



Headteacher Mrs Delia Cooper
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Thursday 19th September 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

We are now in a position to offer **Forest School** as part of our curriculum at Chilham St Mary's. This is a really exciting development for our school and something that I know the children will really enjoy and benefit from. Mr Wheeler has kindly offered us the use of a wonderful location in the Castle grounds that has been cleared and set up especially for us.

What is Forest School?

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. It is a specialised learning approach that sits within and complements the wider context of outdoor and woodland education. Work supports the main curriculum, particularly literacy, science, maths and the arts.

The Principles of Forest School are:

FS is a long-term process of regular sessions, rather than a one-off or infrequent visits; the cycle of planning, observation, adaptation and review links each session.

FS takes place in a woodland or natural environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.

FS uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for being, development and learning.

FS aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.

FS offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.

FS is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice

An integral part of the Forest School experience is that children will experience the outdoors in all weathers. Sessions will run throughout the year with all classes taking part during a morning or an afternoon every week. We plan to start our sessions next week!

Mrs Smith is a qualified Level 3 Practitioner and she will lead the sessions, supported by the class teacher and teaching assistant. During their Forest School sessions, the class will be split into 2 groups – Mrs Smith will have one group and will be focussing on specific Forest School Skills while the class teacher will have the other group to use the outdoor environment to support another curriculum subject e.g. a maths, writing or art activity. The 2 groups will alternate each week.

Love Trust Respect Honesty Forgiveness Perseverance



The Diocese of
Canterbury
THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



Forest School Days:

| Class | Day |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Peacocks | Tuesday Morning |
| Martins | Wednesday Morning |
| Hérons | Wednesday Afternoon |
| Wrens | Tuesday Afternoon |

Clothing:

With the exception of very severe weather – high winds and thunderstorms – please assume that the children will be taking part in outdoor forest school activities in the Castle grounds on their allocated day. Therefore it is essential they have the appropriate clothing to wear. Children in Martins and Peacocks should come to school in their forest school clothes and bring their school uniform to change into for the afternoon. Herons and Wrens should come to school in their uniform and bring FS clothes to change into after lunch.

Clothing should be suitable for woodland activities – long trousers, tops with long sleeves and sturdy footwear or wellies. As the weather gets colder, layers of clothing are really important, along with hats, gloves, scarves, waterproofs etc. Please ensure ALL clothing is clearly labelled.

Activities:

Forest School activities teach the children about caring for, managing and understanding the woodland environment. They will have opportunities to use a variety of hand tools as well as learning about knots and campfire cooking. Further information regarding Forest School can be found on the Forest School Association website <https://www.forestschoollassociation.org/what-is-forest-school/>

Please could you complete the attached Medical Information for your child and return to school by **Tuesday 24th September**.

We are really excited to get started on our Forest School adventure!

Yours sincerely

Mrs D. Cooper
Headteacher



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Forest School Medical Information

I confirm that the medical information I have supplied to the school is up-to date.

As an additional precaution, we are required to ask you in more detail about allergies and insect stings. Please tick the appropriate box(es):

- My child has never been stung by a wasp/bee
- My child has been stung by a wasp/bee and made a normal recovery
- My child has been stung by a wasp/bee and had an allergic reaction

If you ticked the final box, we will get in touch with you for further information.

My child has the following food allergy/allergies:

I give permission for my child to be given first aid or urgent medical treatment during forest school sessions.

Signed _____ Name of Pupil _____

Name of Parent/Carer _____ Date _____

