

4. Supporting wellbeing

The wellbeing of children, educators and the environment can be enhanced by Froebelian-informed practice that is slow, intentional, and multisensory. This is encapsulated in the Froebelian inspired Nature Engaging and Nature Enhancing (NENE) pedagogy ⁽¹⁾.

“The particular value of NENE is in the way it begins from an understanding of connectedness and unity...it calls both adults and children to engage with what [the natural environment] offers and be attentive to what can be given back.”

(Kemp, Josephidou & Watts, 2022, p.20)



Look at the photo. Think about the words you would use to describe this interaction.



Supporting wellbeing

What the research tells us

Froebel's original writing about nature engagement calls for adults to be attentive and nurturing of young children's relations with the natural world ⁽¹⁾. This aligns closely with 'slow' pedagogies that focus on being "*attentive to the rhythm of the children, and adults and materials*" ⁽²⁾.

- The BREEZE Forest School project found regular forest school sessions supported young children in developing the emotional and behavioural skills necessary to learn, and improved their overall wellbeing ^(3,4).

- Nature engagement experiences also support the wellbeing of educators. In one study both educators and managers reported the importance of spending regular time outdoors for their own wellbeing. The study also highlighted the value of experiential, nature-based Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in supporting and inspiring educators ⁽⁵⁾.
- In one Australian study, the introduction of pedagogical approaches that start with the child, their culture and country were found to enhance young children's wellbeing.

Find out more:

1. **Kemp, Josephidou & Watts (2022)**
2. Clark (2023) 3. **Tiplady & Menter (2021)**
4. **Menter & Tiplady (2022)** 5. **Kemp et al (2025d)** 6. **Jackson-Barrett & Lee-Hammond (2018)**



Thinking about humans and the natural world as being in a close, interdependent relationship can encourage an ethic of mutual care.

