

Michael Hall

a Steiner Waldorf School

Tree Climbing Policy

Policy Owner	Bursar
Formally endorsed by	SLT
Endorsement Date	Oct 2019
Next Review Date	Oct 2020

POLICY STATEMENT

Children are not to climb trees without supervision. They receive no help with climbing and it is assumed therefore that they have a level of competency. In the Kindergarten children may climb to a height which can be reached by the Kindergarten teacher. Otherwise, a height restriction applies of 3 metres. Teachers restrict branches to be climbed to those of at least the child's arm width. There is no climbing of trees in slippery conditions or over fences. Teachers check suitability of surface underneath the climbing tree and that there are no children underneath the tree. Teachers supervise safety of number of children in a tree at any one time.

Guidelines for safe tree climbing

These are communicated to the pupils in an age-appropriate way.

- 1. Only climb if an adult is supervising**
- 2. The Rule of Three**

There are four points on your body that come in contact with the tree's branches: two hands and two feet. At least three of these points should be supported by branches at all times. [Reason: If one of the three branches breaks, then at least two branches will still be supporting you.]

- 3. 3 Keep Close to the Trunk**

Always step onto or grab a branch at the point closest to the tree's trunk. [Reason: This is where the branch can support the most weight.]

- 4. 4 Stay off Dead Branches**

Avoid using dead branches when climbing. If you must use a dead branch, be sure to follow the "Keep Close to the Trunk" rule. [Reason: Dead branches can easily snap; living branches will bend before they break.]

- 5. 5 Test Weak Branches**

If you're not sure if a branch will support your weight, test it out by stepping on it (or grabbing it) at a point far away from the tree's trunk. Be sure that you follow the Rule of Three as you do this. If it passes the test, then step on it (or grab it) at a point close to the trunk.

- 6. 6 Always Think About Falling**

If you keep in mind that you could easily fall at any moment, then chances are you will proceed cautiously.

- 7. 7 If It Doesn't Feel Right, Don't Do It**

If for any reason you feel uncomfortable with what you're doing, then stop.

Location of trees permitted to climb:

- The play area opposite the Clock House and behind the bin storage area.
- The play area between the Science Block and the Gymnasium.