



'Enjoyment, Achievement and Learning for life...'

12th July 2023

Development of the External Provision and Play space at Walkley Primary School

As we strive to provide the best surroundings, environment and experiences for our pupils to prosper in their *Enjoyment, Achievement and Learning for Life*, we are very excited to share with you the short and medium term plans for the development of play space and grounds of Walkley Primary School.

Over several years (including over the lockdown period of the Coronavirus Pandemic) you our parent body, have continued to raise funds for Walkley Primary School to supplement the opportunities and experiences of our children. In the past we have used raised funds to purchase instruments to launch our revamped music curriculum and we have used it to purchase mirrors for the dance studio to enhance the acquisition of skills and knowledge for our pupils whilst perfecting their dance routines.

Since these purchases, money raised at events (including the recent Summer Fair fundraiser where you raised an incredible £3,391.74), has been saved with the intention to fund costlier projects that will make significant changes to the infrastructure and security of the school grounds. These enhancements will create opportunities for future long term projects and wider use of the grounds that are simply not possible currently on the old Junior School playgrounds and Forest School due to the risk of trespass and vandalism that we have sadly experienced since relocating to our new school building.

The development of the school grounds will build on the installation of the Famous Five Markings installed this Spring and will continue this summer.

Phase 1 – The Creation of a Creative Role play / Mud Kitchen / Board Game / Gardening Zone on the Back Yard

Mirroring the crucial Early Years developmental stages and associated experiences in the Infant Years, we will provide a space for children to remain playful and continue to explore shared play in a variety of ways. Incorporating Mr Butler's picnic tables and planters, we will undertake the resourcing and landscaping of an area on the back yard for tending to plants, reading a book, observing wildlife, drawing, painting, playing board games and immersing in role-play and creative thinking.





Phase 2 – The installation of canopy sail shade shelters on the Front Yard banking



In the summer we will undertake the construction of 2 sail shade shelters on the Front Yard to provide shelter from sunlight or rain.

Phase 3 – Wellbeing Space with wooded natural canopy, Reading throne and toadstool seating

We are looking for any parents who have the time and expertise to help turn this space into a reading area for our pupils that can also be used during playtime to take time out from active play with a space to chat and unwind. If you can help, please get in touch with either Mr Butler or Mr Wallis who would be delighted to discuss this further with you.



Phase 4 – The installation of a 2.4m secure fence incorporating the established trees and increasing the size of the Forest School.

Subject to agreement from the Local Authority Planning Office, we will secure the Tennyson grounds and tie the Forest School into the existing secure line either side of the Forest School. This is the site of the old Junior School on the Tennyson site which was demolished in 2021. This is now a play field. As you will be aware since moving into our new school, the Forest school has been vandalised on a number of occasions and therefore any planned investment in the provision cannot begin until the site is secure from trespass and the further risk of vandalism.



	Proposed fence line for extending forest school with 2.4m secure fence tying into existing secure line.	
	Existing 2.4m Triton Mesh fence line around the Tennyson site	
	Less secure fence line around existing Forest School	

Phase 5 – Redevelopment of the Forest School Provision and Experience

With more space in which to develop the Forest School, the opportunity for more variety in the provision will allow us to enhance the 6 guiding principles of Forest School. We will develop concept designs with Forest School experts to maximise the potential for variety of pupil experience within the facility:

1. Frequent and regular sessions.

We will be able to run multiple concurrent sessions in the Forest School offering more opportunities for children to visit the school.

2. Woodland environment develops the relationship with the natural world

Incorporating the wooded area above the current Forest School space will allow pupils to be working in different natural spaces. Children will become more relaxed, overcome any fears and connect with nature as they come to know it better.

3. Promotion of the holistic development of children, harnessing resilience, confidence, independence and creativity.

Activities that promote the development of children's self-esteem, thereby encouraging resilience, persistence in the face of difficulty and developing closer relationships with peers. Also, planning for a range of creative learning that links into the subject intentions and builds on prior knowledge and skills.

4. Taking supported risks.

Increasing the capacity of the provision allows us to plan for managed risk. At forest school we talk about 'managed risk' and 'acceptable levels of safety' because we recognise that eliminating risks completely would be impossible and counter productive. Knowing about risks, understanding your own limits and being able to manage them for yourself is all part of growing up.

5. Trained Forest School Practitioners

Increasing the opportunity for staff development in Forest School expertise through further training. Mr Butler is a Level 3 Trained Practitioner.

6. Promotion of a community of learning

A learner-centred approach that supports learners' needs and interests alongside the planned curriculum intentions developed by the subject leaders in school. Community of learning will include teaching, observation, purposeful discussion, conversation and reflection.

We will keep you updated on the progress of the different phases of development as well as any changes or enhancements to the commitment moving forward. Once again, thank you so much for your efforts in fundraising over the years to provide this opportunity for the extensive development of the pupil experience at Walkley and your continued support and connection with the team in school.

Kindest regards

Mr Wallis

Headteacher