

Aspiring Leaders - Camp Handbook 2022

Welcome to Camp 2022 and thank you for giving us your time and help. You will be helping us make a difference to the lives of our children which is rewarding but also great fun. This handbook will help you understand what we do and how we do it. It is important that you read this handbook and follow the advice and instructions given. It is in 8 sections these are:

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SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION AND HANDY TIPS AND HINTS

The first thing to say is that Summer Camp is fun and rewarding. The Camp is a residential holiday play scheme for children aged 9 – 12. It is run by a large group of volunteers from many different backgrounds and of all ages. The children are here to have a holiday and have fun. If we do it well then we have fun too. You will find it strange when you arrive as everything will be new to you but we spend time when you first arrive explaining what we do and how you can contribute. You can raise any questions there are with the Camp leaders, Jane and Duncan – they are very friendly and do not bite! We will try and give you as much support as possible so that you can get the most out of your experience and we will pair you with a group leader so you can work alongside them and be seen by the children as a full member of the team.

There will be some things you cannot do because you are new to this and some things you will be asked to do that do seem strange, like the rotation of bread! If you are confused talk to the group leader you are working with or Fran who is our leader at Camp. We will call you a group leader like all the other volunteers and you will get involved in the whole of Camp as an adult helper. The children will think you know everything so no need to tell them otherwise!

We ask you to do some breakfast and evening duties each day and throughout the day there are lots of housekeeping jobs as well as play. All volunteers, including you, get a break in the afternoon. We will ask you to make sure the children's fruit bowls are kept topped up. We will also ask you to take the lead on some specific tasks so that you can make a full contribution during your time with us. So, it is hard work and tiring but a great deal of fun and many of our full-time volunteers started off as volunteers like you.

Handy hints and tips

- The volunteer team range in age from 15 – 60 plus. They are all committed to Camp and work hard to make it a success and they will do all they can to make you feel welcome. They have a wide range of interest from sport to music to crosswords and many of them are students or work in education, health or service sectors.
- Please try and talk to people outside of your group so that you can get the most out of your experience. On the first night we organise a group activity so you can get to know lots of people. We also have a very nice meal on the first night so that we can socialise together. The staff compete throughout the summer to provide the best meal so be prepared.
- It can be very cold at night and during the day particularly if it is windy (and that happens a lot), so make sure that you have some warm clothes. The best day wear (even in the rain) is shorts, T-shirt, warm jumper and trainers/flip flops or wellies/walking boots. Jeans get wet very quickly.
- You will not need a lot of money as we only have a tuck shop.
- You need to bring a sleeping bag. We have roll mats but no pillows or towels. Feel free to bring your own roll mat for extra comfort.
- We do have indoor toilets and showers – phew!
- We have sun cream and insect repellent spray – lots of bugs unfortunately.
- Food is basic but plentiful and we have a ready supply of pop, fruit, ice pops, crisps and biscuits for all our volunteers.

We hope that you have a really good experience at Camp. Thank you for giving your time to work with us – we really appreciate your commitment to creating a great experience for our children.

SECTION 2 – WHAT WE DO AND OUR DAILY ROUTINE

Organising ourselves

There is always one person in overall charge of the site as well as a Director of Fun who organises all the activities. The first aider is Gwen supported by Annie. Fran works with those with special needs and the more challenging children. All the volunteers carry a responsibility such as tents, health and safety or leadership of a big game.

Team Time

Team time or circle time takes place at the start of the day and at each mealtime. You and the group leader should use this time as an opportunity to check that all the children in your group have eaten and are not hungry. If children have not eaten and / or refuse to eat this needs to be logged in the incident log so please tell Fran. Also, this is a good time to check that the children in your group have appropriate clothing, have been drinking plenty of water and have sun-cream etc. There are a number of games you can play to help the discussion – your group leader will know these, but take note, so you can lead them if necessary.

Mealtimes

We have a dishwasher so clearing up is done by the volunteers. We ask the children to scrape and stack their pots on the tables.

Breakfast

It is a self serve breakfast providing tea, coffee, cereal, toast and fruit. You will be asked to wake the children (by calling outside each tent-do not use loudspeaker system or pans as this wakes the volunteers too) and supervise the hut. A member of the full time volunteers will be working with you in the hut and someone will be supervising the field.

Lunch and Dinner

This is a hot meal on the first night and at lunchtimes on the second and third day. Group leaders take their group into meals and while waiting hold team time and play games with their group. We do duties around each meal time such as serving, washing up and tidying the camp site.

Snacks

Fruit is available at all times on a table on the top level, as is water to drink for the children. If the fruit need replenishing, the stores cupboard is at the back of the main hall; the children are allowed as much as they want as long as stocks last so don't worry if you find you're filling it up many times a day. Drinks are available mid- morning and mid-afternoon and biscuits are available in the afternoon as well.

Supper

Hot chocolate and biscuits. Served in the hut by your good selves except on the last night when they will have pop and snacks at the disco. At the end of supper as the full time volunteers put the children to bed please make sure all the cups are washed and ready for breakfast and set up the self-service table for breakfast too.

Day 1

Morning - All volunteers meet to plan the Camp and highlight particular issues or problems. The Directors of Fun explain the timetable for activities.

Afternoon - Children arrive luggage is stored in a marquee and the children on the first bus take their medicines to Gwen. When the second bus arrives luggage is stored in the marquee, children are then tented. Volunteers at the tents take the names of the children in each tent and a register is typed up.

Children are then put into groups and group leaders explain Camp. During the next 45 minutes the group will tour the site so that by the end of the 45 mins all children in the group know where the bank, boundaries, tents, tuck-shop, first aid, food (is served), toilets and valuables boxes are. We then play a big game before tea.

Evening – Big game.

Day 2

Activities morning and afternoon. Water slide after lunch.

Evening – Big Game on the field.

Day 3

Activities morning and afternoon. Water slide after lunch

Evening and evening duty – Disco followed by Camp fire. Supper served at disco.

Day 4

A big game, tent inspection and medicines and personal stuff handed back.

Lunch and slideshow and home

SECTION 3 – USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT CAMP

This section gives more detail about different parts of Camp and how it works. There is a lot to remember, particularly when you are new so do ask other volunteers or Jane or Duncan if you are not sure.

Groups

The children are split into groups so that they get to know 4 adults very well. They are in a group with the people in their tent. You will be a group leader with an experienced volunteer and take responsibility for a tent of children. It is the responsibility of the group leaders to talk to the children and make sure that they are OK and deal with any problems they have. It is important that you spend time with your group and tent group and get to know them well. The morning session and the times when waiting for meals are a chance to play games and involve all children. This is another chance to talk to the children and get them involved. This regular contact and interaction will help the homesick ones keep going and enjoy their holiday.

Homesickness referred to as HS

This happens on every camp and often the child says they have a headache or tummy upset. They often take a while to say they are homesick. We do not use the word or suggest that they might be missing home and family as this can encourage them to feel worse. We are positive and cheerful and try to distract the child with activities, attention and conversation. If you suspect homesickness refer to Gwen or Fran and use the initials HS to avoid upsetting the child. Fran will provide a watch list for children who are struggling. Fran will also be in contact with the parents but leave it to Fran to discuss phoning home with the children.

Night Duties

The security guard will be up all night throughout each Camp. In addition, 2 experienced volunteers support the guard. This is a rota of volunteers. This means that on the children's first night they do not go to bed until the children are settled and may get up early on their first morning if the children are very active. On the other 2 evenings they are on call and will be got out of bed in case of trouble.

Bed Wetting

Lots of children wet the bed at Camp. If a child confides in you that this has happened, reassure them that this is a common event, get their name and tent number and ask them to roll up anything that is wet with their roll mat and leave it in the outer part of their tent. Tell them we will move and clean it discreetly a little later. *Do not do this yourself, tell your group leader!* We have lots of spare sleeping bags and roll mats.

First Aid

The lead first aider is Gwen. No other member of volunteers should administer treatment or medication without her supervision.

All children's medication is kept in the first aid corner with some of it under lock and key. Volunteers should store their own medicines safely and, with permission, may use the safe storage facility. If you are under 18 and bring medicines, you should discuss this with Gwen.

Volunteers under 18: If you are feeling poorly or injure yourself, then seek advice from Gwen or Fran. Also, please make the first aider aware of **any** medicines you have with you (you may be asked to hand these in to be stored in the medicine cupboard).

Volunteers over 18: There's a basic supply of first aid equipment and simple remedies in a clearly marked box in the first aid corner for you to use. Please feel free to ask for advice or more remedies.

Sun and Wind

It gets very hot on the field but the wind can disguise this. Ensure that you and your group use sunscreen and drink plenty of water. Remind children to reapply after the water slide and regularly throughout the day. Encourage them to wear hats and play out of the sun if it is very hot. REMEMBER - SLIP, SLOP, SLAP!

SLIP on a T-shirt **SLOP** on the sun cream **SLAP** on a hat.

Health and Safety

We have undertaken risk assessments on all areas of activity and these are held in the Camp office. You will always be on an activity with an experienced volunteer who will have read the full risk assessment for that activity. There are strict rules for cleaning and you must sign the cleaning log when you have completed tasks. Steve is the health and safety officer and will check up on this. The following lists of do's and don'ts are the key points to remember.

- If you see anything hazardous then stop the activity, make children safe and report it to Steve;
- Add a small amount of cold water to the children's tea and coffee and hot chocolate so that any spillages cannot burn;
- Use T towels and dish cloths only once and then put to wash;
- Tables and kitchen surfaces should be cleaned with spray cleanser;

- Children must wear helmets, elbow and knee pads on the bikes and wear a helmet on the unicycle;
- The waterslide must be supervised by someone who is over 18 and who has been trained;
- On the waterslide only one child at a time with hands in a fist and thumbs in to prevent broken fingers. These rules also apply to volunteers;
- Ensure that children wear shoes at all times to prevent stings and broken toes on tent pegs. This is very important when going to and from the waterslide. You must do the same
- At the Campfire do not go too close. Jane and Gwen will monitor the activity to ensure safety. A hosepipe is close by in case of accident.

Volunteers and children

Do not get too familiar with the children. **You should not touch or hug them and you should ensure that all your contact with children is in full view of other volunteers. Do not enter a child's tent and do not send them to your tent.** The volunteer's areas and kitchen are out of bounds for the children. When playing games do not tackle the children or get rough with them. Do not pick up the children or give shoulder rides.

SECTION 4 – POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

The children are on holiday and the volunteers are at the Camp to provide a positive, bright and fun experience. No-one is a happy camper if all you do is shout and make negative comments to the children or other volunteers; it brings us and them down.

There will always be children on camp who push the boundaries. Confidence and consistency from the volunteers will help the more challenging children feel it is unnecessary to test the limits. To create confidence and consistency we all need to know the procedures and follow the same practice:

- Volunteers and children will be wearing name badges at all times. Try to learn as many of the children's names as possible especially those in your group. This is more respectful than 'OI YOU' and makes them feel known. "Young man" or "young lady" are good alternatives if you are struggling;
- When we are speaking to the whole group all volunteers should support the person who is speaking. Volunteers should spread out around the children to help them to listen and participate;
- Do not make a point of showing the child up. This creates a power issue and is unhelpful;
- If you see a child misbehaving, get the attention of the child in question and have a quiet word away from the others. This addresses the issue with the child but does not cause the child to lose face. If a situation becomes difficult or you are unsure about what to do then inform a member of volunteers.
- Children are prone to becoming overexcited, particularly in team games. This can lead to accidents. These can be avoided by giving a

time out session, in which the child can be asked to sit out of a game for a while. Be pro-active and positive rather than re-active and redundant;

- If the child does not respond to this approach bring them to the attention of your group leader or Fran and seek advice;

Always refer to your group leader or Fran if you feel you need help or advice.

What to do if there is a fight

A fight on Camp is very rare – probably only 5 or 6 in the last 30 years. Our main purpose is to keep the children safe and to keep you safe. If you see a fight, try and get another volunteer to help. Shout very loudly and tell the children to stop. This usually stops the fight. Quickly get the children to different parts of the site so that they can calm down and then deal with it as any other incident. This approach has worked with every fight we have dealt with. In the unlikely event that they do not stop try and get between them and as a last resort place your arms around the child and pull them away. You must intervene if you think a child is at serious risk of injury.

What to do if you see a child running away

Again, this is very rare and usually the child runs but keeps checking to make sure that someone is following. Make sure another volunteer knows what is happening and get a message to Fran as soon as possible. Follow the child at a distance and give them space to calm down. If they are likely to run onto a road you will need to catch up with them. The child will stop eventually and by that time you will have back up from other volunteers. Then you can deal with this as any other incident.

SECTION 5 – WHAT JANE AND DUNCAN WILL DO FOR YOU

Camp can be a strange little planet, there is an awful lot to take in and it can feel a bit overwhelming. The fulltime volunteers have been there; worn the T/shirt and found the solution - we are prepared to share it with you.

Throughout your time at camp your group leader will support and guide you. In addition Fran, Jane and Duncan will be around for you to ask any questions and just have a chat if you are feeling a bit lost.

As each day goes on you will get to know the routine and it will become easier – by day 3 you will be confident, a bit tired and a bit crumpled but having a great time!

One final point – it is our job to keep you safe while you are with us. Please do not leave the site without telling us (even if you are 18) and please do not go walking in the woods at night – it might seem a great thing to do but it is very dark and slipping and falling is not much fun (whether you're 16, 17 or 18 bruises still hurt)

We hope that this handbook has given you a flavour of our summer and that you are looking forward to joining us. We know that you will have a great time – we are looking forward to meeting you in the summer!