

Ringsfield Hall

EcoActivity Centre



Staying Safe

Health & Safety Notes for
Teachers & Adult Helpers

Staying Safe at Ringsfield Hall EcoActivity Centre

We recommend that at least one member of staff has visited Ringsfield before the trip and knows what to expect. We are always happy to arrange appointments for staff to look around in advance of a visit.

The group leader will have been sent a schedule and full details of the programme from before the visit. It is recommended that helpers are given a printout of this sheet.

Safety

Safety is a high priority for our staff who will lead you for the day. Teachers from the school are responsible for the safety of their class and should inform our staff if they have any concerns. Visiting staff will be entirely responsible for their class during lunch time.

Child: Adult ratios

For very young children in EYFS we recommend 4:1, for years 1-3 we suggest 1:6 and over that 10:1. We will always provide two members of staff for up to 30 pupils, but may provide more according to numbers, needs or programme requirement.

Names

Please bring a class list and names of all the helpers (or a bed plan if residential) so that we can have a copy in case of emergency. It is useful for one of your group to have a mobile phone and the number written on the class list. The phone should be set to silent to avoid disturbing the class and should only be used in an emergency.

SEN

Please inform us beforehand about any behavioural issues or additional needs which may affect pupils' experience and enjoyment.

Arrivals

The coach or mini bus will come down the drive and park to the left of the house. Drivers are welcome to use the staff room to make drinks if they are staying. Please let them know that sitting in the coach with the engine running is not allowed!

Our staff should be waiting to greet you and will show you where to go. Children will be given the opportunity to put their names on a wooden name badge, some will need help to make them legible. Day groups will be put in groups, and badge making, drinks and toilet visits will be staggered to avoid congestion. Residential groups will take their suitcases into the main house, put them in the lobby and go into the dining room for a drink and welcome before being taken on a tour of the grounds.

Toilets

You may have access to a number of toilets, some upstairs, to speed up the process for large groups, so children will need supervision. Someone will show your group which toilets to use for the day.

Cold or Wet Days

We are an Outdoor Centre and the programmes are all held outdoors (within reason). We do have indoor spaces if necessary, but please ensure that children and adults are wearing clothing suitable for any weather. School uniform is not appropriate. They should always bring waterproofs, wellies, gloves and hats - we do have some spares, but it wastes a lot of time having to equip unprepared children. We do supply hot drinks when it is very cold and always have drinks on hand, even in the woods. Similarly if it is very hot children should have sun cream, a hat and any hayfever medication they need.

First Aid

All staff carry a first aid kit and radio or phone when in the woods and many of them are outdoor first aiders. There is also a first aid kit in the red lobby outside the guest kitchen in the main house. Please inform us if there is an accident and help us by filling in our accident book.

Hands

As well as the possibility of being with the animals, children will be getting their hands dirty handling natural materials. There are a number of antibacterial hand wash stations close to the animals and staff need to ensure that this is used each time the children touch the animals. There will be an opportunity for hand-washing before eating.

Lunch times

We would like to ask that everyone tries to bring a low waste packed lunch. We do have drinks available though children will no doubt want their own. Drinking water is recommended rather than sugary, coloured drinks in hot weather to quench thirst. If they need to take drinks to the woods they will need a bum bag.

Car Park

Please take care when crossing the car park and stay close to the children. There are warning signs to slow vehicles down.

Risk Assessments

Our general risk assessments are on the website, but staff carry out risk assessments on all programmes and daily site risk assessments.

Feedback

There is an evaluation from online and we would appreciate your comments in order to improve our service to you.

Valuables

We cannot take responsibility for valuables, mobile phones so if they come on site they must be kept with you at all times. Lost property will be returned on request if found - we ask that you pay the postage costs.

Parents say that 'freedom' is the one thing that today's children miss out on. We aim to provide safe, secure free-range experiences, so we encourage staff and accompanying adults to give children a measure of freedom for safe exploration, and (subject to our Behaviour Management Policy) to allow our Education Team to facilitate and manage behaviour in the first instance during sessions.

Staff Roles for Health & Safety

The nominated Health and Safety Officer for the Centre is the Centre Director. However, all members of the management team operate a duty of care for Health and Safety, and all staff are responsible for abiding by relevant Health & Safety procedures and reporting any notable issues.

All members of our Education Team have a responsibility to ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken to provide and maintain conditions and procedures which are safe, healthy and comply with all statutory requirements and codes of practice.

Our Education Coordinators are responsible for:

- The general welfare, safety and safe conduct of those in their group, and the ongoing safety and maintenance of the site and equipment being used;
- Ensuring safety and the reduction or removal of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of substances and tools;
- The provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure the health and safety of Forest School staff and participants, including updating risk assessments, ensuring other staff are up to date with our Forest School Handbook guidance document, and ensuring updates or changes to risk assessments are known by all team members.

Our full Health & Safety Policy is available on request, but a summary of school visit specific considerations are as follows:

- A detailed Risk / Benefit Assessment of the whole site is made and updated regularly, with a record of actions required and actions taken.
- Equipment, availability and condition checks will be made at regular intervals appropriate to the item, and a signed log kept. Forest School leaders will make site inspections to plan risk management and prioritise maintenance needs. These will take place on an annual basis in addition to the daily visual risk assessments by the Forest School leader and general site assessments.
- Regular staff appraisal will include records of agreed training needs e.g. Food hygiene or First Aid qualifications, appropriate certificated tool use etc. Staff are required to wear appropriate safety equipment when necessary.
- There will be one or more trained first aiders with each forest school group and first aid supplies will be available from Forest School Leaders during a session. A first aid kit is also available in the Hall near the Guest Kitchen. Schools maintain Duty of Care and 'in loco parentis' at all times.
- Our fire/emergency procedure will be available and accessible for all visitors to the Hall; a fire drill will be offered to each group, and relevant muster point shown.
- Our Fire Risk Assessment, Fire Check Record book and Accident Book are kept in the Office.