



## **Woodcraft folk**

### **Information for Parents of Headington Elfins**

Welcome to Headington Elfins Woodcraft Folk group! We have prepared some brief introductory information to help you understand how our group runs and what to expect from the group. We hope this is helpful and welcome your feedback.

#### **Leaders**

There are currently four leaders for Headington Elfins group. You can contact us by email on [headingtonelfins@gmail.com](mailto:headingtonelfins@gmail.com) or by telephone as below:

Jodie McMinn:	07913 634 038
Patience Robinson:	07813 930 426
Chris Hack:	07752 324 717
Kinneret Milgrom:	07514 789 608

The leaders are responsible for planning sessions, coordinating volunteer helpers, distributing information about activities, camps etc and ensuring groups are run safely. All leaders are DBS checked.

#### **How sessions run**

Our sessions start at 6.15pm and finish at 7.45pm each Thursday evening. Leaders will normally be on site from 6pm and ask that you arrive in time for us to start the group at 6.15pm.

Our indoor venue is Headington Quarry Village Hall, however session locations may vary. We normally run 6 sessions per school term. At the start of each term we send out a timetable detailing what the activity will be, where the session will be held, what to bring and parent helpers.

We take regular outings to local woodlands and parks. These are planned in advance and you will be notified of the exact meeting point for outings. Occasionally the start time may be adjusted slightly for these outings.

On arrival, please ensure you see a leader and all children are 'signed in'.

A normal session will include:

- a game to get everyone started
- 'circle' where the children share their news and we talk about the activity or project for the evening
- activity / ies
- snack and drink (normally squash and a biscuit)
- final circle and song 'Link your hands together'

Please ensure you arrive on time to collect your child/ren and leave promptly so that leaders and helpers can clear and lock up. Please ensure your child is 'signed out' with a leader.

## Health Forms

Woodcraft Folk uses a programme called 'Groop' to manage our registrations and administration. You will receive an email when your child joins Elfins, with a link to complete the registration including health information. We will ask you to update this information each year. Please ensure you give us all relevant information, update Groop and let us know if there is new information we should have at any point. The health information helps us to plan and risk assess properly and ensure we are inclusive where any issues may prevent participation.

## Fees

Fees are due at the beginning of each term. We charge £2.50 per session for Woodcraft Folk members, or £3.50 for non-members. Membership of Woodcraft Folk is £36.90 per year (concession rates also available). To become a member, visit <https://woodcraft.org.uk//join>

Becoming a Woodcraft Folk member will save you money on fees, but also supports the wider movement and enables you to join us on camps etc if you would like to come (once DBS clearance has been completed).

If you have any difficulty meeting the fees please speak to a leader in confidence. ***It is Woodcraft policy that no child is excluded due to cost.***

## Volunteering/ Helping out

Woodcraft is a completely volunteer-led organisation. We are reliant on the commitment of the leaders, but also on parents participating in a rota to support us in running each session. The number of parents needed for a session will vary, depending on what we are doing, where we are going, and the needs of the group.

At the start of each term, we will circulate a rota allocating a session to the parent/s of each child to help out. If you are unable to commit to the allocated date, please arrange a swap or speak to the leaders. Please give us as much notice as possible, as a change in adult to child ratio may change what we are able to do in a session.

When helping out we ask that you:

- Arrive a few minutes early so that we can give you instructions / information
- Join circles, news and songs wherever possible
- Give the whole group your full attention and your own child/ren independence
- Help to clear up at the end of the group

At Woodcraft, our aim is to develop your child's independence by providing them with opportunities to challenge themselves and solve problems. When volunteering, parents are there to support the whole group. It is helpful to explain this to your child/ren prior to the group so that they understand your attention will be shared with the whole group.

Because we need parent helpers to give the group their full attention when helping out, you may find it difficult if you have younger children present. We are an inclusive group, however, and want you to be involved, so if you have younger children you need to care for please talk to a leader so that we can rota you on to a group that is less intensive or recruit additional volunteers.

## Pets / Animals

We are often asked if parents can bring along the family pet to a session or outing. The above principle of giving the group your full attention also applies here. In addition, it is important to understand that not all children are

used to animals and may be uncomfortable or even fearful. Bringing a pet may provide a good opportunity for a positive experience, but please do not bring animals without first discussing this with the leaders. This allows us to check for allergies etc. and properly risk assess for the group. If the leaders agree that you may bring your pet, you must ensure it is under control at all times (e.g. on a lead / not disruptive to activity etc.).

## **Camps and Hostels**

There are a number of Elfins groups in Oxfordshire and throughout the year we have scheduled camps with other groups which encourage children to make new friendships and learn new skills from each other. There are 3 regular events for Elfins which are:

- Elfins Camp: a one-night campout for Elfins across Oxfordshire, usually held in September
- Elfins Hostel: a one-night stay in 'hostel' accommodation, usually held in March
- District Camp: This is a two-night camp for members of Woodcraft Folk across our district, usually held in June.
- Summer Camp: This is a more relaxed family camp with wider participation from groups across the South East region. Families can stay for 3, 5 or 7 days and it is held during the Summer school break.

Camps have always played an important role in Woodcraft. They give us a great opportunity to work cooperatively and every adult and child has a role to play. On camps, all adults and children are split into 'clans', each of which is responsible for a particular task (e.g. preparing dinner, washing up after breakfast etc). There are lots of planned activities for the children to participate in and we often have space available for parents to join us (You must be DBS checked and provide two references in advance and you will be expected to participate as part of a clan and support all children on the camp).

## **Ideas?**

We ask the Elfins regularly for their input on group ideas and would love to hear any ideas parents have, either for a one-off group, or general improvements. Many parents have run one-off sessions or given us great suggestions and this is part of what makes Woodcraft a community. Please share your ideas with a leader, or join us for our term planning meetings.

## **Questions or Ideas?**

If there's anything we haven't covered here, please don't hesitate to ask one of the leaders. We want you and your child/ren to have the best possible experience of Woodcraft.

## **Blue Skies!**

Jodie, Patience, Chris and Kinneret