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4<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are very pleased to inform you that as from 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> September, your child will be taking part in Forest School. As the Forest School Association itself says:

*'Forest School is an inspirational process that offers ALL learners regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees.*

*Forest School is a specialised learning approach that sits within and complements the wider context of outdoor and woodland education.'*

We will be going out **whatever the weather**, and with this in mind, we have included a simple kit list at the end of this letter which we hope you will be able to get ready before we start. Rest assured, we won't be going out if it's too windy or if there is any thunder about, but the idea is that the children experience the natural world, come rain or shine.

Mr Tombling and Miss Heyes will be running the weekly FS sessions with half of each class participating in the morning and the other half in the afternoon.

The dates for each class are therefore as follows: (Please note, there are some slight changes due to staff availability, school trips etc).

***PUFFINS on MONDAYS – 16<sup>TH</sup>, 30<sup>TH</sup> September, 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> October***

***SEAHORSES on TUESDAYS – 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October***

***(Please note, there are NO sessions on 23<sup>rd</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup> September).***

This makes 5 sessions in total.

As mentioned above, the children will be outside, following a Forest School curriculum which is based on elements of natural crafts, wood/bush crafts, art and drama, storytelling, outdoor cooking, natural history, games and teamwork, environmental studies and countryside lore.

An important aspect will be to enable the children to acquire appropriate skills including keeping safe in the outdoor environment, using hand tools for crafts and the safe use of fire. Every effort has been made to keep FS activities safe, including doing all the necessary risk assessments and site surveys, but one of the stated aims of FS is to allow children to take risks and have adventures, to engage with the environment around them in a deeper way. For example, we will be talking about nettles and brambles and holes in the ground, amongst other things, that are part of the environment that they will be

working/playing in, which they will need to learn to manage – but we won't be removing the nettles or brambles!

Also, getting 'dirty' is inevitable, so listed below are items which would be **essential** for the children to have with them on FS Wednesdays or Fridays:

### **Forest School Kit List**

**Please note that children will be outside for the whole session and they need to wear layers of clothes so that they stay warm and dry.**

- Waterproof cagoule or similar
- Waterproof trousers
- Walking boots (these are preferable) or wellington boots
- THICK socks (or at least two pairs of thinner socks) when wearing the boots
- Jumper or sweatshirt or fleece for warmth
- Old trousers (please note – leggings are not warm enough, unless worn with other layers).
- **Long-sleeve** top  
(**Please note:** Arms and legs need to be covered so long trousers and long-sleeved tops are necessary).
- ***If warm and sunny weather:***
- *Sun hat & sun cream. Ideally, this will be put on at home and last all day. Children will need to be able to apply their own sun cream themselves.*

**Please ensure every item is named.**

Your child will be told whether they are in either the morning or afternoon group a few days before we start the Forest School sessions. If your child is in the morning group they should come to school in their FS clothes, which they will change out of (into their school uniform) when their session has finished. Children who are in the afternoon group should come to school in their uniform and then change into their FS gear in the afternoon. We will take the first half of the class for approximately 2 hours in the morning, and then repeat the activity with the second group in the afternoon.

If you have any questions or concerns about Forest School, please don't hesitate to contact us.

If you would like to help either in the morning or afternoon, or even all day (!) and have a current school DBS, please speak to the school office as soon as possible and we will confirm before the sessions start.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. David Tombling and Miss Heyes