The UK Forest School movement...
A revolution in Environmental Education
or just another brand?

Richard Irvine
What is Forest School?

*It is not:*

- A badge that schools can collect
- The same as any other sort of outdoor education
- Always in a forest
- All about tools and fire.
- Led by unqualified leaders
Key Principles

1. It is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions in a woodland or natural environment, rather than a one-off visit.
2. It takes place in a woodland or natural wooded environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.
3. It aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.
4. It offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.
5. It is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.
6. It uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning.
How widespread is Forest School?

In 2012 it was estimated that 10000 Forest School practitioners had been trained in the UK.
Training

- 38 organisations or individuals are members of the UK Forest School Trainers Network.
- Many more (we don't know how many) are operating without joining the network.
- Courses range in price from £399 (2200 zł) to £1249 (7000 zł)
- Training time ranges from 5 to 10 days
- There is no government regulation of forest school practice.
Members’ home page

Access your personal ‘Facebook style’ friends, groups, messages, news feed, timeline etc by hovering over Howdy. [YOUR NAME] top right of the black bar above.

New Member Information

Members Directory

Find other FSA members (they will only appear if they have logged in at least once)

Searchable map of FSA members

Only members who have submitted their details will appear on the members map

Local Groups Directory

Find your local FSA group here - join up and get involved (see how to set up a local group in your area)

Map of affiliated local groups

General Forum  Search Forum
There is never enough high quality research.

Most academic works are case studies or project evaluations.

Key works are 10 years old:


Key Authors: Sue Waite, Sara Knight, Trisha Maynard,
The Future

- Collaboration not competition.
- Staying true to the ethos – not be diluted.
- Quality assurance of Forest School training.
- Embedding Forest School in the education system.
- Taking the ethos to the family, community and national culture.
See you in the forest.

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