



Behaviour Management Policy

This policy aims to support members to respond to challenging behaviour with confidence, seeking to protect the physical and emotional wellbeing of all involved, and in a manner that reflects the aims and principles of Woodcraft Folk.

Woodcraft Folk prides itself in providing inclusive respectful environment, when done successfully the drive to present challenging behaviour is much reduced.

What is challenging behaviour?

Challenging behaviour is complex, but in a nut shell it is behaviour of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the individual or others is placed in serious jeopardy or the behaviour seriously limits how the individual can engage positively with others and in group activities. It can include:

- Self-harming behaviour
- Unco-operative or disruptive behaviour
- Physical aggression, threatening and abusive behaviour to peers and adults
- Damage to property

Key Principles

- Challenging behaviour develops because of an unmet need of the individual or individuals. Woodcraft Folk leaders should work with the individual or individuals, and their parents/carers, to identify the need and meet that need where possible.
- Safety comes first, the safety of the individual, safety of other children and young people, safety of volunteers and safety of other adults.
- Open communication is essential to understand and support the needs of the individual
- Try to detach the behaviour from the child or young person, by which we mean respect the person and challenge the behaviour.
- Aim to match up the level of the behaviour with appropriate actions considering any known information and past experiences of the child or young person.
- Some young people need support to regulate their own behaviour. Planned targeted support should be considered to include these young people
- The expectations of what is and isn't acceptable behaviour should ideally be defined by the group as a whole and understood by all members of the group.
- There may be a point where addressing the challenging behaviour of an individual/individuals will have a negative effect on the rest of the group. If the group does not have the resources needed to manage the behaviour, then they should consider asking the individual's parents/carers to remove them from the group temporarily or permanent

Prevention

We aim to prevent challenging behaviour before it develops. To do this some important steps should be taken.

- All groups should aim to create a safe, positive, supportive and inclusive environment for all children and young people at their groups, camps and activities.

- When joining a group all children and young people should be assessed through a children registration form to identify any needs. Communication with parents and carers at this stage is essential.
- Risk assessments and support plans should be completed that consider challenging behaviour and its effect and then shared with volunteers running group nights.
- Volunteers should seek support from the primary carer in the first instance and then seek advice from other professionals if the parent is happy for them to do this.

Addressing the behaviour

While each case will be different there are some common guidelines that can help address challenging behaviour.

- Try to focus the child or young person on the task at hand or distract with another task
- Talk to the child or young person and set expectations, thus giving them a choice on how to respond to the situation
- Acknowledge the situation and try to get the child and young person to express their feelings verbally
- Remove the source of the issue, or the child or young person, to a more neutral environment.

Depending on the seriousness and the nature of the behaviour some of these may not be appropriate, always do what is safest for those involved.

Serious and persistent instances of challenging behaviour and details of action taken to manage behaviour should be appropriately recorded and shared with the Local Safeguarding Officer.

Post incident

Once the behaviour has been addressed and everyone is safe. It is important that all sides are given the chance to communicate their feelings and thoughts including what actions should be taken to prevent future incidents. Where possible the aim should always be for the individual/ individuals to re-join the group.

It is important to record what happened as accurately as possible, so it can be shared easily, used to make needed changes and if ever reviewed it will reflect what happened at the time. Incidents should be recorded on the Woodcraft Folk incident reporting form that can be found here <https://woodcraft.org.uk/managing-behaviour>. Once completed they should be stored in a secure place for at least three years. If the incident could affect the whole movements policy, practice or insurance then it should be shared with **Lead Safeguarding Officer via safeguarding@woodcraft.org.uk**

A set of guidelines and case studies can be found here to support this policy and how it looks in practice for Woodcraft Folk groups <https://woodcraft.org.uk/managing-behaviour>