

Buckland St Mary Primary School

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Buckland St. Mary
Church of England Primary School

Buckland St. Mary C of E Primary School,
Chard,
Somerset, TA20 3SJ

Head of School: Ethne Staniland
CEO: Cheryl Weyman

28th February 2024

Dear Parents & Carers,

FOREST SCHOOL: SPRING 2024

We are part of the way through the Spring term, and Spring has certainly begun in our Forest School area. The daffodils are peeking out, and the trees are beginning to come back into leaf – it's an exciting time, where our environment changes daily!

When will my child have Forest School?

Below is the Forest School calendar **from w/c 4th March 2024 – these sessions will now happen weekly but will be for the afternoons only** – so from 1pm, after lunch. This will allow for core learning to continue in the morning sessions.

- **Beech class** will have Forest school on a **Monday afternoon**,
- **Ash class** will have Forest school on a **Tuesday afternoon**,
- **Oak Class** will have Forest school on a **Thursday afternoon**.

What will they need?

The weather will start to get warmer soon, but whatever the season, having the appropriate kit remains important.

Here is a list of essential items:

- Wellies or walking boots, with plenty of room for extra socks if necessary.
- Waterproof coat and over-trousers.
- Plenty of thin layers, which can be added to or removed depending on need!
- A spare set of clothes.
- A pair of indoor shoes. These should be worn into school for the morning, with separate outdoor shoes in a bag. These provide dry footwear to change into, and are also useful if the children need to come inside for any reason during the session (e.g. toilet etc.).
- Even in warm weather, we do ask that all clothing covers arms and legs, to prevent nettle stings, insect bites and so on.

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What happens in bad weather?

As always, we ask that your child comes to school on their Forest School day wearing appropriate clothing for the weather forecast on the day. As you are aware, the English weather is notoriously changeable, so please ensure waterproofs are brought in just in case.

Going forward, we will only consider moving our Forest School activities inside during very extreme weather conditions, so it is much better to be prepared!

Is there anything I can do to help?

This term we are aiming to develop our on-site forest school provision, developing the outdoor spaces we have on site as well as continuing to use other outdoor spaces within our local area. We are always grateful for parent volunteers to help with these sessions, so please get in touch if you would like to offer your services one afternoon.

Many thanks,

Mrs Napper and Mrs Jessup

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At Buckland St Mary C of E Primary School, we are passionate about outdoor learning. Forest School encourages children to develop an interest and sense of wonder about the world. It stimulates curiosity in finding out why things happen in the way they do. Forest School supports play, exploration, team building skills and risk taking. It develops confidence and self-esteem through learner inspired, hands-on experiences in a natural setting.

Aspects of the curriculum are explored through observing the plant life cycle, plant adaptation, animal adaptation, animal habitats, insects and food chains. Children explore forces and their effects e.g. creating a seesaw or pulley. Children experiment and use equipment to observe changes over time, identifying, grouping, classifying, measuring and recognising patterns.

Forest school helps learners develop socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically and intellectually. Characters are developed as the children explore, problem solve and risk take together while being inspired by the world and gaining a great understanding of how they, as a learner fits within it.

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BENEFITS OF FOREST SCHOOL

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- ♣ Child led play & exploration
- ♀ Woodland crafts e.g. whittling, pegs, jewellery, mallet or stool making
- ⊕ Team games
- ▮ Fire lighting
- ↓ Campfire cooking
- ✂ Shelter building
- ♣ Tying knots
- ⊕ Tree climbing, & taut line walking
- ▮ Woodland conservation
- \$ Stream explorations e.g. raft building
- ⊕ Nature art
- ☀ Storytelling and role play
- ♣ Problem solving team challenges

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL & PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- ⊕ Develop fine & gross motor skills
- ♣ Have courage to challenge yourself
- ✂ Build self-confidence
- ↓ Become more resilient
- ▮ Raise self-esteem
- ▮ Develop communication & language skills
- ⊕ Develop social skills e.g. decision-making with peers, co-operation, sharing, empathy, leadership
- ♀ Build respect for nature
- ♣ Develop a growth mindset ('I can do it')
- ↓ Nurture reflective learning
- ✂ Become a problem-solver
- ♣ Develop creativity and imagination
- ⊕ Promotes positive mental health
- ☀ Grounding—reducing stress / anxiety
- ✂ Build a community—sense of belonging
- ♀ Nurture stewards for our planet