

# "Belonging in our Community"

Policy and Procedures about Access, Inclusion, Diversity and Equality.



"Belonging doesn't require us to change who we are; It requires us to BE who we are.

Brene Brown.

"Not belonging is a terrible feeling. It feels awkward and it hurts as if you were wearing someone else's shoes."

Phoebe Stone

"Love, Belonging and Connection are the Universal sources of true well being."

Unknown.

"It is important to find a place where you feel trust, you feel belonging and you feel stability."

Bojan Krkic

"We are driven by five genetic needs: survival; love and belonging; power, freedom and fun."

William Glasser

Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for being, development and learning.

Forest School Association.



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Policy and Procedures about Access, Inclusion, Diversity and Equality.

June 2021 by Claire Hughes

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Woodland Nurture's overarching priority is to keep all participants safe at all times.

This Policy shall be applied during all Woodland Nurture sessions.

It should be read in conjunction with the following policies: **Anti-Racism Policy and Plan,**

**Anti-Bullying, Admissions, Attendance, Behaviour and Child Protection**

## Woodland Nurture's Belonging Pledge:

- 🌳 To build a united community where everyone is valued and feels like they belong, irrespective of ethnicity, religion; sexuality; disability, neurodiversity or any other perceived differences.

## Context of Our Setting:

Allowing all of our community to feel a sense of belonging is at the heart of everything we do at Woodland Nurture.

We are a very diverse group with people of different ages, ethnic backgrounds, genders, gender identities, neurodiversities, religions, beliefs and life experiences all coming together to join as one community within the woods.

## Aims

This policy's purpose is to set out how we:

- ensure that all members of our community feel valued, happy, have a sense of belonging and feel comfortable enough to have fun and to learn in our setting
- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment and care
- ensure of no unlawful discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination

The **Equality Act 2010** introduced a single public sector equality duty which came into force on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011. The aim is to ensure that public authorities and all bodies exercising public functions, including schools, consider the need to maintain standards of equality, equal opportunities and good relations between different groups.

At Woodland Nurture we are committed to giving each learner every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual children or groups of children.

We work hard to maintain communications between all members of our community to ensure all members feel a sense of belonging.

We aim to provide all our learners with the opportunities to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement.

## **Definitions:**

### **Belonging:**

Belonging is a sense of feeling like you are an important and valued member of a group because of who you are, without having to change to fit in. When we feel that we belong, we can relax, feel happy, build friendships and learn.

Brene Brown says:

*"Those who have a strong sense of love and belonging have the courage to be imperfect."*

### **Access:**

The definition of **access** is the right to use, communicate, or approach something or someone. In terms of our setting, we are committed to making our setting equally accessible to all people.

*"It is not inclusion that I want – it's access. " Peter Slatin*

## **Inclusion**

Inclusion is promoting an environment where people from different backgrounds

- Are welcome and treated with respect
- Feel included and integrated
- Are given equal access to opportunities
- Are given opportunities to contribute their ideas and concerns

## Equality

Equality is the state of being equal; about making sure that people are treated fairly and given fair chances.

Equality is more than treating everyone the same. It is about recognising the importance of treating each person as an individual and making sure that their needs are met in a variety of ways.

Equality is based on the principles of:

- Fairness - working and living in ways that so not discriminate against anyone
- Respect - encouraging a culture where everyone receives respect and can express their views and can be heard
- Honesty - ensuring that policies and practises are transparent and open to scrutiny
- Providing opportunities - working and living in a culture where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

## Equity

Sometimes, people may need differing treatment to make their opportunities the same as another's. This is called **equity**. We recognise that everyone has differing needs and by meeting these needs we are being equitable.

## Diversity

Diversity refers to the wide range of attributes, backgrounds and skills that are in our society. In the UK we have people of many races, religions, abilities, ages and other differences. They bring with them a colourful range of cultures, traditions, ceremonies, skills, languages, backgrounds, experiences and other attributes to our society.

By embracing diversity we aim to recognise, harness and manage differences, so that everyone can contribute to our community and realise their potential. Diversity challenges us to recognise and value all sorts of differences to make society more inclusive, fair and comfortable for everyone.

## Our Goal:

Our ultimate goal is to create and maintain a happy healthy community where existing and new members feel a sense of belonging so they can flourish and shine.

## Our Actions to achieve this goal:

We will:

- 🌱 monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.
- 🌱 ensure equality of access for all learners
- 🌱 actively value the contributions of all our learners

- 🌱 seek out resources including books, toys, fabrics and foods that represent all of our community
- 🌱 actively seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's learning and involvement
- 🌱 take account of the requirements, cultural backgrounds and interests of all learners when planning for future sessions
- 🌱 actively promote gender equality and oppose gender discrimination in all of its forms
- 🌱 actively promote positive attitudes towards life in a multicultural, multiethnic and multi-faith society and celebrate cultural diversity.
- 🌱 foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality
- 🌱 ensure that all pupils and staff are encouraged and able to achieve their full potential
- 🌱 respect and value differences between people and encourage all in our community to do the same
- 🌱 be champions of all members of our community by celebrating their successes
- 🌱 ensure our learners participate safely, in clothing that is appropriate to their religious or cultural beliefs
- 🌱 ensure our learners are given the opportunities, where practically possible, to participate fully, regardless of disabilities or medical needs, making reasonable adjustments if necessary including the modification of work spaces and provision of additional equipment where necessary and within reason
- 🌱 actively promote equally positive attitudes towards all people irrespective of their ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender, gender identity or background.
- 🌱 challenge any and all discrimination
- 🌱 challenge unconscious bias of our own and that of others
- 🌱 report any incidents of discrimination to the relevant parents
- 🌱 take very seriously any reports of discrimination and actively ensure that all incidents of harassment and bullying are recorded in our incident log and monitored.
- 🌱 Anti-Racism.: As an inclusive community, our goal is to be anti-racist in all aspects of our work, teaching and way of life. To show our commitment to Anti-Racism we have a separate Anti-Racism Policy.

## **Procedures – dealing with Discrimination:**

Understanding and education are vital to achieving changes in attitudes and we hope that our anti-discriminatory teaching will be enough to prevent any instances of discrimination from occurring. If there are any instances of discrimination we will tackle them head on:

- Pupils and staff should be encouraged to discuss any instances where discrimination occurs or where the promotion of equality is hindered. This could be with any member

of staff. The staff will report to Claire Hughes who will deal with the matter. If the allegation is against Claire, Laura Owen will deal with the offence.

- Any instance of discrimination will be taken seriously and investigated straight away. Every effort should be taken at this stage to resolve the difficulties. This will involve explaining to the perpetrator the unacceptability of behaviour and the request for it to stop immediately. If the perpetrator is a child their parents will be informed and it will be explained that the behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We will help to educate the child so that further incidences do not occur. Repeat occurrences will lead to exclusion from the setting.
- If the perpetrator is a member of staff disciplinary action will be taken if deemed necessary.

### **Recording and Reporting Incidents**

1. All incidents involving children will be recorded in our log book, including the date and the names of the perpetrators and victims, the nature of the incident, and action taken in response.
2. Incidents involving staff will be recorded in the separate incident book as well as the log book.
3. Incidents of a racist nature will adhere to the separate Dealing with Racism Incidents Policy and will be recorded in the separate Racism Log book.

### **Performance indicators for preventing and dealing with incidents**

In reviewing the effectiveness of this policy staff will consider:

- the feelings of victims (and their parents) on the satisfaction of the support received and the resolution of incidents
- the continued good progress and high self esteem of those who have been offended
- the continued good progress and high self esteem of those who have caused offence
- whether the action taken successfully prevented repeat incidents
- the willingness of participants (and parents) to draw their concerns to the attention of staff
- the consistency of response and confidence of all staff in following the policy
- underlying causes for any rise in numbers of incidents, whether these were preventable and if further action or change in policy and practice is now necessary.

Where review indicates that change is needed, policy and practice will be amended as part of the action plan.