



Planting a Vision

In the midst of the publicity around COP26 and the importance of climate change we are thrilled to be working with a charity which is planting trees across the country. Children's Forest is a movement to inspire and enable children to plant healthy forests. They support people and communities to start Children's Forests in their areas and encourage those with access to land to host these projects. The Children's Forest is planted through a four-step journey of experiencing, imagining, planting and tending a forest. Children are guided through a planting journey by trained facilitators. There has never been a more pressing time to engage children in meaningful action in the face of social isolation and climate crisis. Children's mental health and wellbeing are supported by providing them with the opportunity to envision and create a positive future by planting trees.

We were invited by "Children's Forest" to join them at Sacred Earth in Horam to plant and then tend a forest of trees. The junior classes have been going over in groups this week.

Read Helen's report below.

Children's Forest Tree planting at Sacred Earth

We played forest school games and orientated ourselves on the land, each of us receiving a photo of a creature which was to become our animal guardian of the forest. We then went through a time portal to become foragers of ancient times, finding food to eat which held the seeds of new trees to plant.

We gathered Hawthorns, Rosehips, Crab apples and Sloes. Then we returned to light a fire, each of us lighting charcloth to make the spark for the tinder bundle which became the heart of the fire. Anna roasted the sloes and made us a tea from the rest of the fruits and added honey, it was warming and delicious.

We planted the seeds from our foraged fruits in pots to be tended at school and returned to be planted in our forest at Sacred Earth when they are sturdy enough.

After lunch we went to a magical part of the forest for a sit spot to help us connect with the trees and creatures in the woods. We were then taken on a walk to the field where we were to plant our forest, it was just off the Cuckoo trail, along a bridleway, in a place where we can easily visit with our families.

We played some more forest school games and then were led on a guided journey to imagine the beautiful forest it will become for future generations.





To climb a tree.... is for a child to discover a new world. Froebel

To plant a tree is for a child to create one Mark Hunter

Tree planting at Sacred Earth cont..

Each group then wrote a poem, each person contributing a line, describing the beautiful forest we had seen in our imaginations. We then created a miniature forest with twigs of different trees and made clay creatures to inhabit our forest, it was really beautiful.

Elder and Willow's Dream Forest Poem

I step into the woods with a tingling sensation,
 The last drops of dew are falling through the leaves,
 Here are silvery sparkling streams,
 The golden sun shines through the fir trees,
 A magical shimmering place,
 Waterfalls gushing into rivers,
 A white silvery snake winding through the trees,
 Shimmering fish glide through the clear water,
 Ancient Oaks and spider webs, creaking and crawling,
 Autumn creeps round every corner,
 With Golden sunshine warmth,
 A clearing in the Forest where the sun dapples through,
 Where silver birch arms reach up to the sunlight,
 Warmth rippling off the shining bark,
 Acorns as gold as the Sun,
 Animals hunting for food,
 Luscious green leaves nibbled by deer,
 Ancient winding trees,
 With gnarled, twisting branches,
 There's a mushroom city!
 On moss-cuddled mounds,
 Spider's web weaving starlit dewdrops,
 Slivers of sunlight and butterfly's wings,
 Deer sleep amongst the trees,
 Redwings flying West,

Annan School Elder Class, at Sacred Earth, November 2021

And Finally...

The next day after connecting back into the woodland we went to the field to play games and set out the directions for the planting of our woodland. The central space contained a fire circle and we all worked together to make the sparks for the fire bundle. We marked around the circle where N S W E were with a compass and planted these four directions with guardian Oaks, We then planted Hazels and Hawthorns in compass directions (NW SW SE and NE) and planted Willows, Hazels and Hawthorns in between. The Chestnuts planted the inner circle and the Willows and Elders the outer circles of our Children's Forest. We are looking forward to tending the forest as a school and planting more trees with other classes in the future.



Chestnut's Dream Forest

This forest is magic:
 Green beauty lays all around us.
 All kinds of trees grow here,
 Golden leaves and roasted nuts.
 The stream is trickling;
 I see an otter in the sparkling
 water,
 And the grass is greener than I've
 ever seen it.
 Little children are playing by the
 riverbanks here
 And there is all the time in the
 world to daydream.
 The trees whisper to each-other.
 Shapes and movements,
 Dripping lichen,
 Hunting for mushrooms
 In the Oak Woods.
 The scurry of squirrels above us,
 Wonderful wonders and treetop
 travels.
 Magical and mysterious.

Annan School Chestnut Class, at Sacred Earth, November 2021



Toy Makers in Sycamores

Having spent lots of time playing with and exploring a variety of toys Sycamore Class wanted to start making some of their own. Everyone designed their own Teddy Bear and then created it from a selection of fabrics and accessories, while some of them took to the woodwork shed and crafted marble runs and pin ball machines using pieces of wood, loose parts and lots of nails. Such creative work.



Elders go to Glyndebourne

Elders were treated to a trip to see Don Pasquale at Glyndebourne Opera House on the last Friday before half term. They looked fantastic in their smart clothes worn specially for the occasion and enjoyed a spectacular show. The revolving sets were a particular favourite. What a special experience especially as some children haven't been to a live show before due to lockdown.

Mud, Mud, Mud!

Now that the weather is changing there is a lot of mud coming into the classrooms on the children's shoes after playtime. So that we can keep the classrooms nice, and in particular the carpet that the children sit on for group sessions, we want to start changing into indoor shoes when we come in from play. **Please could you provide your child with a pair of soft canvas shoes, or something similar, that they can keep in the classroom to use as indoor shoes.** These can be crocs as long as they have a strap on the back. Please don't send slippers, fluffy, sparkly or character shoes and please name them. This will make a real difference to the working environment during the winter months. Thank you.



Oak Tree house builders

Oak Tree Class took their maths outdoors and used their measuring skills in their village settlement in the forest this week. They are preparing for the next stage of the building project which is the roof of their roundhouses. They have also been busy collecting thatching materials in the meadow to tie into bundles in preparation for thatching.



Menu for next week:

Monday: Spaghetti Bolognese and veggies
Tuesday: Enchiladas and veggies
Wed: Sausage, mash, gravy and veggies
Thurs: Chili, rice and salsa
Friday: Packed Lunch

Diary dates:

Last Day of Autumn Term: Friday 10th December
First Day of Spring Term: Wednesday 5th January
Spring Half Term: Monday 14th – Friday 18th February
Last Day of Spring Term: Thursday 31st March
First Day of Summer Term: Tuesday 26th April