**Our contract with you**

**Fees and Admissions**

When you take a place at Our School in the Woods, you make a commitment to attend for a minimum of a term. After that, if you want to make any changes, you need to give us six weeks’ notice in writing by letter or email.

Our School in the Woods charges a fee of £39.00 per child per day attending (£36.50 for siblings). In addition we ask for a deposit of £200 (which includes a £50 non refundable administration fee). This deposit will be refunded when your child stops attending Our School in the Woods, providing the required six weeks’ notice has been given.

Before your child starts at Our School in the Woods you must have completed an ‘About You’ form for your child and this contract must be signed. Please also read our brochure and the ‘what to expect at Our School in the Woods’ leaflet before your child starts with us.

Payment for Our School in the Woods can be monthly standing order. If you set up a standing order, please let us know the date of this. Note that annual standing orders need to be re-started after 12 months. Alternatively, you could pay for the term’s fees in advance each term.

Every term we will remind you to notify us of any changes you might request – but it does remain your responsibility to give us notice. If we do not receive six weeks’ notice, we will assume your child will be continuing with us and you will be charged in full for the *following* term. If you want your child to stop with us at the end of academic year, then you need to tell us by the last day of term.

Fees are payable during periods of your child's absence from Our School in the Woods - including sickness and holidays. During extreme weather, or unexpected circumstances, Our School in the Woods may have to close.  This will be a rare occurrence and we are unable to refund fees for this type of closure.

**Policies and Procedures**

Our School in the Woods has a full set of policies and procedures that govern our work. For example our policies set out: settling your child in with us; working safely in a woodland setting; assessing safety in extreme weather; using tools with the children; taking children on trips; toileting; promoting compassionate behaviour; provision of learning opportunities; how we comfort children; healthy eating; food safety; our key worker system; equal opportunities and all aspects of safeguarding and child protection. These are kept in hard copies on site, and you can ask to see these at any time.

**Pick Up/Drop Off and Preparing for the Day**

We ask that you drop your child off at Our School in the Woods between 9:00 and 9:15am. We ask that you pick up between 3:15 and 3:30pm. Outside of these times, our gate will be locked. We ask that you are prompt – so we can give our attention to the children rather than staffing the gate. Please ensure your child comes with a packed lunch, a drink, a change of clothes and is dressed appropriately for the weather. We ask that no electronic or ‘noisy’ toys are brought into the woods.

**Tapestry Learning Journal**

We document your child’s time with us through a secure online ‘Learning Journey’ programme called Tapestry. We will set your child up on Tapestry when they begin with us and you will then receive emails alerting you to pictures of notes about what your child has been doing at Our School in the Woods. We ask that you do not share photos on social media.

We therefore take photographs (and occasionally film) of your child at Our School in the Woods. We do so on our dedicated Our School in the Woods phone or through a Tapestry App on other devices. Staff are not permitted to have photographs of Our School in the Woods children stored on their personal devices. As well as using images for Tapestry we may use them to promote Our School in the Woods and share our experiences at Our School in the Woods through our website. We do not name children in the images.

**Our Daily Routine**

At Our School in the Woods, we offer nature-inspired outdoor learning sessions, which is distinct from the Forest School approach which lacks structured activities and a commitment from the child to participate. Our daily routine includes three structured activities separated by break periods with free play. Play is also a very important aspect of our learning, and it is dedicated over two hours 15 minutes each day. During the scheduled activities, it is expected that your child stays with the group throughout to ensure their safety and to maximise learning and bonding with peers. If your child experiences difficulties with us, we will communicate with you and request your support in helping your child find solutions. At Our School in the Woods, we use the Non Violent Communication (NVC) and Thomas Gordon’s Parent Effectiveness Training (PET) approaches. We request that you familiarise yourself with these approaches. Communication of feelings and needs are at the heart of these methods. We do not use punishments or rewards.

**Plastic-Free Policy**

In order to reduce pollution in the woods, we request that children do not bring single use plastic packaging into the woods in their lunch boxes. Foods like crisps, biscuits, cakes, nuts, cheese or yoghurts can be decanted into reusable containers or compartments of bento-style lunch boxes. Similarly, drinks can be stored in reusable bottles or Thermos flasks. Please label lunch boxes, flasks and especially water bottles. If you would like further advice, please contact one of the team.

**Clothing**

Your child needs a high quality (i.e. not simply shower proof) waterproof coat and trousers. We advise purchasing ski wear for the winter. Please label **all** clothing as this is often the only way we have of reuniting your child with their belongings. Pack your child a change of clothing or extra layers plus hats, gloves and spare socks. From around October, we recommend snow boots rather than wellies for insulation. As the children will have to get their boots on and off, we suggest that Velcro fastening is the most helpful rather than laces.

**Trips**

We sometimes take the children out from the wood on trips to the local area – and often these small excursions will arise naturally out of activities on the day. Examples include: going to the shops to buy ingredients for a cooking project, or collecting bark from the neighbouring cemetery for a craft project. These small excursions are dynamically risk assessed with the children and staff on the day. On occasion, more ambitious trips are planned, which are formally risk assessed in writing and parents are notified in advance of these plans. Excursions such as these might include: a visit to a museum or a trip to a larger woodland.

**Reporting Accidents and Incidents**

We endeavour to report at pick-up about any hurts (physical or emotional) that your child experiences whilst with us at Our School in the Woods – and reflect on how these have been dealt with by children and adults. Any bumps or scrapes that necessitate basic first aid (such as a plaster) will be recorded in our accident files in the register folder. In case of a more serious accident, where more help is required we will administer first aid, endeavour to contact you and get your child to A&E. If for some reason we cannot reach you or your emergency contact person, we will authorise medical treatment at the hospital following advice from medical staff.

**Additional Needs**

At Our School in the Woods we do our best to support all children who enter our setting with the resources we have. However, as a very small and private setting we do not have access to external funding which would enable us to provide additional support such as one-to-one care. The approach we take for children with additional needs is as follows:

* Before entering our setting, we have an open dialogue with you about your child’s needs and whether we are able to support them.
* If we think we may be able to support your child’s needs, we offer the chance to do a six-week trial period during which we will see how your child copes in the setting and whether we are able to support them, working with you to provide the best level of care we can.

It is worth noting that additional needs are not always easy for parents to detect in the context of home and they can become more apparent in a new social context such as a setting like ours which involves a different social dynamic, different structures, expectations and routines.

**Parent Communication**

Finally, we are always happy to talk with you about your child at the beginning and end of each day, but it can be quite busy on the gate. If you’d like a longer or quieter time to talk, please contact us to arrange a dedicated appointment. Once a year we hold a parents evening – where you’ll have a chance to talk with your child’s key worker. Your needs as parents really matter to us. So, if you ever want to raise a sensitive issue with us, please contact one of the management team (Ellen or Amanda). You can email us on ourschoolinthewoods@gmail.com.

I have read and understood Our School in the Woods’s terms and conditions and give my permission for Tapestry documentation, trips, photographs and first aid as required. Any amendments to this are as follows:

Signed: Date:

Parent’s name: Child’s name: