

Cheltenham District Woodcraft Folk

Child Protection Policy

Introduction

This policy should be seen in conjunction with the 'Protecting Children in the Woodcraft Folk', produced by the Woodcraft Folk, 2003. This policy also draws on the guidance produced by the Charity Commission, 'Safeguarding Children - protecting children in your organisation', Nov. 2006. It is also compatible with the local child protection procedures produced by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board.

The purpose of this policy is to assist leaders, volunteers and young people participating in activities organised by the Cheltenham District of the Woodcraft Folk, in ensuring that all activities are carried out in a safe and secure manner, that our young members are protected from harm and our leaders and volunteers avoid misunderstandings and allegations of abuse.

Central to this policy is:

- The maintenance of an open, friendly and welcoming organisation that encourages participation from parents, allows leaders and volunteer helpers the opportunity to discuss and share concerns and that empowers our young members to express themselves in a frank and open manner
- This policy recognises the importance of ensuring all Woodcraft Folk activities are carried out in accordance with the aims and principles of the national organisation of the Woodcraft Folk, which promote best practice for working with young people by respecting the rights of each young member of the organisation
- That the safety and welfare of our young members and any other children or young people involved in any Woodcraft Folk activity is paramount; and
- All children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality.

All group leaders and volunteer helpers, DF's helping to run group activities, will be expected to have read and be fully committed to the implementation of this policy. The policy has been endorsed by the Cheltenham District management committees respectively and will be reviewed on an annual basis at the Annual General Meeting, held in January. It applies without exception to all adult and young people, whether full leaders or volunteer helpers, involved in running Woodcraft Folk Activities and in supervising groups of young members or supporting individuals. Copies of the policy will be available at group nights and other activities for parents to take away and study, it will form part of the new members packs the Districts use to promote the organisation and be available on the District's website.

Respecting the rights of the individual

Behaviour

The use of, or the threat, of physical punishment against any member of the woodcraft folk is not acceptable under any circumstances. Physical restraint is only appropriate if required in order to prevent harm to an individual or others and should involve only the minimum of force to ensure that aim is achieved. Incidents of restraint should be reported to the young members parents/carers, recorded on the District Incident Form (see Appendix One), and passed to the District Co-ordinator for safe and confidential storage.

Management of individuals and groups of young members will be carried out in a positive and constructive manner that encourages appropriate participation in group activities. It is not appropriate to use negative criticism or language, which is in anyway discriminatory through race, gender, culture or disability. All leaders, volunteer helpers and young members will be expected to meet the emotional needs of all young members in an appropriate manner and will avoid situations that are exploitative, frightening or too challenging to individuals. Care will be taken to ensure all behaviour and language cannot be interpreted as abusive or exploitative.

Bullying

The Woodcraft Folk recognises the harmful effects on children and young people of being subjected to bullying. Incidents of behaviour that can be interpreted as 'bullying' will be quickly brought to the attention of the individuals concerned and, if appropriate, discussed in a group setting in a way that clearly explains that such behaviour is inappropriate and why, and that it will not be tolerated.

Persistent bullying behaviour should be discussed by group leaders and the appropriateness of taking further action agreed and recorded on an incident sheet. Further action to include:

- Raising concerns with the parents and carers of the young member perpetrating the bullying behaviour and asking for their assistance in dealing with the concern,
- Suspending the individual young member perpetrating the bullying behaviour for a fixed period; or
- Excluding the young member perpetrating the bullying behaviour from the group permanently.

Photographs

Care must be taken when taking pictures of our young members on group activities to ensure that they cannot be interpreted as inappropriate or exploitative in any way. Suitable photographs of Woodcraft events may be used on District or National Woodcraft Folk material, including publicity leaflets, newsletters or websites.

Risks from the Internet

Group leaders are to be aware of the dangers of exploitation, abuse and access to inappropriate material when organising activities involving computers and the Internet.

Raising Concerns

Leaders, volunteers, parents and our young members are to be encouraged to raise concerns about group or an individual's behaviour, concerns will be listened to and responded to in an appropriate manner (see addressing concerns).

Ensuring all activities are carried out in a safe environment

Safe recruitment

Before being able to lead groups all District Leaders will need to be full members of the Woodcraft Folk. They will have provided two referees (one of which will be contacted) who are not already part of the organisation. All leaders (over 18 years of age) will be CRB checked in accordance with national policy. All leaders will receive training, including basic child protection training, and will complete the Leader Training Packs within two years of becoming a leader.

Running group activities

There will be at least two adult leaders present at each organised District activity. Volunteer helpers will not be left 'in charge' of individual or groups of children unless necessary (i.e. in an emergency or through providing transport etc). All leaders present at any activity are responsible for the safety and welfare of the young members. Leaders will ensure there are enough adults or older young members present to ensure the safety of our young members at all times.

A 'risk assessment' will be carried out by the leaders responsible for activities at all times, using the approved Woodcraft Folk template as a prompt (see Appendix Two). Leaders will ensure they are in a position to 'supervise' all young members, appropriate to any risk assessment discussed (depending on the nature of the activity and the maturity of the young members), ensuring their safety at all times. Leaders will maintain a list of names and emergency contact numbers of all young members on each activity.

The Districts have organised an independent person with whom concerns about behaviour or practice within either district can be raised and who will pass concerns on to the District Co-ordinator or the national Woodcraft Folk:

Julie Bartrum
Youth Work Manager
Young Gloucestershire
Telephone no. 01452 501008

Responding to allegations and child protection concerns

Allegations management

All group leaders and volunteers will need to follow the following guidelines if concerns are raised about the behaviour of individual adults or older young members involved in group activities:

- Concerns and allegations of inappropriate behaviour or allegations of a child protection nature made against leaders, volunteer helpers, parents or older young members should be reported to a group leader at the earliest possible opportunity.
- All concerns will be listened too and taken seriously.
- The group leader receiving the concern will record the details on a District Incident Form (see appendix one) and discuss the concern with another group leader and make a decision as to whether the incident may mean -
 - The leader or volunteer helper is not fit to work with children,
 - The allegation may amount to a criminal offence,
 - The young member or members may be in need of protection.

If the decision is that these three criteria do not apply the concern will be raised, by the leaders receiving the allegation, with the individual about whom the concern was expressed, and a discussion about the circumstances of the allegation and the appropriateness of the behaviour will be carried out. This outcome will be recorded on the District Incident Form and given to the District Co-ordinator for confirmation of the appropriateness of the decision and to store securely and confidentially. The District Incident Form will be kept and reconsidered in the light of any new allegations that are made in respect of the particular individual. The help and support of the District Co-ordinator can be sought at any time.

If the decision is that at least one of these three criteria apply the group leaders should take the following steps:

- Inform the parents/carers of the young members involved.
- Report the incident to the police if it is believed a criminal offence has been committed.
- Report the incident to the District Co-ordinator at the earliest possible opportunity.
- The District Co-ordinator will report the incident to the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Service, Local Authority Designated Officer (allegations management - 01452 583636) for advice about how to proceed, including whether the particular individual should be 'suspended' and prevented from having further contact with young members.
- The District Co-ordinator to ensure the incident is reported to the national Woodcraft Folk who will assist in making a decision about whether it is appropriate to suspend or exclude the particular individual from the organisation.

The District Co-ordinator to ensure that all decisions are recorded on the District Incident Form and that the form is stored securely and confidentially. The District Incident Form will be kept and reconsidered in the light of any new allegations that are made in respect of the particular individual.

How to respond to child protection concerns not related to the Woodcraft Folk

Even if unlikely, it is always possible that a young member will disclose behaviour by parents, siblings or other people, that might be regarded as child abuse, or they may show signs or exhibit behaviour that suggests the young member may be experiencing abuse. Remember that it is not appropriate for group leaders or adult volunteers to investigate or make a judgement about whether abuse has taken place and that it is the responsibility of all of us to report concerns of a child protection nature to the appropriate authorities. If concerns are raised the following guidelines will be followed:

- The young member will be listened to carefully and his or her concerns taken seriously however difficult they may be to believe.
- No promises about keeping things secret will be given, the group leader or volunteer helper will need to explain that he or she will need to get help if the disclosure amounts to a child protection matter.
- Details about the disclosure to be recorded on a District Incident Form, giving as much detail about what is said as possible (including date and time the disclosure is made and details as to who else was present), and given to the District Co-ordinator for safe keeping.
- Advice should be sought from the District Co-ordinator or another group leader as to the next step.
- Parents should be informed of the concerns raised unless they amount to an allegation of sexual abuse or a serious physical injury, or if the young member expressly asks not to inform parents because they are concerned about the parent's response.
- Parents should be informed of any decision to pass information on to the police or children's services (social services), unless the concerns amount to an allegation of sexual abuse or a serious physical injury, or if the young member expressly asks not to inform parents because they are concerned about the parents response.
- The young member should be kept informed about any response, including the need to inform parents and their views obtained.
- Advice about how to handle child protection concerns can be obtained from the Safeguarding Children Service (01452 583636).

- The police should be called if it is felt a criminal offence has been committed.
- A referral to the children's service (01452 42 6565) should be made if it is felt the young member is at risk of significant harm or in need of services.
- Medical assistance should be sought if the young member is found to have an injury that requires treatment.

Useful Information

National Woodcraft Folk www.woodcraftfolk.org.uk, Tel No. 020 8672 6031

Aims and principles <http://www.woodcraft.org.uk/library/item/61>

Gloucestershire Police 08450 901234 (Use 999 in an emergency)

Children's Services for referral to social care (social services) 01452 426565

Child Line 0800 1111

Independent person Julie Bartram
Youth Work Manager
Young Gloucestershire
01452 501008

Safeguarding Children Service (for advice) 01452 583636

Gloucestershire Child Protection Procedures can be found on www.gscb.org.uk

District Co-ordinators:

Cheltenham - Duncan Siret, Telephone No. 01242 263017 email: duncan_siret@yahoo.co.uk

District website www.thewoodcraftfolk.co.uk

Approved January 07

Modified March 08

Appendix One

Cheltenham District's Incident Form

Date and Time of Incident	
Nature of Incident	
Outcome of incident	
Who incident reported to?	
Incident form passed to District Co-ordinator	
Signed and Dated Group Leader	District Co-ordinator

Appendix Two

Risk Assessment For Woodcraft Folk Activities:

Hazard= anything that can cause harm.
Risk= Chance (high or low) that somebody will be harmed by the hazard.

Activity/ies: _____ Co-ordinator: _____ Assessment Written By _____

Location(s) Of Activity/ies: _____ Other Volunteers: _____ Date Written: __/__/__

_____ Date for review of assessment: __/__/__

List Significant Hazards Here: (Slip/ trip, fire, chemicals, equipment, height, vehicles, electricity, lifting/ handling, noise, lighting, temperature)	Groups of people who are at risk from the hazards listed: (Volunteers, participants, people with disabilities, pregnant people, young people, untrained people)	List existing ways of reducing the risks: (Training, Procedures, Information, Signs, Protective Equipment/ Clothing)	Is the risk adequately controlled? (Yes/ No)	Action needed (Be specific!)

Checked by: _____ Adequate? _____ PPE? _____ COSHH? _____ Date: / /

Appendix 3

Cheltenham District Woodcraft Folk Child Protection Policy

Key Points to remember

- The safety and welfare of our young members is paramount during all our activities.
- All leaders are responsible for the health and safety of all present on Woodcraft Folk activities.
- All adults running, or helping to run groups, should have read and agreed to this policy.
- Inappropriate behaviour by adults, or our young members, should be challenged and discussed with the individual and, if necessary, within the group. Parents should also be informed about the concerns of their children.
 - Young members should be made aware that they can approach any Woodcraft leader, if they have concerns about inappropriate behaviour of other people, both within and external to the Woodcraft.
 - Concerns about the inappropriate behaviour of leaders, DFs, volunteer helpers, or of persons outside of the Woodcraft, **MUST** be taken seriously and procedures described in the Child Protection Policy should be followed.
- All DFs or adults running groups **MUST** be full members of the Woodcraft group and have a current CRB certificate.
- All group activities will be supervised by at least two leaders, who are full members of the Woodcraft Folk.
 - Volunteer helpers will not be left in sole charge of individuals, or groups of children, unless absolutely necessary. (ie Providing transport in their own car)
- All leaders are responsible for ensuring there is sufficient adult supervision to safely manage all groups, and that a risk assessment for the activity is carried out.
- Activity leaders shall ensure that contact sheets, containing the contact details of all young members participating in Woodcraft Folk activities, are always readily available.

January 07