

## The Woodcraft Folk Aims and Principles\*

The Woodcraft Folk is an educational movement for children and young people, designed to develop self confidence and activity in society, with the aim of building a world based on equality, friendship, peace and co-operation.

### Education for Social Change

We seek to develop in our members a critical awareness of the world. We will work to develop the knowledge, attitudes, values and skills necessary for them to act to secure their equal participation in the democratic process that will enable them to bring about the changes that they feel are necessary to create a more equal and caring world. As an educational movement, we believe that equal opportunities should extend to all aspects of activity and participation in the Woodcraft Folk. We will combat oppression or discrimination in our movement, whether on grounds of age, class, gender, race, sexual orientation, for reasons of disability, contact with mental health services, or a previous criminal conviction that does not create risk to children or young people. We will educate our members so that they may take these issues into the wider community.

### A Co-operative and Sharing Attitude to Life

We believe that to further our aims it is vital to approach our educational work through the principles of co-operation. To achieve this we will provide a programme which ensures that our members practice co-operation through all the activities in which they participate.

### International Understanding

Our motto is 'Span the world with friendship'. We will therefore encourage and develop international understanding and friendship through our educational work and by our exchanges between children and young people of different lands. We will promote a greater understanding of the world amongst our members so that they are aware of the inequalities which exist in it.

### The Rights of the Child

In our work with children and young people, we respect and defend their individual rights, and encourage them to participate responsibly and democratically, in all aspects of Woodcraft Folk activity.

### Religion

The Woodcraft Folk welcomes all children, young people and adults, who wish to become members of the movement, and it asserts the right of all its members to practice the faith of their choice providing it does not contravene the aims and principles of the movement.

### One World

The Woodcraft folk will encourage an understanding of the need to work towards a world where we provide for the needs of everyone on the planet now and in the future without destroying the physical environment. We aim to educate our members about issues of environmental and social sustainability and how this relates to their own lifestyles and other people's actions.

### A world at Peace

Because of our international outlook and concern that all shall enjoy the right to freedom from the immorality of war and want, the Woodcraft Folk is dedicated to the cause of peace.

Accordingly we associate with the movement for world disarmament and for the transfer of those resources directed to the destruction of life into channels which will be used for the fulfilment of humanity's needs.

### Affirmation

The task of the Woodcraft Folk is the cultivation of a world outlook. Because the Woodcraft Folk is concerned with educational activities, it is accordingly precluded from being involved in activities and policy making of political parties. The Woodcraft Folk expects its members to abide by its Constitution and to participate actively in a movement that is dedicated to all people for all time.

## A Child Protection Policy for the Woodcraft Folk\*

1. Protecting children and young people from abuse should be an integral part of the policy and practice of all Woodcraft Groups on all Woodcraft Folk activities.

1.1 The Woodcraft Folk has recognised the need to demonstrate to parents and to the wider community the importance we give to the child protection issue. We are committed to procedures and philosophies which have been developed to protect children themselves, but which also protect adult members from misunderstandings and false accusations of abuse, and which promote the reputation of the Woodcraft Folk.

1.2 The aims and objectives of the Woodcraft Folk are outlined in its constitution and programme and these set the tone for our work. For example:

- In our work with children and young people, we respect and defend their individual rights.

1.3 This means that we do not countenance any form of physical violence or abuse, whether committed by or inflicted upon either adults or young people.

It also means that we do not countenance verbal insults or destructive criticism. The organisation encourages respect for others' background, appearance, personality, abilities, opinions or preferences. Whilst the Woodcraft Folk has a social and moral standpoint which it seeks to promote among its members, this must be done in a way that does not take advantage of a young person's immaturity or trust in an adult leader.

It means that adults must accept the responsibility to exercise due care in all activities, so that young people are not exposed to risk through adult negligence or incompetence. (see "Safety", Guidelines on Safety for Woodcraft Folk Leaders).

Child Protection requires good child care and good group-work practice. It is a requirement in the Woodcraft Folk that all adults involved with children should create a safe and open environment wherein social relationships can be confidently discussed and in which all members of the organisation may grow.

## 2. Vetting of adults working with children

2.1 All volunteers who wish to work with children and young people in groups or within Woodcraft Folk activities are required to complete a CRB/CRBS Disclosure Application Form.

It is also important that a reference is sought from a person who knows the volunteer before they start working with children. If the reference causes any doubts, the Woodcraft Folk will reserve the right to make further verbal or written contact with the referees before the volunteer can work with children in the organisation. If a Disclosure or reference gives sufficient cause, the local group and/or District will be informed by the General or Deputy General Secretary that the volunteer should not be allowed to work with children or young persons.

Volunteers who work or have contact with children will be asked to declare any criminal convictions they may have which involve abuse against children, however old these convictions may be. This is an exemption from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

2.2 All adults who have responsibilities for children must abide by the local Child Protection Policy.

All Adults will be expected to sign an application form including a declaration that they have no such convictions or criminal proceedings pending which relate to alleged abuse of children.

All adults applying to work with children will also be Adult Members of the Woodcraft Folk, and as such will have access to an Appeal through the Procedure on Suspension and Expulsion of Members of the Woodcraft Folk or through CRB/CRBS appeal procedures.

2.3 All other materials relating to the application will be held centrally by the named leader/co-ordinator of the group, and will be held carefully and in confidence.

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