



Essex After School Clubs

Involving and Consulting Children Policy

Involving and Consulting Children

Essex After School Clubs and all its members of staff, are committed to the principle of involving and consulting children whenever decisions are made within the Club that affect them.

The Club believes that actively promoting the participation of children in decision-making processes is beneficial to children, staff and the Club as a whole.

The Club's commitment to involving and consulting children stems from the 'listening to children' provisions set out in Articles 12 and 13 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. These state that:

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

For children, involvement and consultation helps them to develop new skills such as negotiating, sharing and understanding the perspectives of others. It helps them to understand how decisions are made, and recognises that their opinions are important.

For both staff and the Club, there are multiple benefits of such an approach such as improved behaviour, a relationship with children based on partnership, a more cohesive environment and activities and decisions that children feel a sense of ownership over.

The Manager and staff will work with children to draw up 'club rules' that will set out the expectations and responsibilities of the Club, the staff team and the children.

All children will be listened to and consulted actively. This will take a number of forms, including:

- Regular children's meetings, between children and staff, discussing the Club's activities and any other relevant topics.
- Observations.
- Questionnaires and other regular feedback on activities.
- Notice boards that carry important information about activities at the Club.

Age, maturity and the type of decision being made will determine the extent and nature of children's involvement. However, the emphasis should always be strongly in favour of involving children.

Consultation and involvement will be regularly monitored and acted upon so that children are able to see that their input has led to visible outcomes. The Club and its staff will also be clear about what decisions children will be involved in and attempt

to offer clear explanations if and when consultation and involvement is deemed inappropriate.