

## **Relationships and Sexual behaviour policy**

### **RELATIONSHIPS POLICY**

The Children's Garden is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). Schools must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for these subjects. Everyone is unique and everyone is equal.

The policy sets out how The Children's Garden kindergarten supports the children's physical, emotional and moral development through its Relationship and Sexual behaviour policy.

Positive relationships and respect for differences are at the core of Steiner-Waldorf education. From the beginning, each lesson and activity has a relationship aspect, which is consciously fostered by the teachers. The key is healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships.

Every day is an opportunity to work on social aspects, to navigate relationships as an integral part of the kindergarten experience. The positive relationship is also supported through the Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies and should be read in conjunction with this policy.

In Kindergarten the main focus is on Relationship Education, and the curriculum fosters a reverence for a common humanity, appreciation of differences and the natural world. It instills a strong sense of self and respect for others, a clear sense of what constitutes good relationships.

'Our highest endeavour must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives.' (Rudolf Steiner)

The Kindergarten teachers will foster an open dialogue with their class and parents and will strive to answer children's' questions honestly, but always in an age- appropriate manner.

This will be achieved through conversations between children and teachers about positive and healthy relationships with family, friends and the wider community. Through this the aim is for children to be able to understand relationships that bring happiness and security and are also able to recognise those that do not and how to seek help.

We will share with sensitivity and care how families are different and welcome all types of family structures such as single parents, LGBTQ+ parents, adoptive parents, foster

parents, those who are co-parenting and the like. We take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, and to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. looked after children or young carers.

Turn taking, treating others with kindness, consideration and respect with honesty and truthfulness are at the heart of our values that we foster in the children. We teach children how to establish personal space and boundaries, show respect and understand the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical contact with consent at the centre of what we do right from the beginning in kindergarten.

The seasonal curriculum fosters a relationship with nature, through activities, stories, song and verse. The mixed age group of 3 to 6-year-olds, creates opportunities for dynamic relationships, the younger look up to the example of the older child and the older nurture the younger. Through stories, imitation of the teachers' example and golden rules such as 'gentle hands', 'kind words' and 'everyone is welcome,' expectations for positive relationships are made clear. Respect for others is taught in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding one's own and others' boundaries in play, in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and so on. In Kindergarten, the message is reinforced which body parts are private.

General nature study with an emphasis on the beauty of the interconnected natural world and fostering of healthy relationships is implicit in all activities and through imitation of the teacher. Social issues are dealt with through pedagogical and healing stories. The teachers have expectations of the children to learn to make good choices and make amends if someone is hurt.

## **SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

### **Safeguarding**

It is understood that children learn about themselves and their bodies through healthy and developmentally appropriate and expected sexual exploration and play. Whilst most sexual behaviour displayed by kindergarten age children is age-appropriate, some behaviours between children can be a cause for concern.

Inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviour is a potential safeguarding and child protection issue. All children need to be safe and protected from the sexual behaviour of other children, even though interest in their own and others' bodies is recognised as part of normal development. A child displaying inappropriate sexual behaviour is possibly at risk and therefore the child protection procedure will need to be followed as this could be a sign of abuse. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, harmful, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

## **Procedure**

- If any child displays any form of inappropriate sexual behaviour incident it will be written up in the form of an incident
- The Early Years Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed as soon as possible.
- Depending on the circumstances the DSL will discuss the issue with local authorities
- Parents will be informed (unless there is concern that the child is the victim of parental sexual abuse) in which case the child's local authority will be involved.
- Parents can be given the following link for further information:  
<https://www.parentsprotect.co.uk/traffic-light-tools.htm>
- A behaviour plan will be created, and shared with the parents and the DSL, which will explain how any further incidents will be managed by all adults. This is important because it is likely that the behaviour is being exhibited at home as well, but this may be in secret, so parents will need to be vigilant and follow the agreed behaviour plan. This should be reviewed on a regular basis with the DSL and parents
- Procedures will be discussed at Kindergarten meetings and agreed by all KG staff so that they are consistent and all follow the same procedure

## **Risk Assessment**

A risk assessment should be drawn up to include areas of the kindergarten which are out of eyesight from time to time, use of toilets, intimate care and play situations both indoors and outside.

Date: January 2021

To be reviewed February 2022