



Camphill School Aberdeen  
Social Pedagogy in Practice

*A vibrant place to live  
An inspiring place to learn  
A fulfilling place to work*

INFORMATION  
FOR PROSPECTIVE  
CO-WORKERS  
October 2015

For more detailed information about Camphill School Aberdeen please go to  
[www.camphillschool.org.uk](http://www.camphillschool.org.uk)

*Welcome to Camphill School Aberdeen (CSA) - we are pleased that you are considering to join us as a co-worker and look forward to meeting you soon.*

*Please find below some information about life in our community that we ask that you read before applying to coming here.*

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**Our Mission**

To create a community where children and adults feel a sense of belonging, support and personal growth. A place where there is an inclusive, lifelong learning culture with an integrated approach to health, education and care.

**Our Vision**

To be recognised as a centre of excellence where children and adults can live, learn and work in an integrated community based on mutual respect and the unfolding of individual potential.

**Our Ethos**

We are committed to treating everyone with respect and dignity to enable them to discover their potential. We use a social pedagogical approach which is informed by the understanding of a spiritual dimension in each individual and integrates education, care, crafts and therapy to create a holistic response to the needs of individuals.

We strengthen our community through social integration in the celebration of personal achievements and cultural life. We are committed to caring for the land and strive to use the environment in the most sustainable way to support and enhance a healthy lifestyle.

We seek to further develop a living and working community based on equality of rights and opportunities, collaboration, freedom and empowering, respectful relationships. We have an active engagement with the wider society, facilitating a mutually beneficial flow of information and learning.

We are a community in which people can feel safe and nurtured and in which we all work towards a future where people with additional support needs are fully included and respected in society.

The following quotes may be helpful as they are all related our life and work with children and young people

*"If, as a co-worker, you can gradually make your own way into the situation of a child or young person you can sense how they perceives the world, and can then begin to share something of what they actually experience; then you will have taken the first steps in developing a real understanding of the their inner world of feeling. By educating yourself in this capacity for empathy, you will escape from the subjectivity of your own experience and will learn to acquire an insight into the child or young person's own intellectual, emotional and spiritual means of communicating with the surrounding world."*

Rudolf Steiner Excerpt from 'In Education towards Freedom' (1924)

*"Any of us who have people around us whom we love, respect and value will know how much good thoughts can influence others. Children and young people who are met with loving respect will grow up in such an atmosphere as if surrounded by morally positive walls*

M. Gloeckler (2002:328 ) from' Education as Preventive Medicine

*"Social pedagogy is a holistic approach to development, using reflection and personal relationships to explore, inspire and empower"*.

(Essex Residential Practitioner's Network, May 2009)

*"Through a supportive relationship with a social pedagogue, a person can experience that someone cares for and about them, also that they can trust somebody. This can give them the social skills to build strong positive relationships"*

From [www.teachingtimes.com](http://www.teachingtimes.com)-Vol.11

## **Social Pedagogy - A Positive Strength Based Approach**

In Camphill we are committed to practice social pedagogy.

Social pedagogy cannot be defined in a nut shell- in fact it would be more appropriate to call it 'social pedagogies' because the core of social pedagogy is how we as carers apply our values to our daily practice/life with the vulnerable children and young people in our lives. The basis of social pedagogy is not risk, policies and law (that is one important part) but the building of trusting relationships – being there not for someone but with someone.

Pat Petrie at the Thomas Coran Institute based at University College London has identified the following key principles of social pedagogy:

- *A focus on the child and young adult as a whole person, and support for the person's overall development.*
- *The practitioner seeing him/herself as a person, in relationship with the child or young person.*
- *While they are together, children and staff are seen as inhabiting the same life space, not as existing in separate, hierarchical domains.*

- *As professionals, pedagogues are encouraged to constantly reflect on their practice and to apply both theoretical understandings and self- knowledge to their work and to the sometimes challenging demands with which they may be confronted.*
- *Pedagogues should be both practical and creative; their training prepares them to share in many aspects of children and young people's daily lives, such as preparing meals and snacks, or making music, building kites and other creative activities.*
- *In group settings, children and young people's associative life is seen as an important resource; workers should foster and make use of groups.*

## **Life sharing**

Entering fully into the life of a community such as that at Camphill Schools Aberdeen makes new and often unexpected demands on the individual co-worker and some words of guidance and encouragement may be helpful.

Belonging to an individual house community means that you are part of an "extended family", with all the rewards and challenges which that may entail when sharing in the daily routine of work and recreation, living very closely with a number of other adults as well as with the children and young people with additional support needs, and becoming aware of the many different feelings and temperaments that go to make up the collective spirit of the household. By sharing fully in all the joint responsibilities and duties of the house, school and workshop, life is often colourful and fun but can also at times be demanding. Some tasks may seem basic and routine; others will make unexpected demands upon your personal initiative, self-discipline and presence of mind, yet all those duties, whether simple or complex, are important for the successful care and education of the children and young people in our care. Your sense of achievement will come from knowing that you have contributed effectively to the well-being of the individuals as well as to the community as a whole.

Community living is a process of building relationships and sharing in a common activity of work, social endeavours and spiritual values. It begins when you arrive. It is not a utopia already built but is created every moment during your stay in Camphill School Aberdeen

We are approximately 240 co-workers and currently offer a service to 90 children and young people who make use of our day and residential provision which includes day, weekly, termly and 52 weeks placements in our three estates. Most of the senior co-workers live with their families in Camphill on a permanent basis whereas others come in for the day. Some co-workers come for a year or more with others staying on for a further three years to study a BA in Social Pedagogy. There is always a strong international element with co-workers coming from all over the world.

The School has three estates: Camphill Estate and Murtle Estate have 10 house communities while Cairnlee has 3. In addition there are houses where just co-workers live and many other facilities including school houses, craft workshop and riding therapy buildings, farm and garden, swimming pool and gym, hall, kindergarten, Nature/Nurture trails and the Camphill Medical Practice.

Life sharing is built on activities that we create together every day and which hopefully will give everyone a sense of meaningful purpose in their daily life

A number of children and young people make use of the holiday/respite provision we provide and you will be expected to support with this during the school holidays

The children, young people and co-workers are all engaged in school, craft or work activities during the day. A typical day is usually balanced in the following way:

**Morning:**

In the morning following breakfast the children and young people go to school, craft or work supported by co-workers.

**Afternoon:**

The morning activities usually stop around 1230 allowing time to return to the individual house communities for lunch and a little rest before starting the afternoon lessons/work which usually starts at 1415 or 1515 for an hour or two.

Around 1630 it is time for an afternoon snack and some leisure activities such as sports, play, artistic or cultural events.

**Evening:**

After supper there are often evening activities offered which the children and young people can join together with their co-workers. These vary depending on need and skills, but often include activities such as singing, dancing, swimming, drama, football etc.

Many of the children and young people then need help getting ready for bed while others are more independent, but everybody enjoys a quieter reflective time where they can talk about their experiences during the day. Many enjoy a story and then may speak a prayer before going to sleep.

**A Typical Week Day in Camphill:** (This will vary day to day and from house to house)

07.00 Waking of children and young people, breakfast preparation and cleaning.

08.00 Breakfast, followed by household tasks and getting ready to go to school

09.15 School, work or craft.

13.00 Lunch followed by household jobs and a bit of time for rest.

14/15 or 15.15 - 16.15 Afternoon activities.

16.30 - 17.30 Supervised free activity/festival rehearsals, etc.

17.30 Supper followed by household tasks

19.00 - 20.00 Evening activities

20.00 – onwards: Children and young people get ready for bed/personal time.

This rhythm and structure to the day give the children, young people and co-workers the possibility to have a balance between engaging in social and physical tasks as well as more individual reflective activities. They can also provide a sense of security and purpose for the children and young people, many of whom may have learning and communication difficulties.

### **Support for Co-Workers**

Especially in the beginning but also when you are more settled there will be occasions when you will need the active help of a fellow co-worker, within your house, class and workshop, and within the larger community. Everyone needs this. Through regular house meetings, you will have regular opportunity to share your reflections and concerns with others and to make your personal contribution to the development of our communal life. In addition, you will have the assurance of knowing that all other co-workers are there to provide continuing daily encouragement and guidance, not only in the practical details but also in the emotional ups and downs of living. In particular, the senior co-workers should be regarded as your first line of support, whether you have a major problem or minor worry - or if you simply wish to suggest a new idea for improving the daily routine.

You will have regular support talks with your house co-ordinator/senior co-worker to ensure any issues you have will be discussed and explained.

### **Personal Growth**

The closeness of our relationships with one another at Camphill – be they children, young people or adults - means that the mutual sharing of experiences as well as material resources is a fundamental aspect of everyday life. Getting used to this may take time and, in some instances, may require some personal readjustment but you will find the effort greatly rewarding and you will be helped also by the knowledge that your more experienced colleagues have all worked through this experience. An awareness of how others feel - empathy - is a vital element of the Camphill ethos. It is, essential for forming positive relationships with the pupils but it is just as important for relating harmoniously and lovingly with all those who share with you the adult responsibilities of caring and working at Camphill School. Within the whole community, we try to develop a spirit of mutual respect for each other's points of view, tolerance for one another's personal differences, and openness to each individual's ideals.

At Camphill we promote a strength based approach and the smallest achievement is judged as worthy of praise and acknowledgement as success in the larger undertakings.

### **Responsibilities**

Your major responsibility at all times is to the child or young person in your care, whether in the classroom, workshop or the house. The task is to care and support for each child or young person to the fullest extent possible so that they can unfold their potential. As a new co-worker you will be helped by more experienced colleagues to learn how to establish a successful relationship with each child or young person, how to gauge what expectations to have for the child or young person, and how to unfold each child or young person's potential to the fullest extent possible, so that maximum independence and self-reliance are achieved. Think of it as a mutual process: you are setting out on a personal learning experience while helping the children and young people themselves embark on a similar voyage of discovery. Their needs however are paramount at all times

## **The children and young people**

In our School you will meet children and young people with a wide range of additional support needs including those from within the Autistic Spectrum; Down's syndrome, Angelman's Syndrome, Foetal-alcohol Syndrome and other Syndromes, hyperactivity, epilepsy, delayed physical and emotional development, attachment disorder and learning difficulties. Many have poor communication skills and some display very challenging behaviour.

## **Do I need a Visa?**

If you come from a country which is not a member of the European Economic Area (EEA) you will need a visa and a valid return ticket.

When we confirm your place and date of entry in our Community, a Certificate of Sponsorship Number will be sent to you. This number will allow you to visit the following Website: <https://www.gov.uk/tier-5-temporary-worker-charity-worker-visa> where you can apply for a Tier 5 Charity Work Visa. The cost of the visa is £225 plus a Health Surcharge of £200.

Visa processing times vary between countries, information is available on the UK Visa Website: <https://www.gov.uk/visa-processing-times>. Once granted, a temporary 30 day entry vignette is inserted in your passport. On arrival in the UK you have **10 days** in which to collect your Biometric Residence Permit from a named Post Office in Aberdeen.

UK Immigration Officers exercise a great deal of discretion, and granting Entry clearance is by no means automatic.

## **Volunteer Year Abroad**

Volunteer Year Abroad (FJA)/Social Voluntary Year Abroad (FSJ)

It is possible to join Camphill School Aberdeen through one of the above approved programmes.

Friends of Waldorf Education

Internationaler Bund e.V.

VIA e.V

IVS: [www.ivsgb.org](http://www.ivsgb.org) or <http://www.longterm.lteg.info/index.php/project/publicIndexx> (for long term projects)

This organisations will charge you a fee. This fee is used towards various things such as your social security payments while abroad.

Please remember to mention to the sending agent that you wish to be placed in Camphill School Aberdeen.

### **Time off**

You will have 2 days off a week as well as an hour or two during each day.

### **Holidays**

Generally co-workers come for a 12 month period within which you have 6 weeks. Your holidays will need to be organised with your supervisor/house co-ordinator.

### **Personal Expenses**

New co-workers receive personal expenses of £190 per month. You will receive free accommodation and food as well as all basic toiletries provided by the house.

After 12 months in Camphill you will receive a sum, which equals 4 weeks personal expenses, as a contribution to your holiday expenses. Any other holiday expenses will have to be met by you. If you stay for a shorter period of time the holiday contribution will be proportionally less.

### **Journeys Home European Countries:**

If you stay for the agreed length of time, Camphill will refund, within reason, the cost of travelling home at the end of your year. You will be expected to meet all other personal travel costs yourself. If you decide to leave earlier than the agreed period you are expected to fund your journey home yourself.

### **Journeys Home Non-EU Countries**

If you come for 12 months we will contribute to your home journey. Requests need to be made to the Finance Manager who will determine the amount. If you decide to leave earlier than the agreed period you are expected to fund your journey yourself.

### **Clothes**

We are often doing outside activities and outings with the children and young people so please do remember that Scotland can be cool and wet, even during the summer months. You should therefore arrive well equipped with suitable clothing.

### **The Use of Alcohol and Drugs**

Our policy is to discourage the consumption of alcohol on the premises; any alcohol on the premises needs to be secured. No one must ever be under the influence of alcohol when working within the Schools. Anyone who wishes to live and work in Camphill Schools Aberdeen should abstain from using narcotics and drugs of any kind, unless prescribed by the doctor for your personal use.



**Please be aware that it is a criminal offence in Scotland to be in possession of, or to smoke Cannabis or any other narcotic or drug unless prescribed by a doctor.**

## **Smoking**

Smoking is allowed out-of-doors in agreed designated areas.

You are not allowed, by law, to smoke when in the company of the children or young people.

You should have a lighter with your name on it. Matches should not be used.

Cigarettes should never be thrown away in the grounds but always placed in a suitable bin.

## **Access to Communication**

E-mail/Internet facilities are available in every house. Use of telephone (including long-distance calls) is subject to regulations in the house in which you live. It is possible to send fax communications from the Office.

## **Computer Use Policy**

Computer use at Camphill School Aberdeen is regulated by an acceptable use policy.

Use of the internet is strictly forbidden for the following purposes:

- to contact pornographic sites or any pursuit of this nature
- carrying out illegal activity

## **Personal Audio Equipment**

Your personal audio equipment is your own responsibility and should be used respecting that the sound levels are not disturbing to others. However you must not use it when in the company of the children and young people. It is general policy not to have background music whilst working with pupils.

## **Insurance**

The School is not responsible for your personal effects, e.g. musical instruments, jewellery, cameras, radios, etc, these must be kept safely by you. The Schools has general public liability insurance only. If there is damage done to your personal belongings you may negotiate whether there can be some help for replacement. You will be provided with a lockable cupboard in your room to keep valuables safe.

## **Cars/Transport**

If you come with a car it is your own responsibility to maintain it. The School has company cars with limited access for co-workers who meet the School's internal policy requirements. If the School require additional drivers you may be approached to help with driving

There are good local bus services available to facilitate you on days off or to town or the countryside. Inter estate transports are available to attend various activities within the School.

## **English Language**

Most of our children and young people have communication difficulties and we, as co-workers, must be able to speak a reasonable amount of English to be able to help and communicate with our pupils. Many of their frustrations can be understood and resolved if the children and young people can be helped to express themselves. It is therefore important that those who do come to Camphill School have an adequate command of the English language.

## **Confidentiality**

As a co-worker you will have access to confidential information about individual pupils in order to carry out your day-to-day work. Please take the greatest care to respect this confidentiality. Please be aware that any contact via social media, (Facebook, Twitter etc) with children or young people who attend Camphill School Aberdeen is not allowed

## **Commitment**

We do hope that co-workers will stay for the time that they have committed themselves to but we do realise that this work, although deeply rewarding, can at times be demanding. In such circumstances, we shall try to provide the support to go through these times but this will very much depend on your willingness to discuss this openly with your house co-ordinator or senior co-worker.

Regular support talks will facilitate you to learn and develop your skills. It is a lengthy procedure to fulfil all requirements to work as a volunteer. Should you for an unforeseen reason need to alter your date of departure, it is important to give adequate notice to the house co-ordinator.

## **In-Service Training**

Camphill Schools Aberdeen is committed to providing you with opportunities for regular and on-going training and support. There will also be regular meetings and training sessions in your house as well as occasional conferences and training events during the year that you will be expected to attend. In-service training days are held at the beginning and end of each school holiday.

During your initial year here you will be expected to complete the Induction Process and participate in the Foundation Year. These consist of a series of learning activities designed to enable you to become competent and gain insights for your role as a co-worker.

## **Induction**

The Induction Process is essential for anyone involved in the care and education of the children and young people within the Community. Induction takes approximately 16 weeks to complete and forms part of the foundation year. It starts when you arrive with a course that goes over important elements of the Co-Worker Training Portfolio e.g. health and safety, child protection, house and school life. You will also participate in Emergency First Aid and Moving and Handling training at this time. Attendance at a two-day training course on Behavioural Support Strategies (BSS) is another important element in your early training and learning.

At an early stage you will be introduced to your new colleagues and to the children and young people with whom you will live and work. A key part of your learning in these early days will be the regular supervision talks where your supervisor will encourage you to think about how you are developing and seek to support and challenge you to grow further. You will be expected to keep track of your progress and demonstrate your skills and understanding through everyday activities, conversation, and completing written worksheets and notes. Completing induction is essential preparation for moving on to the Foundation Course

## **Foundation Course – Introduction to Social Pedagogy**

All new co-workers take part in a Foundation Course either at a beginners or advance level which is designed to enable you to further develop your knowledge, skills and understanding about your role.

Attendance at a minimum of 15 two-hour weekly lecture/workshops, which will entitle you to receive a Participation Certificate.

If you choose to undertake further personal reflection in relation to the issues raised during the lecture/workshops you will receive a Completion Certificate.

## **BA Social Pedagogy**

In collaboration with Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen we offer a three year BA in Social Pedagogy for which prior experience is required for admission. For those interested, and without the experience or qualifications, we run a one year 'Access' course.

## **Medical Cover**

During your stay in the School you can register at the Camphill Medical Practice. Once registered with a Doctor you benefit from the regular medical cover provided by the National Health Service including full NHS hospital treatment. The Camphill Medical Practice specialises in Homeopathy and Anthroposophical medical treatments alongside mainstream medical treatments.

Dental services under the National Health Scheme for EC nationals and citizens of some other countries can only be used for emergency treatment only. We strongly advise that you have a

dental check before travelling to Camphill School. You may wish to consider paying for private Dental Insurance for the duration of your stay in Camphill School.

## **Hepatitis B**

Hepatitis B can be a serious, life-threatening illness, people at risk are generally immunised against the infection. It has been recognised that those living and working in residential accommodation for people with additional support needs are a risk group for Hepatitis B. (Please read Dr Geider's letter, attached to our application form, regarding this serious infection).

New co-workers who come to the Camphill School Aberdeen are strongly advised to take up the immunisation for Hepatitis B before joining our community.

## **HIV- Blood-Borne Viruses**

HIV is another blood-borne virus that could be transmitted under similar circumstances, although the risk of HIV transmission is considerably less than for Hepatitis B. The prevalence of HIV in general population of UK is low, nevertheless in your daily routine you are advised to strictly follow Infection Control precautions as outlined in the Health & Safety section of the Co-worker Information hand book. If there is a specific risk for you to contract HIV or Hepatitis B you will receive sufficient information, instruction and training, if necessary.

As care workers we have an ethical as well as legal duty to protect the health and safety of our children and young people. If you have any reason to believe that you may have been exposed to infection with HIV, in whatever circumstances, you must promptly seek and follow confidential medical advice on whether you should be tested for HIV. Examples of how a person may have been exposed to HIV infection include if they have:

- engaged in unprotected sexual intercourse between men;
- shared injecting equipment whilst misusing drugs;
- had unprotected heterosexual intercourse in a country where transmission of HIV through sexual intercourse between men and women is common;
- engaged in invasive medical, surgical, dental or midwifery procedures in parts of the world where infection control precautions may have been inadequate.

Additionally, a person who is aware that they had unprotected sexual intercourse with someone in any of the above categories may also have been exposed to HIV infection.

In case of a positive test for HIV or Hepatitis B you must promptly seek and follow appropriate expert medical and occupational health advice.

## **A co-worker perspective of life in Camphill School Aberdeen**

When I came to Camphill I felt very insecure. My English wasn't really up to date (I couldn't find the raspberries in Mignon garden because I didn't know what I was looking for) and everything was new and different to me.

There was the day when I met the children and young people for the first time and I have to admit that it was a bit of a shock. I didn't know how to treat them; I didn't know what to do with them. I didn't want to disappoint anyone and so I felt very insecure if I would do the right thing.

Anyway, before I came to Camphill I talked to one of my teachers about the work with children with special needs. I told her that I wasn't sure if I could cope with that. She told me that I shouldn't have too many expectations in my behaviour towards children with special needs. It would be the same situation like the one when you meet a common group of people in your daily life. It takes a while until you get to know everyone and you won't have a good relationship to each of them just the first time you met them. Some of the people you might like, others you don't and it takes a while until you get used to everyone and until everyone gets used to you and that's exactly the same situation when you come here and you meet the children.

Nobody is expecting that you just 'fall in love' with them at the first moment you see them. You can't do everything right in the beginning because you're not used to it. Nobody will blame you if you make mistakes and you won't be on your own because there's always at least somebody whom you can ask for help if you need it. Nobody is perfect. You just have to be honest. It just takes time to get to know the children and their routine and it also takes time for the kids to get used to having a new co-worker.

As soon as you've figured out the daily life and you're feeling secure, it will be much easier. After leaving Camphill I worked in some other schools for children with special needs. I have to say that nowhere else will you get the chance again of getting so close to a child, as usually there is not enough staff to make this possible and, you might believe it or not, you can learn a lot from the children.

There are many other co-workers in your age group who also come to Camphill for a year. So there's a lot of socialising going on as soon as you become a group and actually you might get to know people whom you would never have talked to in your home country. You're all going through the same thing and so everyone is being accepted just the way that he/she is.

There are also many things in Camphill which seem to be very strange for everyone who's new and who hasn't been to a Waldorf School. Such things like morning circles, morning-verses, religion lessons or Eurythmy. Well, they might be strange to you but you have to consider that they belong to the daily-life of the pupils, and children with special needs do need a routine. It helps them to get a structure into their lives and it's important to them to know what's going to happen the next day (security). People in Camphill are doing many things in a different way and you might not always be able to figure out why. But 'different' doesn't mean 'wrong' so it's important that you just ask and find out 'why' they're doing it. You can have a good time in Camphill (well, I did) if you try to be a bit open to new and different kinds of working.

*Antje Katwinkel (a former co-worker, who lived in Camphill for 3 years before going on to university to study education).*

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*I hope you have enjoyed reading this information booklet and that you will now apply to join us!*

*Looking forward to meeting you....*

*Laurence Alfred*

Laurence Alfred

Executive Director