



Bushcraft in Schools

Funded by: Devon County Council Small Grants Scheme

Grant Application:

This project provided children with special needs and mainstream children the opportunity to interact with each other, improve social understanding, reduce isolation and stigma that can be associated with special needs, helping to improve self-esteem, generate new friendships and understanding between peers.

This was achieved by taking our Bushcraft team into schools and working with small mixed groups of children both with and without additional needs in the outdoor environment.

The children participated in activities such as shelter building, making tools and camp structures such as tables and stools, wild food foraging, making cob, fire lighting and other Bushcraft related activities. All the activities were designed so that the children worked together as a team, learning new skills, and most importantly having fun which in turn helped improve and develop peer relationships.

Outcomes

The project achieved all the desired outcomes detailed in our application and worked with **90 children** which was 18 more than we predicted; of which 62 children were Special Needs.

A lot of the schools wanted us to work with larger groups, so in these cases we worked the days into sessions so that everyone benefited from the activities.

Not only does this mean that all the children benefit from working with us, but we are able to manage the health and safety aspects of our work too.

All the children who participated on our workshops and sessions benefited from

- improved confidence and self-esteem,
- improved communication skills,
- the opportunity to interact with peers using our activities as a platform
- the opportunity to socialise, make new friends and work as part of a team,
- improved motor skills by participating in new and practical activities, such as making shelters, tools and camp crafts

The sessions encouraged team work to achieve set goals, such as building shelters together, or making stretchers for first aid “patients” (toy animals).

“Thanks very much for a great Bushcraft day. Here are some of the children's comments which I promised you:

;;We made dens and lit up a fire. I want to stay doing Bushcraft”.

I liked the bit where we went through the bushes to find the marshmallows”.

“I made fire on cotton wool - it was like metal and metal you had to rub together”.

“I liked warming my hands by the fire”.

“I enjoyed all of it - fire lighting was the best”.

“Many, many thanks for the excellent sessions yesterday. The children absolutely loved it and all adults involved were most impressed.

Please let me know how much a day's session would cost, if we were to book again next term, i am keen that the other children have an opportunity to experience the same activities.”

