

## **Safeguarding Policy, July 2015**

This Safeguarding policy applies to all volunteers, helpers, members, staff, including senior managers, sessional workers, freelancers and General Council members or anyone working or volunteering on behalf of Woodcraft Folk.

The purpose of this policy:

- to protect children and young people who attend Woodcraft Folk groups and events
- to provide volunteers and staff with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection

### **What is safeguarding?**

**Safeguarding** is the broader preventative and precautionary approach to planning and procedures that need to be in place to protect children and young people from any potential harm or damage. It is more than child protection, although child protection is one important aspect of safeguarding.

**Child protection** involves recognising signs of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect and acting on it.

### **Woodcraft Folk's Commitment**

Woodcraft Folk believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind, that they should be supported to feel comfortable and confident when participating in our activities and the wider society.

Woodcraft Folk have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. Woodcraft Folk are committed to practice in a way that protects children and supports them to engage in activities that support our aims and principles.

Woodcraft Folk will not tolerate any behaviour which may harm children or young people emotionally, physically or psychologically. Such behaviour includes physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse, bullying, harassment, undue or harsh criticism or violence directed towards individuals or groups. Woodcraft Folk will take serious measures against any volunteer or staff member found in violation of this policy.

Woodcraft Folk strive to maintain a culture of honesty and openness, supporting children and young people to work co-operatively with adults to identify what they consider likely to affect them and their safety.

## **Safeguarding Principles**

Woodcraft Folk recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

Woodcraft Folk's underlying safeguarding principle is that all members (children, young people and adult volunteers) should be protected at all times from behaviour and attitudes they find uncomfortable. To achieve this aim:

- The needs of the children and young people are central to all activity planning
- Open communication with members of all ages and effective planning will support safeguarding of children, young people and adults
- Anyone has the right to speak out about behaviour and attitudes they find uncomfortable, they know who they should speak to in advance and be confident they will be listened to
- Every District, Centre, project and event organiser must nominate one adult member to take the lead on safeguarding issues and to develop a tailored safeguarding plan
- Groups of children and young people should be supervised by a minimum of 2 adult members
- Physical contact should be instigated by the child or young person, and should be relevant to their needs or safety
- Appropriate screening and checks need to be undertaken by all adults regularly working with children, but these are only effective when supported by good communication, training and ongoing observation (link to screening procedures)
- All volunteers and staff receive appropriate Safeguarding training relevant to their role in the Woodcraft Folk
- Risk assessments must be completed for all venues and activity types
- Personal details of members, children and young people are held securely in accordance with Woodcraft Folk's data protection policy

Woodcraft Folk are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

## **Whose responsibility is it?**

All volunteers, helpers and adult members are responsible for:

- Being familiar with safeguarding policy and child protection procedures
- Ensuring parents, carers, children and young people are aware of the organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures

Local Safeguarding Officers are responsible for:

- Being familiar with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures

- Acting as the first point of contact for volunteers concerned about the safety and welfare of a child
- Contacting children's social care in cases where a child is at risk of harm
- Ensuring that all volunteers know where they can find the safeguarding policy, local safeguarding plan and child protection procedures
- To support volunteers after they have shared their concerns about a child
- To liaise with appropriate local agencies for support and advice and keep a list of local contacts

Lead Safeguarding Officer is responsible for:

- Developing safeguarding policy and procedures
- Advising and providing guidance to staff and volunteers concerned about a child protection issue
- Communicating to staff and volunteers any changes in policy and procedures
- Training staff and volunteers about how to respond to child protection concerns
- Keeping accurate records of concerns about children and actions taken
- Collecting monitoring data on all safeguarding activities across the organisation
- Ensuring that the organisation meets the requirements of its insurers regarding its safeguarding responsibilities
- Promoting the importance of safeguarding across the organisation
- Managing complaints about poor practice of either staff or volunteers
- Making decisions about appointing someone who has a criminal record
- Supporting Local Safeguarding Officers in their role

General Council is responsible for:

- Nominating a lead member for safeguarding
- Evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding within the organisation
- Reviewing and updating the organisation's policy and procedures on safeguarding every year

### **Safeguarding Declaration**

I confirm that I have read and understand my responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and young people taking part in Woodcraft Folk activities.

I confirm that I have never received criminal convictions for offences involving abuse against children, nor am I subject to any such investigation. I have no other criminal convictions which might render me unsuitable to work with young people or pose a risk to the welfare of children and young people.

I confirm that I am not barred from working with children and young people or barred by association.

I understand that any such proceedings or convictions could result in suspension or expulsion from the Woodcraft Folk subject to the organisation's procedures.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Where can I get more support and information?**

General Council will nominate a Lead Safeguarding Officer and a Deputy, who can be contacted on 020 7703 4173 or by emailing [safeguarding@woodcraft.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@woodcraft.org.uk)

The Lead Safeguarding Officer and their Deputy will work with external advisers, staff and volunteers to produce and deliver:

- Training in safeguarding and child protection
- Good practice guidance in risk assessment
- Guidance for responding to child protection disclosures and child abuse concerns
- Guidance for dealing with allegations about staff and volunteers
- Template for local safeguarding plans, health registration/consent forms, disclosure, accident and incident forms

The following links will provide advice and guidance:

[www.woodcraft.org.uk/safeguarding](http://www.woodcraft.org.uk/safeguarding)

[Staying Safe, Woodcraft Folk's online module exploring Woodcraft Folk's Safeguarding Procedures and Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Recognising and responding to child protection issues](#)