



# St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

## 'Doing our best for God'

Date: Friday, 07 May 2021

Dear Year 4 Parents/Carers/Pupils,

I wanted to write and introduce myself so you know a little about me and what we will be doing before I start working with you from **Monday 17th**.

My name is Mrs Topping and I am going to be leading the sessions in our new Forest School and teaching Year 6 in the afternoons. You may have seen me unloading wood into the garden area of school over the past week or so. I am super excited to get started!

You may be wondering what on earth Forest School is all about? Well, it is about learning in nature all year round - being outdoors whatever the weather; working together as a team; learning to take risks by thinking them through first; working at your speed; developing your resilience, confidence, independence and creativity; and importantly reflecting on what you have done and how we can improve next time. That is a lot of learning to do in an hour every week! We will do this through lots of different activities, such as:

- Shelter building
- Natural art
- Using knots and lashings
- Fire lighting
- Animal tracking
- Bug hunts
- Team games
- Sensory activities
- Cooking on an open fire
- Developing stories, drama
- Climbing and balancing
- Woodwork using tools
- Creating bug homes and bird feeders
- Collecting, identifying and sorting natural materials
- Studying wildlife
- Using a Kelly kettle
- Physical movement activities

Not all these activities will happen every week, but I hope to plan lots of these over the coming weeks for you.



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Each session will start with a team game and then I will explain the different activities on offer for that session. Some activities you will be able to do by yourselves, some will be supervised by your class teachers, others will be under my guidance. We may use tools to help us, but in order to use tools I have to see that you are being sensible and can act safely with them. We have certain rules at Forest School that everyone needs to follow to keep us all safe. We will spend time each session going over these rules. For safety, people who do not follow the rules will not be trusted to use the tools. At the end of each session we will have some reflection time where you can let me know what you enjoyed, what you want to do more of and what you want to try next time. In this time we can celebrate our achievements as a team and congratulate those who have persevered and overcome difficulties in order to complete a task. I will have lots of ideas for activities where transferable skills will link into our everyday Curriculum. But I want to listen to your ideas too, so we can develop our skills and the Forest School site together. Sometimes our reflection time will be around the fire, we may even toast marshmallows or cook popcorn!

In order to get the most out of your Forest School sessions, you need to bring your Forest School kit with you on your Forest School day - for Year 4 that is a **Friday (starting 21<sup>st</sup> May)**. Be prepared to be muddy and make sure you pack layers (I wear at least 4) and waterproofs as we will be outside whatever the weather! **Please bring your items in a carrier bag ready to change into. If your session is timetabled at the end of the school day, you will go home in your Forest School kit.**

### Kit list:

Summer	Winter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Long sleeved top</li><li>• Jumper</li><li>• Waterproof coat with a hood</li><li>• Full length trousers / joggers / leggings, NOT jeans</li><li>• Waterproof trousers</li><li>• Sun hat</li><li>• Sun cream</li><li>• Trainers / wellies</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vest / t-shirt</li><li>• Long sleeved top</li><li>• Warm jumper / fleece</li><li>• Waterproof coat with a hood</li><li>• Full length trousers / joggers / leggings, NOT jeans</li><li>• Waterproof trousers</li><li>• Warm socks, or two pairs of thin socks</li><li>• Wellies</li><li>• Scarf, gloves, warm hat - preferably with no bobble</li></ul>

I am excited to get to know you all and develop your Forest School site together. I hope you are getting as excited about starting Forest School as I am. I will see you very soon!

Kind regards

*Mrs Topping*