Let's talk why.

Before getting into the [nuts and bolts](https://the-commons.local/faq/), let us explain why we're here in the first place.

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### **Our Purpose**

Creating a community where children are people.

### **Our Philosophy**

We are driven by the idea that children are people who learn best when they have the freedom to choose what they want to learn and the opportunity to test their ideas and skills in a dynamic environment with other people who share this belief.

Our shared space is rooted in varied educational approaches, with inspiration drawn from Acton Academy, Agile Learning Centers, Free Schools, Montessori Schools, Charlotte Mason, unschooling, Sudbury Valley School, other democratic schools, and more.

To check out some of the ideas that form our philosophy, check out our [resource library](https://the-commons.local/library/).

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### Children are people.

We are all capable of self-determination and have an inherent right to agency, dignity, and respect - regardless of our age.

### We learn together.

We are inherently social beings, and we thrive when learning happens in the context of relationships—sharing ideas, observing others, collaborating, and problem-solving.

### Freedom nurtures growth.

When we are given the freedom to explore, take risks, and solve problems on our own, we develop confidence, resilience, and creativity—essential skills for navigating life.

### We learn through play.

"Play helps us to develop a sense of self, belonging, and community; learn to communicate better, problem-solve, argue, and respect one another’s ideas; and find ways to fit our ideas within a community of conflicting and overlapping needs."

From ASDE's "[The Six Optimizing Conditions](https://www.self-directed.org/sde/conditions/)"

### Learning begins with curiosity.

When we are free to explore our interests and ask questions, we develop broad, adaptable skills that prepare them us the complexities of the world.

### Education can happen anywhere.

Learning is not confined to any context—it happens in gardens, kitchens, parks, and conversations. When we embrace the world as our classroom, we discover that every moment and place is an opportunity to grow.

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"The world is full of light and life, and the true crime is not to be interested in it."

A. S. Byatt