrops and the wind, spotting a variety of fungi and the joys of mud play! As the weather gets ever wetter and cooler, we would ask that all children wear layers to keep warm, and bring waterproof coat, trousers and boots to school each week.

As ever we offer a familiar structured routine each session which includes a "mindful moment" and a talk about safety guidelines. Alongside this, we offer a selection of activities, as well as the usual ones like the swing, mud kitchen, trench digging, water play (using the fab new gutters that were generously donated to us) and, weather permitting, climbing tree. The children are encouraged to try new things, but ultimately, the choice is theirs and we are always delighted to see where their energy takes them!

We look forward to seeing those who have signed up at our Forest School Open Morning, from 10am tomorrow - an opportunity for you to experience our wonderful forest, with your children!



