

Wild Arts: Behaviour policy

Conflict resolution:

We understand that conflicts usually result from a mismatch in needs. As unpleasant conflicts can be, they often open important opportunities for young people to understand their and others' needs better, and growth and development can come out of them.

A cognitive knot is a key element in Reggio's teaching. Cognitive knots are problems that provide direction and propulsion for learning to move forward. Sometimes teachers launch cognitive knots, guiding learning to a new realm. Other times, cognitive knots are predetermined by circumstances or relationships.

We believe that young people need to experience conflicts and learn how to manage and resolve them, not for the sole purpose of solving problems, but to learn the social skills necessary to navigate the world and to gain the opportunity to develop their relationships with others. However, when conflicts continue for long periods, they might become harmful and can result in trauma.

At Wild Arts we adopt a democratic approach to problem solving, involving one another in how we can overcome obstacles and consider solutions that take into account all of our needs. In a world of compromise we are aware that sometimes we need time and space to think about big decisions, or the impact of our actions on others. We pause and listen to the children, we use a talking stick to navigate active listening and engagement during times of important conversation. We encourage non judgemental expression of all of our feelings. If children need space to decompress we have allocated safe locations for this that are within sight/hearing range but offer comfort and privacy such as dens or hammocks or cosy nooks. We allow time at the beginning and end of the sessions to reflect on practices we feel either worked well for us or not, and how we can move forwards productively for the next session. When handing over to parents we mindfully address any moments that may have caused friction and how they were handled, being open to suggestions about what works well for the child and sharing what we also felt worked well for a particular example.

As a wider community we work alongside parents and carers, if we have conflict within the group of children or conflict with any of our approaches we may arrange a circle for parents to have their voices heard. This is a space and time for us all to be heard and join heads to create a solution that works for us all, ensuring we feel safe in the space. We can trial new ideas and share feedback with an openness for positive development.

Some non-negotiable boundaries have been established with the children and parents prior to sessions commencing, such as respect for the land, ensuring we leave no rubbish around the forest. We try to bring this awareness by encouraging children to leave spaces as good as if not better than how they arrived. Parents were encouraged to have conversations with their children about respecting the people,

animals and wildlife at the site and to listen to practitioners when we talk about safety rules and boundaries.

We believe and understand that it is the role of adult staff members to keep young people safe and to support them in exploring how, what and when they want and need to learn. We know that it is essential that staff help young people understand the reasons that might lead them and others to present particular types of behaviour (reasons such as boredom, feeling unsettled or upset, not feeling listened to, feeling anxious or unwell).

As staff we will reflect on our own behaviour showing kindness, respect and caring to each other, young people, the wider community and our world.

- Staff will always prioritise physical and emotional safety,

We set some boundaries to ensure Wild Arts and those who attend are safe from physical and emotional harm and discrimination, we have stated that if children continue to disrespect other children or not listen then they may be removed from the programme.