

Nurture group – Paradykes Primary School

Margon Van Tuyl, Education Officer with The Green Team, did a 6 week programme Forest school/Nature play with Paradykes Primary School during February and March 2017. The group consisted of 8 boys, a teacher and learning assistant. The boys all had difficulties being in a school environment and were often disruptive in class. The teacher felt that taking them outside would be beneficial to them, where they could play and work together as a group, learn about the environment and participate in free play.

It took the group 2/3 weeks to settle into the routine of the session, which consisted of walking and playing on to the site, circle time talking about how they felt, a structured group activity, free play followed by snack. During snack, I told the group a story and it was the only time when the whole group sat still for 10 minutes and listened attentively. One week, during snack time a robin came closer and closer to the group, which felt magical.

One of the favourite structured group activities was pond dipping. The whole group got very excited when frogspawn was found in the pond. Other activities included a bug hunt , making your own clay “alien” bug, follow the trail, game of stealth, bat & moth, rope line. The free play activities that the group enjoyed were tree climbing, making dens and playing hide and seek.



During the last session the group chose which games they wanted to play again and they chose stealth and cat & mouse. The final session was finished with a review around the fire while toasting marshmallows. Some of the feedback of the 6 weeks were : “extonishing”, mega, amazing, enjoyable, different. The teacher and learning assistant learnt a lot and are planning to continue the outdoor sessions with the P4 class and the boys will be mentors to the class.

