

Equal Opportunities Policy

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. All children will have the opportunity to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Into the Wild Wood Forest School promotes children's rights to be *strong, resilient and listened to*, by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.

- We actively seek to remove barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual children or groups of children.
- We aim to provide all children with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement irrespective of age, ability, gender, ethnicity, religion or background.
- Children with additional needs, including challenging behaviour will be admitted to Forest School after consultation between parents, school or nursery staff to ensure the correct support is in place before they start.
- Staff will ensure that inclusion for all is reflected in the language they use with the children, for example activities will not be described as being more suitable for one gender over another.
- All children should be adequately dressed to ensure that they are able to safely take part in all Forest School activities. We will aim to provide all weather clothing when finances allow.

Behaviour Policy

The aim of the behaviour policy is to set out clear guidelines in order to create an environment where children can develop confidence, self-esteem, motivation, resilience and creativity. Where they can work and play collaboratively and show respect and care for others and for the natural environment.

In order to meet these aims -

All Children to the best of their ability will:

- Show kindness and consideration to others
- Take care of the environment and all equipment
- Listen to and respond to instructions and requests, especially those concerning safety
- Take responsibility for their actions
- Recognise the consequences of their behaviour and where possible make amends
- Play, explore, create, run, jump, climb, splash, sing....
- As a group they will talk about the rules within which they can work, play and stay safe

All Forest School Staff and Volunteers will:

- Work to create a positive environment which encourages children to be caring, nurturing and collaborative
- Promote and model positive relationships which demonstrate respect, kindness and fairness

- Give recognition and encouragement to children demonstrating positive behaviours - e.g. effort, resilience, resourcefulness, concentration, self-control, co-operation and kindness
- Respect children's need to explore and play without too much adult intervention
- **Observe and listen**, allow children to direct their own learning; give support instead of taking the lead
- Listen; give children time to raise issues and concerns
- Recognise that children will make mistakes and give them ample opportunity to redeem themselves
- Be aware of risks, whilst remembering there are good risks which support children's growth, learning and development. Intervene if children are on the verge of causing significant harm to themselves or others, or to equipment or the woodland

In addition the Forest School Leader will:

- Place the needs of the children at the centre of Forest School; planning for their preferred learning styles to maximise individual success and raise self-esteem
- Plan for 'small achievable tasks' which do not set children up to fail, but still challenges them
- Plan time for reflection and sharing thoughts and feelings
- Work in collaboration with parents and children to establish good standards of behaviour

In the event of conflict or challenging behaviour

- Where appropriate children should be given time to resolve conflicts for themselves, it's an important life skill that will be harder to develop if resolutions are always worked out by adults.

Sometimes adult support will be needed, in these instances the adult will:

- See to upset/injured child, giving them reassurance and time to express their hurt or upset
- Give the angry child time and space to be calm - find them somewhere they can sit either with an adult or on their own, but within close view of an adult, until they have returned to a normal state where they are able to work on resolving the problem
- Try to identify the trigger for the challenging behaviour
- Show understanding, allowing child time to express frustrations or grievances, help them to name their feelings
- Work with the child to help them see the consequences of their behaviour
- Support them in finding solutions and working out how they can make amends
- Develop coping strategies for the future
- Volunteers should seek assistance from Forest School Leader or member of staff

If a child's behaviour continues to put themselves or other children at risk, and they are not responsive to attempts to help resolve the problem, then the Forest School leader will:

- For school groups - contact the head teacher to consider the most appropriate step to take next, that might include:

- Child collected and returned to school by a member of staff
- Child collected by parents
- Forest school session ends and all return to school

Exemption from Forest School will be an absolute last resort, children who struggle the most with working and playing collaboratively and lack self-control often have the greatest need for Forest School experiences which build confidence, self-esteem and resilience.

Parent and Child groups:

In parent and child forest school groups the parent/carer will be responsible for their child's behaviour. Where appropriate the Forest School Leader will offer support in resolving conflicts.

Rough-and-tumble play and fantasy aggression

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes, such as superhero and weapon play. Some children appear preoccupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing.

- We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not problematic or aggressive.
- We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behaviour boundaries to ensure that children are not hurt.
- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently dramatic strategies, e.g. blowing up and shooting, and that themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies' and as such offer opportunities to explore concepts of right and wrong.
- We are able to tune into the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes to encourage empathy and to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

Anti Bullying Policy

Into the Wild Wood will take bullying and its impact seriously. Children and parents should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to.

Bullying will not be tolerated. All staff children and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and know what they should do if bullying arises.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour used by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying is considered to be, unacceptable behaviour which occurs lots of times, on purpose. Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time.

Bullying can be:

Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting

Physical: pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence

Racial: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Homophobic: focussing on sexuality

Verbal: (direct or indirect) name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Cyber bullying: all areas of internet ,such as email and internet chat Twitter, Facebook misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities, I- pad, games consoles,

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Gender
- Religion
- Culture
- SEN or disability
- Appearance or health condition
- Home circumstances, including Young carers and poverty
- Sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual bullying, homophobia

Staff will remain vigilant about bullying behaviours and approach this in the same way as any other category of Child Abuse; that is, do not wait to raise concerns or deal directly with the matter. Children may not be aware that they are being bullied; because they may be too young or have a level of Additional Educational Need which means that they may be unable to realise what others may be doing to them.

Staff must also be aware of those children who may be vulnerable; those coming from troubled families, or those responding to emotional problems or mental health issues which may bring about a propensity to be unkind to others, or may make them more likely to fall victim to the behaviour of others.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of attending Forest School
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- lack of eye contact
- becoming short tempered
- change in attitude to people at home.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by the Forest School leader and reported to a senior member of school or nursery staff, or in parent and child groups the Forest School leader will speak directly with the parents of the children involved.

All incidents will be recorded in the Bullying Log and monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

Staff and children are encouraged to have respect for each other and for other people's property and the site at which the session is taking place. Kind behaviour is acknowledged and encouraged.

Staff will treat any bullying as a serious matter and will encourage open conversations in order to increase children's confidence in talking about and reporting any incidents and concerns.

Staff will follow the equal opportunities policy; supporting every child at Forest School, being careful not to highlight differences which could encourage other children to use this difference to begin calling names or teasing.

Staff will be vigilant regarding friendship groups as they may bring about an imbalance of power that could lead to bullying and exclusion of others. Children will be encouraged to be welcoming towards others.

Staff must reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings and be kind to each other.

Unacceptable behaviour towards others will be dealt with quickly and children will be supported in finding ways to resolve conflicts.

Incidents of Bullying

If a child feels that they are being bullied then there are several things that they will be encouraged to do:

- Tell a friend
- Tell an adult whom you feel you can trust
- Ring Childline and follow the advice given

Recording of Bullying Incidents

When an incident of bullying has taken place, staff must record each incident in the Behaviour Log - this would include incidents where staff have had to become involved and speak with children, and/or where parents have raised concerns regarding bullying.

All incidents of bullying will be discussed with all relevant staff and parents of the children involved, in order that everyone can be vigilant and that further incidents by the same child(ren) may be prevented from happening in the future.