# Ealing and Hammersmith District Woodcraft Folk

# Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

## 1. Scope & Purpose

This Health, Safety and Wellbeing policy applies to all members, office holders, volunteers involved in Ealing and Hammersmith District Woodcraft Folk with respect to groups, camps, centres, and outreach activities.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect anyone attending or participating in any Woodcraft Folk groups and events or who may be affected by Woodcraft Folk events or activities
- To provide all members, with overarching principles that guide Woodcraft Folk's approach to preventing harm and promoting wellbeing
- To ensure that the groups, camps, events and any buildings for which Woodcraft Folk is responsible are safely managed

For specific guidance on other aspects of health, safety and wellbeing, including safeguarding, please see the following documents:

- Drugs alcohol, tobacco and intoxicating substances policy
- First Aid guidance
- Online communication guidance
- Risk assessment guidance, examples and template
- Safeguarding policy
- Supporting Individuals in Vulnerable Circumstances Policy

## 2. Health & Safety Principles

- The health, safety and wellbeing of everyone participating in Ealing and Hammersmith Woodcraft Folk. Activities and/or attending our events is one of our main objectives
- We are committed to ensuring that all our leaders, helpers, young members, parents and visitors to events, will be able to enjoy Woodcraft activities in a safe and secure environment without exposure to unnecessary or excessive risk.
- All members, group leaders and camp office holders, have a duty to take reasonable steps to protect from harm everyone participating in, or who may be affected by, Woodcraft Folk Activities
- We acknowledge that some activities, by definition, involve a greater exposure to risk than others, and we are committed to ensuring that adequate and appropriate steps are taken to manage this risk.
- Working in partnership with children, young people and volunteers is essential to identify and manage risks, and to encourage everyone to learn and become effective risk managers, and helping children and young people to assess, understand and manage

risk is a key part of their growth and development and, while we will take every precaution to minimise risk, we do not believe it can or should be eliminated entirely.

- Some children, young people and adults are additionally vulnerable to harm because of their inexperience, level of dependency, communication needs or other issues and this will be taken into account when planning and running all activities

To deliver on these principles:

- The District will nominate a named individual to take the lead on Health, Safety and Wellbeing (who may also be the lead on safeguarding.

- The District will develop a develop a tailored health, safety and wellbeing plan based on the guidance provided

- The District lead will deliver briefings and training locally as required, and promote a culture mindful of health, safety and wellbeing

- Every Group, Camp and Event should have a named Health, Safety and Wellbeing lead Named Health & Safety leads should undertake specific training relevant their role, as outlined in Woodcraft Folk's Training Policy

- Every activity, event and venue shall be subject to rigorous risk assessment, to define the potential harms that could arise and ensure that suitable preventative and protective measures are in place

- Once a risk assessment has identified the preventative and protective measures to be relied upon to prevent harm, everyone responsible for organising the activity or event shall ensure that they are properly implemented

- The arrangements for health, safety and wellbeing should be periodically reviewed and updated if required, as a minimum these should be done following a major event, the first running of a new activity or use of a new venue, or in the event of any significant incident

Named Leads for health, safety and wellbeing, with respect to the Group, Camp or Event, they are responsible for, will:

- Ensure that appropriate risk assessments are completed to cover venues, activities, travel and other eventualities (whether by conducting suitable risk assessments themself or by reviewing relevant risk assessments already prepared, ensuring they are sufficient comprehensive to cover all planned activities)

- Ensure that they and other volunteers are familiar with all relevant health, safety and wellbeing procedures

- Ensure that risk assessments are reviewed when there are any significant changes, in the light of any incidents, and any event annually.
- Oversee the implementation of the relevant procedures, ensuring that risks are assessed appropriately, and that the adequate preventative and protective measures are in place to promote health, safety and wellbeing

- Clarify the responsibility of all persons responsible for the relevant venue, activity or event to ensure that the preventative and protective measures detailed in the risk assessments are implemented.

- Emphasise the requirement to communicate, that is to discuss, not simply to instruct, so that everyone develops an understanding of the way in which Woodcraft Folk activities are arranged and managed, to effectively control any risks arising.

- Act as the first point of contact for anyone with concerns about health safety and wellbeing

- Ensure the accurate and timely reporting of any incidents or 'near misses' to the District Health, Safety and Wellbeing Lead

- Contact the District Health, Safety and Wellbeing Lead if further advice or assistance required

## 3. Health and Safety at Regular "Group Night" Meetings

**Risk assessments**

- An initial risk assessment should be carried out when a venue is chosen for group nights. This should then be reassessed annually to ensure that the venue is still suitable for the group's needs. The risk assessment should answer the following questions (as a minimum) including in the answer the method used to minimise any risk involved.
  - Is the venue big enough for the group?
  - Is there safe, well-lit access for parents/guardians to collect and drop off children?
  - Are there adequate toilet facilities?
  - Are the kitchen facilities adequate for our needs, including space to store food safely if required?
  - Is the venue well-maintained?
  - Is the venue secure? Could any person/persons gain access without our knowledge during the group session?
  - Have we outlined a procedure for evacuation should it be necessary?

- The risk assessment should be carried out by at least two group leaders, recorded (a pro forma is provided should you wish it) signed, dated and stored safely with other group paperwork.
- It is not necessary to carry out additional risk assessments for regular group activities, but it is recommended that you do so if you have planned a particularly unusual activity for a session, especially if you are bringing in external people or equipment
- If you choose to engage someone to run a session for your group (e.g. circus skills) you must see evidence of a full risk assessment undertaken by that person.

**First Aid**

- Every group should have a first aid box and a named individual responsible for maintaining this and calling the emergency services if necessary.
- The District should work towards training as many first aiders as possible so that every group has at least one trained first aider present at any activity

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**Responsibilities**

- Group leaders are responsible for their own Health and Safety and that of their fellow leaders and the children in their charge

- It is recommended that one person be nominated as the responsible person for Health and Safety in a group. S/he should keep a supply of template risk assessments and be especially on the alert for any potential risks. However, this does not relieve all group leaders/helpers from their responsibilities in this area.
- Anyone who notices any potential Health and Safety risk should report it immediately to the relevant person. This might be the person responsible for the venue, the leader in charge of the group, or any other person deemed appropriate.
- Failure to report any concern will be viewed very seriously by the Woodcraft Folk

**Recording of incidents**

- All groups should have an accident book in which all incidents, no matter how minor they may appear should be recorded, This sho uld be in the back of the 'subs' book.
- Any incident resulting in professional medical treatment being required by any person should be reported to the District Leader and Folk House in writing, along with a copy of the venue risk assessment and any risk assessment specific to that activity. A form is available at the back of this policy for this purpose
- All incidents involving children should be reported to their parents/guardians as soon as practicable, however minor they may appear.

## 4. Health and Safety for "Day Activities" Outside the Normal Group Meeting Place

*For the purposes of this document a 'day activity' is anything that does not include an overnight stay away from the child's usual home. Examples include trips to the theatre, nature walks or any activities that take place at the time of a normal group session but in a different location.*

**Risk assessments**

- It will not normally be necessary to complete a written risk assessment for a short activity taking place at the same time as a usual group session e.g. a nature walk or wide game provided that:

    - The correct ratio of adults to children is maintained at all times
    - All adults are familiar with the location of/route to the activity and pay due care and attention to any potential risks e.g. crossing roads
    - Permission for each child to take part in the activity has been gained from their parent/guardian in advance of the activity e.g. at the end of the previous week's session

- Written risk assessments should be carried out for any day activity that takes place at an unfamiliar time or location i.e. other than that of the usual group session. This risk assessment should answer the following questions as a minimum including in the answer the method used to minimise any risk involved.

    - Is the venue for the activity safe? (If it is a venue frequently used by the general public it should have all the relevant policies and insurance which they should make available if you want to request them)
    - How will the group make its way to and from the activity? Will they need to use any additional means of transport while taking part in the activity e.g. Underground/Public bus?
    - How will the group make its way home in the event of the activity finishing early for any reason?
    - Do you have sufficient adults to ensure that ratios can be maintained in the event of an adult having to leave the group e.g. with a sick or injured child?
    - Where is the nearest Accident and Emergency/Minor Injuries unit?

- Do you have a means of contacting the parents/guardians of each child quickly and easily in the event of an incident?
- Are there any people taking part in the activity with specific medical/other needs? Do you know how to deal with these in the event of it being necessary?

**First aid**

- Every group should have access to a first aid kit, even when away from the group's normal meeting place
- Group leaders need to consider if more than one first aider is required when taking part in an activity away from the group's normal meeting place

**Responsibilities**

- All children taking part in the activity should have a completed and signed consent form for the activity giving details of any specific medical/other needs. These forms should be kept by a designated adult who is a full member of the Woodcraft Folk.
- Group leaders are responsible for their own Health and Safety and that of their fellow leaders and the children in their charge.
- It is recommended that one person be nominated as the responsible person for Health and Safety in a group. S/he should be especially on the alert for any potential risks. However, this does not relieve all group leaders/helpers from their responsibilities in this area.
- Anyone who notices any potential Health and Safety risk should report it immediately to the relevant person. This might be the person responsible for the venue, the leader in charge of the group, or any other person deemed appropriate.
- Failure to report any concern will be viewed very seriously by the Woodcraft Folk.

**Recording of incidents**

- All incidents should be recorded in the accident book as soon as possible after they have happened.
- It is accepted that it may not be practical to carry the accident book on all activities, but if the incident requires treatment of any kind (even the administration of a plaster) it is wise to make a note of any details at the time e.g. in a diary so that they can be accurately transferred into the accident book later.
- Any incident resulting in professional medical treatment being required by any person should be reported to the District Leader and Folk House in writing, along with a copy of the venue risk assessment and any risk assessment specific to that activity. A form is available at the back of this policy for this purpose.
- All incidents involving children should be reported to their parents/guardians as soon as practicable, however minor they may appear.

## 5. Health and Safety for Camps and Other Residential Activities or Trips

*Overnight activities, whether under canvas or in bunkhouses, pose a greater organisational challenge, and involve an increased level of risk, compared to group night sessions. A residential activity is defined as any activity where children/young people are away from their usual home for at least one night. These guidelines apply equally to overseas trips, with the addition that groups must make sure they have adequate travel insurance for their trip*

***All Woodcraft Districts are required to complete an online checklist for overnight activities.*** *This checklist will ensure that our planned activity meets Woodcraft Folk's minimum expectations for overnight activities with children & young people, and should be completed by the volunteer responsible for the activity not less than 7 days before the event.using the link below*

https://woodcraft.org.uk/resources/residential-checklist/

In order to comply with the checklist the following criteria should be met.

**Risk Assessment**

- A full written risk assessment must be carried out for **every** residential activity. The risk assessment should answer the following questions as a minimum, including in the answers the steps taken to minimise and manage the risk.

    - Is the venue for the activity safe? (If it is a venue frequently used by the general public it should have all the relevant policies and insurance which they should make available if you request them).
    - Does it have adequate and appropriate sleeping, toilet and washing facilities?
    - Is the venue well-maintained?
    - How will the group make its way to and from the activity? Will they need to use any additional means of transport while taking part in the activity e.g. Underground/Public bus?
    - What activities will the group be taking part in during the residential? Do any of them pose additional risks and therefore merit their own risk assessment e.g. adventurous activities?
    - How will the group make its way home in the event of the residential finishing early for any reason?
    - Do you have sufficient adults to ensure that ratios can be maintained in the event of an adult having to leave the group e.g. with a sick or injured child?
    - Do you have adequate First Aid cover?
    - Where is the nearest Accident and Emergency/Minor Injuries unit?
    - Do you have a means of contacting the parents/guardians of each child quickly and easily in the event of an incident?
    - Are there any people taking part in the activity with specific medical/other needs? Do you know how to deal with these in the event of it being necessary?
    - Are there adequate plans in place in the event of evacuation being required?

**First Aid**

- Every group should have access to a first aid kit, even when away from the group's normal meeting place.
- Every group should have more than one trained first aider when taking part in residential activities. Consideration should be given to ensure the level of first aid is appropriate to the activity and situation.

**Responsibilities**

- All children taking part in the activity must have a completed and signed consent form for the activity giving details of any specific medical/other needs. These forms should be kept by a designated adult who is a full member of the Woodcraft Folk.
- Group leaders are responsible for their own Health and Safety and that of their fellow leaders and the children in their charge.

- It is recommended that one person be nominated as the responsible person for Health and Safety in a group. S/he should be especially on the alert for any potential risks. However, this does not relieve all group leaders/helpers from their responsibilities in this area.
- It is recommended that one adult be designated as the responsible person each night to ensure that assistance can be given in the event of an incident.
- Anyone who notices any potential Health and Safety risk should report it immediately to the relevant person. This might be the person responsible for the venue, the leader in charge of the group, or any other person deemed appropriate.
- Failure to report any concern will be viewed very seriously by the Woodcraft Folk.

**Recording of incidents**

- The accident book should be taken to the residential venue and kept securely. All incidents should be recorded in it as soon as possible after they happen.
- It is accepted that it may not be practical to carry the accident book on all activities during the course of a residential, but if the incident requires treatment of any kind (even the administration of a plaster) it is wise to make a note of any details at the time e.g. in a diary so that they can be accurately transferred into the accident book later.
- Any incident resulting in professional medical treatment being required by any person should be reported to the District Leader and Folk House in writing, along with a copy of the venue risk assessment and any risk assessment specific to that activity. A form is available at the back of this policy for this purpose.
- All incidents involving children should be reported to their parents/guardians as soon as practicable, however minor they may appear.

Further Support & Information from Woodcraft Folk **Owen Sedgwick-Jell**, Head of Membership & Programmes, who can be contacted by emailing owen.sedgwickjell@woodcraft.org.uk or by telephone on 020 8126 8307.

The Safeguarding Portal on the Woodcraft Folk website contains links to:
- Online training on Health, Safety and Wellbeing
- Good practice guidance in risk assessment and suitable preventative and protective measures
- Guidance for responding to concerns
- Template for local Health, Safety and Wellbeing plans, accident and incident forms