

Sutton Ecology Centre

Health & Safety Guidance Notes

Introduction

Please read these notes carefully as they will ensure you are aware of all the Health & Safety implications of your visit. Reading these notes will ensure that you have a successful and safe trip.

Schools visiting Sutton Ecology Centre should be aware of the DfE Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits guide. The DfE guidance is the basis for what should be used for organising trips and visits, which includes a Handbook for Group Leaders. This guidance is very comprehensive and needs little addition from us. You can download all the guidance notes from <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/guidanceandadvice/f00191759/departmenal-advice-on-health-and-safety-for-schools>. We draw to your attention the following points, which you need to be aware of and act upon in addition to the above.

General Safety Issues

Most activities here at the Centre are no more risky than those carried out in school grounds.

Most sessions include the following Risks (identified by Risk Assessment) which can be reduced by close supervision and / or a safety talk before the activity begins.

1. Running about games: this could include the odd tumble or stumble whilst moving round the grounds. **We recommend sensible shoes whatever the weather – NO FLIP FLOPS!**
2. Being stung by stinging nettles / scratched by brambles. **We recommend long trousers whatever the weather.** We will warn children when there are stinging nettles around not to touch them. However, we are not permitted to apply any medicines to stings.
3. Exposure to extremes of weather. These effects are reduced by close monitoring of children and:
 - In hot weather wearing sunhats, using sun cream, bringing water bottles (we can provide water to top up bottles). We will make use of shade where possible.
 - In cold / wet / windy weather wearing sturdy shoes - preferably wellington boots, wearing layers of clothing to trap body heat, wearing a wind and waterproof outer layer. We will make use of outdoor shelter and indoor classroom where possible.
4. Allergic reactions: schools should ensure that pupils with history of hayfever etc. have taken suitable medication if appropriate. Pupils with serious bee or wasp allergies should also bring appropriate medication and a teacher should know how to administer it.
5. Sutton Ecology Centre is **open to the public**; we cannot restrict access to the grounds during your school visit. Please provide suitable adult / pupil

supervision ratios. Your school is responsible for being aware of where your pupils are during the visit.

Roles of school staff teachers, classroom assistants and parent helpers

1. **You are still in charge of children's safety and behaviour as they are not signed into our care.** To this end, schools need to meet and preferably exceed the adult pupil supervision ratio advised by your LEA.
2. Teachers who have not been to the Centre before **must** attend a free pre-visit to assess for themselves, amongst other issues, the safety of the visit. Sutton Ecology Centre is open to the public in daylight hours. You are welcome to come along to see the grounds and how to get here any time, but you will not be able to access the building. Please ring to book, if you would like to meet with a member of the Education Staff to see the inside of the building.
3. First aid provision is the school's responsibility.
4. Schools should ensure pupils come properly clothed for the day's weather.

Role of Sutton Ecology Centre staff

1. We will check the Centre grounds are safe and suitable for the activities. i.e., toilets are clean, there is no harmful litter, etc.
2. We will provide up-to-date information of any possible risk that may occur in the Grounds.
3. We will give relevant verbal health & safety warnings to the children when we are leading activities, and remind about hand washing afterwards.

Minibeast Hunting

If your class will be minibeast hunting here at the Centre, please read this extra safety information, as it has a higher risk than our general activities.

The main hazards of minibeast hunting are:

- Being stung by a minibeast.
- Allergic reaction to a plant.
- Minor trips and falls whilst moving around.
- Nipped fingers and feet when lifting logs.

We will reduce the impact of these hazards in the following ways:

- A safety demonstration before the hunt showing how to use the equipment safely for people and animals.
- Showing children nettles and any other hazards in the area.
- Ensuring the children move about safely e.g., don't run and generally ensuring that they keep to safety rules.
- Children expected to wash hands before eating etc.
- Adults turning over logs for younger children.

Pond Dipping

If your class will be pond dipping here at the Centre, please read this extra safety information, as it has a higher risk than our general activities.

The main hazards of pond dipping are:

- getting wet
- injury from equipment
- infection by a water borne disease (Weil's disease / leptospirosis)
- in a very worse case, drowning

We will reduce the impact of these hazards in the following ways:

- Close supervision on the dipping platform and around the ponds.
- A safety demonstration before are children allowed near the edge of a pond (i.e. how to carry the equipment, no running, no pushing etc.)
- Children working in small groups, to reduce crowding at the water's edge.
- Children expected to wash hands before eating etc.
- Cuts to be covered up with suitable waterproof dressing etc.