

November 4, 2019

Hello Families,

It seems like ages ago since we had our glorious walk in Hemlock Ravine, it's hard to believe that it was just last Monday. Did your child tell you all about it? Just as in the classroom, we are slowly setting up routines and expectations for the forest.

Did your child tell you about the coloured pinnies? First and foremost, we want your child to be safe in the woods. Secondly, we want to give them some freedom to explore. So we have considered carefully how to balance both needs. Ms. Klyne had a great idea from her Forest School Practitioner course. On Monday, we gave groups of children coloured pinnies that fit right over their coats: red, blue, yellow, green, or orange. Then we gave an adult the corresponding colour. This means that each adult only has to keep track of 3-4 children in the woods; it is much easier to count your three 'reds', instead of looking at lists and under hats and hoods for the correct children. Your child knows that when we give a coyote call, they are to freeze, and then run to their colour adult. We practiced that in the classroom, on the field, and along the wooded paths.

Did your child tell you about our whistles? This is another safety feature that Ms. Warren learned from the Forest School, Wild Child. Each child was given a whistle that attached securely to their pinnie. We talked about the whistle in the same way that we talk about the fire bell at school; it is just for emergencies. If your child was to ever lose sight of the group, they need to STOP, HUG a tree, and BLOW the whistle loudly three times. Your children were so curious about the sound that the whistle would make, that we all blew our whistles three times in the field, to get it out of their system. If a child blew their whistle as a false alarm in the woods, then they had to hand over the whistle and stay very close to an adult for the remainder of the visit. Your children did very well with this, and very few whistles had to be given over! We're sure that all of them will stay with the children next time. Luckily, the whistles are fully plastic, so Ms. Warren tossed them in the dishwasher at home, ready for another day.



When we reached our meeting place, your children were so excited! We talked about the "bubble" that surrounds our meeting place, and walked all along the boundaries; we want to make sure that your children are aware of how far they can roam and explore. Our meeting place is fairly open along a side hill, with tall trees, long logs, a big rock, and a little pool of water in the corner. We can see your children everywhere within the boundaries. We will review the boundaries each time we go out.

Now, what were your children up to in the woods after all of that? We will have to save those stories for our next newsletter! Just know that there were stories upon stories, questions, fine and gross motor explorations, and scientific studies of creatures and their homes, and floating and sinking. Ask your child about Fairy Rock! And about Beyond the Pond! And about the book that we read in the woods before we returned to school! If you are interested, our website has updated pictures from our adventures.

We are excited to announce that we will be going back out into the woods after recess on Wednesday. Please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately! We were lucky with the weather, but some children were only dressed in pants and running shoes, and were disappointed to

have to stay back from the edge of Beyond the Pond. Rubber boots and waterproof pants are necessary! And if it is cold, hats, mittens and a warm coat. We sit on logs and rocks and walk through mud, and we want your child to participate as much as they wish.



On another topic, your child is studying sorting in Math. If your child went out trick-or-treating, this is a great opportunity to practice some sorting. They could sort by the kind of treats, by colour, by what they like or dislike... they might even sort their candy and ask YOU to guess their sorting rule.

-Dates to remember:

-Thursday November 7th is our school **Remembrance Day assembly**. If you would like to attend, it will start at 11am in the gymnasium.

-Monday November 11th is **Remembrance Day**. There is no school on that day.

-Pictures are now up on our class website! Check it out on <https://primarywt.weebly.com/> . ****If you selected 'No' on the Media Release form, your child's photo will not be on the website****

-Please label everything that comes in with your child, such as **coats** and **sweaters** (as the days get cooler), and even **food containers**. **Boots and shoes** can also be easily returned to your child if they are labeled with their name.

-Please check your child's bag and **Communication Scribbler** every day and ensure it is **returned on a daily basis**. Thank you! You may also send us a message in the Communication Scribbler. If you have an **urgent message**, leaving a **telephone** message is another option 902-457-8422.

-As a school, we ask that birthday party invitations to be distributed outside of school. We sent home a **class list of phone numbers and emails for parents** to use as needed

-It is very important and helpful to label any money you are requested to send to school. We recommend an envelope that includes your **child's name**, the **amount**, and **purpose of the money**. Thank you very much!

-We are excited to go on **nature hikes** in Hemlock Ravine and **field trips** this year, but we need your help to take your children off-site! We require 5 adults to chaperone our class of 17 children. If you would like to be a parent volunteer at any time this year, the school requires a current **Criminal Record Check** and **Child Abuse Registry** background check. You will find links to those checks under the **Parents section** on our website: <http://gww.hrsb.ca/our-school> .

We appreciate your time to read through this note, and your support with the items above. We look forward to building a partnership with you and learn with your child in the coming year. Stay tuned for more news about our classroom and program next week.

Thank you, Ms.Warren and Mrs.Klyne