



Information Pack for Schools

This pack gives you all the information you need to plan a fun, safe and educational trip to Stepney City Farm.

Please read and share the contents with colleagues and all other accompanying adults, *particularly the health and safety guidelines on page 5.*

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About Stepney City Farm

Stepney City Farm is a three acre working farm; a rural oasis, in the heart of Tower Hamlets. We give children and adults a chance to meet farm animals, learn how to grow food and try out arts and crafts. Every Saturday, the Farm hosts a popular Farmer's Market.

We have an extensive education programme, with over 5,000 school children and young people benefiting from funded workshops, tours and projects each year.

We are an educational charity working to improve lives through farming; we provide a welcoming green space to bring together our diverse community, and cultivate wellbeing through high-welfare, environmentally-sustainable farming practices.

We offer high quality learning experiences that meet the national curriculum at EYFS, KS1 and KS2 and have been awarded the [Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge](#).

Find us

Our address is Stepney City Farm, Stepney Way, London, E1 3DG.

Our nearest stations are Stepney Green and Limehouse. Both are about a ten minute walk away.

Bus 339 stops outside the Farm (St. Dunstons stop) and bus 309 stops behind the Farm (Stepney Green School stop).

Unfortunately there is no onsite parking at the Farm, and nearby street parking cannot be guaranteed.

Get in touch

For general enquiries, you can call us on 020 7790 8204 or email info@stepneycityfarm.org

For schools-specific enquiries, you can contact Siobhan Brown (Schools Officer) on 020 7790 8204 or email siobhan@stepneycityfarm.org

Siobhan works on Wednesdays, Thursdays and occasional Fridays.

Opening hours

The Farm is open from 10.00 – 16.00, Tuesday to Sunday. School visits are offered Tuesday to Friday. We have two slots for schools: morning (10.30 – 12.00) or afternoon (13.00 – 14.30)

Planning and booking a visit

Before your visit

- Booking is essential for all group visits, self-guided tours, guided tours and workshops.
- Our **maximum capacity is 30 children** i.e. one class on site at any one time.
- Please read our schools pages on our website to help you select the workshop or tour most suitable for your class.
- Email siobhan@stepnecityfarm.org including: your school name, your class/year group, what session you would like to book (self-led visit, guided tour or workshop) and the date(s) you would like to visit. Your booking is not confirmed until you have received a confirmation email from us.
- **Please familiarise yourself with our Risk Assessment and the HSE Advice Sheet on Avoiding Ill Health at Open Farms** (Appendix 2 and Appendix 3)
- Our sessions usually go ahead rain or shine! **Please ensure the children wear weather-appropriate clothes**, i.e. hats, gloves, raincoats and suitable shoes in case of rain / sun protection and suitable layers if hot.

During your visit

- Farm staff will give a quick 'safety on the farm' talk before guided tours and workshops
- School staff must ensure that the children are well behaved, don't go anywhere unsupervised and wash their hands thoroughly before leaving the site.
- At the end of your visit you will be asked to complete a short evaluation form.

Responsibilities of the Farm	Responsibilities of the School
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide Health and Safety information to the schools before the visit• Create a safe, welcoming and informative environment• Ensure someone is available to deliver the tour or workshop• Meet the proposed learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read the Health and Safety advice• Ensure children are well behaved• Provide enough staff to supervise the children• Ensure all children wash their hands thoroughly with water and soap• Arrive at the arranged time

Cancellations

Our workshops and tours usually run rain or shine. In bad weather, we may provide alternative activities or different routes around the farm to stay dry or keep cool. In very bad weather, tours may have to be postponed. Where staff absences are unavoidable, for example in case of serious illness or emergency, we will offer you alternatives (usually in the form of a self-guided tour) or a postponement of the booking to a mutually convenient time.

If you need to cancel a trip, please give us as much notice as possible. Our schools service is very popular and we like to be able to offer the slot to another school if possible.

Farm staff, facilities and resources

Staff: We have a dedicated Schools Officer who works on Wednesdays, Thursdays and occasional other days.

Café and Farm Shop: Open Tuesday to Sunday. They sell drinks, breakfast, lunch, cakes and snacks. Our farm shop sells our seasonal produce, including our fruit and vegetables as well as eggs from our chickens, ducks and geese.

We also have a plant shop.

Toilets: We have male, female and accessible toilets (4 in total). These are located in our Rural Arts Centre.

Hand-washing facilities: Sinks with soap and hot water are available near the toilets, around the farm and at the exit. Groups should use before they leave, eat, drink or otherwise put their hands near their mouths.

Protective equipment: There are a limited number of rain coats, wellington boots and gloves available upon request. Please contact us if you would like to arrange this.

Designated eating areas: If you would like to have lunch on the farm please notify us beforehand. Eating is only allowed in designated eating areas and not in other areas around the farm.

NOTE: There are some areas on the farm which are not for public access. These are clearly signed; please do not allow the children or staff to enter these areas.

Health and Safety on the Farm

It is important that all children and supervising adults are aware of the correct health and safety guidelines. The risk of infection is very small, but the disease caused by an infection could be serious. By following the simple guidelines, which are similar to everyday basic hygiene recommendations, the risk can be easily minimised. The Health & Safety Executive has produced guidelines about avoiding ill health at open farms (see Appendix 1). This advises teachers and others who organise visits for children to farms on controlling the risk of infections from the animals the children may contact during their visit.

Stepney City Farm has a standard Risk Assessment for Schools and Youth Groups visiting us (see Appendix 2). Please make yourself familiar with this before visiting. A member of staff will also give a brief introduction to Health and Safety when the group arrives for workshops and guided tours.

During and after the visit, please make sure that the children:



- Do not kiss any animals
- Do not put fingers in or near their mouths
- Do not climb on the animal fencing
- Do not chase, frighten or torment the animals
- Always wash their hands and arms with hot water and soap before leaving the farm and eating or drinking
- Clean or change their footwear before leaving
- Follow the instructions given by farm staff

If a member of your group shows signs of illness (e.g. sickness or diarrhea) after a visit, advise them or their parent/guardian to visit the doctor and explain that they have had recent contact with animals.

Teachers are welcome to carry out a pre-visit to the farm to assess risk and become familiar with the site.

Appendices

APPENDIX ONE: Preventing or Controlling Ill Health from Animal Contact at Visitor Attractions: Teachers Supplement

CHAPTER 6 – ADVICE TO TEACHERS AND OTHERS WHO ORGANISE VISITS FOR CHILDREN

This advice is for teachers and others who organise visits by children on the precautions necessary to reduce the risk of ill health arising from contact with animals.

All animals naturally carry a range of micro-organisms, some of which can be transmitted to humans, where they may cause ill health. Some of these, such as *Escherichia coli* O157 (*E. coli* O157) or *Cryptosporidium parvum* (a microscopic parasite), present a serious health hazard and have the potential to cause serious illness and health problems which may be particularly severe in young children.

As with many other educational or recreational activities, visits can never be considered free from all risk. However, while the hazards are real, the risk of infection in children can be readily controlled by simple everyday measures. The following practical steps will help make your visit even more safe, healthy and enjoyable.

Before your visit, you should:

- Read and understand the advice in the industry Code of Practice, and discuss arrangements for the visit with the management at the site.
- Confirm that the control measures provided at the site match the recommendations in the industry Code of Practice.
- Seek advice from your local authority or organisation on what the appropriate ratio of pupils to teachers/leaders/assistants/parents should be.
- Discuss and agree with the supervisors, parents or staff of the school, crèche leaders of youth organisations etc. their roles and responsibilities during the visit. In particular, they must understand the need to make sure that the children wash, or are helped to wash, their hands thoroughly after contacting animals and before eating. Key points to cover with the children should include:
 - explaining the rules for the visit, stressing that they must not eat, drink or chew anything (including sweets) outside the areas in which you permit them to do so;
 - explaining why they must wash their hands thoroughly after contact with the animals, and before eating or drinking anything;
 - demonstrating how to wash their hands properly;
 - discussing the requirements for appropriate clothing, including suitable footwear. You should liaise with the attraction to ascertain what this is;
 - checking that cuts, grazes etc on children's hands are covered with a waterproof dressing.

**APPENDIX TWO:
Risk Assessment**

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action by when?
Animals	There is a possibility that some of the animals might bite children if they put their hands in to the animal enclosures. They could also be harmed if any of the larger animals escaped.	<p>Animals are kept enclosed unless farm staff are supervising visitors handling them.</p> <p>Signs are around the farm reminding people that the animals may bite.</p> <p>Daily H&S Site Checks take place to ensure that the animals are enclosed.</p>	<p>If handling animals with children, talk to people about the risk and show them how to handle them correctly.</p> <p>H&S introduction at the beginning of any animal activities to remind people the animals may bite.</p> <p>Specific Site Check just before the group arrives to ensure animals safe and enclosed.</p>	<p>Farm Staff</p> <p>Farm Staff</p> <p>Farm Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>At the beginning of each tour/workshop</p> <p>Just before the group arrives</p>
E-coli and other zoonoses	Children may be harmed if they eat, put their hands near their face or leave without washing their hands and arms. Young people are especially at risk of becoming acutely ill if infected.	<p>Hand washing facilities are provided for staff and visitors.</p> <p>Signs are located next to hand-washing facilities with instructions on proper hand-washing.</p> <p>There are a number of signs around the farm reminding people to wash their hands.</p> <p>Daily H&S Site Check to ensure that the cleanliness around the farm and the signs reminding people to wash their hands are maintained.</p> <p>Contact with the animals only takes place when there is</p>	<p>During Health and Safety talk when groups arrive they should be reminded to wash their hands and arms with hot water before leaving. Also to remind everyone not to put their hands near their face whilst at the farm.</p> <p>Information Pack sent to schools before they visit to ensure teachers and group leaders are aware of the importance of good hygiene, including details on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand-washing facilities • E-coli 0157 • Designated eating area(s) • Supervision • Route of tour • Risk Assessment template <p>Provide washing</p>	<p>Farm Staff</p> <p>Education Worker</p> <p>Health and Safety</p>	<p>At the beginning of each tour/workshop</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

		sufficient supervision by farm staff.	facilities for footwear at the exit of the farm.	Committee	
Walking on the farm	Children risk injury if they slip or trip on any tools, water, hose pipe or other materials that haven't been put away.	Daily H&S Site Checks to ensure tools and other hazards are cleared away.	Staff to be vigilant and keep an eye out for potential slip and trip hazards. Specific H&S Site Check prior to the group arriving. Information Pack to be sent to schools before they visit to ensure teachers and group leaders are aware of H&S issues, including information on; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable clothing and footwear to avoid accidents • Responsibility of teachers / group leaders for ensuring group discipline Teachers and group leaders responsible for ensuring group stays together and is well behaved	Farm Staff Farm Staff Education Worker Staff / Group leaders	Ongoing Before a group arrives Before the visit Throughout the visit
Duck Pond	The duck pond could cause serious injury to a child if they were to fall in.	Signs warning people that there is deep water inside. Gate kept shut at all times. Daily H&S Site Checks to ensure that the duck pond is closed and that the surrounding area is safe.	Specific Site Check to ensure that the duck pond is closed and that the surrounding area is safe just before the group arrives. Children to be supervised when looking at the ducks and not to climb on fence surrounding the pond. Staff to remind the whole group to stick together when giving Health and Safety talk.	Farm Staff Teachers and Group Leaders Farm Staff	Just before the group arrives. Throughout the tour At the beginning of each visit
Tool Sheds	Children could cause themselves harm if they were to gain access to the	Daily H&S Site Checks completed to ensure that the tool sheds are kept shut.	Specific H&S Site Check to ensure that these are shut just before the group arrives.	Farm Staff	Just before the group arrives.

	tool sheds as there is dangerous equipment inside.				
Feed Shed	Children could harm themselves harm if they were to gain access in to the feed shed and tried to eat animal food.	Daily H&S Site Safety Checks completed to ensure that the feed sheds are kept shut.	Specific H&S Site Check to ensure that these are shut just before the group arrives.	Farm Staff	Just before the group arrives.
The Rural Arts Centre (including a forge, woodwork and pottery studios)	Children could be seriously injured if they were to gain entry into any of the Rural Arts studios where there are extremely hot surfaces, heavy tools and machinery.	The Rural Arts Centre studios are only open when people are working in there and closed when not. Each rural artist puts a safety enclosure around their entrance when they are working.	Health & Safety Talk to remind people to stay together and not to go anywhere unsupervised.	Farm Staff	At the beginning of each visit.
Kitchen	Children could cause themselves serious injury if they were to gain entry in to the kitchen where there is hot water, the oven and other electrical equipment.	Groups are not allowed in the kitchen area unsupervised.	Health & Safety talk to remind people to stay together and not to go anywhere unsupervised.	Farm Staff	At the beginning of each visit.
Stinging Nettles	Children could be stung by nettles that grow very quickly around animal enclosures and along path ways around the farm.	The paths are randomly cleared of stinging nettles when there are volunteering days.	Regular path clearing sessions with volunteers to be included in task list. Take responsibility for ensuring upkeep and maintenance of pathways. Health & Safety talk to remind people to watch out for stinging nettles.	Farm Staff and Volunteers Farm Staff Farm Staff	When necessary but regularly Ongoing At the beginning of each visit

Hazardous Plants	Small children may try to eat some of the plants and may become sick as a result. For example the leaves of rhubarb plants are poisonous.		<p>Staff and teachers to be watchful of small children around plants.</p> <p>It is more likely for children under 5 to put things in their mouths who are always visiting with a responsible adult. Health and Safety talk to remind the group to stay together and for the adults to watch out for this.</p>	<p>Farm Staff and Teachers</p> <p>Farm Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>At the beginning of each visit.</p>
Getting lost	Children may cause themselves harm if they were to get lost, leave the group or leave the farm.		<p>Teachers and group leaders to be responsible for ensuring that the children remain together at all times.</p> <p>Information Pack sent to teachers and youth groups beforehand to ensure they are aware it is their responsibility to ensure that the group stays together.</p> <p>H&S Introduction to remind everyone to stay together at all times.</p>	<p>Teachers and Group Leaders</p> <p>Education Worker</p> <p>Farm Staff</p>	<p>Throughout the tour</p> <p>Before the tour</p> <p>At the beginning of the tour</p>
Tools and other Farm Equipment	Children could cause themselves or each other harm if they were to handle or use farm machinery.	Daily Health and Safety Site Check completed to ensure that no tools / equipment is left unattended.	<p>Specific H&S Site Check to be completed just before the group arrives.</p> <p>Children and Young People to be supervised at all times throughout the tour.</p>	<p>Farm Staff</p> <p>Teachers and Group Leaders</p>	<p>Just before the group arrives</p> <p>Throughout the visit</p>
Weather	Dependent upon time of year, the children may get sun burnt, be too cold or get wet resulting in illness.		<p>Visitors to wear suitable clothing for the type of year.</p> <p>Information Pack to be sent to schools before they arrive, including advice on suitable clothing.</p> <p>School Staff to ensure that children are aware of what to wear.</p>	<p>Teachers and students.</p> <p>Education Worker.</p> <p>Teachers and Group Leaders</p>	<p>For the visit</p> <p>Before the visit</p> <p>Before the visit</p>

