

Safeguarding Policy

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Statement

It is the policy of Into Wilderness Bushcraft to safeguard all children and young people from physical, sexual and emotional harm while participating in Forest School activities.

Into Wilderness Bushcraft will take all reasonable steps to create an environment where children are safe from abuse, in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to using the following procedures and guidelines.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff and volunteers who, during their employment, have direct or indirect contact with children and families and vulnerable adults, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

There is a duty on organisations to make appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Government guidance makes it clear that it is a shared responsibility and depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise. This is clearly outlined in the document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018', where the definition of safeguarding is: 'Protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes'.

The statutory inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié and the first joint Chief Inspectors report on safeguarding children highlighted the lack of priority status given to safeguarding. The government response to these findings included the Green Paper Every Child Matters and the provisions in the Children Act 2004. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is not just the province of those working directly with these groups of people.

Into Wilderness Bushcraft aims to ensure that no act or omission on the part of the organisation, or that of its staff or volunteers puts a child, young person or vulnerable adult directly or inadvertently at risk; and that rigorous systems are in place to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children,

young people and vulnerable adults and support staff in fulfilling their obligations

Definition of Child Abuse

An abused child is any boy or girl under the age of 18 whom has suffered from or is believed to be at significant risk of:

- Neglect
- Physical injury
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Or bullying.

Child abuse can be carried out by *anyone* who has contact with the child. This *could* be friends, family, other children, a stranger or someone who is known and trusted.

Staff & Volunteers

The careful recruitment of staff and volunteers is an effective way to protect children and young people and to reduce the risk of potential abusers targeting the project.

- All staff and volunteers need job descriptions and clearly defined roles.

- All staff and volunteers will be interviewed before taking up their job.
- References will be taken up on all staff and volunteers before they start.
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service disclosures will be carried out on staff and volunteers working directly with children.
- All staff and volunteers will receive regular supervision
- Staff and volunteers who do not have disclosures should not work alone with children and young people
- Staff will be informed and trained appropriately to ensure they recognise the symptoms or possible symptoms of neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

Preventing abuse by means of good practice

Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence, through our support, in making choices and finding words to describe their feelings and manageable ways of expressing them. This will enable our children to work toward resisting inappropriate approaches.

Dealing with Abuse

- Record concerns in an agreed place separate from other children's notes
- Share concerns with appropriate Forest School Leader and others who *need to know*

- Do not let concerns become common knowledge or gossip
- Seek advice from Social Services
- Do not investigate further or decide whether concerns are true or not
- If worried, contact the appropriate agency (Social Services or Police).
Children's Services (The Integrated Front Door) can be contacted by email: WSChildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk or by phone: 9 – 5pm
01403 229900 out of hours 0330 222 6664

Disclosures

Children and young people will talk to adults who they trust. This could include disclosing abuse to an adult or another child at Forest School. When this situation arises, follow these steps:

The nominated persons responsible for Safeguarding in respect of Into Wilderness Bushcraft is Founder and Lead Instructor; Lewis Tingle

07443052162

IntoWildernessuk@gmail.com

Lewis Tingle is the first-person staff, children and volunteers should approach with concerns or suspicions of abuse. Lewis Tingle is responsible for ensuring that child protection policies and procedures are being implemented correctly. He will ensure that staff and volunteers will receive adequate training.

Lewis Tingle will be responsible for recording information and contacting the relevant authority.

1) Receive

Listen to what is being said

Accept it

Do not display shock or disbelief

Take notes

2) Reassure

Reassure the child/young person but be honest

Don't make promises you may not be able to keep

Do not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to refer

Reassure the child/young person that they were right to tell you. If the child/young person expresses guilt, point out that they are not to blame.

4) React

Do not interrogate for further details

Do not ask leading questions (this can invalidate court evidence)

Do ask open questions e.g., "Anything else you need to tell me?"

Do not criticise the person the child is talking about

Do not ask the child to repeat what they are saying for someone else

Explain to them what you must do next

5) Record

Make brief notes as soon as possible

Do not destroy original notes

Record the time, date, place, noticeable non-

verbal behaviour and the 'actual' words used by the child/young person

Draw a diagram to show any marks/bruises

Record what is said rather than your assumptions

6) Remember

Follow the guidelines in this policy

Consult with the appropriate person as soon as possible.

Ask for support from Rachel Maynard or Julia if needed, you have been dealing with a traumatic situation

It is important to deal with any allegations by children, young people or their parents/carers straight away.

- Any allegation must be taken seriously and reported to Social Services, who will investigate
- Any member of staff, the management committee or a volunteer should be offered support from another member of the organisation.
- Any member of staff or volunteer who has an allegation made against them should be suspended immediately and remain suspended until the allegations have been investigated
- Ensure as much confidentiality as possible
- If Social Services investigate the allegations, decide how this affects Forest School's disciplinary procedure.

Guidelines on the behaviour and roles of the staff and volunteers

The aim of these guidelines is to identify appropriate behaviour to protect children and young people and to safeguard adults.

- Physical punishment in any form is not acceptable
- Activities involving close contact should take place in a group situation

- Keep everything public – a hug in the group is different to a hug behind closed doors
- Touch should be related to the child's needs and not the workers.

Children and young people have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others. Permission should be sought from the child before any physical contact.

- Adults should monitor each other in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by pointing out anything that can be misunderstood
- Minimise time spent alone with children and young people and tell other adults if this does happen
- Don't give lifts to children or young people if they are alone, unless not doing so puts them at risk. Further guidance available in transport and lone worker policies.

It is important to publicise this policy and to ensure that children and young people are aware of its existence. All volunteers and staff should receive a copy of this policy.