



11. Care, Play and Activities Policy

This policy was adopted by *Wigod Way Wallingford Family Centre* on January 2023..

Background and Aims

The play experiences and the atmosphere of Wigod Way Wallingford Family Centre (WWWFC) events and sessions aim to encourage children and young people's confidence, independence and enjoyment. Our work has, as its core, the aim of enabling children to develop their emotional, social, cognitive, interpersonal and physical skills, and their desire to explore, discover and be creative.

WWWFC recognises that children and young people's capacity for positive development will be enhanced if given access to the broadest range of environments and play opportunities.

We endorse the following play-work principles:

- All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and wellbeing of individuals and communities.
- Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
- The prime focus and essence of play-work is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
- For play workers, the play process takes precedence and play workers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult led agendas.
- The role of the play worker is to support all children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play.
- The play worker's response to children and young people playing is based on a sound, up to date knowledge of the play process, and reflective practice.
- Play workers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people's play on the play worker.

- Play workers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All play worker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and well-being of children.

Activities are carefully planned to allow children to build on their natural curiosity, advance their thinking, use their imagination and develop positive social relationships. WWWFC will recognise a child's individuality, effort and achievement.

Planning for experiences in the sessions for children up to the age of 5 will take into account the EYFS.

Parents and carers will be encouraged to support their child's play and understand how this play helps children to develop.

Staffing arrangements will provide opportunities for:

- Reflecting on practice.
- Recognising that working with children is a complex, challenging and demanding task and that often there are no easy answers.
- Acknowledgement that learning is a shared process and that children learn most effectively when, with the support of a knowledgeable and trusted adult, they are actively involved and interested.

Staff will display flexible styles of leadership and respond appropriately to children according to their age, understanding and needs. Staff will support, recognise and promote achievements by all children.

WWWFC will provide children with a range of equipment and resources appropriate to their age and interests.

Children will be offered access to outdoor play at all sessions, where possible.

Information will be given to parents and carers about the activities that are on offer.

Sessions will be evaluated by staff and volunteers and include the feedback from children and adults.