

Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy (FS&T)

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Contents

Introduction	3
Our Aim	3
Positive Behaviour Support	3
Inclusion support for SEMH/SEN Learners	4
Our Method	5
Praise.....	5
Our Rules & Code of Conduct	5
The Forest School Code of Conduct	6
Dealing with an Incident of Concern.....	7
Specific Behaviours of Concern.....	8
Absconding/Leaving the Premises:.....	8
Use of Inappropriate Language:.....	8
Behaviours of Concern Resulting in a Safeguarding Disclosure	8
Complaints Procedure.....	9
Appendix A: Anti-Bullying Policy	10
What is Bullying?.....	10
Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?	11
Signs and Symptoms for Parents and Staff.....	11
Outcomes	11
Appendix C: Drug Use Policy.....	13
Introduction	13
Procedure around Drugs Related Incidents	13

Introduction

Our Aim

We strive to create a thriving community who feel safe and content in our woodland settings, with the ability to express themselves freely and appropriately with knowledge and understanding of a clear set of expectations that can be understood by all attendees, both children and staff alike. In doing so, self-regulation through positive behaviour can be achieved and all present can contribute to an environment that enables us to promote the key principles of Forest School.

All are welcome and equal in our community, learners, and staff alike. We understand that everyone comes from a different experience of life and our diversity and differences should be celebrated for the benefits they provide.

Positive Behaviour Support

At The Outdoors Group (TOG), we understand that positive behaviour communicates needs that are met, and negative behaviour communicates needs that are unmet. We wish to enable learners to understand these behaviours and needs to support them to have positive outcomes.

We expect learners and staff to show:

- pro-social communication
- kindness
- respect
- a willingness to learn
- a commitment to our community

Individuals will be supported to work toward these outcomes using varied supportive methods based on the needs of the learner.

These are not limited to but include:

- restructuring
- scaffolding
- humour
- distraction
- environmental changes
- praise/celebration

Behaviours that cannot be tolerated include:

- bullying
- physical aggression (kicking, hitting, biting, etc.)
- any type of racism, sexism, or isolating/exclusive views
- sexualised behaviour

We will handle these situations on a case-by-case basis.

Inclusion support for SEMH/SEN Learners

We will make reasonable adjustments to facilitate inclusion within Forest School where possible. We recognise that in some instances, children may require further additional support which may fall outside of the training/specialisms of the Forest School Staff, and which may be addressed more appropriately and supportively within in different setting.

Ascertaining the suitability of any given session for an attendee will be done in collaboration with Parent/Guardian and the Forest School Team, with cooperation from all parties to ensure the best outcome for the individual, as well as for the staff and other attendees.

In facilitating this process, taster sessions may be utilised to provide a trial period to allow reflection on likely progress within a given session.

Where we are not able to facilitate Forest School for any individual, we will make every effort to signpost to other business areas (TLP/TOS) where appropriate.

Our Method

The Outdoors Group believes in recognising and celebrating positive behaviours as well identifying and addressing behaviours of concern. We understand that behaviours of concern are learned and therefore can be shaped to become positive, and we believe that responses to positive behaviour need to be tailored to the learner.

Praise

All staff at The Outdoors group should be involved in organising and delivering praise to learners who display positive behaviour. Depending on lived experience, learners will respond differently to praise, therefore it is delivered in several ways but always aims to be right for the learner we are working with:

- positive body language-gestures and smiles
- verbal praise
- public praise as part of a group or praise on a 1:1 basis, depending on anticipated response.
- feedback to parents on collection
- rewards as appropriate

Our general response to negative behaviour is as follows:

- listening to the learner's explanation of the behaviour
- staff explaining the expected and alternative response to behaviour presented
- staff describing why a certain expectation exists

Repeated behaviour of concern will result in reminders, removal from activity, and parental discussions around the behaviours displayed.

Behaviours which result in someone's safety being placed in jeopardy will result in a learner being sent home early from a session but will include reparative work with staff and other learners upon the learner's return.

Ultimately, it is our aim to find the source and function of the behaviour presented to limit instances of the behaviour reoccurring. Parents and carers may be involved in this process to aid in appropriate responses.

Should any attendee display a level of behaviour that we feel unable to manage progressively and effectively within Forest School, we may conclude that we are unable to meet the needs of the individual. In this instance, discussions will be had with Parent/Guardian to find a more suitable progressive alternative through avenues both inside and outside of TOG.

Our Rules & Code of Conduct

At The Outdoors Group we aim to be:

- Safe
- Kind
- Respectful of ourselves, others, and the environment

To enable us to remain consistent across our sessions, to demonstrate that we are fair to all in our approach, and to enable the staff and attendees of our sessions to be accountable for

their actions, we have created a Forest School Code of Conduct. This elaborates on the above three factors to further demonstrate what it means to be safe, kind, and respectful.

The Forest School Code of Conduct

Respect Nature

- Treat all living things with kindness and care.
- Respect the woodland as a natural habitat for the animals and plants whose space we share.

Listen, and be respectful of others

- Pay attention to your surroundings
- Follow instructions from your Forest School Team.
- Treat others with the respect that you would like them to show you.

Teamwork & Inclusion

- Work together with your fellow explorers.
- Be a kind and supportive friend; recognise and take joy in the achievements of others.
- Celebrate the differences which make each of us unique.
- Share tools, resources, and discoveries.

Safety Rules must be observed

- We want you to have freedom of choice and ownership of your forest school journey! To enable us to do so with confidence, please respect and listen to all the Forest School Rules.
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear at Forest School.

Leave no trace

- Keep the forest clean; pack away and clear up after you have used resources.
- Ensure that what you use is looked after and returned so that the next person can enjoy using it too.
- Dispose of waste properly in bins.

Curiosity & Learning

- Ask questions and express your curiosity.
- Learn about the plants, animals, and ecosystems around you.
- Share your discoveries and knowledge with others.

Respect Personal Space

- Give others space to explore and enjoy the forest.
- Be mindful of your impact on the environment and on fellow explorers.

Communication & Sharing

- Communicate your thoughts in a respectful manner

- If you are unsure about anything, or are unhappy about something, your Forest School Team is there to listen, and to help you.

Dealing with an Incident of Concern

On rare occasions, an incident may occur which could jeopardise the safety and wellbeing of other attendees on site. This may be due to threatening or aggressive behaviour, as well as extreme distress and anxiety that requires addressing immediately to avoid extended stress and trauma. Succinct, confident, and well-informed action should be taken to limit the impact on the individual and the group as a whole.

During an incident of this nature the following are critical:

- That you seek assistance at the earliest available opportunity to ensure suitable supervision of all attendees, and ensure that Parent/Guardian are informed and asked to collect their child
- That you keep yourself safe first
- That you make the environment as safe as possible, this could include:
 1. Putting out fires
 2. Removing and securing equipment and tools
 3. Removing logs, branches etc
 4. Moving other learners away
 5. Moving learner away from hazards such as trees to climb or things to throw, mud to get stuck in etc.
 6. That you keep other learners safe
 7. That you make the learner in question as safe as possible
 8. That police are informed if appropriate
 9. That you are present with the learner or can see them until they are safely escorted from the site

After any incident of this nature the following should be done:

- Fill in a Forest School & Training incident report
- Fill in any other forms as necessary (e.g. safeguarding report form)
- Ensure that Parent/Guardian are notified and given a full account both verbally and via email
- Speak to Site manager about updating risk assessments as necessary
- Brief any other staff who work with the learners about the incident
- Seek debrief and/or support for yourself

Specific Behaviours of Concern

Absconding/Leaving the Premises:

- Immediately radio for support, and if necessary, place other learners with another member of staff so you can deal with the incident.
- Allow the learner to move freely about the site as long as they are not a danger to themselves or others; if they feel trapped it will likely make the situation worse.
- If they leave the site completely, warn them that the policy is to ring their parents/carers and the police and ask them to return to the premises. Give them space to be left alone as long as they remain on site safe to themselves and others.
- If they do not return to site, inform the parent/carers to arrange collection, and inform the police if you feel they are unsafe or pose a risk to themselves, others, or property in the area.

Use of Inappropriate Language:

- Where the language is directed at others directly or is affecting other learners on site then either the offender or the group should be moved away, whichever is most practical to do.
- The learner should be informed that the language is inappropriate and that it will be reported to parent or guardian (if the learner is under the age of 16)
- They should be reminded of the other learners on site and that it could jeopardise their return to sessions.
- If the learner's behaviour escalates or if they leave the area without instruction to do so immediately radio for support and follow the procedures for their actions as in this document.

Behaviours of Concern Resulting in a Safeguarding Disclosure

If a learner becomes upset or makes a disclosure because of an incident, the Safeguarding Policy and procedure should be followed, and the relevant Safeguarding Officer and MASH should be informed of the situation as appropriate.

For more information, please see The Outdoors Group [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#).

Complaints Procedure

If an individual or stakeholder is unhappy with action we have taken regarding behaviour management and positive behaviour support, they are welcomed to refer to our [Complaints Policy](#) to ensure their concerns and views are heard.

Appendix A: Anti-Bullying Policy

What is Bullying?

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour used by an individual or group, REPEATED over time, that INTENTIONALLY hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. In other words, bullying at The Outdoors Group is considered to be, “unacceptable behaviour which occurs ‘lots of times, on purpose’.”

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g., hiding things, threatening gestures).
- Physical: pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Social: purposefully excluding someone, spreading rumours about them, or purposefully isolating them.
- Racial: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic: because of or focussing on the issue of sexuality.
- Direct or indirect Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyber bullying: All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat, including Online, gaming misuse, text messaging and calling, videoing.

Bullying can be based on:

- 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

Bullying can take place in the group sessions, breaks, toilets, on the journey to and from the site, on residential trips and cyberspace. It can take place in group activities and between families in the local community. Perpetrators and Victims Bullying takes place where there is an IMBALANCE OF POWER of one person or persons over another.

This can be achieved by:

- The size of the individual (although larger size does not mean a person cannot be bullied or bullies).
- The strength of the individual.
- The numbers or group size involved.
- Anonymity–by cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc.

Staff must 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 be told before you raise concerns or deal directly with the matter. Learners may not be aware that they are being bullied; because they may be too young or have a level of Special Educational Needs which means that they may be unable to realise what others may be doing to them.

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. Learners who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Signs and Symptoms for Parents and Staff

A learner 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 learner:

- changes their usual routine.
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic).
- begins to truant.
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- starts stammering.
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- feels ill in the morning.
- comes home with clothes torn.
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing".
- asks for money or starts stealing money.
- is bullying other learners or siblings.
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- 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.

Outcomes

All incidences of bullying will be investigated. The first step is always to ascertain if it is a 'one-off' incident or is repeated and intentional bullying. Parents of the alleged perpetrator may also be questioned about the incident or about any concerns that they may be having the learner displaying unacceptable behaviour may be asked to genuinely apologise (as appropriate to the learner's age and level of understanding).

Other outcomes may take place:

- A parent being informed about their learner's behaviour and a request that the parents support The Outdoors Group with any consequences that it takes.

- Wherever possible, the learners will be reconciled.
- In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support The Outdoors Group or the family in dealing with a learner continually demonstrating unacceptable behaviour towards others. E.g., police, family support or counsellor.

Appendix C: Drug Use Policy

Introduction

At the Outdoors Group Ltd, we feel that creating safe environments which discourage the use of drugs enable us to help learners understand how to make healthy choices and promote positive behaviours.

Substance misuse affects all communities - crossing gender, cultural and social boundaries. No school, parent or carer can afford to be complacent or think that children and young people are not at risk. Schools have a key role to play in ensuring that young people understand the risks involved and have the confidence, knowledge, and skills to avoid them.

Possession or use of drugs and illicit substances should always be viewed as a Safeguarding and welfare issue first and foremost and schools should seek to place their safeguarding duties at the heart of any response to such incidents.

Procedure around Drugs Related Incidents

Reporting

All incidents involving drugs should be treated as safeguarding concerns and should be reported to the Head of Forest School and the DSL in the first instance.

Recording

All incidents involving drugs should be recorded following our safeguarding procedure on SharePoint as well as our Safeguarding Report Form.

Confiscating

Any drugs that are located or suggested to be contained within a learner's property warrant a search of this property and confiscation of any drugs or drug related paraphernalia that is found. These items should be searched for and confiscated in the presence of two staff members as witness and returned to the Head/DSL to be disposed of by police involvement.

Informing

All drugs related incidents that occur suggest a need for underlying education, need, and related consequence which should relate directly to the specific incident. A need for counselling and education will be identified by leadership and sought in conjunction with parents, carers, and other professionals.