

Forest School Handbook

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MIAG Forest school site Handbook

Address The Hawthorns Backwell Hill Bristol BS48 3EJ

Grid Ref no ST49856 67652

Livestock holding number 346930263

Description of site: Privately owned, 33 acres spread over 3 sites with small 2 acre coniferous woodland in Backwell Bristol near Bristol airport

Site Owner :- Robert Morris and partner Lucinda Bickerstaffe

Public access: None except by prior appointment

Vehicular access: two on site private parking areas

Flora and fauna: Ash,Hornbeam, Douglas Fir, Hazel, Holly, Hawthorn,Sycamore common wild animals seen Buzzard, Raven, Badger, Deer, Woodmouse, rabbits and squirrels are the most commonly spotted. There is an interesting and broad diversity of field and ground plants and herbs.

Water: two wildlife ponds,

Interesting features: Site is next to 100 acres of public access woodland

Dogs: None allowed on Forest School site area

Daily plan

Arrival at site usually between 9.30am -10.00am depending on traffic

Inform site holder of arrival:- Robert Morris (arrive in a car park next to main green cabin)

Conduct site assessment

Visual risk assessment

Check first aid

Check equipment

Set up site, unload equipment

Collect group from meeting point

Conduct register

Check medical information

Check clothing is appropriate

Arrive at site

Arrival and circle time

Safety talk

Start session

Enjoy!

Return to circle

Closing circle time and reflection

Extinguish fires

Check for litter

Return group to meeting point

MIAG Forest School group organisation and assessment of incidents

All adults and children will be informed of the coo- wee technique of getting the children's attention.

Upon hearing the **coo-wee** the children stop what they are doing to listen and await instructions. If there is a problem, they calmly walk together over to the fire circle.

Upon hearing **coo-wee** ' the children stop what they are doing and calmly respond, **coo-wee** I'm over here.' Check if there is a problem, and if there is, the children leave everything and walk calmly together to the fire circle.

In case of incident: the leader/first aider will go to the incident whilst the assistant plays circle games with the children in the fire circle area only. They will continue to do so until they receive instructions from the leader.

Minor injury

First aider to attend to injury as necessary, then complete accident log sheet and an accident form to pass on to the child's teacher/parent at the end of the session.

If the situation is not deemed to be serious then reassurance can be given to the child or first aid can be applied at the scene. During this time, the assistant can explain to the rest of the group what has happened.

If it is safe to do so, under the supervision of the assistant, the children can continue their activities.

Major injury

All adults should assess the situation before attempting recovery

The first aider will administer first aid whilst the assistant calls 999, and then the child's parents. The assistant can then call the main school office to inform them that an ambulance has been called to the Forest School site area.

The first aider will apply immediate temporary care and keep the child calm and warm until the ambulance arrives. The assistant will call the register and end the session, collecting in any sharp tools and knives.

A written report of the incident will later be completed.

The address needed for the emergency services is:

The Bungalow Backwell Hill Bristol BS48 3EJ Grid ref ST49856 67652

The leader's telephone number is: 07841053146

The main office's operations manager Nicola MIAG telephone number is: 07935932339

The OS grid reference if needed is: ST49856 67652

What3Words location of entrance: ///legs.undercuts.triathlon

Lost child

One adult calls the register and holds the children at base camp. They can ring the main office Nicola MIAG telephone number is: 07935932339

to notify staff to look around the site.

Another adult uses the COO-WEE' routine to try to locate the child. The adult carries out a search of the whole of the immediate site to confirm that the child is not present.

If the child has not been found within 20 minutes, call the police and contact the child's carer.

Fire

In the event of fire, remove the children from the area to the designated fire meeting point (car park next to green cabin).

Attempt to extinguish the fire only if safe to do so. Call 999 if necessary.

Stranger danger

If a stranger is seen on site, call the children back to the central circle and take the register.

Alert all adult help on site.

If deemed as an immediate threat to life or property call 999 and then alert the main office.

Ask the stranger to leave the site if it is safe to do so. Keep the children under close supervision until the situation has been dealt with.

In case of an emergency requiring 1 member of staff to leave the site, the session will end and the children will be returned to the meeting point. Stay with the children until they have all been collected by parents/carers.

MIAG: Fire Policy

Fire policy to be used in conjunction with the fire lighting guidelines and Fire Risk assessment.

Fires to be lit only in the designated fire pits or on woodland paths. The seating circles are two meters away from the inner fire pit.

Engage the group and discuss why we use fires (cooking, warmth etc.) and give the fire a purpose (as a tool and not a toy).

Demonstrate to the group the stop, drop and roll procedure.

Fire sessions will only be carried out once the leader has assessed the group's understanding of fires and fire safety, as highlighted below. This knowledge will be accumulated over the course of a few weeks of 'fire training'.

Expected knowledge and behaviour of children

Children must sit down on the logs and never walk within the fire circle, only around the outside.

Children can only approach the fire when given permission to do so.

Children must adopt the safe kneeling position when placing sticks on the fire or cooking on it.

Wood must be offered to the fire one at a time.

Sticks that are alight must not be removed from the fire.

There can be no more than two children at the fire at any one time.

The children may attempt to use the striker but only under close supervision.

The fire must be attended and supervised at all times by the leader.

The fire must be safely extinguished at the end of the session. Children can participate with this but only under close supervision.

The leader is responsible for checking and ensuring that the fire is properly extinguished.

Ensure the fire pit is cleaned out before leaving the site.

First Aid

Accidents will be dealt with by the leader and recorded in both the Forest School accident book and the site accident book.

A bucket of clean water will always be made available for immersion of major burns (minimum 5 minutes). 250l of clean water kept at fire site

Safety equipment needed: first aid kit, cling film, clean water, water buckets, fire blanket, fire extinguisher, burns kit, eye wash.

MIAG: Risk assessment checklist for fires and Kelly kettles

Assessment carried out by:

Date of assessment:

Check list number:

SITE MIAG Forest school

Hazard reference	Item	N/A	YES	NO
1	Is the fire to be lit on a non combustible surface? If using a Kelly kettle, is it placed on a level non combustible surface?			
2	Is the area where the fire is to be built free from underground, overhead or adjacent surfaces?			
3	Is the area where the fire is to be lit away from areas: Used by children at the site not attending Forest School? For public use or visits?			

Are there permanent/temporary buildings?

4 Are there clear and visible exit routes from the area?

Ensure all children are aware of their location

MATERIALS

Hazard
reference

Item

N/A

YES

NO

5 Are the materials you are burning suitable?

NB: Treated timber may give off noxious fumes. All rubbish to be removed from the site and not burnt.

Lighting Fire

Hazard reference	Item	N/A	YES	NO
6	Is the person lighting the fire competent or under close supervision of a competent person?			
7	If using matches, a lighter, or fire lighting blocks, are they stored in a suitable locked container? <i>Do not use petrol or other flammable liquids to light a fire.</i>			
8	If the children are too light or to use the Kelly kettle are they aware of the fire triangle?			

EXTINGUISHING

Hazard reference	Item	N/A	YES	NO
9	Is there suitable means of extinguishing the fire i.e. a supply of water? A fire blanket may also be of use, especially if clothing catches fire.			
10	Are all participants familiar with the stop, drop, roll method of extinguishing fire on clothing?			

SUPERVISION

Hazard reference	Item	N/A	YES	NO
11	Is there a competent person supervising the fire at all times, or the Kelly kettle while in use?			
12	Is there a suitable ratio of supervisors to students? <i>Students must be closely supervised if allowed to add fuel to the fire or Kelly kettle.</i>			
13	Is the person using the Kelly kettle competent to do so or under the close supervision of a competent person?			

FIRST AID AND EMERGENCIES

Item

Is there a suitable first aid kit and are all children aware of its location?

Are there suitable qualified first aiders capable of treating minor burns and aware of what action to take in case of more serious emergency?

Once qualified, I will be using tools with children during the Forest School sessions. It is an important part of Forest School that enables children to develop new practical skills that help to develop self-confidence. I will ensure that all children using tools will do so safely, carefully and under close adult supervision. Tools that may be used include loppers, bow saws, potato peelers and knives.

The following guidelines will be followed when using tools at MIAG Forest school.:

The Forest School leader must check that all tools are safe and fit for use before each session. Tools may not be used if risk assessment has not been completed.

Correct and safe use of all tools will be demonstrated to Forest School assistants and children and ample familiarization and guided practice will be offered to everyone using them.

Tools will be counted and inventoried as they are handed out before and taken back in after use.

All children will be closely supervised by competent leaders until they are deemed competent to use them with reduced supervision.

Tools must be kept in a locked box in a designated safe area when not in use. None should be left out unattended. Only staff may access the box.

All knives must be closed, locked and put in sheaves immediately after use. They must then be locked up in the tool box.

Saw guards must be replaced immediately after use.

It is not permitted to walk around with open or unmasked tools. Staff and children will be trained in safe transportation of tools.

Safe working distances and suitable adult-child ratios must be maintained at all times.

All children and leaders must wear suitable outdoor clothing and shoes for activities, including gloves and hard hats where necessary.

MIAG : Health and Safety

During Forest School sessions, some activities may be considered higher risk than normal for the children involved. Prior to these sessions, the leader will consider not only the risks involved in each activity but the potential benefits too. The leader will seek to minimize risk by following appropriate rules and procedures and conducting risk assessments for activities using tools, fires etc.

Mr Robert Morris is a trainee Forest School leader, with relevant training and an up-to-date DBS check. He is also first-aid trained. He will ensure that his Forest School assistant is adequately trained and supported and that they feel competent and confident when following Forest School policies and procedures.

The Forest School site in the private wooded area of MIAG forest school must be safe at all times and Mr Robert Morris will ensure that the site is thoroughly checked and prepared before the children enter it. He will seek to identify significant hazards and take

precautions to reduce any risk to a safe level where necessary. The Forest School site has been checked for emergency services access, toilet access and mobile phone coverage. All staff involved will have access to all policies and procedures and will be adequately familiarized with them before the Forest School sessions begin.

Prior to Forest School sessions commencing, Mr Robert Morris will obtain and check all children's dietary requirements, allergies, pre-existing medical conditions and medicine taken. He will also request any special knowledge of the group from the parents and teachers. For example, fears or anxieties that may affect the children's enjoyment of Forest School.

For food hygiene and eating, all children will be encouraged to wash their hands with soap and water, wet wipes or antibacterial hand gel before eating food. Allergies will be checked by Mr Robert Morris before any food is offered to the children.

Clothing advice will be given to participants and their parents/carers prior to the visit. Where possible, we will endeavor to keep spare sets of waterproof clothing in case of a child arriving without adequate protection.

We have access to the toilets on site. The leader will encourage all children to use these before the session begins.

Part of the risk assessment conducted is to identify any particularly hazardous plants and point them out to the group so that they are all aware of the dangers. A minority of plants may cause rashes or blistering when in contact with skin – most commonly, stinging nettles. If any plants of this nature are identified on site, the leader will teach the children how to identify them and avoid coming into contact with them. It is rare that serious poisoning from ingestion of leaves, berries or mushrooms occurs. However, ingesting even small amounts can cause nausea, stomach cramps, and vomiting, and consuming large amounts can even be fatal. Consequently, children will strictly be disallowed from foraging or eating anything found on the Forest School site.

Insect bites and stings can be common, particularly in Spring and Summer, but they usually only cause minor irritation. In rare cases, people can have a serious allergic reaction that requires immediate medical attention. The Forest School leader will be made aware of any allergic reactions before the sessions commence, but should an unexpected reaction occur that requires emergency medical attention, the Forest School Emergency procedure will be followed.

Any accidents or injuries that occur will be logged on an incident report form and also written in the MIAG Forest School accident book. Any incidents involving serious negative behavior will be openly discussed with the child's teacher.

Parents will be asked to fill in a consent form before the Forest School sessions begin. The completed form will give relevant medical details about the child and permission from the parents that they can participate. The form also provides emergency contact details for the parent/carer and will ask for optional permission for the leader to use any photographic material for evidence. The Forest School leader will have a copy of this form with them at all times.

It is the responsibility of all Forest School leaders to ensure the safety of children whilst in their care. We are committed to an environment which is safe from abuse, and any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately dealt with. All staff involved in Forest

Schools will have up-to-date DBS checks. The ratio for adults to children at MIAG will be 2 adults: 6 children. Appropriate steps will be taken where concerns arise concerning the safeguarding of a child during Forest School. Following the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, should a disclosure be made, it will be reported immediately to the necessary Child Protection Officer/Child Protection service.

MIAG: Environment Policy

Activity	Impact	Mitigation
Collecting wood	Green wood should never be chopped down from the site. Dead wood is important to woodland ecology as it can house minibeasts and fungi, so it is important not to remove too much of this.	Limit the frequency of fires and evaluate the amount of dead wood before having a fire and collect only the minimum amount needed.
Fires	Changes in soil chemistry can lead to increases in PH levels, carbon, phosphorus etc. which can be harmful to some plants and nutrients.	Designate one fixed location per area for fires on site (fire circles only). Ensure that all fires are properly extinguished before leaving the site.
Cooking	Cooking and food waste may attract animals to the site or increase numbers of certain species, potentially leading to changes in biodiversity.	Ensure all food waste is disposed of once leaving the site.
Tree climbing and shelter building	Damage to trees.	Ensure suitable trees are being used for this and oversee the activities carefully.

Collecting natural materials	Damage to plants, flowers and trees.	Gain permission from the owner in advance of Forest School sessions. Inform children of which plants are best to pick, if any. Limit the frequency of this type of activity.
Toilet use	Human waste may enter waterways and disposing of wet wipes in the forest is harmful to the environment	Use the toilets located at the green cabin

MIAG : Behaviour

Everyone, including Forest School staff, have a responsibility to protect their own and their children’s health, safety and well-being. Forest School aims to promote: self-esteem, self-awareness, respect and care for oneself, other people and the environment, and co-operation and non-violent communication.

In the first Forest School session, a set of Forest School rules will be made by the children under the supervision of the Forest School leader. Further non-negotiable ground rules will be implemented by the leader, such as ‘no violence’. Each child will have the opportunity to voice their own feelings. Talking about how they wish to be treated and listening to others is important as it will allow the children to work together, understand one another and ultimately become more supportive and cooperative.

As the Forest School sessions are taking place, behavior expectations are applied. However, due to the natural setting of Forest School sessions, more freedom will be given to the children’s use of space and movement.

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See Behaviour Policy page 27

MIAG : Forest School consent form

Child's name:

Class: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address:

Telephone number (in case of emergency):

Telephone numbers:

Medical Information

Does your child have any conditions requiring medical treatment, including medication?

YES / NO

If yes, please give details:

Please note: if your child uses an inhaler, it should be carried on their person at all times.

Please outline any special dietary requirements:

Does your child have any known allergies? **YES / NO** If yes, please specify:

Name and address of your child's doctor:

For purposes of marketing and evaluation, we may record photographic evidence of our child during their Forest School sessions. Please state if we may use this documentation: Photos of childrens activities are sometimes displayed on cabin notice boards for all children, teachers and parents to see.

YES / NO

MIAG: Forest School Incident Form

Name of child:

Class and year group:

Date and time of incident:

Location of incident:

Was the accident:

A near miss

Ill health/disease

An accident leading to injury

A violent or aggressive incident

Name of staff completing form: _____

Date: _____

Staff Selection:

All applicants to our organization will complete an application form

Short-listed applicants will be asked to attend an interview

Short-listed applicants will be asked to provide references and these will always be taken up prior to confirmation of an appointment

All successful applicants must have the current, relevant Enhanced Criminal Record Check from the Disclosure and Barring service

Criminal Record Check will be renewed every three years of continuous service

A passport must be presented to the office in order to verify the disclosure documentation

Screening:

The disclosure will be requested prior to the applicant taking up the post.

Training:

The successful applicant will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organization and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure. Relevant training and support will be provided on an ongoing basis and will cover information about their role, and opportunities for practicing skills needed for work. Training on specific areas such as health and safety procedures, identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality will be given as a priority to new staff and volunteers and will be regularly reviewed.

Supervision:

All staff and volunteers will have a designated supervisor who will provide regular feedback and support. All staff and volunteers will be expected to attend regular reviews, where their performance, skills, motivation and expectations will be discussed.

MIAG will ensure that all staff and volunteers involved in recruitment, training and supervision are aware of this policy and have received appropriate training and support to ensure its full implementation.

Protection of individuals:

MIAG will ensure the following:

It is the policy of our organization that anyone who is listed on the Disqualified from Working with Children List will not be allowed to work/volunteer within our organisation.

We will make a referral (send a written report) to the appropriate authority if an individual harms an individual or puts an individual at risk of harm. As a result of this, we take the decision to remove them or they leave of their own accord, come to the end of a contract, retire or have been made redundant.

Reporting suspected abuse/disclosures:

Should an incident arise with a child or vulnerable person where we feel alerted to the individual being in some way at risk,MIAG will:

Produce a written report of any concerns, conversations, and any action you may have taken relating to said incident, and present this to the supervisor

Report directly to the appointed member of MIAG Forest School (Mr Robert Morris)

Supervising staff will follow child protection procedures as set out by the school which the child in question is attending.

I _____ accept and will adhere to this policy on

behalf of

_____.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Equality and Diversity Policy

POLICY TITLE:	Equality & Diversity
Persons Responsible for Policy:	Julian Alsop- Director Robert Morris Trainee forest school leader Nicola Palmer- Operations Manager
Date due for review:	28-12-2022
Date reviewed:	08-06-23

MIAG FS recognises that it is essential to provide equal opportunities to all persons without discrimination, harassment or victimisation. This policy sets out the organisation's position on Equality and Diversity as a service provider in all aspects of employment, including recruitment and promotion and provides guidance and encouragement to employees at all levels to act fairly and prevent discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristic.

This policy lays the basis of the Equality Scheme and should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection, SEN and Data-protection policies. The Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality related legislation, standardising the protection available for all groups previously identified.

Rationale

The key characteristics of groups protected are as follows:

- Gender
- Race
- Marital status including civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Disability
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment

Definitions

- Discrimination can be direct, indirect, by association or perceived. All forms of discrimination must be avoided.
- Direct discrimination occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have.
- Perception discrimination occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they are thought to have.
- Discrimination by association occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another person because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.
- Harassment can be either directly by an employee or group of employees of the organisation or through a third party such as other related party e.g. another learner.
- Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so.
- Indirect discrimination can occur when there is a condition, rule or policy or even a practice in the company that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. It may be justifiable if it can be shown it was fair and reasonable to the running of the organisation.

Statements

MIAG FS recognise that discrimination is unacceptable and although equality of opportunity has been a long-standing feature of our MIAG practices and procedure, we have made the decision to adopt a formal equal opportunities policy. Breaches of the policy will lead to disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, disciplinary action.

The aim of the policy is to ensure no job applicant, employee or student is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

MIAG FS will ensure that the policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for our recruitment and a copy of the policy will be made available for all employees and made known to all applicants for employment.

The policy will be communicated to all private contractors reminding them of their responsibilities towards the equality of opportunity.

MIAG FS will maintain a neutral working environment in which no employee or student feels under threat or intimidated.

Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment and selection process are crucially important to any equal opportunities policy. MIAG FS will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.

Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with MIAG FS equal opportunities policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications.

MIAG FS will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.

MIAG FS will not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources which provide only, or mainly, applicants of a group. All applicants who apply for jobs with MIAG will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.

All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.

Short listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person where possible. Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.

MIAG FS will not disqualify any applicant because he/she is unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.

Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff.

Monitoring

We will maintain and review the employment records of all employees in order to monitor the progress of this policy. Monitoring may involve:

- The collection and classification of information regarding the race in terms of ethnic/national origin and sex of all applicants and current employees
- The examination by ethnic/national origin and sex of the distribution of employees and the success rate of the applicants
- Recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions.

The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and staff.

Disability Equality Duty

MIAG FS is legally required to take action to promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others, eliminate unlawful discrimination and disability related harassment, and promote positive attitudes towards disabled people. MIAG will involve disabled students and adults in its development and monitor the impact of its practices.

Gender Equality Duty

MIAG FS are legally required to take action to eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and promote equality of opportunity between men and women, boys and girls. MIAG takes necessary measures to eliminate sexist discrimination and monitors the impact of its practices.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

This duty adds gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion, sexual orientation and age (adults). The aims are to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct. Employees will be provided with appropriate training regardless of any protected characteristic or group to which individuals may belong.

Harassment because of any protected characteristics is unlawful and will not be tolerated by MIAG . This policy prohibits unlawful harassment by any employee or worker of MIAG. MIAG will also not tolerate unlawful harassment from any client. Appropriate action will be taken if any harassment should occur.

Examples of prohibited harassment are:

- Verbal or written conduct containing derogatory jokes or comments
- Slurs or unwanted sexual advances
- Visual conduct such as derogatory or sexual oriented posters
- Photographs, cartoons, drawings or gestures
- Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, or any interference because of gender, race or any other protected basis
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment or to avoid some other loss and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favours.
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment

Provision arrangements

MIAG FS will not refuse any student referrals on the grounds of discrimination. In exceptional circumstances, whereby Health and Safety checks, risk – assessments and student wellbeing indicate concerns around the individual student are such that provision may need to be declined or terminated following contractual notice arrangements.

Reporting complaints

Staff/students/parents/carers should make an immediate complaint in line with MIAG Complaints Policy including by a written report as soon as possible after the incident.

The complaint will be investigated in accordance with MIAG Complaints Policy.

Behaviour Policy

POLICY TITLE:	Behaviour Policy
Persons Responsible for Policy:	Julian Alsop- Director and DSL Robert Morris Trainee Forest School leader Nicola Palmer- Operations Manager and DSL
Date due for review:	27-05-2023
Date reviewed:	27-12-2022

Statement of intent

Bullying is unacceptable anti-social behaviour which affects everyone in the community. At MIAG FS we try to promote respect and care for one another; but there is always a risk that bullying will occur in any institution. The aim of the Provision's Anti-Bullying Policy is therefore to foster a supportive, caring and safe environment in which young people and indeed staff can live and learn without fear of being bullied, and thus be able fully to benefit from the opportunities available at the Provision. To this end, it will be made quite clear to the young people, staff, parents and carers that bullying is unacceptable at MIAG FS and that any instance of it will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter, investigated and punished appropriately. This policy has regard to the DfE Guidance Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2017).

All staff, parents and students work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the provision.

There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at our provision.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2021) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in provisions and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in provisions'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following provision policies:

- Behavioural Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2. Definitions

For this policy, “bullying” is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable students are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable students may include, but are not limited to:

- Students who are adopted.
- Students suffering from a health problem.
- Students with caring responsibilities.
- Students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Students with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Students who are LGBTQ+ or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students.
- Students with SEND.

3. Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another student because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offense under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Anti-Racist Policy :- MIAG FS welcomes the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, faiths and beliefs and celebrates the home languages, dialects and accents of all students, staff and others.

Standards for Racial Equality published by the Commission for Racial Equality is used for guidance on good practice and procedures in addressing issues of equality and cultural diversity.

We will ensure that MIAG FS nurtures an ethos and environment where all are valued and where views are taken into consideration.

This embraces a culture that enables all who attend MIAG FS review their practices and behaviors, to have the confidence to build on prior experiences and to make appropriate changes.

All associated with the MIAG FS are committed to dealing with incidents involving racism (including prejudice and stereotyping), racial harassment, and racist name calling whenever they occur.

Our site is an anti-racist establishment and is committed to: - addressing racism; - ensuring action to support victims of racism; - ensuring existing or visiting school's policies address inappropriate behavior around racism and other discriminatory practices; - recording and reporting racist incidents.

We support students in valuing cultural diversity and understanding. We are committed to identifying cultural awareness issues and to maximizing opportunities to promote greater understanding.

We will seek to promote racial harmony, prepare students for living in a diverse and increasingly interdependent society and specifically to address racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination.

All staff are expected to respect the rights of others and to respect those with different beliefs: expressing a personal view in an unprofessional way would be considered inappropriate.

All incidents which appear to have racist connotations should be reported to the forest school leader **Robert Morris** or operations manager **Nicola Palmer** at the earliest opportunity. A written record will be made of each instance and it is the responsibility of the all staff to inform the operations manager.

Homophobic and biphobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate, or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal, or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Ableist bullying: Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g., religion or mental health issues.

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating, and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Socioeconomic bullying: Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any students based on their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that the provision adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the provision is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy considering these.
- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a record of all incidents on COPMS including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.
- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for students and parents when more serious bullying incidents occur.

Mentors are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for students who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the student's heads of year of such observations.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of student groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a student for support.

Parents are responsible for:

- Informing their child's head of year or form tutor if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involved in bullying in any way.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Students are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other students in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyberbullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyberbullying.

5. Statutory implications

The provision understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The provision understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of students to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The headmentor will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the headmentor understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene, or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment, or intimidation, and hate crimes.

6. Prevention

The provision will clearly communicate a whole-provision commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement which will be regularly promoted across the whole provision.

All members of the provision will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All staff members will receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

All types of bullying will be discussed as part of PSHE sessions.

Staff will encourage student cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work. Diversity, difference, and respect for others will be promoted and celebrated through various lessons. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events, e.g., external activities and trips

The matching of students will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying. Potential victims of bullying will be placed in working groups with other students who do not abuse or take advantage of others.

Before a new student joins the provision, particularly when this happens in-year, SLT will implement a strategy to prevent bullying from happening. Where a new student is deemed vulnerable, this strategy may involve further observation or intervention on the part of the DSL.

The provision will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst students, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour.

The provision will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional, and social development is not negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g., mental health issues.

7. Signs of bullying

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a student is a victim of bullying:

- Being frightened to travel to or from provision
- Unwillingness to attend provision
- Repeated or persistent absence from provision
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill repeatedly
- Decreased involvement in provision tasks and activities
- Leaving provision with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional, or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Students who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour.

Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a student is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated
- They have been the victim of abuse
- Their academic performance has started to fall, and they are showing signs of stress

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify SLT, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

8. Staff principles

The provision will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.

Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one student towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.

Staff will always respect students' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless the student has given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a student is in danger, e.g., of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.

Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

9. Child on child abuse

The provision has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

To prevent child on child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the provision will educate students about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons, in line with the [Prevention](#) section of this policy.

All staff will be aware that students of any age and gender can abuse their peers. Staff will take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims, will never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”, and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g., as “boys being boys”, as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours. Staff will also be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing- or initiation-type violence.

Students will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a student has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to children's social care services (CSCS), where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

10. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target students, staff, and others, and may take place inside provision, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

Cyberbullying can include the following:

- Threatening, intimidating, or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- Silent or abusive phone calls
- Using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites, and social networking sites, e.g., Facebook

NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

The provision has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The provision views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in [section 12](#) this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

Many of the signs of cyberbullying will be like those found in the '[Signs of bullying](#)' section of this policy; however, staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a student is being cyberbullied:

- Avoiding use of the computer
- Being on their phone routinely
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages

Staff will also be alert to the following signs which may indicate that a student is cyberbullying others:

- Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near
- Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer or mobile phone
- Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer or mobile phone
- Becoming upset or angry when the computer or mobile phone is taken away

Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- **Possible extensive scale and scope** – students may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online
- **The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying** – students may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying always continuing through technology
- **The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is** – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and students may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity
- **The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying** – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to students crossing boundaries without realising
- **The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened** – students may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator

The provision will support students who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the student about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with [section 13](#) and [section 14](#) of this policy.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the provision has the right to examine and delete files from students' personal devices, e.g., mobile phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all provisions and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. In these cases, the provision's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy will be always followed.

11. Procedures

Minor incidents will be reported to the victim's form tutor, who will investigate the incident, set appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator, and inform the Deputy Head in writing of the incident and outcome.

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses are all interviewed separately
- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the students being interviewed, including electronic communication
- If a student is injured, members of staff call 111 for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
- A witness is used for serious incidents
- If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the victim and witnesses are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
- SLT will gather evidence of a cyberbullying incident; this may involve text messages, emails, photos, etc. provided by the victim
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not assigning blame until the investigation is complete
- All students involved are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other students

Due to the potential for some specific forms of bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

Sanctions

If the headmentor is satisfied that bullying did take place, the perpetrator will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents. The headmentor will inform the perpetrator of the type of sanction to be used in this instance.

If possible, the headmentor will attempt reconciliation and will obtain an apology from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the victim, and/or witnesses if appropriate, or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent.

Discretion will be used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

Parents/Carers are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

All staff involved in managing instances of bullying will be aware that taking disciplinary action and providing support are not mutually exclusive actions and should be conducted simultaneously to encourage more positive behaviour in future.

The provision will avoid unnecessarily criminalising students for bullying or abusive behaviour where possible, as young people with criminal records face stigma and discrimination in future aspects of their lives. The provision's focus when handling perpetrators will be supporting them to develop more positive behaviours and to refrain from abusive and bullying behaviours in the future.

SLT informally monitors the students involved over the next half-term.

The provision will remain cognisant of the fact that continued access to provision can be important for rehabilitation of harmful behaviour and will try strategies to support behaviours. In the case of a serious event and where a student repeatedly causes emotional distress to others, SLT will review their placement at a professionals meeting.

12. Support

In the event of bullying, victims will be offered the following support:

- Emotional support and reassurance from the provision staff
- Reassurance that it was right to report the incident and that appropriate action will be taken
- Liaison with their parents/carers to ensure a continuous dialogue of support
- Advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent re-occurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online
- Discussion with their parent/carer on whether police action is required (except in serious cases of child exploitation or abuse where the police may be contacted without discussion with parents/carer/social worker)

The SLT will carefully consider in each instance of bullying that is handled whether it is appropriate to split up the victim(s) and perpetrator(s), e.g., preventing them sessions or spaces where possible, and will split up other harmful group dynamics to prevent further occurrences where necessary.

Staff, particularly the key Mentors/DSL, will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g., by offering emotional therapy.

The provision will acknowledge that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. Perpetrators will be required to attend a mandatory counselling session to assist with any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. The provision will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.

13. Follow-up support

The progress of both the perpetrator and the victim will be monitored by their mentors. One-on-one sessions with SLT to discuss how the victim and perpetrator are progressing may be appropriate.

Students who have been bullied will be offered continuous support. The Mentors will offer ongoing support and wellbeing checks and asking if any bullying is continuing.

Students who have bullied others will be supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents/carers

Students who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

14. Bullying outside of provision

Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of provision and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside provision in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Mentors have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside of the provision premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the provision premises, such as on provision or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside provision is reported to provision staff, it will be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the student on provision premises, or elsewhere when the student is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g., on a provision trip.

The SLT is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

15. Record keeping

The DSL will ensure that robust records are kept about all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g., sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions.

The SLT and DSL will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:

- Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain students that may need to be handled, e.g., with pastoral support.
- Reflecting on whether cases could have been handled better and using these reflections to inform future practice.
- Considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the provision, e.g., whether provision culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances and planning to mitigate this.
- Considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise.

16. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the SLT. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

National Bullying Helpline

<https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/about.html>

Helpline: 0300 323 0169

Telephone: 0845 225 5787

We are open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday

Anti-Bullying Alliance

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/advice-and-support/if-youre-being-bullied/financial-help-and-support>

Staff Sign Off

I confirm that I have read and understood the handbook and policies and agree to abide by them

Name	Job Role	Date	Signature