

The Den



Participation Policy

At The Den we believe that actively promoting the participation of children in the decision-making process creates a sense of partnership and benefits everyone at The Den: children, staff and parents. We therefore involve the children whenever decisions are made that affect them.

We follow the principles set out in Articles 12 and 13 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* which state that:

- A child's opinion should be considered in anything that affects them.
- Children should have information disseminated in a way that enables them to make choices and decisions.

Involving and consulting children helps them to develop new skills such as negotiation, sharing, and understanding the perspectives of others. It helps them to understand how decisions are made and shows them that their opinions are important. At The Den we actively consult the children and encourage them to participate in making decisions about the running of The Den through:

- Asking questions and paying full attention to the child's response, listening to what they are saying verbally (or through use of visual aids) and also observing their body language.
- Group discussions
- Regular questionnaires and gathering other feedback on activities.
- Noticeboards
- Regular Club Council meetings, between children and staff

The age and maturity of each child, together with the type of the decision being made, determine the extent and nature of their involvement, however, the basic assumption is always that children will be involved.

We make sure that we act on any consultation with the children so that they can see that their input has had visible outcomes. If children suspect that the consultation is just window-dressing they will disengage from the process.

At The Den the children can participate and make decisions on a day-to-day basis, including, but not limited to:

- Choosing freely what type of play to engage in
- Choosing what snacks to eat
- Preparing snacks themselves
- Selecting new equipment for The Den
- Drawing up club rules
- Using our resource library to select toys or activities that are not already set out.
- Using our suggestion box to request new resources, activities, or other changes.
- Activity planning [eg 'What do you want to do today?' whiteboard]
- Conducting risk assessments

This policy was adopted by: The Den	Date: May 2023
To be reviewed: June 2024	Signed: Pauline Barritt Manager

Written in accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021): Learning and Development Requirements [1.8]*

Also complies with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)