**The Wilderness Grove Forest School Code of Conduct for Staff and Staff and volunteers**

**09/2025**

We recognise that the role of staff and volunteers are vital to creating a positive learning community. We value the contributions of all members of the TWiG Team.

In this code of conduct we set out what the acceptable standards of behaviour are for all staff and volunteers at our organisation.

We all have a duty of care to safeguard the children we work with. All staff and volunteers are made aware of this Code of Conduct during their Induction Period.

If the organisation suspects, or becomes aware, that a staff member/volunteer has breached the code of conduct, the organisation will address this in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy or immediately end the work relationship.

**Guiding Principles**

* Staff and 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.
* Staff and volunteers should know who is designated as having responsibility for their support and supervision.  Staff and volunteers should have regular access to this person and this person should ensure that each member of staff or volunteer is adequately supported.
* To ensure fair representation of their needs and interests, Staff and volunteers should have access to and play a part in the decision-making process.
* Staff and volunteers will be protected against exploitation of their interests.  They will not be put under pressure to do work which goes against their principles.
* Staff and volunteers will be protected against risks which occur as part of their duties.  They are covered by Public Liability Insurance.
* Staff and 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.
* The relationship between paid workers and volunteers will be complementary and mutually beneficial.
* Staff and volunteers may join a Trade Union and will be made aware that some Unions offer free membership to Staff and volunteers.
* Staff and volunteers should familiarize themselves with all Policies and Procedures.

**Main duties and responsibilities of TWiG Team**

* To be responsible for, dynamically plan and oversee the day to day delivery, organisation and smooth running of Forest Schools programmes.
* To evaluate programmes and to continually strive for improvement.
* To promote learning in the outdoor environment and the ethos of Forest Schools and outdoor learning.
* To be responsible at all times for high standards of care and education of all group members in accordance with the Forest Schools Association principles and criteria for good practice.
* To ensure effective communication with team members, parents, volunteers, partner organisations and of course, children.
* To ensure the health and safety of all participants, including writing and checking risk assessments for the sites, tools and activities used.
* To regularly check and maintain tools and other equipment.
* To keep records as appropriate of emergency contact details for participants, permission forms and achievement of pupils.
* To adhere to all relevant policies and procedures
* To engage in continuous professional development.
* To carry out all other such duties as may from time to time be determined by the line manager.

**Physical Demands**

The work requires moderate levels of physical effort. It involves lifting and handling of equipment and other resources and to be involved in practical activities and physical care of learners and the physical outdoor environment. The role is almost exclusively out of doors and will require working on uneven surfaces and in unpredictable weather conditions.

Please let managers know if any roles or responsibilities pose challenges and further support or reasonable adjustments need to made in order to fulfil your role.

**Safer Working Practices**

The following safer working practices form the basis for our Code of Conduct.

* Confidentiality
* Behaviour
* Dress and appearance
* Gifts, rewards, and favouritism
* Online Safety (including Photography, Videos, Mobile Phones, Smart Watches)
* Physical contact
* One to one situations
* Transporting children
* Trips and outings
* Intimate/Personal Care
* Reporting concerns

**Confidentiality**

* You must be clear about what information can be shared and when.
* You are expected to treat information received about a child in a discreet and confidential manner.
* You must seek advice from the safeguarding lead if you are in doubt about sharing information.

**Behaviour**

* You will treat all children with respect and dignity.
* You must not use your position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children or young people.
* You will ensure that children's welfare is always paramount.
* You are expected to always act in a professional way and be a positive role model.
* You must recognise that the behaviour or actions in your personal life could compromise your position in the workplace and indicate unsuitability to work with children. Examples of such behaviour are misuse of drugs, misuse of alcohol or acts of violence.
* You must recognise that the behaviour of your partner or family members may raise questions about your suitability to work with children.

**Dress and appearance**

* You need to dress in a way appropriate for your work role.
* Do not dress in a way which could be viewed as offensive or sexually provocative.
* Do not dress in a way which could cause embarrassment, distract, or cause a misunderstanding.

**Gifts, rewards and favouritism**

* Always ensure that gifts given or received are declared to your manager.
* Do not accept any gifts which could be seen as a bribe.

**Online Safety**

* Do not add parents or children to your personal social media accounts.
* Do not give out your personal contact information to children or parents. The work mobile phone can be used when calling parents to keep personal numbers confidential
* I will follow the rules for personal mobile phone usage and personal smart watch usage as set out in the safeguarding policy and online safety policy.
* Only use equipment in the organisation to communicate with children and parents. The FAMLY platform should be used to message parents
* Be sure to adhere to all the procedures in our online safety policy.
* Ensure that any online content being shown to children has been checked beforehand and is age appropriate.
* When inappropriate online content is found report to the safeguarding lead immediately.
* When taking photos and videos of children be clear to them about the purpose of the activity.
* Photos or videos taken in 1-1 to situations should be shared on observations on the FAMLY platform and then removed from personal devices including cloud storage.
* Ensure signed parental consent is in place when recording images.
* Ensure the child knows why the images are being taken and that they have agreed, do not carry on if they are uncomfortable or have said no.

**Physical Contact**

* Be mindful that physical contact can be misconstrued by the child or an observer.
* Always be prepared to report and explain your actions.
* Be aware of cultural or religious views on touch.
* Ensure you understand the personal risk assessments of the children you are working with.

**One to one situations**

* Ensure that a charged radio is on your person at all times
* If working with a child in remote or secluded area make team member aware where you are.
* Always report situations where a child becomes dysregulated and ask for support when needed.

**Transporting Children (Only in emergency situations)**

* If using your own vehicle ensure it is roadworthy, insured and taxed.
* Ensure your behaviour always remains professional.
* Ensure all passengers are wearing seatbelts.
* Ensure you are fit and healthy to drive.
* Inform parents and commissioning parties of the dynamic risk assessment and need to transport a child.

**Intimate/Personal Care**

* Only perform intimate/personal care to ensure the dignity of a child. Intimate/personal care is not normal practice and part of TWiG provision.
* Make other staff aware of the task you are carrying out. Ask for an observer when necessary.
* Explain to the child what is happening.
* Consult with the safeguarding lead and parents if the procedure could not be followed or completed with the reasons why.

**Reporting Concerns**

* You must listen to, and act upon, any disclosures, allegations or concerns about the welfare of children.
* If a child demonstrates inappropriate behaviour towards you ensure this is reported immediately.
* Be responsible for reporting any safeguarding concerns.
* Ensure you report any behaviour by colleagues which raises concerns.

**I confirm that I have read and understood the Code of Conduct, which I will adhere to.**

**I understand if I breach the Code of Conduct, this will be addressed in accordance with the** **Organisation’s Disciplinary Policy.**

**Name:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**ANNEX B**

**The Wilderness Grove Forest School VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

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

**INTRODUCTION**

This Volunteer Agreement applies to Staff and 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 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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[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 Staff and 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 Staff and 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, Staff and 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:

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

Volunteer signature:                                                                                    Date:

Staff member Signature:                                                                              Date: