



William Gilbert Endowed (Church of England)

Primary School & Nursery

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Headteacher: Mrs S J Whyld



30th March 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to inform you that Year 1 will be taking part in a series of 6 forest school sessions at the local nature reserve in Duffield. I will lead these sessions as a qualified level 3 Forest School Leader, supported by Miss Day, Ms Belfield and Mrs Summerfield.

Forest School is a unique educational experience and process that offers children the opportunity to succeed and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a Woodland environment.

Children engage in motivating and achievable tasks and activities throughout the year and in almost all weathers. Children will work with tools, play, learn boundaries of behaviour; both physical and social, grow in confidence, self-esteem and motivation whilst developing an understanding of the natural world.

The Forest School concept originates in Denmark, originally aimed at pre-school children, where it was found that children who had attended forest school then arrived at school with strong social and communication skills, having the ability to work in groups effectively, generally had high self-esteem and a confidence in their own abilities. These foundations helped them to raise their academic achievements.

Our Forest School sessions encourage children to:

- develop personal and social skills
- work through practical problems and challenges
- use tools to create, build or manage
- discover how they learn best
- pursue knowledge that interests them
- learn how to manage failures
- build confidence in decision making and evaluating risk
- develop practical skills
- understand the benefits of a balanced and healthy lifestyle
- explore connections between humans, wildlife and the earth
- regularly experience achievement and success
- reflect on learning and experiences
- develop their language and communication skills
- improve physical motor skills
- become more motivated
- improve their concentration skills



Year 1's Forest School sessions will run on Thursday mornings over the next half term. The dates are listed below. **Please ensure your child arrives at school timely, so that we can check clothing, footwear and kit before a prompt departure.**

Since these sessions will be taking place in the morning, please can your child attend school in their outdoor clothes, and bring their school uniform and shoes in a separate, named bag to change into at lunchtime.

Dates:

Week 1: 20th April

Week 2: 27th April

Week 3: 4th May

Week 4: 11th May

Week 5: 18th May

Week 6: 25th May

Your child will need the following for EVERY session:

Clothing list:

- Waterproof trousers
- Waterproof coat with a hood.
- Long sleeved top
- Full length trousers
- Jumper/fleece
- Wellies/walking boots
- Warm socks plus a spare pair
- Gloves and woolly hat in cooler weather/sun hat in sunny weather

Please note that in the woodland, it can often be cooler than expected under the shade of the trees.

* A filled water bottle and high energy snack – no nuts, chocolate or sweets please. Snacks like a banana, an apple, cheese, malt loaf, banana bread, crackers, grapes, raisins, flapjack etc. Please place this in a plastic container with their name clearly marked.

* A rucksack that they can carry on their back to contain their drink, snack, hat, gloves and extra layers. Please also remember to provide a carrier bag to put dirty boots into at the end of their session.

No Child will attend without appropriate clothing, that will protect them from extremes of heat or cold, keep them covered to reduce the likelihood of cuts and scrapes, and that fits appropriately for comfort.

Children and parents/carers are encouraged to think about the usefulness of their clothing for outdoor activities, and to be aware they are likely to take some of our mud home with them after a session.

Please ensure that all clothing, footwear and rucksacks are clearly labelled, as they are only young and there is a large quantity of kit to keep track of.

We work on the principle that **“there is no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing.”** (Alfred Wainwright). Please ensure your child is prepared for all weathers.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Miss B Rice
Class Teacher