

# Volunteer Manual

## General Information

<b>Location</b>	Camelot for Children
<b>Phone</b>	Campus: 610-791-5683
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### Camelot's Mission

Camelot for Children is a non-profit organization providing year-round social and educational opportunities to children with disabilities and chronic or terminal illnesses in a supportive, developmentally appropriate, enriching environment in order to make the magic of childhood accessible to children with unique needs.

### Camelot's Vision

Camelot prioritizes opportunities that foster the enthusiasm, exploration, and friendships of childhood in an accepting, accessible, and loving environment.

### Helpful Definitions & Descriptions

Camper- a member of the Camelot community who is 6-19yo. The child may be individual with unique medical, developmental, or intellectual circumstances or may a 6-19yo sibling of the qualifying individual.

Buddy/Volunteer- a member of the Camelot community donating time and caring to be a friend and supporter during Camelot events. Buddies and Volunteers are 12yo or older and support our communities as mentors, friends, special guests, and beyond. THANK YOU for volunteering with us.

Staff- Camelot has an Executive Director and Program Directors as well as several seasonal Camp Staff. Camelot is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors.

Nurse/Medical Staff- Camelot strives to have a volunteer medical professional at camp and events to support the community with medication administration, emergency management, and more. These professionals are often nurses, physicians, paramedics, nurse practitioners, or physician assistants.

*\*\*\*On average, it takes 6,750 hours every year to provide Camp Camelot and School-Year Programming to Camelot children.\*\*\**

## Camelot Goals

A top priority for our volunteers is to understand and help carry out the mission of Camelot's programming and our unique goals for our Camelot kids. Beyond providing fun and safe experiences for our kids, Camelot aspires to contribute to the development of life and academic skills. The life skills that we strive to teach are:

- Building meaningful relationships
- Living as a positive role model
- Developing a sense of independence and accomplishment
- Increasing social skills including self-advocacy
- Learning new skills by trying new, different, challenging and fun things by participating in safe experiences with limits and careful supervision

Volunteers assist the Camelot staff and children with a variety of activities including crafts, games, field trips, academic goals, outdoor activities and developing relationships. Additionally, volunteers may help with site maintenance and tasks that will keep Camelot clean such as picking up trash, tidying up craft/game supplies, and distributing snacks.

### **Positive Volunteer Qualities:**

- agreeable, friendly, and approachable
- organized, enthusiastic and focused on camp
- engaged in all activities with the campers
- sympathetic and understanding
- fair and accepting
- flexible
- dependable
- efficient in their assigned work at Camelot
- respectful of others
- sensitive to the needs of individuals
- team mentality

### **Role of Volunteer:**

- Give the kids a great day.
- Help the kids access and enjoy activities and opportunities.
- Support the development of positive relationships, manage conflict if necessary and redirect negative behavior.
- Be mindful of the feelings and wellness of your buddy (is she tired, is he too hot, is she overwhelmed...).
- Be positive in your statements to kids when possible. Remember structure and expectations help build bonds between the two of you and create a sense of safety in the child.
- Help children become acquainted with other children and participate in group activities to improve communication and social skills.
- Children must feel that they can do things on their own. Your job is to gently guide, suggest and help develop a feeling of independence.

### **What does “special needs” mean?**

Children with special needs are defined as having a temporary or chronic condition or disability due to illness, accident or developmental disorder. Their development can be different than their peers in any of the following ways: physically, emotionally, socially, mentally and/or intellectually.

### **Volunteer/Camelot Kid Communication**

When you meet your camper, introduce yourself and get acquainted. Ask about his or her school, likes and dislikes, favorite foods... Don't feel that you have to be active or engage in conversation all day long. Your camper may have different physical limitations and levels of physical ability. He or she will have a way to communicate when they need help or a staff member or veteran volunteer can help both you and your camper figure out what will work for the two of you. Please don't assume that your buddy has a mental disability if they have a physical disability. When appropriate, gently encourage interactions with the other children and volunteers.

### **Suggestions for a Great Experience**

- Relax! Be yourself.
- Remember you are here for the kids. Do what they would like to do and encourage them to try new things.
- Offer assistance if asked or if the need seems obvious, but don't overdo it or insist on it.
- Be considerate of the extra time it might take for your camper to do something.
- Give your camper whole, unhurried attention.
- Don't talk for your camper- but give gentle help if needed.
- Speak calmly.
- Be alert.
- No name-calling or foul language.
- Use your best judgment- but ask questions if you don't know an answer or what to do in a specific situation. We are here to support you and the kids.
- Set a good example. You have a powerful influence on these amazing kids.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Clearances and Paperwork**

- All volunteers must submit a completed electronic application and sign the acknowledgment of this manual.
- If under 18 years old, both forms must be signed by a parent/guardian
- All volunteers over 18 must have required clearances and sign the physical and sexual misconduct policy.

### **Attendance**

- Register for events using SignUpGenius.
- Sign-in and sign-out on the spreadsheet or paper sign in sheet provided at each event. At Camelot, computers are usually set up inside the front doors with spreadsheet open for your convenience. Staff can assist you if you have questions. This is necessary to get credit for your volunteer hours.
- Complete forms required by your school, organization, etc. in its entirety and present to a Camelot Staff member for signature.
- If you are unable to attend an event you are registered for, please call one of the above phone numbers ASAP.

### **Sign In and Sign Out**

- Upon arrival, please immediately sign-in and put on a nametag.
- We will discuss the day's events as soon as everyone arrives.
- At the end of the event please sign-out.
- Signing in and out allows us to track volunteer hours and helps us keep track of who is currently on campus. This enables us to maintain a safe and secure program for everyone.

### **Medication Policy:**

- All medication to be administered to Camelot children and volunteers is done by the medical staff only.
- Notify the medical staff of any incidents even if they seem minor.
- Medications, prescriptions or over-the-counter medicines must be kept in the medical staff office and dispensed by the medical staff. Please report to medical staff when you sign-in if you have medications that you need to take while you are volunteering.
- A medication form must be filled out by a parent if you are under 18 years old.

### **Parking:**

- Parking is available in the lot and in the field to the left of the building.

### **Telephone Calls/Cell Phones:**

- Please keep cell phones in the car unless you need them for emergency purposes.
- Do **not** post pictures of our Camelot kids or mention Camelot kids' names on any social media.
- No texting during events. You are here to spend time with your camper/Camelot Child.
- Do **not** give your phone number or other contact info to Camelot kids unless it was approved by the parents/caregivers.
- Please be sure to give your parents/guardians Camelot's contact information in case of an emergency; (610)791-5683.

### **Social Media Guidelines:**

As a volunteer at Camelot for Children, you are expected to demonstrate appropriate etiquette on social media.

DO NOT TAKE OR POST PICTURES OF OTHERS AT CAMP OR CAMELOT EVENTS unless asked to do so by and approved by Camelot Staff. Only Staff at Camelot are approved to share pictures of participants at Camelot via posts on the various social media platforms. We hope that you will "like" or comment on something that is posted. When doing so be respectful to all, no hate speech:

- Familiarize yourself with Camelot's mission and values
- Use good judgment
- Remember private things are not private when posted in social media platforms
- Note that only approved spokespeople may speak on behalf of Camelot for Children

### **Valuables and Cash:**

- Everyone is urged to not bring valuables or cash to camp or other events.
- No firearms are permitted.

- No pets, except service dogs, are allowed.

### **Alcohol/Tobacco:**

- Camelot is a smoke-free environment. Smoking, chewing tobacco and vaping are not permitted anywhere on the grounds.
- Any volunteers caught using any type of tobacco or vaping will be asked to leave.
- Alcohol possession or consumption on Camelot property will immediately result in the volunteer being asked to leave.

### **Supervision and Camper Care:**

- All volunteers will be supervised by a trained staff member. If at any time you have questions or concerns, please speak to a Camelot staff member.
- Setting limits is important. No Camelot children should be allowed to intimidate or frighten others or to disrupt activities.
- Ridiculing or embarrassing the Camelot children are not acceptable behaviors.
- If discipline problems arise and you cannot deal with them, please let the Camelot staff know so they can take care of it.
- Volunteers must refrain from helping with direct care including bathroom assistance, hygiene, medical care, behavior management, etc. Please ask for assistance with these issues.
- No volunteers may be alone with a Camelot child at any time. Please stay in group areas with your child.
- Never leave a Camelot child unsupervised. Your care and attention are integral in keeping our children happy and safe.

### **Boundaries:**

- We want everyone including Camelot kids and volunteers to have fun and to be safe when they are at Camelot and a part of this is maintaining personal boundaries.
- Boundaries that must be maintained at Camelot:
  - No piggyback rides or picking up Camelot children at any time unless directed to by a staff member.
  - Do not let Camelot kids sit on your lap. Have them take a seat next to you.
  - While some kids may run to you and give you a hug, we strongly recommend you to encourage the Camelot children to give side hugs.
  - High fives, fist bumps, and handshakes are allowed.

### **Absences:**

- Many of the Camelot Children have low immune systems. If you have had a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea within the prior 24 hours, then please call Camelot (610-791-5683) to cancel or reschedule. Any volunteers experiencing the above symptoms while at Camelot will be asked to leave. The health and safety of our children, volunteers, and staff are our first priority.
- Please call as soon as possible to let us know of your absence.

## **Safety**

Every volunteer has a special responsibility with regard to safety. No matter where you are, you should be aware of potential hazards, environmental or behavioral. If you have a question or concern that you are not sure about, please tell a Camelot staff member immediately.

### **Wheelchair Safety Rules**

- Wheelchair-bound children must always wear seatbelts.
- Make sure the child's feet are on the footrests to prevent dragging and possible injury. Additionally, this allows the volunteer to easily move the wheelchair.
- Never ride on the back of a wheelchair.
- Never run with a wheelchair.
- Always make sure the brake is locked when the child is in a stationary position.
- When applying or releasing the brake, brace your opposite hand onto something for stability.
- Always push rather than pull the wheelchair.
- When going over small bumps or a floor transition, such as a door threshold, use downward force on the back of the chair to ease pressure on the front.
- Do not hang heavy bags or other objects on the back of the chair as this can cause the chair to become unbalanced or tilt backward which could injure or harm a child or volunteer.
- When descending slopes and ramps, take your time and go down in reverse.
- Never transfer a wheelchair-bound child out of their chair. Please see a Camelot staff member or the nurse on duty.

## **Additional Responsibilities and Considerations**

### **Facility and Equipment**

- Return all equipment to its proper storage place.
- Anything damaged or broken should be reported to the Staff so it will not be a hazard.
- Equipment should be utilized in a manner in which it is intended to be used.

### **Clothing**

- Please be conscious of your clothing, for example, no low cut shirts and short shorts. Do not cut up or change your Camelot Buddy t-shirt in any way.

### **Hygiene**

- Please check to make sure that your camper washes their hands after using the bathroom.
- Diaper changing must be done by the nurse in the restroom or nurse's office by staff or medical personnel.
- If a bathroom accident occurs, please see the nurse or staff for assistance. Do not attempt to change the child.

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Opportunities to Volunteer for Camelot

- Monthly Camelot Parties for the teens and children
- Clean up Days
- Coordination of Fundraisers
- Attendance at miscellaneous Fundraisers

See our website calendar at [www.camelotforchildren.org](http://www.camelotforchildren.org) for all of the latest information, dates and times.

**Donations are always welcome!**

***Thank you for your help as a Volunteer at Camelot for Children!!! Your kindness and caring are what allow us to provide the magic of childhood to our amazing community.***

***We cannot do this without you. You time and talents are the greatest gifts.***

**THANK YOU & HAVE FUN**

