1. Introduction

As part of our commitment to involving and consulting with parents, children and other community stakeholders at Dormansland Primary School, we are seeking your views on the proposals we are making to our outdoor learning provision for the forthcoming academic year.

We welcome your views on these proposed changes to our current provision:

a. to have every class spend one day per half term (six days across the year in total) learning off site at the Ashdown Forest, as part of our development of a meaningful outdoor learning curriculum for every year group;

b. to extend our current residential programme to include the opportunity for children in Year 3 to spend a night away, to take our Year 6 children to France and to reschedule our KS2 trips across the year to ensure that parents are given a reasonable timeframe within which to meet the payment deadlines more equitably.

A more detailed outline of each of these proposals can be found attached to this consultation report.

2. Why are we looking to making these changes?

There is increasing concern nationally about declining opportunities for outdoor learning and low levels of understanding about food, farming and sustainability issues among young people. With this in mind, schools are being encouraged to consider ways in which they can incorporate a greater element of outdoor learning experiences for all children in their care.

The benefits of outdoor learning and experience will include learning about nature; society; nature-society interactions and oneself. Outdoor education involves working with others, developing new skills, undertaking practical conservation and influencing society. The intended outcomes of such experiences can encompass new knowledge and understanding, attitudes and feelings, values and beliefs, activities or behaviours, personal development and social development.

Rather than treating this provision as a ‘bolt on’ to our existing curriculum at Dormansland, we are keen to ensure that our outdoor education becomes part of our core provision, is of the highest quality and has significant benefits and impact on our children over time.

3. Why have we proposed these particular plans?

a. The school already has a strong partnership with the Ashdown Forest and is keen to develop an extended programme of annual outdoor learning with them. We have researched a number of commercial 'Forest School' possibilities, but are excited by the fact that the Ashdown Forest education team have designed a bespoke programme specifically for the children of Dormansland.
In addition, the children in Years 5 and 6 will have the opportunity to work towards gaining their John Muir Award as part of this programme. For further information about this innovative programme, please click here: https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/john-muir-award

b. Our current residential programme, although loved by the children, is rather repetitive across the year groups. As a staff team, we have reviewed our provision and considered ways in which we can ensure that each year group’s time away has a particular emphasis that is different from the others. We also feel that, by extending the provision to begin with one night away in Year 3, our residential opportunities become a fundamental feature of every class in KS2.

4. How will we fund the Ashdown Forest learning project?

We will subsidise the project using some of our Sports Premium allocation for next year. We are also in the process of negotiating further funding from another external stream, so that this curriculum enrichment will be at no extra cost to parents.

5. What do we see as some of the potential pitfalls of these proposals and how do we intend to address them?

a. Transporting the children to and from the Ashdown Forest

- If we were to look at hiring a coach for every visit to the forest, this would more than double the cost of the programme and make it financially unsustainable. Therefore, we are asking that parents car share to take the children to and from the forest when their child’s class are there for the day, and would be incredibly grateful to any parents who can offer to take more than their own child on the day. In addition, we will be able to ferry some of those children who cannot be taken there, using staff cars, where parents are in agreement. Parents will, of course, be more than welcome to stay at the forest for the whole day, should they wish to take part.
- We will run an early morning club for siblings of children who are working at the forest.
- The day at the forest will run within the school day (ie a slightly later start and an earlier pick up) in order for parents to make it back to school to collect siblings.
- The weekly visit to the forest will, wherever possible, fall on the same day. We are currently negotiating a Wednesday with the education team.

b. Cost of residential trips across a four year period

- We are aware that this has been an issue in the past, especially where deposits have been required before the end of the previous academic year to secure a child’s place. The timings of the trips across the four years are being designed to enable us to take advantage of out of season discounts in some years and to spread the costs of trips more evenly.
- We will never exclude a child from attending a residential trip on the grounds of non-payment. However, we do need to receive a minimum percentage of the overall costs in order to be able to take a class away. If you have an concerns about making payments, please speak to Mrs Stokes in confidence at any time.

6. How you can respond:

- Complete and return the response form enclosed
- Email your thoughts directly to Mrs Stokes (head@dormansland.surrey.sch.uk)
- Speak to your class rep, who will bring any points you raise to our next Parent Forum meeting

Many thanks, in advance, for your thoughts and comments about these developments to our educational provision for the children of Dormansland School.
Appendix 1: Ashdown Forest Outdoor Learning Programme

Running throughout the visits for all ages would be:
- nature awareness games
- walking and movement, promoting physical fitness and mental well-being
- opportunities for team work and communication
- developing observation skills
- knowledge and understanding of the wildlife of the Ashdown Forest and the local area
- adaptability and flexibility to weather and landscape conditions
- time available for children to direct their own activities.
- scope to change the programme depending on the outcome of the previous session’s learning and needs

Reception
- mud monsters - natural sculptures with found materials and soils
- plants and seasonal change observations through games and activities
- exploring water and floating - puddles and small streams
- animals and seasonal change
- mini-shelters from found materials

Year 1 and 2
- seeds and seed dispersal (autumn)
- collecting materials for a fire and stories of the day around the fire (winter survival)
- seasonal change (trees in winter and spring explosion)
- exploring flowering plants (summer)
- mini-shelters
- minibeasts - sweep netting in summer grassland

Year 3 and 4
- boats - joining materials, tying and wrapping
- making cordage
- shelter building
- follow the stream
- observing animal trails, creating and following trails
- fire making - gathering suitable materials, fire safety and cooking on fire
- travel thorough time - looking at the archeological remains on the site and how it has been used over time

Year 5 and 6
- fire making and lighting
- links to how the Ashdown Forest is managed through careful use of controlled burning and dangers of uncontrolled fire
- shelter building
- painting with mud - exploring the forest for different soils and soil colours
- survival challenge, using plants e.g. food, shelters
- natural sculptures
- John Muir Awards
## Appendix 2: Residential Trips Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR GROUP</th>
<th>CURRENT PROVISION</th>
<th>CURRENT APPROX COSTS</th>
<th>NEW PROPOSAL</th>
<th>NEW PROPOSED TIMINGS</th>
<th>APPROX COSTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3          | N/A               | -                    | One night stay under canvas on Box Hill:  
• A range of forestry skills activities and adventures | July | £60.00 |
| 4          | Hindleap Warren  
(2 nights):  
• Forest Adventure walks,  
• Map skills,  
• Team building,  
• Shelter building,  
• Archery | 170.00 | Hindleap Warren  
(2 nights):  
• Forest Adventure walks,  
• Map skills,  
• Team building,  
• Shelter building,  
• Archery | April | 170.00 |
| 5          | Sayers Croft  
(2 nights):  
• Forest Adventure walks,  
• Map skills,  
• Team building,  
• Shelter building,  
• Archery | 135.00 | New Forest Farm  
(3 nights):  
• Animal care,  
• beach trip,  
• team building  
• survival skills,  
• orienteering,  
• village study. | May | 180.00 |
| 6          | PGL trip to Windmill Hill, East Sussex  
(4 nights):  
• A trip to the Science Museum at Hurstmonceux  
• A range of outdoor pursuits and learning opportunities | 300.00 | PGL trip to France  
(4 nights):  
• A range of activities that immerse the children in French culture | June | 400.00 |
Outdoor Learning and Residential Trip Proposal for Consultation
September 2016

Name of child: ……………………………………. Current year group: …………………………….

If applicable for further siblings:

Name of child: ……………………………………. Current year group: …………………………….
Name of child: ……………………………………. Current year group: …………………………….
Name of child: ……………………………………. Current year group: …………………………….

Proposal A: to have every class spend one day per half term learning off site at the Ashdown Forest

I agree/disagree* with the school’s proposal* please delete as appropriate

I would sometimes be able to help out with transport on the forest visit days for my child’s class: Y/N
I have spaces for up to …….. children in my car.
I hold a current DBS certificate: Y/N
I would be happy for my child to be transported to and from the forest by another parent: Y/N
I would be happy for my child to be transported to and from the forest by a member of staff: Y/N
I would need to make use of an early morning club at the school on forest days: Y/N

Any other comments: (please continue overleaf if necessary)

Proposal B: to extend and improve our current residential programme in Key Stage 2

I agree/disagree* with the school’s proposal* please delete as appropriate

Any other comments:

Signed: ………………………………………………………… Date: …………………………………

Closing date for responses: Friday 30th September