

Sending Updates to Parents

Version 2.0 · May 2026 · All Forest School and Camp delivery staff

PURPOSE

After every Forest School session and on every camp day, we send an update to families. A good update does four things at once:

- **Builds the relationship.** Parents see what their child experienced and can extend the learning at home.
- **Justifies the investment.** They see where their money and their child's time are going, and the added value of Forest School.
- **Markets Wildlings.** It educates parents on the richness of our practice and showcases the team and the children at their best.
- **Builds us as practitioners.** Writing reflectively keeps us honest about pedagogy, the Forest School ethos, holistic development and play schemas.
- **Keeps the record.** Updates are used to generate reports on terms of Forest School and seasons of camps. The foundation of the report starts with the quality of the updates.

WHEN UPDATES ARE SENT

Programme	Sent by
Forest School morning sessions and camp days	The same day, ideally by 6pm and no later than 10pm
Forest School afternoon sessions	By 6pm the following day (48hrs is ok)
Holiday camps	Daily, by 6pm on the same day

Non-negotiable

Updates are not optional and they are not "when you get to them". Parents expect them. Late or missed updates damage trust and the brand.

WHAT AN UPDATE INCLUDES

Every update has these components:

- **1.** A row of 8 to 12 varied emojis at the top (flowers, leaves, butterflies, bees, frogs, snakes, sunshine, etc.).
- **2.** Greeting: "Dear Families. Welcome to your weekly Forest School update!"
- **3.** Two or three flowing paragraphs covering what we did, why it mattered and the stand-out moments.
- **4.** Photo link: "Please enjoy the photos:" followed by the Google Drive folder URL.
- **5.** "DATES FOR YOUR DIARY" block, with bookings and closures as bullets with links inline. We supply this each term.
- **6.** Sign-off: "See you in the Forest!" then the delivering staff first names (e.g. Vince, Zhul and Mahirah).

- **7.** Repeat the emoji row.

Length

Aim for 200 to 300 words in the body (between the greeting and the photo link). Longer than that and parents will not finish it. Shorter and it can feel thin. The whole update should take 10 to 15 minutes to write if you have prepared during the day.

VOICE AND WRITING STYLE

We are teachers and need to sound like teachers. Updates should sound like a teacher writing an end-of-day email, not like marketing copy or AI text which can destroy trust and authenticity.

Voice rules

- **Direct, warm, conversational.** Write for intelligent adults who want to see the substance behind the day.
- **First person plural.** Use "we" and "our", not group labels. "We crossed off our names and hung our sticks" reads better than "Sunbirds did this, Sprouts did that".
- **Flowing sentences.** Avoid choppy fragments like "Circle time first." or "Plenty of pulled faces." They sound staccato and AI-generated. Connect ideas with conjunctions and inline parenthetical hyphens.
- **Bake the why in.** Embed pedagogy as a phrase inside the description ("we did X, which gave the children a chance to build Y"), not as a separate reflective sentence afterwards.
- **Exclamation points are fine.** When something is genuinely fun, surprising or a moment, use them but do not overuse.
- **Specifics convey quality.** Name the ingredients, the tools, the methodology (Action Bound, clove hitch, Tangy Garden tea, Saga tent, coconut rhinoceros beetle). Specifics demonstrate the reality.

Banned language

These are the phrases that mark an update as off-brand. Do not use them.

- **Infantilising children:** "little ones", "little hands", "tiny", "our little explorers", "tiny creatures".
- **Marketing fluff:** "magical", "truly joyful", "fun-filled", "magic of nature", "just nature doing its magic".
- **The word "mud" or "muddy".** Use "nature kitchen" (our play kitchen) or "come ready to embrace the great outdoors". Conditions are often clean and dry and customers do not love it anyway.
- **The words "real" and "proper".** Find another word, these are AI favourites.
- **Motivational closing quotes.** No wuotes like this: "Curiosity grows when little hands explore, taste, discover and wonder together." They read as AI Instagram captions and undo everything sincere that came before.
- **Triplet reflection sentences.** Avoid "This is X in action: slow looking, careful handling, biology learned by holding it." The colon-plus-three-abstract-phrases pattern is a classic AI tell.

Naming children

The two rules on names

- **Never name trial children.** They are not yet Wildlings families and must not be identified in customer communications. If a trial child is at the session, describe the session without using their name.

- **Name enrolled children only occasionally.** Only when they do something genuinely notable: a striking find, a creative twist on an activity, a breakthrough, a new joiner being welcomed in. One or two named children per update is plenty. Do not list names for ordinary participation.

PHOTOS AND THE ALBUM

Where photos live

All session photos now live in Google Drive.

- **One folder per programme per term per week.** For example, one Drive folder for Saturday morning older children, Term 1. A new folder for the same programme in Term 2.
- **Camps:** One Drive folder per camp week per programme per day (e.g. Sunbirds Week 1, Monday, Hornbills & Eagles Week 1, Tuesday).
- **Admin or Camp Manager creates the folder and shares the links with colleagues** at the start of term or camp via WhatsApp.

Photo workflow

- **Take photos during the session.** Activities, faces (where permitted), the children in flow. Show the session in the best light.
- **Edit before uploading.** Quick crop and brighten if needed. Skip anything blurry, awkward or out of context or repeating.
- **Upload to the Google Drive folder.** Same day, before sending the update.
- **Delete from your phone.** Once photos are safely in the Drive folder, delete the originals from your personal device. This is a privacy and safeguarding requirement, **not optional**.
- **Session leaders check the album** shows the day well before linking it in the update.

Why delete from your phone

Photos of Wildlings children must not sit on personal devices longer than necessary. Once they are in the shared Google Drive folder, they are backed up, accessible to the team, and safe. Deleting the originals protects the children, you, and Wildlings.

SENDING THE UPDATE

Updates are sent through the Wix Bookings App. Only staff with Wix App access and Broadcast permissions can send them.

Step-by-step

1. Open the Wix Bookings App and navigate to the session you delivered.
2. Tap "Broadcast Message". The participant list and broadcast button will show on the session page.
3. Paste your written update and check the photo album link is correct and clickable.
4. When prompted "Send broadcast via", select Outlook.
5. Send.

Critical – choose Outlook, not Wix Members App

Before you send you must select Outlook (email). Do not send via the Wix Members App. Most families do not use it and they will not see the update. If you select the wrong option, the update is effectively lost.

PREPARING YOUR UPDATE EFFICIENTLY

A good update takes 10 to 15 minutes if you set yourself up well. A messy approach can ruin reputation. The difference:

- **During the session**, jot two or three observations in your Notes app: a quote, a breakthrough, a stand-out activity. You may not remember them otherwise.
- **Right after the session**, upload your photos to the Drive folder and delete from your phone.
- **Write the summary** while it is still fresh. Use the AI prompt below if you want a starting point. Then edit it in your own voice.
- **If you are not the session leader**, upload your photos immediately so the leader can send the update without chasing you.

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

- **Sending via the Wix Members App by accident.** Always check the dropdown says Outlook.
- **Linking an empty or half-uploaded photo album.** Open the link and check before you send.
- **Naming a trial child.** Never. Even if they did something memorable.
- **Naming five or six enrolled children with no real reason.** One or two notable names per update is plenty.
- **Listing activities without reflection.** Parents want to see the learning, not just a timetable. Bake the why into the description.
- **Marketing fluff or infantilising language.** "Magical", "little ones", "fun-filled", closing motivational quotes. Cut all of it. Its marketing fluff and doesn't sound respectful to the work we, or the children, are doing.
- **Choppy AI-style sentences.** "Plenty of pulled faces." "Slow looking, careful handling." These fragments do not sound like a teacher.
- **Leaving photos on personal phones.** Upload, then delete.
- **Sending late.** Same-day before 6pm. 10pm at the absolute latest.

AI PROMPT FOR STAFF

If you want a head start, paste the prompt below into ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, CoPilot etc or another AI tool, replace the session notes section with your own bullet points from the day, and run it. Then edit the output in your own voice. The AI will not get the voice perfect, but it will give you a solid draft to work from.

Copy everything inside the box, replace the SESSION NOTES section with your own notes, then send.

You are helping me write a parent update for Wildlings Forest School in Singapore.

Wildlings is an authentic, experienced, premium outdoor education and Forest School business. We are not a cute nature playgroup. Children are respected, capable, learners. The environment is carefully prepared. Risk is managed, not avoided. Parents are intelligent adults who want to see the substance behind the day.

I will give you session notes below. Write a parent update following these rules.

LENGTH

200 to 300 words for the body (between the greeting and the photo link).

STRUCTURE

1. Row of 8 to 12 varied emojis at the top (flowers, leaves, butterflies, bees, frogs, snakes, sunshine, etc.). Vary the row.
2. Greeting: "Dear Families. Welcome to your weekly Forest School update!"
3. Body: 2 or 3 flowing paragraphs covering what we did, why it mattered (woven in, not lectured) and the stand-out moments.
4. Photo link line: "Please enjoy the photos:" followed by [INSERT GOOGLE DRIVE FOLDER URL].
5. DATES FOR YOUR DIARY block. I will supply this; do not invent dates.
6. Sign-off: "See you in the Forest!" then the delivering staff first names.
7. Repeat the emoji row.

VOICE

- Write like a teacher writing an end-of-day email, not like marketing copy or AI text.
- Direct, warm, conversational, slightly informal.
- First person plural ("we" and "our"). Avoid "Sunbirds did X, Sprouts did Y" group labelling.
- Flowing sentences. No choppy fragments. Connect ideas with conjunctions and inline hyphens for parenthetical asides.
- Bake the why into the description as a phrase ("we did X, which gave the children a chance to build Y"). Do NOT add separate reflective sentences afterwards.
- Exclamation points are fine when something is genuinely fun or a moment.
- Use specifics (ingredient names, tool names, methodology names). Specifics carry the writing.

BANNED LANGUAGE (do not use any of these)

- "little ones", "little hands", "tiny", "our little explorers", "tiny creatures".
- "magical", "truly joyful", "fun-filled", "magic of nature", "just nature doing its magic".
- "mud", "muddy", "muddy kitchen". Use "Nature Kitchen" if relevant.
- The word "real".
- Closing motivational quotes (e.g. "Curiosity grows when little hands..."). Do not add one.
- Colon-plus-three-abstract-phrases pattern (e.g. "This is X in action: A, B, C"). It reads as AI.

CHILDREN

- Never name individual children. If the notes mention a child by name, describe the session without naming them.
- Name enrolled children only occasionally. One or two named per update is plenty, and only for something genuinely notable (a striking find, a creative twist, a new joiner being welcomed in). Do not name children for ordinary participation.

PEDAGOGY

- Reference Forest School ethos, holistic development, play schemas, risk, child-led play, the Five Rs (resourceful, reflective, responsible, resolute, resilient) or Five Cs of emotional intelligence where relevant, but woven into description rather than lectured.
 Consciousness = self-awareness
 Control = self-regulation
 Catalyst = motivation
 Compassion = empathy
 Community = social skills

SESSION NOTES

[Paste your bullet-point notes from the day here. Include: what activities ran, who delivered, anything notable, names of any enrolled children who did something stand-out, and whether any trial children were present (do NOT name them in the output).]

Now write the update.

EXAMPLE UPDATE

Worked example. This is the format, voice and length we are aiming for.

Background: Sprouts and Sunbirds combined session. Activities included opening circle, foraging and tasting plants, tea making, Floor is Lava, bug hunting, terrariums, smoothies. One trial child present (not named). One genuinely notable moment: an enrolled child found a coconut rhinoceros beetle.



Dear Families. Welcome to your weekly Forest School update!

We gathered in the circle to cross off our names and hang our sticks before getting stuck in. The theme was tasting and exploring with the senses, so we started by smelling and sampling the plants growing around our space - blue pea, spearmint, mint and cranberry hibiscus - giving the children a chance to build working knowledge of what's edible and how to safely try new flavours. The harvested ingredients then went into our drinkable tea concoctions, with Tangy Garden (cranberry hibiscus and mint) and Blue Breeze (blue pea, lemongrass and mint) the crowd favourites. A few were convinced theirs tasted sweet despite no sugar going in!

We played a game of Floor is Lava which got everyone crawling, balancing and working together to avoid the lava, while a second group headed to the Tembusu tree for bug hunting and turned up millipedes, beetle grubs and the find of the day, a coconut rhinoceros beetle spotted by Libi. We talked about metamorphosis and what those grubs will become before returning all the creatures carefully to where they were found. A third group continued last week's terrariums, layering bark, soil and compost for their residents. We finished with leftover-fruit smoothies, except the children took over with their own blue pea and banana version, with papaya added on request - chopping boards, plastic knives and patient lip-licking all round.

Please enjoy the photos:

Sprouts: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Oxx289YzvjmxE17PxElSD7OtWwF6UZ_b

Sunbirds: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-l1AHM4jJphQip6I3vJgNbfhjAXNmijL>

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Term 2: Monday 13th April to Saturday 20th June

- Wednesday 27th May Hari Raya Haji Closure
- Overnight Family Camp 30th to 31st May book now:
<https://www.wildlings.sg/so/85PuAUAux?languageTag=en>
- Vesak Day Closure: Monday 1st June
- Summer Camps start: Tuesday 2nd June (10% off until 5th June, multiple camp 15% discount)
- Batu Batu Eco-Island Holiday Camp, flexi dates 22nd June to 5th July, book now:
<https://batubatu.com.my/wildlings-camp-at-batu-batu/>
- Forest School Summer Party: Friday 12th June (5-8pm, Dempsey) Save the date!
- Last Day of Forest School: Saturday 20th June

See you in the Forest!
Vince, Zhul and Mahirah



Why this example works

- **~225 words.** Inside the 200 to 300 ideal length.
- **Two flowing paragraphs** covering the tasting/tea strand, then the split-group activities and smoothie finish.
- **One named child** (Libi, for the rhinoceros beetle find) at a genuinely notable moment.
- **The trial child present that day is not mentioned by name.** The session is described without identifying them.
- **Pedagogy is baked in** ("...giving the children a chance to build working knowledge of what's edible and how to safely try new flavours"). No separate reflective sentence.
- **No banned language** ("tiny", "magical", "real", "little hands", motivational closing quote: all absent).

QUESTIONS OR ISSUES

If you cannot get into the Wix App, are unsure which Drive folder to use, or have a photo issue, message the Camp Manager (camps) or Programme Coordinator (Forest School) on WhatsApp before the deadline. Do not skip the update.