St Peter's
Church of England Primary School
Unlocking the potential in everyone

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Dear Y3 Parents/Carers,

We are very pleased to inform you that as from w/b 9th November, your child will be taking part in Forest School.

The Forest School Association 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 starting the sessions for **STINGRAYS** on **MONDAY 9TH NOVEMBER** and **SHARKS** on **TUESDAY 10TH NOVEMBER**; please check the other session dates in the list below.

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

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. Hopefully the weather will be kind to us, but as we are at the beginning of Autumn, in all its glory, it's best to be well prepared!

The dates are therefore as follows:

STINGRAYS: ***MONDAYS – 9TH, 16TH, 23RD, 30TH NOVEMBER & 7TH DECEMBER***
SHARKS: ***TUESDAYS – 10TH , 17TH, 24TH NOVEMBER & 1ST, 8TH DECEMBER***

(PLEASE NOTE: there may be one or two clashes with other events that are already in the school diary, but we hope these will only cause minimum disruption. If we have to cancel a session due to the weather, we will endeavour to catch up on the one remaining Mon/Tues in the last week of term!)

This makes 5 sessions in total. We shall need parent support for these sessions to go ahead due to our own staffing constraints. Please email the office (office@stpetershenfield.org.uk) if you are able to come and help. Whether it is just one session, or all of them, your help is very much appreciated.

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 Mondays or Tuesdays:

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 (If you only have wellington boots, PLEASE ensure that children have WARM, THICK socks as feet can become very cold in this type of footwear.)
- THICK socks (or at least two pairs of thinner socks) when wearing the boots
- Jumper or sweat shirt or fleece for warmth
- Old trousers (please note - leggings are not warm enough, unless worn with other layers)
- **Long-sleeve** top
- Extra t-shirts to create layers
- Please ensure **every** item is named!

Your child will be told whether they are in either the morning or afternoon group this week. 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 FS, please don't hesitate to contact us. We are really looking forward to working with your children and continuing the FS adventure with them; we hope and trust that you too will embrace this venture with a similar level of enthusiasm and interest!

Yours sincerely,
Mr. David Tombling
Forest School Leader