Appendix 1 - Area Committee Funding Application

PART 1 - Overview
Short description of your project (Max 60 words)
Providing weekly Forest School Sessions for 450 deprived children aged 0-5 years old for a period
of 12 months.
C. 12 months.
Amount of funding requested
£9,500
PART 2 - About your group
FAIRT 2 - About your group
Name of Organisation/Group:
Bows and Arrows Nurseries
Address:
Redacted
Name of person completing application:
Redacted
Contact Address (if some as above locus blank).
Contact Address (if same as above leave blank):
Redacted
Telephone Number:
Redacted
The diabeted
E-mail Address:
Redacted
Website/Social Media:
https://www.bowsandarrowsgroup.co.uk/about/who-are-we/
https://www.facebook.com/bowsandarrowsgroup

Type of organisation:

Constituted Group	Charity	Community Interest Company	Not for Profit	Private company
	×		×	

Charity Number: (if applicable)	Registered Charity: 1129046
Company Number: (if applicable)	Registered Company: 06784276
Date organisation established:	6 January 2009

What does your organisation do? Please outline the vision, values, and main activities (Max 500 words)

Bows and Arrows is a charitable non-profit making organisation, governed by a Board of Trustees. Our main activity is the operation of 7 day care nurseries for children aged 0-5 years old in Ipswich, Suffolk. In line with our legal purpose within our Memorandum of Association, our aim is to advance the education and development of young children. Across the nurseries we have approximately 15% of children speak English as an additional language; 25% of children have special needs and 5% of children have a safeguarding concern. 81% of children registered at Bows and Arrows nurseries live in the 30% most deprived LSOAs in Ipswich (June 2023), operating in these areas is an active choice so we can reach those who need us most. Last year around 900 children attended our nurseries, and we employ a staff team of circa 100 people. Of our 7 nurseries, 5 are rated OUTSTANDING by Ofsted.

Aside from childcare and early years education, we offer additional services including Forest School Sessions. Weekly Forest Schools Sessions take place in numerous, carefully selected local woodlands and are led by our Forest School Leader. The idea for Forest Schools Sessions came from the children and families. Parents told us that due to economic disadvantage their children had limited access to natural spaces outdoors, either at home (many live in flats without gardens) or through leisure (transport or entry costs are too expensive). We also notice that many of the disadvantaged children struggle to self-regulate and manage their own behaviour successfully in a classroom environment. In the forest the children are encouraged to run, climb, jump etc, but these actions are mostly forbidden inside. Parents also tell us that their child becomes more confident when they regularly attend the forest sessions, and their resilience improves. Forest School sessions are hugely beneficial, when the children participate they are less likely to exhibit negative behaviour, have increased levels of self-esteem and self-confidence and more likely to have improved physical stamina and concentration. All these aspects counterbalance the negative outcomes associated with disadvantage, raise aspirations and educational attainment, and help prevent intergenerational cyclical poverty and deprivation.

		YES	NO
2.1	Does the organisation/group have a recognised governing document e.g. constitution, memorandum etc.? If yes, please attach when submitting the document	×	
2.2	Does the organisation/group have a committee with at least three members?		
2.3	Does the organisation have a bank account in the organisation/group's name?	\boxtimes	
2.4	Does the organisation/group have a safeguarding policy in place? If yes, please attach when submitting the document	×	
2.5	Has your group/organisation previously received Area Committee funding for the same or similar project in the last 3 years?		\boxtimes
2.6	Has your group/organisation considered or explored any other routes (for example other organisations, grant funders, companies, property owners) to fund or part-fund this project before applying to Area Committee funding?	\boxtimes	

	Date	Amount (£)
If you answered yes to question 2.5, please provide the amount and date received:		
If you answered yes to question 2.6, please	Date	Details
provide the date and other routes	On 30/10/2023	Applied to the Steet Charitable
considered:		Trust for £10,000
	As at 09/11/2023	£1,067.59 raised via Just Giving
		& £55.18 via Easy Fundraising

Are you registered on **InfoLink**? If not, think about joining the single directory for Community & Voluntary Sector services and groups in Suffolk. It's quick and free to register. Find out more here.

https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/

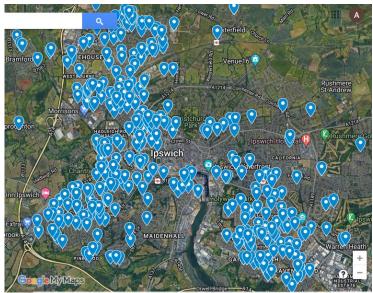
PART 3 – Why is your project needed?

Which Area Committee are you applying to? If more than one, please indicate. Note that the outcome of your bid is at the discretion of each Area Committee, independent of one another.

North East Area Committee	North West Area	Central Area Committee	South East Area Committee	South West Area
	\boxtimes	\boxtimes	\boxtimes	\boxtimes

If you are applying to more than one Area Committee, please explain why this is. What are the benefits to each area? Where will attendees come from?

We expect all attendees to reside in Ipswich, most will reside in areas close to a Bows and Arrows Nursery so Gainsborough, Whitton, Chantry, Westgate, Gipping and Ravenswood. Our organisation has nurseries located in South East, South West, North West and Central Ipswich, so we are applying for all areas except for North East Ipswich. The map of Ipswich below plots where children live who attend a Bows and Arrows nursery (June 2023). Each blue marker represents a residence of a child (anonymously) and you can see the majority of markers are in the areas in which we are applying for funding. North East Ipswich is considered a more affluent area, so it is less likely children from this area will access the project.



As this project targets deprived children, we expect most children accessing the project to reside in a deprived area of Ipswich.

What is the need for your project? Who will be helped? Outline the information on your project below, ensuring you relate to the relevant <u>Area Committee Action Plan</u> (Max 500 words)

Disadvantage

The project is designed to counterbalance social and economic disadvantage by providing an enriching and healthy learning activity that only privileged children can access because deprived families find the costs a barrier. A lack of financial resources restricts our children's access to enriching learning experiences such as Forest Schools. Families tell us they can't afford to buy the waterproof clothing required and attendance fees required for a non-funded forest school session. Also, the added Families say that transport costs to get to a woodland are inhibiting as many do not drive, public transport costs are high, or transport links do not exist. For this project the sessions would be free to access, with free transport to the forest and appropriate clothing is provided. Forest school sessions are essential for our children as they exhibit more behavioural and emotional problems on average than their wealthier peers. According to Gaster et al., 2007, children growing up in a deprived areas are more likely to be provided with insufficient educational support, lack of recreational space and receive poor quality health support. This project will help counterbalance the effects of poverty and improve social inclusion.

Special Needs and Disabilities

Ipswich children with additional needs and disabilities will benefit from the project. The Bows and Arrows children have higher than average needs. Our 'Supported Children Report, Spring Term 2023' indicates:

- 25% of all the children at the Bows and Arrows nurseries were receiving Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) support compared with 12.6% nationally
- 12% of the children claimed Early Year Pupil Premium (EYPP) compared with 10% nationally
- 20.1% of the children had English as an additional language (EAL) compared to 19% nationally

For these children, the Forest School Sessions offer an outlet encouraging activities such as running, jumping and climbing which are not appropriate in indoor settings, resulting in less behaviour management interventions. The sessions also build confidence and improve self-esteem as the children usually often have low resilience. Other benefits include improved stamina, sleep and wellbeing.

Any child with SEND can access the drop-in sessions. Being in nature offers practical, sensory experiences that are suited to the preferred learning styles of many SEND children as the forest environment provides a calm space to process, stim or reduce demands.

Education, Skills and Training

The Forest Schools approach to learning not only helps combat economic disadvantage, but it also supports holistic academic performance too. We know through experience and well documented research that the Forest School sessions support self-regulation; emotional wellbeing; language development; confidence and independence exceptionally well.

Environment

The Forest School sessions facilitate contact with nature and set the foundations for a deep and meaningful connection with it, so that children and parents wish to care for it in the long term. By engaging in Forest School activities our children learn about their environment, the trees and plants and the animals that live there. This contributes to a sense of place and responsibility which includes supporting wildlife, recycling and caring for the local environment to the benefit of the community. The project sessions will make a long-term difference in laying the foundations for families to continue outdoor activities themselves beyond the funded period.

What evidence do you have of this need? Please include results of any consultation and evidence on how it will benefit the residents of the committee area you are applying to (Max 500 words)

In February 2023, 61% of our families (103 parents surveyed) told us that their children play outside for less than 1 hour a day. As children 1- 4 years old should be physically active for at least 3 hours a day (NHS England) we know they would benefit from more activity outside to enhance their physical development. Parents tell us their child's physical health and stamina improves when they engage in Forest School sessions; they sleep better and appear to be ill less often. In the same survey Ipswich parents tell us that they highly value forest school sessions and they really benefit their children: they told us,

"I think forest school helps children have experiences out of their usual comfort zones and gives them a wonderful opportunity to learn about the outside world. Whilst we have walks and go to the playground, we don't usually go in to depth / explore nature as much as we should!"

There isn't a whole bunch of flashing, loud plastic toys; nature is a far bigger focus and the Forest School sessions are the highlight of my son's week.

"I will be very upset if forest schools stopped. If no funding provided he will never attend forest school. It would be very upsetting as having two children I would not be able to afford extra Forrest group and it's amazing that children can learn about nature from a trained nursery staff."

Ipswich's 2020 Place Based Needs Assessment (PBNA) noted a 27.4% incidence of overweight or obese children in our postcodes. The Forest School sessions ensure children are physically active throughout the day. The children enjoy more exercise and less sedentary learning than their peers, which in turn helps tackle excess weight gain and obesity.

Within the East of England, children in 9 of 11 districts have better development than those in Suffolk (Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, 2022). Educational outcomes can be improved if children learn how to concentrate, but in our experience the children sometimes struggle to focus and concentrate in the confines of the classroom. Forest school sessions enable a much more active way to learn, the approach allows children to expand upon their practical abilities, to problem solve, learn how to protect themselves from physical harm and develop spiritually, physically, and intellectually.

In England the number and percentage of pupils with SEN continues to rise, continuing an increasing trend since 2016 (UK Government, Special Educational Needs in England Data Guidance, published 22 June 2023). Through our work we continually see more children who are neurodivergent and often their needs are not being met through traditional education. Exposure to a natural environment reduces ADHD symptoms in children including reduced stress levels, decreased risk of depression/anxiety and superior attention (F. E. Kou and A F Taylor 2004). The above evidence supports the need to offer weekly Forest School Sessions to SEND children and disadvantaged children in Ipswich.

Please describe your project and how it meets the need (max 500 words)

This project looks to operate 190 Forest School Sessions for 450 disadvantaged children for a period of 12 months. The sessions involve collecting up 30 children (aged 2- 5 years old) per day from the nurseries and travelling by coach or by foot to a nearby local wood on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday to conduct outdoor learning, up to 10 parent volunteers and 6 nursery practitioners attend these sessions and they supervise the children. On Mondays there will be an "open access" Forest School Stay and Play session and on Fridays an open access Forest Schools Stay and Play Session for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their parents. These sessions are for any family to attend they don't have to be registered with the nurseries and families supervise their own children during these sessions.

We employ a Level 3 Qualified Forest School Leader to plan, deliver and manage each session. There will be 5 sessions each week, the sessions on Tuesday to Thursday operating for 6 hours from 9:00 to 15:00. The Monday and Friday sessions will be "drop in" events and run either in a morning or afternoon for 1.5 hours. All sessions will run for 38 weeks per year during term time.

Forest schooling originated in Scandinavia in the 1950s and is based on the philosophy that children's interaction with nature and the natural world is a very important factor in their development. Forest schools is a long-term process of regular sessions in a forest environment. We strongly believe that playing and learning outside improves children's physical and emotional wellbeing and the forest school experience has been shown to be hugely beneficial for children with a range of emotional and developmental needs. Rather than using classroom resources and equipment, children can use natural materials found in the woodland and enjoy activities such as collecting sticks and leaves, tying knots, making dens, handling tools, using twigs to write in the mud, climbing trees, jumping, and building fires. To keep everyone safe, staff to child ratios for forest school sessions is lower than those in the nursery. The ratios are one practitioner for every five children aged 3 years old or older and one practitioner for two children aged two years old. In addition, the qualified Forest School Leader will always be supernumerary. The link below is a one-minute video of a session delivered to local children.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kN0hhjFxqMo&t=8s&ab_channel=BowsandArrows

The Forest Schools Sessions meet the needs of those participating by offering:

- Qualified educators with a high staff: child ratio to support deprived and disadvantaged children to learn and develop rapidly.
- A calm and stimulating environment for children who require support with emotional development, behaviour and SEND.
- An opportunity for children and families to learn more about green spaces and natural habitats in Ipswich, to help care for them and take pride in them.
- A new experience which fosters social skills such as collaboration, teamwork, cooperation.
- Health benefits for children including increased strength, stamina and wellbeing

What risks have you identified for your project and how will you manage them? (e.g. financial, health and safety, operational, success etc.)

Financial - In terms of long-term sustainability, we aim to reduce reliance on grant-funding for this service considering additional government investment in childcare and early years education

scheduled to take effect in 2024 and 2025. At this time our overall income will begin increasing giving us greater financial flexibility and as resources are freed up, we hope to begin designation of some money towards the continued provision of forest school sessions. In the interim, the funding would offer us the stability to continue the work.

Health and Safety – We have a comprehensive Health and Safety Policy and a specific Risk Assessment for the forest school sessions.

Operational – Sessions may not be able to run if the Forest School Leader is unavailable (due to leave or resignation) as sessions can only be run by a qualified leader. As part of our succession planning, we have two further employees who are qualified, and we are training another employee to be L3 qualified to run the sessions if necessary.

How many beneficiaries will benefit from the project? Please refer to the evidence you highlighted in section 3. (max 500 words)

We expect 450 children aged 0-5 years old to engage, 270 children will attend the sessions on Tuesday to Thursday and 180 children on Mondays and/or Fridays. 270 is calculated as follows - 30 different children per day, so 90 children per week. Each term we expect the cohort of children to change and there are three terms per year, so $90 \times 3 = 270$ children. 180 children is calculated as follows – 15 children per group with 2 groups a week = 30 children. Each half term we expect the cohort of children to change and there are 6 half terms per year so $30 \times 6 = 180$ children. 270 children plus 180 children equals 450 children in total.

How will potential beneficiaries be made aware of the project?

Our organisation has been running for over 20 years and we have a wide spread of nurseries in the Ipswich area therefore we are well networked within the community, with families and with other organisations. Linkage with the nurseries facilitates rapid development of strong, trusting relationships with families. Through regular daily contact the nursery team are well placed to identify children's needs and signpost families to the sessions.

Children and families will access the project through:

- referrals from organisations we already work with eg Family Hubs, FIND food banks,
 Ipswich Housing Action Group, etc
- attending a Bows and Arrows nursery and meeting a set criterion eg eligibility for disadvantage funding, postcode, additional need, developmental delay, etc,
- self-referrals from families

We will also advertise the open access forest school sessions on social media and through existing networks. We expect all sessions to be fully booked.

How will your project affect people from different backgrounds? Have you considered how to make your project fair to everyone in relation to the Equality Act of 2010?

We are open to children of all cultures, religions, linguistic backgrounds, and abilities. All children are treated as individuals with equal concern, in order that they should feel equally valued regardless of their sex, disability, religion, nationality, ethnic or national origins. All staff work to encourage each child's self-esteem and respect for others by promoting the positive values of diverse cultural identities through anti-racist activities and resources. Within our equality and diversity policy we aim to provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish, in which all contributions are valued and to make inclusion a thread that runs through all the activities of the nursery.

One of the key aims of this project is to recognise the different learning needs of disadvantaged children and consequently make appropriate provision to ensure children get the best possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities. This project specifically targets disadvantaged and deprived children and families which are minority groups who deserve equity in education and society. This project looks to give all children an equal chance to develop and achieve in early childhood.

		YES	NO
4.1	Have you considered the use of volunteers for delivering your project and how you will promote these volunteering opportunities?	\boxtimes	
4.2	Have you read the relevant guidance and information about volunteers in Appendix 1 of the Funding Guidelines?	\boxtimes	

If you stated yes to any of the above questions, please state how you will promote your opportunities and engage with volunteers.

In February 2023, we conducted a parent survey on forest school sessions and 103 parents responded. Of these 46 parents (45%) said they would be "very likely" or "somewhat likely" to help run a forest school session as a volunteer. Therefore, we already know we have a pool of people willing to volunteer, next steps would be to recruit and train the volunteers and motivate them to take part in the sessions. The Bows and Arrows Communications Coordinator will promote the difference volunteering makes and celebrate the impact of their work.

Please describe how you will minimise the environmental impact of your project

The use of the natural resources has to be managed with care. If we use them with abandon, we may find that we exhaust the supply created by the woodland and that could be catastrophic. One of the many special features of Forest School is that sessions are held in the same area of woodland over a period of time, allowing the children to become very comfortable in and knowledgeable about the area. Although this is very positive for learning, it can have an adverse environmental effect due to overuse of an area. We counterbalance this risk with an ecological impact assessment to assess and mitigate against compaction, denudation, pollution and damage to flora and fauna. Fortunately, the Forest Schools approach tends to attract people with a proenvironmental attitude, or the approach fosters a new interest in the environment for those who

participate, so most of the adults are self-motivated to minimise environmental impact from the onset of the work.

PART 5 - Costs & Funding

Please provide a breakdown of project costs for each item of expenditure, and enclose quotations /links where applicable:

Description of expenditure	Co	ost (£)
1 x Forest School Leader salary cost	£14,261.00	
2 x Coach hire per week	£9,500.00	
Childrens waterproof clothing https://muddypuddles.com/collections/originals	£1,590.00	
Group shelter Large Group Shelters for Forest Schools Forest School Shop	£109.00	
Early years Forest School Kit https://www.forestschoolshop.co.uk/forest-school-kits/early-years-forest-school-kit.htm	£469.00	
Total project costs	£25,929.00	
Total amount requested from Area Committee	North West	£1,000
If you are applying to more than one Area Committee, please consider the amount of	South West	£2,000
money requested is proportionate to the impact of the project on the residents in each specific	Central	£500
area.	North East	-
	South East	£3,000
	Ravenswood Community Fund	£3,000

Please show in the table below how much funding you have already secured or are currently applying for towards the project:

Name of Funder	Amount of funding requested	Granted (yes/no)	Waiting for outcome (yes/no)
Steel Trust	£10,000	No	Yes, Applied 30/10/23
Children in Need	£12,000	No	Not yet applied
Local funders – (Redacted) and Scarfe Charitable Trust	Up to £3,000	No	Not yet applied
Internal fund raising Just Giving	£2,000	Yes - £1067.59	Yes – ongoing fund raising
Internal fund raising Easy Fundraising	£250	Yes - £55.18	Yes – ongoing fund raising

How will any remaining costs be met?

As part of our fundraising contingency plans we would undertake further prospect research and approach other grant funders as required. We will source and buy second hand tools, tarps and waterproofs instead of purchasing new items to reduce the costs. We will seek to mitigate or reduce the need for coach travel through seeking sites that can be accessed by foot which would offer environmental as well as cost saving benefits.

How will the project be sustained after the funding has been spent?

From September 2025, all working parents of children under the age of five will be entitled to 30 hours free childcare per week as announced in the 2023 Budget. The government are introducing more free childcare gradually to give childcare providers time to prepare for the changes, ensuring there are enough providers ready to meet demand. From September 2025 onwards we expect income from funded childcare places at Bows and Arrows Nurseries to increase significantly which will free up financial resources and enable us to invest more in additional non-statutory work. Consequently, by the end of the request period, we expect to be less reliant on external grant funding.

PART 6 - Supporting Information

Please attach your supporting documents as appropriate to your application

All Grants

\boxtimes	Recognised governing document e.g. constitution, memorandum, Charity or Community Interest Company registration etc.*
X	Proof of bank account in the name of the organisation (e.g. bank statement or letter) *
\boxtimes	Results of consultation (if applicable)
X	Safeguarding policy (if applicable)
	Quotations for project costs (if applicable)

Medium & Large Grants (£1,000 over)

If no yearend accounts are available (for instance if you are a new group), please provide a copy of your accounts to date and a scan of your latest bank statement

Large Grants (£5,000 and over)

Business plan or similar document setting out your plan to sustain your organisation & project.*

PART 7 - Monitoring your success

The Area Committee will require progress reports during the life of the project, what methods will the organisation use to measure success of the project? What will be the key performance measures that you will report on?

Monitoring is collecting and recording information about what your group is doing – outputs (number of sessions held, number of attendees, demographics etc), outcomes (the effect your work is having on peoples' lives) and impact (the change created as a result of the project).

Evaluating is using the information collected (qualitative and quantitative), together with other information and peoples' experiences, to get an overall picture of your group/project, its work, and its impact.

This project will be led and delivered by the Bows and Arrows employed Forest School Leader and monitored and evaluated by The Nursery Operations Manager, part of the senior leadership team. Project outcomes will be measured and evaluated as follows:

Attendance Records

Attendance at all sessions will be monitored. Participants in the Forest School Sessions will be required to "sign in" to allow us to record attendance. We expect to engage with approximately 450 children during the project, a -30% variance in attendance figures at each session is considered acceptable.

Parent Survey

We will ask all parents to complete a survey to determine parents' perception on their child's confidence, behaviour, and health after attending the forest school sessions. We may supplement this with parent interviews and additional consultation to understand the extent to which we are achieving desired outcomes through our activities. We expect that 80% of parents will report improvements in their children's behaviour, confidence levels and health.

Environmental Checklist Assessment

The Forest School Leaders will complete a simple assessment checklist for each child to measure the child's interactions and comprehension of living things, natural materials and how to respect and care for the environment. We expect that 90% of children will have improved understanding of the environment, and an interest in protecting the environment after participating in the project.

^{*} required, as appropriate to grant size.

Highfield Resilience Tracker

The Highfield Resilience Tracker is a nationally used assessment tool for measuring the resilience (in terms of capacity to recover quickly from difficulty) of young children. The resilience tracker is a simple to use, RAG rating system to identify 3 strands of resilience: their feelings and beliefs, attitudes, and their interpersonal/social skills. All children attending the 6 hr forest school sessions will be tracked at the beginning and end of the project to measure the variance in their resilience levels. We expect that 60 % of children participating in the project who are attending a Bows and Arrows Nursery will score higher in resilience at the end of the project.

PART 8 – Terms & Conditions

Any misleading, incorrect statement, or fraudulent action or statement at any stage of the application process, whether deliberate or accidental, may render the application invalid and require the repayment of Area Committee Funding in full if paid or the withdrawal of the Area Committee Funding offer.

Applications found to be fraudulent will be reported to the police.

The Area Committee Funding will be used for the purpose set out in the approved report or as amended with the agreement of the Area Committee and the applicant organisation.

Any Area Committee Funding awarded will not be increased in the event of an over spend.

Applicants should note that the award must be acknowledged as Ipswich Borough Council Area Committee Fund and must comply with any reasonable requests relating to publicity.

Any organisation awarded Area Committee Funding shall be subject to monitoring, which could involve site visits and the collection of statistics.

The applicant will forward to the Communities Team, performance information within 6 months or on completion of the project. Failure to submit this information may render the applicant ineligible for further Area Committee Funding and may be asked to repay the funding in part or full.

We confirm that all staff / volunteers working with children, young people or vulnerable adults have had the relevant DBS checks completed (applicable where appropriate).

Area Committee monitoring and evaluation helps us to ensure that funding is spent in accordance with Area Committee guidelines. You will be sent a link to an online form following the completion of your project, or bi-annually until your project is complete.

Please note that your declaration confirms that you have read and accepted the terms and conditions for Ipswich Council Area Committee Funding.

We require the signatures of two people authorised to sign on behalf of your group (that are not directly related to each other).

Signatures

We, the undersigned, on behalf of the applicant organisation/group understand and agree that:

- We are authorised to complete this application on behalf of our organisation/group.
- We have the power to accept the Area Committee funding awarded to our organisation/group subject to the terms and conditions listed and the power to repay the Area Committee Funding in the event of any funding condition not being met.
- This funding application falls within the objectives of our group or organisation.
- All staff / volunteers working in a position of trust with children, young people or vulnerable adults have had the relevant DBS checks completed.

Signed by authorised signatory (1):	Signed by authorised signatory (2):
Redacted	Redacted

Please return your completed form to the Community Engagement team at Ipswich Borough Council.