



Bore Place School Day Visits: Handbook of Policies, Procedures and Risk Assessments

"We will inspire and educate people to make a difference and positively impact the environment in their daily lives, while connecting with nature to support their health, wellbeing and development, providing equal access to the natural world."

From February 2022 the Bore Place schools' day visit programme is being relaunched, in line with our green recovery programme and to maximise the time that children spend outdoors. We aim to inspire young people with a love of the natural world, educate them about food production and regenerative farming, and involve them in taking care of our world for future generations.

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Programme overview

EYFS/KS1 Reception, Year 1 and 2 (4-7 years old)	Farm Explorers
KS2 Years 3-6 (Age 7-11)	Nature Champions
KS3 Years 7-9 (Age 11-14)	Citizen Scientists

The exact format of each day will depend on:

- The audience – age of children, size of group, any additional needs
- The season – what wildlife is abundant, seasonal links with the surveying programme

Sample generic itinerary

10:00	Welcome and safety chat Introductory story/song/discussion
10:30	Tour of our organic dairy farm to find out where milk comes from
11:15	Break
11:30	Seasonal activity 1
12:30	Lunch
13:00	Seasonal activity 2
14:00	Day ends

If you have any specific themes or curriculum areas you would like us to cover, please let us know.

Group-specific plan and dynamic risk assessment

(to be completed by BP tutor for each visit)

Farm Explorers

Nature Champions

Citizen Scientists

Date of visit	Audience	
Dynamic risk assessment comments (e.g., weather conditions, hazards along route, special instructions from farm staff or others)		
10:00	Welcome and safety chat Introduction to topic:	
10:30	Tour of our organic dairy farm to find out where milk comes from (see separate risk assessment)	
11:15	Break	
11:30	Activity 1:	Risk assessment:
12:30	Lunch	
13:00	Activity 2:	Risk assessment:
14:00	Day ends	

Completed by:

Date:

Staff roles

Prior to trip, visiting staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- parents have given written permission for their children to visit Bore Place
- the group has appropriate adult to pupil ratios
- all accompanying adults are well briefed and aware of their responsibilities
- pupils are well briefed and aware of their responsibilities
- the school has completed the appropriate risk assessments
- Bore Place staff are supplied with appropriate information about the group
- Parents have been informed of our clothing and sun policies, and that children have brought a packed lunch and a water bottle

During the visit, visiting staff are responsible for:

- acting 'in loco parentis', taking overall responsibility for pupils wellbeing and safety
- administering first aid to members of the group, if required
- being aware of any known allergies/medical conditions of the group and dealing with these issues, should they arise. Carrying any medication/inhalers/EpiPens at all times
- pupils' behaviour
- supervising pupils' snack, lunch and toilet breaks
- informing Bore Place staff of any incidents or near-misses so that we can review our procedures if necessary

Bore Place is responsible for:

- providing programmes designed to meet the pupils' needs
- providing appropriate facilities, i.e., premises and equipment
- providing appropriately qualified and experienced tutors
- briefing groups on health and safety issues
- evaluating visits with users and taking appropriate action
- carrying out risk assessments of our activities
- supplying a first aid kit
- having arrangements for:
 - fire safety and evacuation
 - accident and emergency procedures
 - insurance

Insurance

Commonwork Trust has public liability insurance with NFU mutual.

Clothing policy

School staff are responsible for communicating the following information with parents:

- Please ensure that pupils wear suitable clothing: this should be something that won't spoil if it gets a bit dirty and should be appropriate for the season of your visit. At all times of the year, the optimum clothing includes waterproofs and wellies.
- We strongly recommend that children and adults wear long sleeves and trousers to protect from scratching plants and biting insects.
- It is essential that all pupils and participants bring two pairs of footwear: a pair suitable for the tour of the farm (ideally wellies) and a pair for indoor/travel use.

Travel policy

- Schools are responsible for making their own travel arrangements to and from Bore Place.
- BP tutors will meet coaches and minibuses at the main gate, just past the public car park. When children get off the bus they will be asked to go through the gate and line up in the lime avenue, which is traffic free.
- If minibuses are parking in the main car park, school staff are responsible for escorting students safely through the car park.

Sun policy

- School staff are responsible for making sure that children are properly dressed for sunny weather and that parents have applied sunscreen.
- Activities may be moved into the shade if necessary.
- Water is available to top up children's bottles as needed.

Dynamic risk assessment policy

Outdoor education is dependent on many environmental factors. On the morning of the visit, BP tutors will carry out a dynamic risk assessment of the site and weather conditions, which may result in a change to the pre-agreed plan. Alternative arrangements will be made to ensure children have a safe, happy and engaging visit.

Factors to consider: (this is not an exhaustive list)

- Weather conditions:
 - woodland activities should not take place during high winds or thunderstorms.
 - If the weather is very cold, static activities may be replaced with more active ones, and vice versa in very hot conditions.
 - During periods of prolonged hot weather fire lighting/cooking is not advisable.
- Condition of site:
 - Footpaths may be very muddy/slippy after rain – consider using an alternative route.
 - High winds may have dislodged branches – check for hanging deadwood.
 - Seasonal changes to flora – check for emergence of poisonous plants/fungi.
 - Discovery of a wasp nest or similar.
- Bore Place stakeholders:

- Liaise with farmer over suitability of farm visit (for example, tour may have to be altered if a cow is unwell).
- Maintenance work – liaise with groundskeepers over any areas to avoid.
- Conservation team – liaise with team over sensitive habitats or ongoing groundwork.
- Events team – be aware of other groups onsite.
- Needs of group:
 - Plans may need to be adapted to suit children with allergies or other needs.

Introductory safety briefing – start of day

- Bore Place is a working dairy farm. We have 240 cows, tractors, delivery trucks, dog walkers, ponds etc. It is therefore very important that we stick together as a group at all times throughout the day.
- If you do happen to find yourself separated from the group, look for someone wearing a green lanyard who is BP staff.
- If you are inside and hear the farm alarm sound, our meeting point is the holm oak in the courtyard (tree with the bench around it).

Introductory safety briefing – prior to farm tour

- We must stick together. Children and teachers will walk behind BP staff member at all times.
- We are going to WALK very calmly around the site, trying not to shout or raise our voices.
- Try not to touch anything. Try not to touch your face.
- Make sure you wash your hands thoroughly when we get back to Middle Yard.
- Change your boots when we get back.

Introductory safety briefing – prior to forest school style session

- Clearly establish boundaries of area being used.
- Discuss foraging policy or insist on 'no pick, no lick', depending on group and activity.
- Demonstrate safe use of sticks.
- Demonstrate specific activity.
- Explain that '123 over to me' means return to base camp immediately.
- Demonstrate what to do if a dog comes on site.

Stick policy

- We don't use sticks for fighting/hitting.
- Walk (don't run) with a stick, and keep it pointing down.
- If stick is longer than your arm, drag it along the ground, or ask a friend to help.

Tool use policy

- Tools include bow saw, palm drill, sheath knife, pruning saw, loppers, hand trowels, spade, secateurs.
- Any activity involving tools will have a separate risk assessment detailing exactly how the tool should be used.
- Any tool use should be appropriate to the age group, clearly demoed and supervised appropriately.
- If cutting, a glove should be worn on the non-tool hand.
- Tools to be kept in designated area and counted back in at end of session.

- Be prepared to stop activity if child is not safe.
- Suggested ratios: palm drill 1:4; bow saw 1:1; sheath knife 1:1 (not below KS2).

Fire use policy

- Fires should only take place after a dynamic risk assessment of weather conditions.
- Designate a safety cordon around fire. Have water bucket, gloves and fire blanket to hand.
- Remind children of expectations around fire – walk, be calm.
- Self-check – hair tied back, no ‘dingly-danglies’.
- Fire to be supervised by an adult at all times.
- Extinguish fire immediately in case of emergency.
- Kelly Kettle: remove bung. When putting kettle on and off fire, hold handle at 90 degrees. Make sure sticks do not overlap base before putting kettle on (make the kettle unstable).

Foraging policy

- General rule is ‘no pick, no lick, might make you sick’.
- For some activities children will be allowed to forage for materials, e.g., leaves and flowers for hapazome, blackberries to make ink, autumn leaves to make a collage.
- Tutor will point out which plants the children are allowed to pick, and will make clear any that should not be touched (or move to a different site, depending on plant and group).
- Use rigger gloves, especially if picking nettles.
- Refer to allergy information in advance of activity.
- Only take what you need for the activity, leave the rest for nature.

Pond dipping policy

- Pond dipping only takes place under strict supervision of BP staff.
- Depending on pond, only a small group of children will be dipping at one time, with no more than two children at the edge of a platform at any one time.
- Other children will be given tasks away from the water’s edge (supervised by teachers).
- No running near ponds.
- Adults only to fill bowls and tubs with water.
- BP tutor will inspect platforms and area prior to session.
- BP tutor will demo safe technique to group.
- Cover any cuts with plasters.
- Wash hands thoroughly at end of session.

Emergency procedures

Indoors:

- If the fire alarm sounds, exit through the nearest marked emergency exit.
- Assemble group under holm oak (big tree with bench round it) in courtyard.
- Class teacher is responsible for taking register of children and staff.
- Await further instructions from BP fire officer.

Outdoors:

- Emergencies that may arise include:
 - Child runs off
 - Child or adult sustains injury
 - Unsupervised dog on site
 - Stranger approaches group
 - Fire (see separate fire use policy)

In the event of an emergency:

- Call group back to central point. One teacher takes responsibility for role call. Keep group together in one place (play a quiet game etc) while another teacher/BP tutor organises search or administers first aid where appropriate.
- In event of unwanted attention from a dog or swarm of insects, children are encouraged to stand very still.
- If extra help is needed, BP tutor will return to Middle Yard to request assistance and/or contact emergency services.

General site risk assessment

Potential risk	Mitigating steps
Changing conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out dynamic risk assessment and safety sweeps on the morning of each visit Be prepared to change plans or make alterations to site if necessary
Separation from group – dangers from livestock, vehicles, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thorough safety briefing at start of day, emphasising importance of sticking together. Repeat/remind students throughout the day if necessary Teachers to carry out regular head counts. Separate children into small groups to make counting easier. No one goes into farmyard without BP staff member Look out for vehicles together
Farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See separate safety briefing Ensure hot water, soap and paper towels are available on return to MY Very dirty boots can be washed at outside hoses All participants should bring two pairs of shoes and should change out of the shoes they wore on the farm before going inside or getting back on their bus Pregnant women should avoid the farm during calving time
Outdoor classrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamic risk assessment/safety sweep carried out before each session Hazards to be removed/taped off, or relocate if necessary Establish clear boundaries at the beginning of the session Brief children on specific activities and hazards according to dynamic risk assessment
Indoor areas including toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Floors to be kept dry, spillages mopped up immediately Encourage walking and calm behaviour Do not stack more than six chairs on top of one another in classrooms If fire alarm sounds, follow Emergency Procedure
Areas of water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All water is clearly marked If doing an activity that goes near water e.g. orienteering, bring students' attention to potential hazards. Encourage walking instead of running. Consider using star orienteering method with younger groups. See separate pond dipping procedure
Members of public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All BP staff to wear lanyards. Children are encouraged to look for these if they become separated from the group Many areas of the site are open to other booked visitors and/or members of the public. Staff to remain vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour to management.

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Scratches, bites, stings; poisonous plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants are encouraged to wear long sleeves/trousers• Safety sweep to check for obvious signs of nests prior to activity• Be aware of any allergies; school staff carry medication/EpiPens etc• See separate foraging policy
Electric fences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check for location of fences when deciding on route or walk• Brief children not to touch or through things at fences• If walking across fields with electric fencing, ensure people cross at supplied crossing point or squeeze gap or wait for group leader to lay fencing on ground before crossing.

Risk/benefit analysis of activities

Activity and benefits	Possible risks	Mitigating steps
Den building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Team work ○ Creativity ○ Problem solving ○ Physical exertion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pole falling on head ○ Pole/stick hitting child whilst being carried ○ Stick in eye 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thorough briefing at beginning of activity ○ See separate stick policy – demonstrate safe carrying of sticks ○ Don't go into the den until it's finished ○ Take extra care when dismantling
Worm survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Connecting children to nature through hands-on discovery ○ Sensory stimulation ○ Teaching them to care about nature ○ Contributing to survey knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Injury from spade/trowel ○ Bacteria in soil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See separate tool use policy ○ Make sure everyone washes hands thoroughly at end of session ○ Cover any cuts and/or wear gloves
Seasonal site walk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Connecting children to nature ○ Learning the names of common species ○ Noticing the changing seasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Separation from group ○ Poisonous plants ○ Insect bites/stings ○ Electric fences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See introductory briefing. Frequent head counting ○ See foraging policy ○ Children should wear long sleeves/trousers. In case of swarm, encourage group to stand very still. Check allergy information, teachers to make sure medication is carried. ○ Alert children to presence of electric fences and instruct not to touch
Farm tour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning about where food comes from ○ Empathy with livestock ○ Understanding a profession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Injury from livestock, vehicle ○ Cross-contamination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thorough safety briefing ○ If child can't comply, they may have to go back to classroom ○ Don't touch face ○ Thorough hand washing on return. ○ Change boots on re-entering building
Environmental art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Poisonous plants ○ Bites/stings ○ Cuts from scissors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See separate foraging policy ○ Supervise scissor use.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exploring and connecting with the natural world ○ Self-expression ○ Trying something new ○ Self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Injury while using tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See separate tool use policy
<p>Veg garden tour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Finding out where food comes from ○ Learning about the parts of a plant ○ Connecting with nature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tractors ○ Child separated from group ○ Injury from using tool ○ Poisonous plants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See safety briefing, tool and foraging policies
<p>Fire lighting and cooking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning to respect and use fire safely ○ Self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Burns ○ Fire gets out of control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See separate fire use policy
<p>Pond dipping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learn about amphibian and invert life cycles ○ Connect with an unfamiliar habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Child falls in pond, risk of drowning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See separate pond dipping policy
<p>Sweep netting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learn about inverts and their lifestyles ○ Learn to appreciate the importance of inverts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sting/bite ○ Wasp/bee nest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children should wear long sleeves/trousers ○ Check area beforehand for signs of nests ○ Be aware of any allergies in group. Make sure EpiPens are carried

Incident reporting

- Any accident, incident or near-miss on site should be reported to your tutor, who will fill out a report.
- Copies of this report will be forwarded to the school who should forward it to the parents.
- Risk assessments will be reviewed in light of the report as appropriate.