



Expand your Mind, Connect with Nature

Newsletter Summer Edition 2023



We are a South London charity offering Forest Schools, Environmental Education and Practical Nature Conservation sessions, programs, events and community projects.



Activities

Weekly activities

- 10am-12 noon Mondays Family Forest School at **Galleywall Nature Reserve** (until 22nd May 2023)
- 2pm-4pm Saturdays Family Forest School at **Eardley Road Nature Reserve**



"Our free project activities will be crucial for participating families coming out of lockdown, these will include organic vegetable and fruit gardening, woodcraft, bushcraft skills and planting. Our child-led approach on activities will help children develop self-initiative, promote independence, self-esteem and build social skills through outdoor play, learning and environmental awareness."

Eric Mbiada, Chair of environmental charity Nature Vibezz



Open to everyone, drop-in!

Farm trip!

- 4 yearly residential farm trips to **Padding Farm in Glastonbury** in Somerset

Coming soon...

In summer 2023 lots of new Nature Vibezz projects will be starting at various new and old sites in South London. The times and dates of these sessions will be scheduled soon!

Follow our social media accounts to keep up to date.



We are here for all families, especially for those with young children who have been living in cramped conditions.



10/05/2023

At forest school, you can find us...

Cleaning up

Each session starts with some litter picking. Typically, it's lots of bottles, cans, takeaway boxes, and crisp packets. And the top strange find of the fall goes to...

a bathtub that some DIY hero decided to dump in the park!



Exploring the soil to find minibeasts

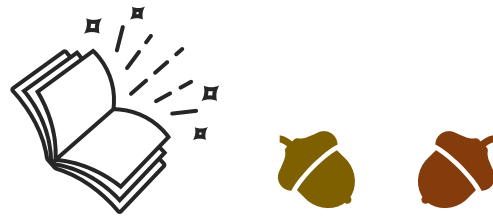
Earthworms, snails, centipedes, millipedes, beetles, ants, and spiders share the forest with us. We grab a shovel to break the ground and find some invertebrate friends.

Little plastic jars with a magnifying glass are provided for detailed inspection, before returning the minibeasts back to the earth.

Collecting conkers and building magic story-telling wands

Each season brings its wonders, and last autumn we collected conkers, pinecones, acorns, to make our own magic wands! We then gathered in a circle and took turns to tell stories with the aid of our wands and our imagination. Children of all ages voluntarily stood up in front of the group to

improvise! The items in the wand represented characters and events: A row of conkers for a row of ducks, a pine cone for a beaver dam they found, Irity's acorn was a bee and as she travelled through the wood Irity moved the acorn across to the other end of the wand!



Playing in snowy Epping Forest



Making fire



During the autumn and winter, we make a fire to keep warm and cook some snacks and hot beverages. And we do it from scratch!

We learn about how Fuel + Heat + Oxygen makes the flame and even the little ones chop some wood.

Sharing food

Towards the end of each session, we share healthy snacks. We all sit in a circle and, when Douglas gives the green light, we get food from the middle, always making sure there is enough for everyone, and even the smallest kids get their share without having to rush.



Making art!



What the parents say

We got lots of parent feedback on how Nature Vibezzz forest school enriches the lives of children and families in the community.

A few examples...



*“Excellent activities, very engaging and stimulating, staff are very friendly and accommodating. We have learnt nature activities and survival skills such as tree cutting, planting trees, health and safety and awareness of surroundings. **We improve the sites by planting trees and litter picking and learn more about the environment.** Activities had a great community feel and the overall child’s confidence has increased.”*

(Mother of 4-year-old child)



*“It’s the best way for us to spend our time. My children enjoy the time here as well as I do. **It’s a balm to our soul.** We relax, recharge and enjoy being connected with others and nature before we head back to the concrete jungle. I am very grateful for finding these people.”*

(Mother of 8 months and 3-year-old, 5-year-old and 7-year-old children)



*“Staff are very welcoming, caring and knowledgeable. **Activities keep you interested and you always learn something new.** We have learnt outdoor skills such as carving, making campfires and more. We have done activities such as bird nest building, building to help wildlife, building and mending fences, plus trimming trees. **The Forest School is great, everyone should have the chance to do it.** The Forest School allows us to explore local areas, learn about local plants and wildlife. Do outdoor activities as a family together while learning something new.”*

(Mother of 5-year-old child)



Thoughts from a new volunteer

I started volunteering with Nature Vibezzz's Forest School last autumn, and as soon as I met the team and the kids, I knew it would be worth the trip from North London to Streatham! There really isn't anything like it. The feeling of community fills the fresh air of the lovely Knight's Wood Park. Douglas greets most women around the neighbourhood with a warm "Hello mum!" - he knows their kids through forest school.

As soon as I arrived, I was struck by the diversity of the group, even for London. I heard kids and parents speaking in Italian, French, Japanese, and Finnish. Ages range from 2 to 13.



For the first few months, I was like one of the older kids. There were, of course, some activities that I helped set up, but the bulk of the time we are all letting the soil, the insects, and the trees teach us about their cycles, their shapes, and their relationships to each other. We have a lot of independence and are encouraged to wonder and let our curiosity be guided by nature and its wonders.

At Nature Vibezzz's forest school, learning has a practical goal: to make a fire in the winter and autumn months, to eat healthy foods, and of course, to have fun and tell stories. Learning involves the senses: the position of our bodies to chop

wood, the position of the logs, our focus, our patience, our memory about the role of oxygen, fuel, and heat.

- Veronica Salazar Restrepo

A volunteer opening a Forest School in China

Through working with our Forest School volunteer Yue Ma, Nature Vibezzz has been given the Certificate of honor of 2023 China-UK Exchange Ambassador.

Yue returned to London in February 2023 to complete a Forest School Leader training course and joined Nature Vibezzz for several family Forest School sessions at Streatham Common and Knights Hill Woods supporting our staff to run activities.



During her previous stay in London as a postgraduate student at UCL University she majored in Early Years Education and was a regular volunteer at Nature Vibezzz free Forest School sessions in Lambeth.

In her last session Yue invited a filmmaker to record the Forest School session on Streatham Common and we are looking forward to seeing the results. Yue shall be returning to China to continue her own Forest School (New Forests School).

We wish Yue the best of luck with her Chinese Forest School, and we are looking

forward to future visits promoting culture exchange between the UK and China, including possible Nature Vibezzz trips to China.

The Team making it all happen

Douglas Saucedo Anez - Executive Director

John Cannell - Operations Director

Elisa Briscioli - Freelance Administrator and Designer

Eric Mbiada - Chair

Christine Burford - Treasurer

Donna Mc Laughlin - Secretary

Veronica Salazar - Volunteer

Andrea Aidoo - Volunteer

Getting involved

Donate

Paypal Donation page

<https://www.paypal.com/uk/fundraiser/charity/3290806>

Join

Nature Vibezzz Co-op project

https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/65641?fbclid=IwAR04BwYlv5D2hAuW5y-27FLPp4ykDHE9bMm1aTo_MDEcCNBotGtMde1sKNM

Find us on the internet

Website: <https://www.naturevibezzz.org/>

Blog: <https://naturevibezzz.wordpress.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Naturevibezzz/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/NatureVibezzz>

Instagram:

<https://instagram.com/naturevibezzzcharity?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>

Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDuwFxO1N75eOyuY9zHzUiA>

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