



Portsmouth Forest School CIC Inclusion and SEND Policy

1. Policy Statement

At Portsmouth Forest School CIC, we are committed to providing an inclusive, nurturing environment where all children—regardless of ability, need, or disadvantage — can access, enjoy, and benefit from outdoor learning. We actively promote equality of opportunity and ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged for any reason including, but not limited to, special educational needs, disabilities, or other disadvantages.

2. Aims

- To create an inclusive Forest School environment where every child feels valued, supported, and able to participate.
- To identify and respond to individual needs through comprehensive information gathering, tailored planning, bespoke programmes and ongoing support.
- To work in partnership with families, carers, and professionals to ensure the best outcomes for all children including children with SEND and other disadvantages.

3. Legal Framework

This policy adheres to:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

4. Inclusive Practice

4.1 Access and Participation

- Activities are adapted to meet individual needs which are age appropriate without compromising the Forest School ethos.
- Sessions are flexible and child-led, allowing children to participate at their own pace and comfort level.
- Physical adaptations can be made where possible to meet individual needs of the group e.g lowering or raising tables and the sawhorse ; alternative tools for activities depending on the age or skill of the individual. .
- Physical adaptations can be made (e.g., additional tables, alternative tools) wherever possible to include children with mobility or sensory impairments. However, there may be limitations to our ability to provide adaptations given our outdoor terrain.

4.2 Communication and Behaviour

- Visual supports, social stories, and clear routines are used to support understanding.
- Staff use trauma-informed and neurodiverse-aware approaches to support behaviour and emotional regulation.



- Children are supported to express themselves in ways that are meaningful to them, whether verbal or non-verbal.

4.3 Staff Training and Support

- Staff and volunteers receive ongoing training in equal opportunities, inclusion, SEND, and safeguarding.
- Individual children's needs are discussed in planning meetings, and reasonable adjustments are documented and implemented.

5. Identification and Support of SEND and other additional needs.

- Portsmouth Forest School CIC works closely with parents/carers, with school SENCOs, and other professionals to understand children's needs.
- Where a child is not yet formally identified as having SEND but is showing signs of difficulty, staff will observe, record, and consult with the relevant parties.
- Behaviour management and other support plans (e.g. IEPs, EHCPs) can be incorporated into Forest School planning, with goals reinforced through outdoor learning.

6. Partnership with Parents/Carers

- Portsmouth Forest School CIC ensures parents and carers are involved from the start, with open dialogue about any support needs.
- Feedback from families is encouraged and used to inform practice.
- Confidentiality is maintained, and all information is shared in line with GDPR and safeguarding policies.

7. Monitoring and Review

- The effectiveness of this policy is reviewed annually or following any significant changes or incidents.
- Feedback from children, families, and staff is used to constantly improve provision, ensuring changing needs continue to be met.

8. Complaints

Concerns related to inclusion or SEND at Forest School should be raised with the Forest School Leader in the first instance. If unresolved, the issue should be raised with Sharon Emery Co-CEO by emailing sharon@portsmouthforestschoolcic.co.uk . If Sharon Emery is the Forest School leader at the session concerns are raised at, then the matter can be raised with the Chair of Directors Janice Mason by emailing chair@portsmouthforestschoolcic.co.uk

Please see our complaints policy for more information.