



FOREST EDUCATION INITIATIVE

North East Forest Education Initiative Cluster Group
Notes of the meeting
15th January 2007
Chopwell Wood Education Centre

Present

Rich Hurst, Sarah Dinning, Alex Lister, Rachael Richardson, Jeff Searle, Liz Hilsdon, Annabel Bartyla, Richard Gilchrist

Apologies

Caroline Jackson, Leanne Shipley, Helen Cheetham

Matters Arising

AL welcomed Liz to her first meeting, she explained her background and the work of the Northumberland Learning Landscapes project.

AL explained problems that Durham WT are having that there may not be any input from their Education staff for a while.

Draft Constitution

The group read the amended draft document and agreed with the aims for the group. Suggested that we agree an equal opportunities policy at the next meeting.

Action: RH to make necessary changes and send to AL to sign and then send to FEI England Coordinator.

Forest School Criteria

Agreed by the group that we need to produce a criteria list for general forest education activity not just forest school.

The issue of Site Ecological Impact assessments is important. How to do them/who etc needs to be raised at the next meeting, this may be a key issue that the group can help with putting schools in touch with orgs who can support this work.

Action: RH to place on next agenda

Membership & Contact Lists

Add Liz Hilsdon to the contact list

The group will end up with two e-mail lists:

- ❖ A membership list which will give voting rights etc
- ❖ A Contact list to be kept informed but not involved in development of initiatives

Upcoming Training @ Hamsterley Forest

RR update on 16th - 20th April. Villa Real is the lead body organising this activity as part of a 14 - 19 partnership. Other partners are: Real Care (Outdoor Learning company based at Villa Real), The Meadows, The Oaks & Connexions.

Two people from our cluster wish to attend. RR believes there are two spaces left. Cost for the week is £695 to Bridgwater College and £20 to Hamsterley Forest. If interested contact Rachael on r.richardson100@durhamlea.org.uk

Future Funding

- ❖ FEI nationally have funds up to £5K available twice yearly. Decision to not apply this round but to perhaps apply later in the year.
- ❖ There was a discussion around funds allocated to members from this group. Decided that a commitment should be made by the organisation not the individual as to how they will support the cluster group if they receive funding.
- ❖ This group will write to NECF to ensure any funds are ring fenced and detailed for AGM purposes. Action: RH to write/ AL to sign
- ❖ AL to write to DfES to request funds from the Outdoor Learning Manifesto allocation.
- ❖ AL highlighted that the North East Wildlife Trusts (NEWTS) were planning for 2008 to work together to support FS.

Insurance/CRB Checks/ First Aid

This cluster will provide individual organisations who are being supported or promoted by this group with a list of criteria they must meet. The organisations will sign the disclaimer and will be held responsible if they don't meet the criteria.

Website and Promotion

- ❖ Send information to Susannah Podmore to update the national website with NE cluster info. Change contact details to AL. (www.foresteducation.org) Action: RH
- ❖ Update info on Strategic Partnership site www.sustainableschools-ne.org.uk
- ❖ RG is updating the Forestry Commission website. He will add Forest School to it www.forestry.gov.uk Action: RG
- ❖ Contact Growing Schools website to add FEI group info to it. Action: RH
- ❖ Word of mouth promotion by the group

Date and Venue for Next Meeting

North East Community Forest Offices at The Greenhouse at Annfield Plain, near Stanley, Co. Durham, Fri 27th April at 1.30pm.

RH to send out travel details nearer the time.