

Health and Safety Policy for Groups Policy



Last updated: February 2013

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Summary

Health and Safety rules for activities with children and young people. Group leaders will find relevant information under separate headings for normal group activities, other day activities and residential activities.

Statement of General Policy

The health and safety of our members is of paramount importance to the Woodcraft Folk. We are committed to ensuring that all our leaders, helpers, young members, parents and visitors to events are able to enjoy Woodcraft activities in a safe and secure environment without exposure to unnecessary or excessive risk.

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. We believe that 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 step to minimise risk, we do not believe it can or should be eliminated entirely.

Health and Safety at regular group 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 your 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 your knowledge during the group session?
 - Have you outlined a procedure for evacuation should it be necessary?
 - Each group's needs will vary slightly, so you may wish to consider additional questions relevant to your specific group.
 - The risk assessment should be carried out by at least two group leaders, recorded (a pro forma is provided for your use should you wish it) signed, dated, review date and stored safely with other group paperwork.
 - It is good practice to make the risk assessments accessible by displaying them or putting them in a policy file which is available.
 - The Risk Assessments should be reviewed annually by two group leaders who are full members.

- 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 (see appendix three for recommended contents) and a named individual responsible for maintaining this and calling the emergency services if necessary.
 - Every group should have at least one trained first aider present at any activity.
- 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 could jeopardise the healthy and safety of members and 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. Once an incident is recorded in the accident book, it should be removed and stored separately to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998
 - Any incident resulting in professional medical treatment being required by any person should be reported to the District Co-ordinator 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 end 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

Health and Safety for day activities¹ outside the normal group meeting place

- 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/wide game provided that
 - The correct ratio of adults to children is maintained at all times (for more information on the correct adult to child ratios please visit [this link](#))
 - All adults are familiar with the location of/route to the activity and pay due care and attention to any potential risks eg crossing roads

¹ 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. It could, for example, include trips to the theatre, nature walks or other activities that take place at the time a normal group session would happen but in a different location.

- Permission for each child to take part in the activity has been gained from their parent/guardian in advance of the activity eg 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?
 - If a leader is using their own car to transport children and young people they must follow safeguarding procedures and ensure they have the correct insurance for their car. Visit this website for more information on this <http://www.do-it.org.uk/>
 - 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 (see appendix three for recommended contents), 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 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, this person must be a full member of Woodcraft Folk. 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 eg in a diary so that they can be accurately transferred into the accident book later. Once an incident is recorded in the accident book, it should be removed and stored separately to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- Any incident resulting in professional medical treatment being required by any person should be reported to the District Co-ordinator 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

Health and Safety for residential² activities and trips

- 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 want to 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 eg 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 eg 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 eg 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 (see appendix three for recommended contents), 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

² For the purposes of this document, a residential activity is any activity where children/young people are away from their usual home for at least one night.

- 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 Woodcraft Folk.
 - For residentials and camps two copies of each completed consent form should be taken – one to be held centrally and the other for offsite activities.
 - 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. Once an incident is recorded in the accident book, it should be removed and stored separately to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998
 - 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 eg 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 Co-ordinator 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
 - The above outlined guidelines apply equally to overseas trips, with the addition that groups must make sure they have adequate travel insurance for their trip

Other Woodcraft Folk policy links

- Safeguarding Policy
- Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco Policy
- Drug Education Policy

Useful website links

Health and Safety Executive - www.hse.gov.uk
The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents - www.rospa.com
British Red Cross - www.redcross.org.uk
St John Ambulance - www.sja.org.uk

Policy History

February 2013: Revised policy approved by General Council
December 2012: Policy reviewed policy submitted for General Council approval
October 2012: Policy reviewed by Education and Groups Committee
October 2008: Policy approved by General Council
October 2008: Policy amendments submitted for General Council approval
February 2008: Policy approved by General Council
February 2008: Policy submitted for General Council approval
November 2007: Policy approved by Operations Committee
November 2007: Policy submitted for Operations Committee discussions