

Equal Opportunities Policies and Procedures

West Suffolk Hive CIC believes our ethos nurtures and fosters resilience, creativity, confidence and independence in all learners and that all learners deserve an equal chance to be part of programmes. Our projects are open to all groups and individuals on condition that they keep to the boundaries that ensure their safety. It is the responsibility of all employees, members and supporters to enforce this policy at all times. In line with the Equalities Act 2010, West Suffolk Hive CIC welcomes all people irrespective of gender, race, culture, colour, creed, sexual orientation, age, class, marital status, religion, political belief or disability and any of the nine protected characteristics*. We will not tolerate any form of prejudiced or offensive behaviour although we understand that some participants may carry prejudiced or offensive views.

Anti-bullying and 'Prevent' Policies

Whilst we understand that some participants may arrive at West Suffolk Hive CIC holding prejudiced or offensive views, we will not tolerate behaviour that allows any member of the group, or of society in general, to feel ostracized, intimidated, or inadequate.

In line with Section 26 of the Counter-terrorism and Security Act (2015), West Suffolk Hive CIC acknowledges that certain societal conditions lead to dis-enfranchisement and will exercise due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Anti-bullying Procedures

West Suffolk Hive CIC will not tolerate any form of prejudiced, offensive or intimidating behaviour. All participants, parents and volunteers will be expected to adhere to the Behavioural Management Policy and to challenge any discriminatory behaviour. All members are expected to model positive behaviour and anyone who is found to be acting in a manner contrary to this will immediately be asked to leave West Suffolk Hive CIC and will not be welcome to return. West Suffolk Hive CIC believes that an inclusive ethos encourages positive behaviour. Any incidents occurring will be recorded by the course leader and investigated further. Anyone suspecting incidents of bullying must report it to the course leader initially, who will decide what action is required. Depending on the severity of the situation, it may be necessary to inform the parents/guardians of the child, or the relevant authorities, including local Social Services or the Police.

'Prevent' Procedures

PREVENT is part of the Home Office and the Police counter-terrorism strategy and aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism by working with individuals and communities to address issues before they become a criminal matter to stop people moving from extremism into terrorist-related activity. There are various societal conditions that may lead to disillusionment or dis-enfranchisement with society, including religious beliefs and customs, conditions at home and exposure to media coverage of violent and extreme behaviour. If any participant or adult has any suspicions, they must immediately notify the Safeguarding Lead.

The ethos of West Suffolk Hive CIC supports community cohesion with the implementation of all of the six principles of Forest School. In particular, the use of learner-centred processes creates a community for development and learning. Forest School encourages holistic development and relationship building, both with fellow participants, and with the environment around them. It promotes a sense of responsibility to care for the local wildlife and to work together, providing opportunities for risk-taking, teamwork and problem-solving.

If the course leader becomes concerned about the mental health of a member of the group, they will follow the Safeguarding Procedures, ensuring careful observation and recording those observations. If relevant and necessary, the parents of the individual will be consulted.

Behaviour Management Policy (Conduct Policy)

West Suffolk Hive CIC accepts the feelings and emotions affecting conduct at our sessions and works to help learners understand, celebrate and manage those feelings as appropriate to themselves and others.

Behaviour Management Procedures

There are various factors which affect the behaviour and conduct of participants, including direct factors such as the weather (too hot, cold, wet etc) and hunger or thirst. Other factors include tiredness, or any ongoing pain from an injury, length of time attending sessions, and any outside factors like problems at home or with friends.

The conduct of individual participants can impact on the rest of the group's learning and development in a positive or negative way. Positive or negative behaviour can affect the dynamic of the group. Continued negativity can erode the resilience of others, while positive energy can enhance learning and development. An individual's conduct can impact on their own learning and development by affecting their experiences at West Suffolk Hive CIC. By not participating fully, they miss out on the social benefits and the sense of community and teamwork.

West Suffolk Hive CIC will strive to encourage and maintain appropriate conduct in a positive way. Where possible, the situation will be up to the participants to resolve, but if necessary, the course leader may step in to mediate. We will use positive strategies for handling inconsiderate behaviour, by helping participants find solutions in ways which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. By modelling positive behaviour, the course leader and any volunteers will be setting an example of the desired conduct at Forest School. Children will be supported to understand their feelings, and every effort will be made to help them develop self-esteem and confidence. At no point will a child be humiliated or shamed for undesirable behaviour. If their behaviour is endangering them or any other children or adults, we may remove them from the group for everybody's safety. Staff will only raise their voices when the Health and Safety of members of the group is at risk.

At Forest School, in order to work safely and take appropriate risks, it is necessary for the children and adults present to be aware of what is expected of them. Every activity will be explained and will be immediately stopped if there are any incidences that jeopardise the safety of any of the participants. West Suffolk Hive CIC will promote an environment where children feel able to confide in a staff member and know that shared information will be dealt with sensitively and acted upon as appropriate. Inappropriate behaviour will be challenged in a calm but assertive manner. Initially, they will be offered alternative options to redirect them elsewhere. During the session, there will be a time for reflection, during which the children will be encouraged to discuss their feelings about their own or their peer's behaviour.

Any incidents that warrant further action will be recorded and, if necessary, shared with parents or the relevant local authorities.

Inclusion and Access Policy

West Suffolk Hive CIC works with participants and their carers to ensure that all have equal access to the site and to our ethos. The course leader will work to ensure participants with special educational or physical needs are able to experience the benefits of nature connection.

Inclusion and Access Procedures

The ethos of West Suffolk Hive CIC will be communicated to potential participants and their carers via email. It will also be available to view on the website at www.westsuffolkhive.org.uk

Any condition that may affect participation must be explained to the course leader before taking part in a session. Those participants who may need extra help with mobility or medical needs will need to have a parent or carer with them. All efforts will be made to adapt the sessions to be inclusive to the abilities of those in the group.

*It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are called protected characteristics. The Equality Act 2010 protects people from these types of discrimination.

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Completed by: S Holland

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