



Comet Nursery School

Natural Explorers



Who are our Natural Explorers and what do we do?

Our Natural Explorers are children who are entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) and/or Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). We have created a programme that is focused around the natural world which seeks to provide children with enhanced opportunities to experience and explore the wider world through Forest School, gardening, trips and stories.

Forest School

Forest School happens in the nursery garden every week. This involves developing children's self-confidence, self-esteem and it allows them to take risks through activities such as building fires, outdoor cooking and using tools.

Further activities include:

- Tree climbing
- Building bird feeders
- Digging
- Cooking in the mud kitchen
- Building a mini beast hotel
- Transient Art using natural materials



Gardening

Many of our Natural Explorers may not have their own outside space for gardening. We have developed a garden area where children can learn about planting and growing and the process from planting to eating.

The Natural Explorers will learn about healthy eating and we will encourage them to try a wide range of foods.

Trips

This programme provides children entitled to EYPP opportunities to experience the world within and beyond their local community to build cultural capital. We take small groups of children out on a regular basis. We also practise life skills such as road safety, ordering from a menu, and using an oyster card. Outings have included:

- Parks
- City Farms
- The library
- Theatres and cinemas
- Art galleries
- Restaurants and cafes
- Museums
- Local shops



Stories

We support communication and language with our Natural Explorers by reading stories with them to explore different topics and expose them to a wide vocabulary.

Comet: national winners of the Early Years Pupil Premium award 2017



Vocabulary and language development

Developing children's language and vocabulary underpins the Natural Explorers programme. Our small group outings, activities and experiences are planned to provide children with new words to hear and learn and space and time to talk to practitioners.

We have seen a positive impact particularly with the children's speech, language and communication as well as a development of their vocabulary.

What can parents do to help?

You can help us by coming on outings with us, or being a parent volunteer with our Forest School sessions. Maybe you have a skill or a passion for gardening, arts and crafts, carpentry or music. We would love to hear how you can help.

Home learning

The learning you do at home with your child is as important as their time at nursery. This could include helping to match socks when you do the laundry, washing up or laying the table. Visits to the park, lunch in the local café or counting how many dogs you see on the way to school can support children's learning and language development as well as their self-confidence and independence.

How to apply?

If you think you are eligible for Free School Meals please apply via <https://www.learningtrust.co.uk/content/apply-free-school-meals>