**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**09/24**

**Objective**

The Wilderness Grove Forest School Anti-bullying policy outlines what we will do to prevent and tackle bullying.

We are committed to providing a supportive, caring and safe environment in which all children are free from fear of being bullied.  We take bullying and its impact seriously.  Bullying of any form is not tolerated, whether carried out by a child or an adult.  Anyone who knows bullying is happening is expected to tell a FSL.  All TWiG FSL’s are aware of our position on bullying.

Any child who is a victim of bullying will be dealt with in a sympathetic manner.  A clear account of the incident will be recorded, and the behaviour policy implemented.  All facilitators will be informed so close monitoring of all concerned can begin.  Parents of all parties will be informed.

**Aims of the Anti-Bullying Policy**

* To minimise incidents of bullying
* To improve children’s safety and well-being
* To change the behaviour of the person/people using bullying behaviours
* To change the behaviour of bystanders and witnesses
* Educate all about the nature of bullying

**Characteristics of Bullying**

* Ongoing
* Deliberate
* Unequal

**Definition of bullying**

**Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally.**

We recognise many children and young people experience conflict in their relationships with other children/young people and at TWiG we are committed to developing empathy and the skills to manage relationships in a peaceful and kind way that does not harm others

At TWiG our definition of bullying is, ‘The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.  It can happen face to face or online.’

Bullying is unacceptable.  At TWiG we will respond promptly and effectively to reported incidents of bullying.

At TWiG

* Everyone has the right to be treated with respect.
* Everyone has the right to feel happy and safe.
* No one deserves to be a target of bullying.
* Individuals who bully need to find different approaches to their behaviour.

National research has shown some children are particularly vulnerable to bullying, including children with SEND, looked after children, pupils from minority groups or faiths, young carers, LGBTQ+ pupils and those perceived to be LGBTQ+

**Forms of Bullying**

* Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening.
* Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, using derogatory language.
* Extortion – demanding money/goods with threats.
* Online – social media, messaging, calls, misuse of photos/videos.
* Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
* Sexual – unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments.
* Homophobic/Bi-phobic – bullying because of sexuality or perceived sexuality.
* Transphobic – because of gender identity/perceived gender identity

**It involves**

* Target(s)
* The person/people doing the bullying.
* Witnesses/bystanders

**Proactive approaches**

We believe prevention is the responsibility of the whole of the TWiG community.

At TWiG we do this by...

* Improving the environmental quality by promoting a culture of acceptance and understanding.
* Ensuring there are opportunities for children to be listened to and to listen to each other.
* Work to develop positive relationships between adults and children and for all adults to be effective role models.
* Cooperative group work
* Cross-curricular themed approaches
* Awareness of the Anti-bullying Policy
* Training of all staff
* Involving the whole community in our policy.
* Using time for discussion to ensure children understand the difference between relational conflict and bullying.
* Building a positive ethos respecting all types of difference.
* Creating a happy and safe environment where positive relationships are celebrated.
* Working to develop empathy, social skills and emotional intelligence within our community.
* Considering safeguarding and reporting concerns to the DSL
* Provide assurances to a child that raises concerns they will be listened to and action taken.
* Provide clear messages bullying must stop.
* Work with both parties to find solutions.  Work to identify how to prevent recurrence.  Implement behaviour policy.
* Raising awareness of online bullying.
* Offering additional training to facilitators.

**Reactive Approaches**

* Initial approach is one of no-blame and begins with an interview between a member of staff and those involved.
* Problem is discussed and recognition of how this makes those involved feel.
* Meeting will be recorded.
* Everyone must take responsibility for reflecting upon their behaviour.
* Follow up meeting with individual experiencing bullying will follow to check bullying has stopped.
* Involvement of parents/carers so that there is support from home.
* Should bullying continue consequences of no longer attending the provision put in place.
* Priority is to adapt and change behaviour, but the safety of individuals must be taken into account.

At TWiG children are encouraged to talk to FSL’s if they are unhappy or have concerns.  This includes any bullying that is taking place outside of TWiG meeting times.  If children raise a concern, TWiG FSL must LISTEN and BELIEVE.

* Secure the safety of the target of bullying   
  Consider safeguarding concerns and report to DSL if required.    
  Assure child they have been listened to and action will be taken.
* Take action to stop bullying from happening again   
  Consider who is involved, send a clear message it must be stopped.    
  Work with both parties to find solutions and identify ways to prevent recurrence.
* Whole group reflection
* Reflect and learn from the incident.    
  Consider discussion of bullying issues with whole group

On a regular basis, we give children the opportunities to discuss how happy and safe they feel at Forest School.  We do this through discussion around the fire and individually recorded reflections.

All facilitators will fill out a behaviour report form (see Behaviour Policy) when dealing with incidents of bullying.

**Liaison with parents/carers**

* Forest School leaders will make sure that parents/ carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying.
* Work with parents and the local community to address issues beyond our setting that give rise to bullying.
* If any Parent/Carer has a concern, they should speak to a TWiG FSL’s immediately.
* TWiG will work with parents/carers to ensure bullying is stopped and that support is given where needed.
* Parents/Carers should not confront the bully or their Parents/Carers.  This can complicate the situation and distress the victim.
* TWiG will deal directly with all children involved in the incident and their Parents/Carers.  Everyone involved will be informed of any action taken.
* If Parents/Carers feel their concern has not been appropriately addressed, they should follow the Complaints Procedure.

**Responsibilities**

This policy will only have impact if the whole community understands that bullying is not tolerated and understands the steps that will be taken to both prevent and respond to bullying.