



Pathfinders Camp

Safeguarding

Charity: 1171466

Introduction

Pathfinders Camp (Woodlarks) is a provider of camping holidays based at Woodlarks Campsite Trust (Registered Charity number: 306148), which is a specialised facility that allows disabled & non-disabled people to camp together. Each volunteer helper is paired with a disabled camper, becoming partners for the week, sharing in camp chores and a full programme of activities.

In our work with adults who may be at risk due to disability, age or illness and children and young people who may volunteer their help, Pathfinders Camp will endeavour at all times to provide personal care, enabling help and a range of leisure activities, in which risks are minimised and the experience of camping is made as safe as possible.

In the context of the holidays that we offer, we aim to protect all of our participants, whether they are disabled campers, volunteer helpers or members of the leadership group or 'crew'. Our aim is to protect them from harm or maltreatment, to prevent the impairment of health, to ensure the provision of safe and effective care and to promote and increase people's life chances.

We will work in partnership with Woodlarks Campsite Trust and other local and national agencies as needed to put in place and adhere to appropriate procedures for reporting any safeguarding concerns or allegations, making referrals, accessing training and specialist support, as and when required.

As users of the facilities provided by Woodlarks Campsite Trust, we have a duty to follow the policy and procedures laid down in their Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for Children and Vulnerable Adults 2020 document which can be accessed here:

<https://woodlarks.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Safeguarding-Policy-Final.pdf>

Safer Recruitment and Retention

Pathfinders Camp seeks to recruit trustworthy volunteer helpers using appropriate procedures, safeguards and checks. We currently take up two references for all new volunteer applicants prior to confirming their place at camp. We use the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks to help us to assess suitability. Most of our female volunteers will be expected to provide personal care, which falls within the legal definition of 'regulated activity' and is therefore subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure, which includes a barring list check. Male volunteers are also welcomed by



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Pathfinders Camp, in an enabling role that does not usually include provision of personal care, thus those roles are eligible for enhanced DBS checks only. We will assess any criminal record information that is disclosed to us in line with our data protection and equality (treating ex-offenders fairly) policies.

We provide an induction programme for all new volunteers with appropriate training to enable all personnel to undertake their roles safely and confidently, and ongoing training as benefits the personal and professional development of individuals and of our organisation. We provide a booklet of guidance on the nature of the volunteer role, as a part of the 'Joining Instructions', when confirming an individual's place at camp. There is an equivalent booklet of guidance for new campers, which gives information about how camp runs and underlines the notion that help at Pathfinders will be given by unqualified volunteers, willing to learn about provision of personal care.

New volunteers are given 'on the job' training, working alongside more experienced volunteers until they feel more confident in undertaking personal care tasks. All campers (or their parent/guardian, where more appropriate) sign a declaration that they are aware that they will be supported by unqualified volunteer help whilst at camp.

All new volunteers are also offered a two-part interview to gather their first impressions and to allow them to reflect on their experience at the end of the week. The results of this exercise are then discussed amongst the leadership team, so that this feedback can continue to improve the volunteering experience.

It is a particular strength of Pathfinders Camp that many volunteers choose to return to camp in subsequent years and retention of volunteers remains a high priority. This enables us to offer some level of continuity of care and enables our volunteers to work with different campers, so that they become experienced in supporting people with a range of different needs. It is this strong base of experienced help that enables us to meet the complex care needs of some of our campers, and ensures that new helpers are able to learn from the more experienced helpers in their teams.

We review our recruitment procedures regularly in response to changes in legislation and systems external to our organisation e.g. DBS and barring list checks.



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Volunteers

All volunteers are supported within the established structure of Pathfinders Camp. This includes access to the Camp Leader, trustees, designated leads for Health and Wellbeing and other experienced volunteers.

Volunteers will be treated equally, and all volunteers will be offered the same opportunities for advancement, responsibility, training and gaining qualifications and acknowledgement for their contribution to our organisation. This includes but is not limited to assessment for the residential section of the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award and provision of references based on their contribution to camp, which may help them to secure training or employment. In turn, our volunteers are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct at all times as representatives of our organisation.

Activities

A comprehensive risk assessment document is drawn up each year to consider the types of risk inherent in day-to-day life on camp and with the planned programme of activities, to mitigate the risk of accidental injuries being sustained during the course of the week.

Safeguarding Officers

Our appointed Safeguarding Officer is the Camp Leader, Sam Dunn, from October 2016 and supported by Jane Pyzniuk as Deputy, with three other experienced members of Pathfinders Camp, who are available to all volunteer helpers and campers to speak to when they have any concerns, issues or complaints regarding the safety, well-being or conduct of campers, helpers or crew members. Photographs of these crew members are displayed prominently on posters during the week at camp under the wording 'Do you need to talk to someone?' with a brief note about our commitment to safeguarding.

The Safeguarding Officer and Deputy will endeavour to remain up to date with appropriate training to support them in these roles. They will liaise with appropriate local and national agencies, contribute to appropriate policies, maintain records and keep confidentiality, adhere to and promote this policy within the organisation, and support or provide access to support for individuals who may be suffering harm or abuse.



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Awareness

Harm may be caused by accidents, deliberate abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, financial), neglect (deliberate or not) or factors such as bullying, prejudicial attitudes or a failure to enable an individual to participate in activities that are open to most of their peers.

All incidents of harm to anyone involved in our organisation will require an appropriate response to reduce risks and improve the service we offer. In the first instance, all disclosures must be reported to the Safeguarding Officer or Deputy. It is also possible that an individual may choose to disclose information about abuse which they have been subjected to in the past, either at home or within other facilities and these disclosures must also be reported and followed up.

Deliberate acts of harm (sexual, physical, emotional, and financial) and neglect are abuses against the person and will incur disciplinary proceedings and may require reports and referrals to social services, the police, Woodlarks Campsite Trust, other professional bodies and to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if in regulated activity.

Significant Harm

Where there is risk of significant harm to any of our campers, helpers or crew, the Safeguarding Officer and Deputy are empowered to act accordingly.

- To log all conversations regarding the issue using the Pathfinders Camp Safeguarding form
- To sign and request signatures on reports and statements
- Confidentially seek advice from expert sources
- Share concerns (with consent where required and appropriate) internally with the designated officers for Woodlarks Campsite Trust
- Share concerns and make referrals to external agencies such as Social Services, the Police or NSPCC as appropriate to the circumstances
- Make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service regarding any helpers undertaking regulated activity whose conduct is harmful to any of our attendees and when they are removed from regulated activity



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Confidentiality

All reports and logs of complaints, allegations and suspicions will be kept securely and confidentially according to our data protection policy and confidentiality statement, or in line with DBS Code of Practice if appropriate, until or unless it is necessary to share this material with the agencies named above. Information will be shared on a “need-to-know” basis only.

Communication

We will communicate this policy to all crew, helpers, and campers, using appropriate methods, formats, and language to get the essence across. Each attendee is given a copy of the ‘Protecting Vulnerable People’ document (see Appendix 1) as a part of their ‘Welcome Pack’ on arrival at camp. This encourages a culture within which safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility and includes an easy-to-understand Code of Conduct. It also includes information on the procedures to be followed in case of concerns raised.

We support and encourage all campers, helpers and crew to speak up and contact the named Safeguarding Officer or Deputy where there is:

- a concern (a worry, issue or doubt about practice or treatment of a camper or helper, or their circumstances), or
- a disclosure (information about a person at risk of or suffering from significant harm) or
- an allegation (the possibility that a helper or crew member could cause harm to a person in their care)

Campers, helpers and crew members can all report things that aren’t right, are illegal or if anyone on camp is neglecting their duties, putting someone’s health and safety in danger or covering up wrongdoing. In the first instance they should speak with the Safeguarding Officer, their Deputy or another member of the Safeguarding team.

We would prefer our members to use internal processes whenever possible to make a report as above, but this does not prevent them from making a report or referral to statutory agencies such Social Services or the Police, in their own right as a private individual. We also support our members to raise concerns or to disclose information, which they believe shows malpractice (disclosure in the public interest).

To encourage everyone involved in our organisation to understand that safeguarding is everybody’s business, we will provide opportunities for discussions about issues and



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concerns, policy and procedures to reflect, review and to continue to learn and improve in our safeguarding responsibilities.

Reviewer: Jane Pyzniuk

Reviewer: Dave Grosvenor

Role: Chair of Trustees

Role: Trustee

Date: 6th January 2023

Date: 6th January 2023



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Appendix 1

PATHFINDERS CAMP (WOODLARKS) – safeguarding guidance

DO:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Treat everyone equally – avoid showing favouritism.
- Set an example for others to follow.
- Encourage others to talk freely or challenge behaviour or attitudes they are uncomfortable with.
- Discourage / steer clear of inappropriate attention seeking behaviour e.g. flirting, crushes, tantrums etc.
- Try to avoid putting yourself in a situation where your actions may be misinterpreted.

DON'T:

- Trivialise abuse.
- Allow bullying.
- Allow inappropriate "banter" that could be considered offensive or bullying.
- Make suggestive remarks or threats, even in "fun".
- Let allegations, suspicions or concerns about abuse go unreported.
- Believe "it will never happen to me".
- Rely on just your good name to protect you.

HANDLING A DISCLOSURE:

DO:

- Remain calm and approachable.
- Listen carefully, without interrupting.
- Acknowledge that you understand how difficult this is.
- Make it clear you are taking what is said seriously.
- Remember this may be distressing for the individual disclosing.
- Write careful notes of what was said, using the actual words used wherever possible. Sign and date your notes. Pass your notes to the Camp Leader.

DON'T:

- Give your opinion or ask leading or probing questions.
- Promise confidentiality.
- Investigate.
- Ask the individual to repeat the disclosure.
- Discuss the disclosure with people who don't need to know.
- Delay in reporting the disclosure to the Camp Leader.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT SOMEONE OR RECEIVE A COMPLAINT ABOUT ANYONE INCLUDING YOURSELF

- Document what you witnessed, heard or were told.
- Tell the Camp Leader immediately.