

ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS RISK ASSESSMENT FOR SCHOOLS



General use of the British Wildlife Centre

Identified hazard	Action to reduce risk	Notes
<p>Slips, trips and falls (including into an enclosure).</p>	<p>Ensure children are aware they must not run, due to uneven surfaces. Instruct children never to climb trees or enclosure fences. Mop up any spilt water from floors immediately. Boardwalks cleaned periodically to remove algae, any slopes to be covered in non-slip material. Pedestrian areas to be kept clear of vegetation, roots and any large stones.</p>	<p>School to recommend strong outdoor footwear for the visit. Children to be supervised at all times.</p>
<p>Soil borne infections, e.g. leptospirosis, tetanus, stomach upsets.</p>	<p>Cover all open cuts or wounds with waterproof plasters or gloves as appropriate. Do not allow soil or animal material to come into contact with mouth, nose or eyes. Instruct children never to pick up droppings or feathers. Warn teachers that in the event of any 'flu' like symptoms within 2 weeks, seek medical advice. Never eat or drink during an animal tour and always wash hands afterwards. Warn children not to touch enclosures or put fingers in their mouth.</p>	<p>Check for plaster or glove allergies.</p> <p>Adults to supervise washing.</p>
<p>Hazardous plants e.g. nettles or brambles.</p>	<p>Point out hazardous plants to the children. Advise children with skin allergies not to touch any plants. Tell children never to eat anything from the wild. Where possible have arms and legs covered.</p>	<p>School to check for specific allergies before the visit.</p>

Distressed animals	Children warned not to bang on enclosures, make loud noises, throw things into enclosures or crowd around enclosures in large numbers.	Remind children not to touch enclosures, in case of allergies and for hygiene.
Getting lost	Children to always stay with a designated group and adult.	Accompanying adults should be in a ratio of at least 1:8.
Getting cold or wet	Teachers asked to ensure children bring adequate (waterproof) clothing.	A few additional waterproofs available for emergencies.
Sunburn	Teachers asked to ensure children bring a hat and sunscreen.	A bottle of water is also recommended.
Injury from sticks or stones	Instruct children never to carry sticks or throw stones.	Teachers are asked to supervise the behaviour of the group at all times.
Potential allergies to nuts in animal feed.	Children reminded not to touch enclosures or animal food.	Adults to accompany all groups of children.
Stings	Children not to approach observation hive exit closely. Baffle inserted close to bee exit to direct bees in an upward direction.	Adults to supervise and be aware of potential anaphylaxis.
Touching animals or putting fingers through fencing of enclosures, risking bites.	Warn children never to put their fingers on or through the fencing around the enclosures or to put anything in their mouth or suck their fingers, and always wash hands before eating or drinking.	Adults to supervise at all times including washing.