

Project Report - Woodland Work Area, Little Acorns Pre-School at Rushbury

This project has provided children with a purpose built area outdoors along with equipment which will enhance their ability to learn and engage with nature within the Shropshire Hills

The project has already enabled children to better connect with nature so that they care about it. It is teaching them the benefits of nature and how magnificent the whole ecosystem is. Plus it provides them with core values and understanding for future years in how important it is to preserve/protect and regenerate our community's surrounding area.

When did the project take place:

We decided to undertake the project during the school holidays to ensure less disruption to teaching and every day Little Acorns activities. (August 2024)

Over a couple of weeks we levelled an area within the forest school setting at Little Acorns and erected a fantastic canopy for the children to gather, not only to lean and play within nature, but also to use as a woodwork area.

What we did step by step:

1. Ground works - Level off the site with a digger and level lasers
2. Dig trenches around site to allow for drainage
3. Perforated pipe put in trench on a sand base
4. Rock then stone filled in trench
5. Eight footings dug out,
6. Steel rods inserted into holes, concrete mixed on site and concrete poured in to create footings.
7. Left site for 1 week to ensure concrete set
8. Returned to site and concrete supports removed
9. Post brackets attached to concrete pads
10. Terram put down and then gravel surface
11. Wooden support posts erected.
12. Metal "A" frame roof work secured to posts
13. Rubber roof and canvas end secured
14. Added logs for seating, tuff trays, working equipment and wood work bench/ vices and tools





Who was involved:

The step-by-step activities above were carried out by a father and grandfather of one of the children at Little Acorns – they donated the digger, power tools, some hard-core stone, level laser. One other father of a child at Little Acorns helped with the final erection and donated the petrol cement mixer.

We purchased the equipment from MuddyFaces which is an online provider of equipment for children’s outdoor learning.

What the project has facilitated:

It allows children to be outdoors for longer and enjoying and learning in their surroundings. The area provides the children with a dry outdoor space with a level and dry surface to play and learn in.

The equipment aids fine motor skills which help children's development. They also can create projects of their own which provide a sense of satisfaction and achievement, for both children and staff.

Who uses the project area:

The 10 Little Acorn children use this area everyday for at least 3/ 4 hours a day.

It is also utilised by the 96 children at Rushbury Primary School – every day one class uses the purpose built shelter for the afternoon – learning outside is a strong vision of the primary school

Activities that children carry out in the Woodland Work Area:

- Every morning the 10 Little Acorn children go down to the shelter and sit in the log circle to discuss the rules of forest school and discuss what activities they are going to do that day
- They have made wooden bird feeders using the woodwork tools (under supervision) which are then hung up in the forest school area
- Seasonal and topical activities such as pumpkin carving, creating Diwali lamps
- Creating leaf crowns, threading leaves onto strings
- Painting with natural resources – leaves, acorns, sticks
- When its bad weather this is where all morning activities take place – as it is wonderfully spacious, so while still open to the elements, it has excellent overhead coverage

This funding has provided Little Acorns and Rushbury School with another string to its' bow – enabling children within the Shropshire Hills to have better facilities which aid, teach and enhance their awareness of what a beautiful part of the country we are lucky enough to live in. Thank you Shropshire Hills.

