



St John's Gosport C of E (VA) Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs Carolyn Wilkinson
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Dear Parents,

We are writing to let you know that we would like to introduce new provision and we are delighted that the children will soon be starting woodwork. Woodwork is a great medium for children to work with to develop many different skills that will help other aspects of their learning. When we set up this provision you may be surprised to know that the children will learn to use real tools – such as hammers and saws.

We wanted to explain why we think woodwork is such an important learning experience and reassure you that safety is always prioritised. Woodwork has a long history in early childhood education. It started right back to the beginnings of early childhood education with Froebel's Kindergarten in Germany back in the 1800s.

Woodwork is so valuable to support children's learning and that is why we are introducing it. It is a really special activity because it truly engages children, it helps them focus and keep on trying at an activity as they are really eager to take part.

Children really respond to the experience and very much enjoy working with wood and real tools. They will be developing:

- physical coordination,
- fine and gross motor skill and hand eye co-ordination.
- basic mathematical concepts, such as shape and measure
- their mathematical thinking skills
- understanding of the world – seeing tools as basic technology, understanding wood as a material
- scientific concepts such as the rotation of a wheel, levering nails back up or using a drill to drill holes
- their language by learning new words,
- skills and language to talk about their ideas and to problem solve
- their mark-making and drawing to express ideas on paper and also mark on the wood itself.

More than these many skills, there are two areas where woodwork really benefits children. Firstly, it develops children's self-esteem and confidence – they are proud of their work, and it develops a 'can-do' attitude.

Secondly it helps develop thinking skills – children use their creative and critical thinking as they problem solve and express their ideas and creativity with wood.



“Give us faith, fun and friendship as we learn, love and fly”



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In terms of safety, this is prioritised at all times. We follow strict guidelines such as the children must wear safety glasses at all times and sawing is only ever done with 1:1 adult supervision. Of course, we cannot eliminate all risk, and there might be the occasional bruised thumb, but part of children's development is that they need to learn to manage risk and make judgements to protect themselves. That way they are learning to make good decisions and judgements about other issues they will encounter during their lives.

With woodwork, the biggest challenge is keeping up with demand. We would very much like to encourage you to help out by bringing in any offcuts of soft wood such as pine and other resources such as bottle tops, corks, and lids. As children become eager makers and creators, we will need on-going help with this! Thank you.

Woodwork is great activity to also do alongside your child at home if you have the opportunity. We hope you enjoy the children showing you what they have created – but remember the real benefit is all the learning that has happened along the way.

The Early Years Team



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