**The Wilderness Grove Forest School Volunteer Policy and Agreement**

We recognise that the role of volunteer is important to helping achieve our aims and purposes. An individual has the right to volunteer or not and the decision to do so should not result in exploitation. To ensure volunteers can gain fulfilment from their contribution we will embrace the following principles.

**Guiding Principles**

* Volunteers should have a clear idea of the tasks they are asked to perform and the responsibility that goes with these tasks, in particular their responsibilities regarding health and safety.
* Volunteers should know who is designated as having responsibility for their support and supervision.  Volunteers should have regular access to this person and this person should ensure that each volunteer is adequately supported.
* To ensure fair representation of their needs and interests, volunteers should have access to and play a part in the decision-making process.
* Volunteers will be protected against exploitation of their interests.  They will not be put under pressure to do work which goes against their principles.
* Volunteers will be protected against risks which occur as part of their duties.  They are covered by Public Liability Insurance.
* Volunteers will not suffer financial loss because of their volunteering.  They will be provided with adequate tools, equipment, and materials to enable them to carry out their tasks.
* Volunteers will not be used to perform tasks currently or previously undertaken by paid staff.
* The relationship between paid workers and volunteers will be complementary and mutually beneficial.
* Volunteers may join a Trade Union and will be made aware that some Unions offer free membership to volunteers.
* Volunteers should familiarize themselves with all Policies and Procedures.

The Wilderness Grove Forest School acknowledges and endorses the Volunteers’ Charter (Annex  A) which provides the basis for our policy for volunteers.

**Volunteer Management**

1. The volunteer role is a gift relationship, binding only in honour, trust, and mutual understanding.  No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers to attend, give, or be set a minimum amount of time to carry out the tasks involved in their voluntary activity.  Likewise The Wilderness Grove Forest School cannot be compelled to provide either regular work or payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by volunteers.

2. Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability.  Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what The Wilderness Grove Forest School expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of The Wilderness Grove Forest School.

3. The relationship between individual volunteers and The Wilderness Grove Forest School will be recorded in a Volunteer Agreement (template at Annex B).

A copy should be given to each volunteer before they commence their role with an office copy being retained in the Volunteering file.  The expectation is that the Agreement will be created for each volunteer.

4. It is important to ensure that there is a clear and ongoing dialogue between The Wilderness Grove Forest School and its volunteers.  This will help to ensure that over time, mutual understanding, and expectations are sustained on a sound footing.  In this way the risks of drift from the original aims and intentions of both parties can be minimised and if necessary mitigated.

5. All volunteers will be made aware of and have access to The Wilderness Grove Forest School relevant policies, including those relating to volunteering, health & safety, child protection and equal opportunities. Where volunteers may come into contact with young or vulnerable people then the appropriate DBS checks will be carried out.

6. The continuing need for the Volunteer support should be discussed on a quarterly basis between the Managing Partners and individual volunteers.  This will help to ensure that both parties continue to be satisfied with the arrangement provide and that a shared understanding of the scope and nature of the support continues to operate effectively.

**ANNEX A**

**Volunteer Charter**

The TUC and Volunteering England have signed a Volunteers’ Charter to strengthen ties between paid staff and volunteers.

The Charter was launched by TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber and Volunteering England Chief Executive Justin Davis Smith at a Parliamentary Reception at Westminster on Monday 7th December.

The Charter sets out a series of principles for employers to follow to encourage a good working relationship between volunteers, employers, and paid staff.

The Charter principles include:

* all volunteering is undertaken by choice, and all individuals should have the right to volunteer, or not to volunteer.
* while volunteers should not normally receive or expect rewards for their activities, they should receive reasonable out of pocket expenses.
* the involvement of volunteers should complement and supplement the work of paid staff, and should not be used to displace paid staff or undercut their pay and conditions of service; and,
* all paid workers and volunteers should have access to training and development.

The Charter recognises the value that the UK’s 22 million volunteers make to the economy and wider society, which is estimated to be worth £23 billion every year.

**ANNEX B**

**The Wilderness Grove Forest School VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| NAME OF VOLUNTEER: |  |
| TWiG CONTACT/Line Manager: |  |

**INTRODUCTION**

This Volunteer Agreement applies to volunteers who support The Wilderness Grove Forest School.  It describes the arrangement between The Wilderness Grove Forest School and the volunteer.  We wish to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding.

PART 1: OUR ORGANISATION

Your role as a volunteer is to assist us in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[insert short role description]

and starts on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_[date].

This volunteering role is designed to support The Wilderness Grove Forest School to provide children with a holistic experience of education.

You can expect The Wilderness Grove Forest School to:

**Provide Induction and training.**

Provide a thorough induction on the work of The Wilderness Grove Forest School, its staff, your volunteering role, and the induction and/or training you need to meet the responsibilities of this role. (Annex C)

**Supervision, support, and flexibility**

Explain the standards we expect for our services and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them.  Provide a named person who will meet with you regularly to discuss your volunteering and any successes and problems.  Do our best to help you develop your volunteering role with us.

**Expenses**

To reimburse agreed expenses necessarily incurred in connection with your volunteering.

**Health and safety**

Provide adequate training and feedback in support of our health and safety policy, a copy of which will be provided as part of your induction.

**Insurance**

Provide adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst carrying out their volunteering roles which have been approved and authorised by The Wilderness Grove Forest School

**Equality and Diversity**

Ensure that all volunteers are dealt with in accordance with The Wilderness Grove Forest School’s Equality and Diversity Policy, a copy of which will be provided to you during your induction.

**Problems**

Try to resolve fairly any problems, complaints, and difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us.  In the event of an unresolved problem, to offer an opportunity to discuss the issues in accordance with the procedures set out in The Wilderness Grove Forest School Complaints Policy provided to you during your induction.

**THE VOLUNTEER**

We expect you to:

Help The Wilderness Grove Forest School fulfil the principles of kindness and acceptance within the forest school context to provide children with a holistic experience of education.

Perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability.

Follow The Wilderness Grove Forest School procedures and standards, including health and safety and equal opportunities, in relation to its staff, volunteers and clients.

Maintain as absolutely confidential the information of the organisation and of its clients.

Meet the time commitments and standards which have been mutually agreed to, and to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible.

If requested, to provide referees who may be contacted, and to agree to a DBS.

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party.

DATE OF ISSUE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**ANNEX C New Volunteer / Work Experience Induction checklist**

Volunteer Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**General conduct**

* I have passed an enhanced DBS check as organised by TWiG.
* Timekeeping – I recognise my good timekeeping is important to the smooth running of The Wilderness Grove Forest School and a good participant experience.
* Appearance– I will wear appropriate clothing and any appropriate PPE, therefore setting a good example to participants.
* Language – I recognise the importance of using appropriate language around all members of the Forest School.
* I agree to show no bias or discrimination towards anyone working at The Wilderness Grove Forest School, (participant, staff, or volunteer), regarding race, sex, religion, age or ability.
* Confidentiality – I recognise that our participants are vulnerable but feel safe at The Wilderness Grove Forest School and because of this may share personal information. I will respect their privacy and not discuss anything shared by a participant outside of The Wilderness Grove Forest School. I know I can approach a member of the team if I am concerned about/upset by anything that has been shared with me.

**The Wilderness Grove Forest School Tour**

* Toilet
* Pod
* Tool Shed
* Phone signal (for emergencies)
* I have read The Wilderness Grove Forest School site risk assessment and am familiar with any areas of hazard.

**Health & Safety**

* I know who the First Aiders are if I or a participant has an accident.
* I know how to report a first aid issue with a participant.
* I know who to go to with a Safeguarding Issue
* I have read The Wilderness Grove Forest School generic activity Risk Assessments

a. Tool use

b. Fires & Cooking

d. Whittling

e. Any other risk assessments deemed necessary by the team.

* I have read any Individual participant risk assessments as deemed necessary and signed.
* I have been made aware of the Behaviour policy, and feel confident in how I would respond to a participant exhibiting challenging behaviour in the first instance
* I have been shown appropriate procedures to maintain food hygiene when cooking and storing food for groups.

Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number/s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact (Name & number)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Dietary requirements/allergies

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Medication (inc any information you would like passed to a paramedic in case of emergency)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Anything else you feel we should be aware of:

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Volunteer signature:                                                                                    Date:

Staff member Signature:                                                                              Date: