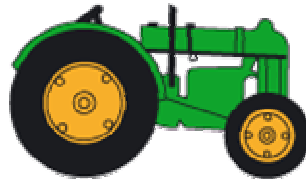


STONEHURST

Family Farm And Museum



Risk Assessment And Safety Policy Statement

Issued by: Stonehurst Farm
Reviewed: October 2006



General

Stonehurst Farm and Woodside Farm are commercial working farms with enterprises including cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry, horses, rabbits and guinea pigs, crop production including cereals and potatoes that can be visited and viewed for educational purposes. There is also a straw barn and play areas where children can play under adult supervision.

These places that people will visit and things they will be shown will have been checked by Stonehurst Farm staff. Whilst every effort possible is made to ensure safety there is always an element of risk with any outdoor visit. Stonehurst Farm will not expose groups to any activity that unduly dangerous. At the outset of any visit teachers and group leaders must explain to their group that they must comply immediately with any safety instructions given by Stonehurst Farm staff.

All Stonehurst staff and volunteer helpers as well as teachers, classroom assistants and other adults who accompany the children have a duty of care towards those children and throughout the visit must take such precautions as are reasonable and practical. Schools / groups must understand that the responsibility for the discipline and welfare of the children throughout the visit remains with the teacher in charge, assisted by those other adults accompanying the visit and sent by the school / group, all of whom must remain with the group at all times.

It is the duty of Stonehurst Farm staff and / all volunteers to prevent children and adults getting into a potentially hazardous situation, they should be aware before hand of possible risks and should warn all visitors of such dangers and indicate how these dangers should be avoided. On arrival at the farm the teacher in charge should report arrival to farm staff before unloading coach.

Hazards

Farm Machinery

Stonehurst Farm staff and volunteer helpers will not operate or interfere with machinery and equipment unless trained to do so.

All persons especially children must be kept at a safe distance from any agricultural machinery that is moving and must not be allowed to travel on any item of farm machinery such as a tractor. The only exception to this is that visitors may ride on our purpose built trailer and must be seated whilst the vehicle is moving. Attention must also be drawn to any stationary machinery which must not be touched or climbed on without permission, and then only with close adult supervision.

Farm Chemicals

All substances hazardous to health such as pesticides and veterinary medicines are controlled and kept under lock and key. Visitors will not be allowed into areas that have had recent applications of pesticides, or to livestock undergoing any treatment.

Farm Animals

All farm animals can be dangerous in the wrong situation. Particular care must be taken with large farm animals such as cattle, pigs and horses. No visitors shall enter livestock pens at anytime. When close to livestock care must be taken to avoid being trapped, bitten, or kicked by stock. No animals shall be fed unless permission is granted Stonehurst Farm staff.

When around animals especially loose animals out to pasture, groups must stay together so as not to accidentally surround and panic an animal and not take any action that may startle an animal.



No pregnant person is allowed to have contact with ewes and lambs at lambing time due to the risk of enzootic abortion which if present in a sheep flock can be a risk to pregnant humans. When around animals especially loose animals out to pasture, groups must stay together so as not to accidentally surround and panic an animal and not take any action that may startle an animal.

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Water

All open water carries a risk of drowning. When close to any pond, stream or canal on the farm children must be closely supervised. Groups do take part in pond dipping in order to study the pond life, this only done in special locations where the water is shallow. We require strict supervision from group leaders and helpers to avoid pushing shoving at the waters edge and advise that class size groups are split into smaller groups whilst at the pond dipping area.

Miscellaneous

Barbed wired fences are a particular hazard, they should not be crossed or climbed upon and special care must be taken where a stile in a field is close to a barbed wire fence.

Dust, particularly from the harvesting or handling of grain and the handling of hay, straw and from sawdust used as animal bedding, can cause choking and or irritation to eyes and should be avoided where possible.

Stinging nettles, some children will be unaware of stinging nettles and should be warned of the danger.

Tripping on farms, in woodland and around farm buildings; care must be taken to minimise the risk of tripping. Children must not run unless they have been told they may, and then only under supervision, running steep hills in particular is to be avoided.

Play areas such as straw barn and main play area are made as safe as possible with soft flooring and suitable play equipment but careful supervision of children by teachers / group leaders and helpers is needed.

Diseases and Hygiene

Farm Health & Safety

We want your visit to Stonehurst Farm to be both enjoyable and safe. Stonehurst Farm is a working farm with livestock, play areas and outdoor activities. It is important during your visit to behave responsibly and to supervise children on all areas of the farm. Please observe any safety notices around the farm and also to note the following hygiene advice.

The Risks

Many farm animals carry germs including cryptosporidia, campylobacter, salmonella and e-coli. You don't need to remember these names but simply that people can catch them and suffer stomach pains and diarrhoea.



Germs may be present in droppings and elsewhere on the farm and, unfortunately are most likely to be passed on during spring and summer - the very times when farms are open to the public. Children are always the most vulnerable because they do not appreciate the need for personal hygiene. They could pick up germs from eating with dirty hands, or sucking grubby fingers. Even the most minor infections can be most distressing for children and interfere with schooling. More serious infections may require hospital treatment.

Teachers and/or group leaders should be aware of the possibility that a child is having an allergic reaction to dust or pollen and take appropriate action. Children with known allergies should avoid a situation that could trigger a reaction, and should have appropriate medication or inhaler with them if they are normally carried. Stonehurst farm staff and volunteers should be advised if visitors have a known serious allergy.

Precautions can be taken to ensure that what would have been an enjoyable visit does not result in distressing illness.

Precautions You Can Take

1. Do not eat or drink near animals or until hands have been washed. Take notice of any signs stating that food and drink should not be taken into specific farm buildings or areas.
2. Eat food only in designated "CLEAN" eating areas separate from areas where animals are kept.
3. Take care to keep hands and feet away from mouths after touching or handling young lambs or other animals around the farm.
4. Wash hands as soon as possible under running water after touching animals, and ALWAYS before eating. The farmer should provide taps at each point where people leave farm buildings.
5. Take notice of signs stressing the importance of washing hands.
6. Never drink from taps around the farm unless they are marked "drinking water".
7. Never eat or taste animal feed stuffs, raw milk or similar items.
8. Young children should be closely supervised to make sure these precautions are observed. Bottle fed lambs and calves are especially tame and may suck children's fingers, after which hand washing is necessary.
9. Hands should be washed at the end of the visit before leaving the farm.

Common Sense

The above assessment of risks involved with a farm visit covers virtually all situations that may be encountered. However Stonehurst Farm staff, volunteers, teachers and helpers should be alert for any unforeseen dangers at any time. The overriding principle is that common sense should be used at all times.



Contacting Us

If you require further advice or information then please do not hesitate to contact us:-

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