

AUTUMN



Ash



Allow the children time to investigate the tree, what does the bark feel like, what do the leaves look like? Use the ID guide to find the correct name.



Explain to the group that each leaf has many leaflets. Count them together. There should always be an uneven number as the leaflets are opposite each other, apart from the one found at the top.



Compare this leaf to other leaves—is this leaf smaller or larger?



Ask the children to describe the colour of the buds on the ash branch. It is very dark brown, almost black and so can be compared to the ash found after a fire has burnt out. This is a useful way to remember the tree name.



Ask the children to look around the tree to see if they can find any seeds or nuts. They should find seeds hanging down in amongst the leaves. Children sometimes relate these to hanging bananas. Compare them to keys their parents may have. They hang like a bunch of keys and this is what they are called – Ash keys.



The leader is to take one key from the tree. It is important that only the leader does this, children are to gather round and describe its appearance.



Ask the group why they think it is so thin and small? Explain to them that squirrels would not find the ash key very tasty and so the tree has to rely on other methods to transport itself – wind! It will blow to another part of the park and will hopefully therefore have plenty of room to grow strong, far away from the 'mother tree'.



Carefully take the seed from the case protecting it. Let the children see how small it is. It is amazing that something so tiny will grow so large!



**Finaghy Primary School
pupils with ash leaves**