



St Patrick's RC Primary School, Dipton

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Headteacher: Mrs J Burgess

We follow in Christ's footsteps

Monday 16th November 2020

Dear Parents/Carers



Your child, and their class, are continuing to have the fantastic opportunity to take part in a series of weekly outdoor learning sessions.

Our outdoor learning sessions are based on the school site and take place every Wednesday afternoon. The site is safe, thoroughly risk assessed and managed appropriately. The first session concentrated on safety; establishing boundaries and routines. As the pupils develop in confidence and familiarity with the environment, the sessions will focus on specific national curriculum areas and subjects. It is also important for us as a school to take care of children's wellbeing and mental health. As more children spend less time outside, especially now, with current restrictions in place, the forest school grounds provide a chance to experience the outdoors and be active.

The aim of these sessions is to ensure learners have the time and space to develop skills, interests and understanding through practical, hands-on experiences. Individuals and group needs will be taken into consideration therefore planning will be flexible and built upon each week.

We wanted to give pupils a sense of ownership and responsibility regarding these activities. Children in Year 5 discussed, in detail, and decided the necessary qualities to take part in outdoor learning. Qualities such as: respect, listening skills and a high expectation of behaviour were highlighted. The children came up with the idea that if anyone misbehaves in class during the week, they will get a 'strike'. This will ordinarily begin on a Thursday and end on a Wednesday. These strikes will be recorded in the classroom which will enable children to see, visually, their prospects for the week regarding behaviour. Three strikes within the week will result in a consequence. The children felt that if a person has not shown they can adhere to the qualities expected within the school building, they will be unable to take part in the outdoor session, especially as the planned activities outside can carry greater 'risk' factors and readiness and willingness to listen to and follow instructions are very important. Instead, they will remain inside where they will be supervised by a member of staff to do their work, which will be linked with the work covered outdoors where possible – albeit in a less practical way.

The children thought it was best to alert parents to the prospect of this situation when they reached two strikes. As a result, if two strikes are issued, school will send an individual text to the parent of that child. If you receive a text, please do not feel the need to ring school. It is important to accept that behaviour has warranted these strikes and it will much more beneficial to wait until your child returns home to take time to talk about the behaviour s/he has been displaying in school and how that can be improved. In Year 5, your child is old enough to take responsibility for his/her actions and change that behaviour for the better where necessary. We will, of course, contact you should a problem persist. We are sure, with high expectations from school and home, all pupils will have the best chance of fully engaging in the range of outdoor learning opportunities on offer. We hope we have made our intentions, and our reasoning for these, as clear as possible.

We will review this approach at the end of this term and will update you accordingly.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Class teacher: Mrs A.Oswald

Headteacher: Mrs J Burgess

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