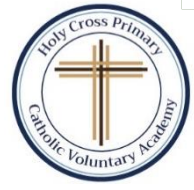




Forest Schools Newsletter Pentecost 2023



Welcome to our Forest Schools Newsletter.

It has been a very busy term with the children in all classes enjoying being outside and making the most of our wonderful grounds, despite the sometimes cold, wet and windy weather. We are looking forward to warmer temperatures and bright, sunny summer days. It is important that your child wears appropriate clothing, depending on the weather as we go out for most of our sessions. As we look forward to this new term, sun cream and hats will be necessary (we hope.)

Gardening

Children are encouraged to look after the school environment and to take an interest in the plants that grow in it. We plant flowers to help our bees and vegetables that we hope to harvest and eat! We had an amazing show of daffodils around school and seeing them come up reminds us there is always hope as new life emerges from its winter sleep. We learned how to look after the plants, remembering our rules of no picking and no licking. We have been dead heading flowers to encourage new growth. Please spend some time to talk to your child about the plants in your garden and how to look after them. Give your child a space in your garden where they can nurture and grow either flowers, fruit or vegetables.



Identifying wildlife

We enjoy looking for wildlife. Using binoculars to spot birds is one of our favourite activities. They are always available to be used. We have bird feeders and lots of bushes for the birds to hide in. We can name common birds that visit our site and know some information about them. We have spotted pigeons, blackbirds, robins, blue tits and crows. What birds visit your gardens? Which birds can you identify when you go for a walk? This time of year is exciting because we have frogspawn in our pond. We talk about life cycles and get to observe the changes as they happen when we go pond dipping. We even had a couple of ducks visit our pond.



Useful links

There are lots of useful websites that you can explore with your child. These give lots of ideas for family activities around gardening and looking after wildlife.

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/education-learning/gardening-children-schools/family-activities>

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-kids/>

Celebrating our faith



We celebrated Our Lady of Lourdes Feast Day by making our own grottos. It

allowed us time to think about how we can have faith and help others. We worked together to create some fantastic grottos. We learned to tie knots and used this skill to make some crosses which we decorated with wool. Spare wool is always much appreciated!



Using our senses

During our Forest Schools sessions we enjoy using all our senses. One of our favourite activities is playing in the mud kitchen and digging!



We use our imagination to create interesting dishes and mud sculptures. We listen to bird song. We often hear birds flapping in the bushes and trees before we see them.

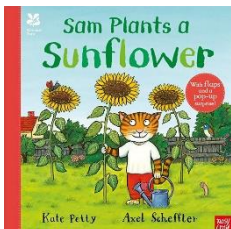
We use our sense of smell to identify different plants like lavender and mint.



Try planting some herbs and plants with fragrance at home.

Recommended reads

Charity shops are a good source of books. You can find some excellent books to help you identify different birds, animals and plants.

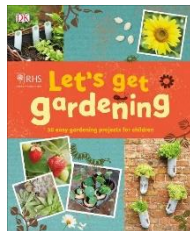


EYFS

Now is a good time to start growing sunflowers.

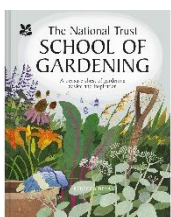
Key Stage 1

This book from the RHS is a good guide to begin your gardening journey at home.



Key Stage 2

This is a practical gardening book which covers basic planting and growing techniques. There are also some great gardening magazines available at most supermarkets.



Mrs Hudson's Conservation Tip of the Term

There are lots of dandelions coming up at this time of year. Its flowers are the first food for insects after hibernation and unlike most plants they have pollen AND nectar. They appear because your soil needs its help. If your soil is too compact it will loosen it for you with its roots. If the soil is acidic or has too little calcium it will replenish it with its dying leaves. Wait until the end of May or later before you start picking them. The biodiversity and the bees will be very grateful!

