



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

Safety Codes of Practice – Brackenhurst

June 2021

Health and Safety Codes of Practice for Brackenhurst Environmental Education Centre.

Emergency Contacts

Your School:

Telephone Number(s):

Centre:

**Simon Williams, Brackenhurst Environmental Education Centre,
Brackenhurst College Campus of The Nottingham Trent University,
Southwell, Notts NG25 0QF.**

Telephone: 01636 817059 (classroom) 01636 817092 (main reception)

**Nottinghamshire LA Outdoor Education Adviser
01623 556110**

Nottinghamshire LA Emergency Helpline
In the event of an 'after hours' emergency,
when no support staff are available:
0300 456 4546

**If the situation is life threatening, immediately ring:
999
(Centre address is above)**

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Introduction

This booklet is aimed at providing all the necessary practical information required for groups visiting the Environmental Education Day Centre at Brackenhurst. The Environmental Education Day Centre is maintained by Nottinghamshire County Council Local Authority (LA) for schools. Safety at the centre is managed by the Council's Outdoor and Environmental Education team in conjunction with Nottingham Trent University at Brackenhurst.

By describing the standards of safety provided for schools by the Outdoor and Environmental Education team (OEE Team) and standards which visiting schools are recommended to provide for their pupils, it provides a quality assurance document for governors, head teachers, teachers, parents and pupils alike.

Because the safety of visiting one of the centres is the joint responsibility of the OEE Team and the visiting school and other agencies responsible for the management of the site, this document makes clear the responsibilities of and provides codes of practice for all groups of staff. All support staff, visiting teachers and leaders should have access to, and be familiar with, these codes of practice.

The document follows the recommendations and requirements of Nottinghamshire LA's '*Visits Guidance for Children and Young People*'. Schools from other LAs should also follow their own LA's policies in planning and undertaking their visit. Private schools should have their own policy.

The risk assessments for all activities carried out at the centre is available on the internet at www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/outdooreducation and (for Nottinghamshire schools) on the Schools Portal website.

In following this booklet, all concerned need to appreciate that no document of this nature can cover every possible set of circumstances. Safe educational experiences ultimately rely on the common sense and good judgement of teachers and other adults, while working within their own experience and capabilities.

The Environmental Education Day Centres

Health & Safety Policy Statement (including Covid19 requirements)

The Outdoor and Environmental Education staff managing the day centres recognise their responsibility for giving effect to Nottinghamshire County Council's safety policies for the protection of all centre staff, pupils, visiting teachers and members of the public liable to be affected by the operations and activities of the centres.

Within the line management structure of Children, Families and Cultural Services, The management at Nottingham Trent University, the Head of Centre or tutor based at the centre will manage the health and safety functions of the centre to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, injuries to any person as a result of the operation of the centre by provision of safe premises and equipment, and the effective management of the work activities over which the centre exercises control. This provision will be based on the principles of risk management and include any controls and protective equipment necessary for persons identified as being at risk.

The Head of Centre/centre tutor will, so far as is reasonable to do so, ensure that staff designated with health and safety responsibilities are competent to carry these out. It is the duty of all centre and visiting staff to co-operate with the Head of Centre/centre tutor to ensure the safety of themselves, co-employees, pupils and other persons liable to be affected by their activities at work and to follow the operational procedures of the centre.

With the advent of Covid19 a number of safety measures may be implemented to reduce the risk of infection whilst at an activity day at the NCC Classroom, NTU Brackenhurst. Such measures might include: Maintaining, where possible, a 2m social distancing gap between children and / or adults; cleansing door handles etc as often as possible; providing hand sanitiser for everyone to maintain a minimum level of hygiene; reduce the number of visitors to allow 2m social distancing to be possible in the two relatively small classrooms. More guidance will be published from NCC to complement these basic procedures.



Signed:

Simon Williams
Position: Centre Tutor
Centre: Brackenhurst Environmental Education Centre
Date: June 2021



Signed:

Gary Richards
Position: Head of Primary Provision

Safety Responsibilities

Safety responsibilities of the Outdoor and Environmental Education Team

In liaison with the Nottingham Trent University at Brackenhurst, the Head of Centre/centre tutor will:

- take overall responsibility for the management of health and safety of all areas in their operational control.
- through the proper processes of risk assessment, ensure appropriate standards of health and safety in classrooms and other areas under their management, including, where appropriate, the building, furniture and fittings, water, sewerage and other services, fire precautions and procedures, following, as appropriate, local authority fire, environmental health and general safety advice.
- liaise with site manager of Nottingham Trent University, to ensure any areas of potential risk to visiting schools are identified and appropriate measures taken.
- undertake risk assessments and provide written guidelines/codes of practice to schools for activities undertaken in or from the centre.
- provide pre-visit training for visiting leaders through structured meeting.
- conduct a pre-visit planning process with visiting staff in order to agree a safe and appropriate programme.
- except in the case of agreed self-led school visits, provide guidance and advice to visiting teachers and groups and advise on proposed activities in relation to weather and other pertinent factors.
- take responsibility, where appropriate, for the overall management and safety of pupils both on and off-site, including, as necessary, making decisions in relation to the management of activities and the amendment or cancellation of activities.
- provide first aid equipment and materials, written guidance as to procedures to be followed in an emergency and, wherever possible, leadership and management of emergency situations.
- ensure that the centres' outdoor clothing, equipment and teaching equipment is safe and suitable.
- ensure that any catering equipment and provision complies with the local Environmental Health Officer's recommendations.
- undertake supervision and leadership of pupils where so agreed in a programme.
- ensure all Service staff leading activities are sufficiently experienced, trained and qualified in accordance with the centres' codes of practice.
- ensure all Service teaching staff working with schools are trained and qualified in first aid.
- ensure, as far as possible, that schools can make contact during their visit with a member of the Service staff in the event of an emergency.

Safety Responsibilities of the Caretaker/Cleaner at the Centre

The caretaker/cleaner of each classroom/centre is responsible to his/her line manager for:

- ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety and health provisions and procedures affecting cleaning are adhered to.
- cleaning materials and equipment liable to be a danger to pupils or staff are correctly used and properly stored when not in use.
- all waste materials from the centre are disposed of in accordance with LA or site policy.
- maintaining a high standard of housekeeping.
- reporting to the Head of Centre/centre tutor or site staff any problem or imminent danger associated with his/her responsibilities as soon as it is practicable to do so.

Safety Responsibilities of all Council Employees

- As employees, all members of staff have a duty in law to work safely and not put other persons at risk, and also to co-operate with the centre staff and the LA to ensure that responsibilities placed upon them as employees are, so far as is necessary, complied with.

Safety Responsibilities of Visiting Schools

Through the management of the teacher leading the visit, the visiting school is responsible for:

- ensuring the visit leader, and other leaders if possible, attend a preparatory training meeting specific to the centre to be visited prior to the visit.
- **ensuring that all adults in charge of groups working independently are fully briefed by the visit leader in relevant aspects of health and safety including; fire and emergency procedures, organisation and planning of the visit.**
- in the absence of centre staff, taking responsibility for first aid provision and management of fire procedures and other emergencies (it is required that at least one trained first aider should accompany each independent group).
- ensuring teachers and others who lead activities are sufficiently experienced and trained as appropriate to the activity.
- planning a safe and appropriate programme which follows the advice and guidance provided by centre staff.
- undertake a risk assessment for all areas of the visit under their control including the journey to the centre and any special needs of the group (the centre is responsible for risk assessments of the centre and activities provided by the centre).
- undertaking the school's planning and preparation for the visit, including briefing of other staff, parents, helpers and pupils, the provision of parental consent and medical forms and the approval of arrangements by the head teacher. (Nottinghamshire schools use the Evolve system.)
- organising personal insurance for pupils and visiting adults if required, and for teachers on INSET meetings.
- provision to centre staff of all relevant information, including medical information, in respect of both staff and pupils.
- provision of safe supervision of pupils at all times by appropriately experienced adults, particularly during playtimes and at the end of activities.
- **ensuring suitable standards of discipline and behaviour, so that pupils act responsibly in their care for themselves, others, the centre, equipment and the environment. Pupils should be withdrawn from activities if they fail to meet these standards, or returned to school in extreme cases.**
- on agreed independently-led visits, obtaining a weather forecast and ensuring the planned programme is safe and suitable in the light of this.
- establishing a means of communication between the visiting group, school and parents.
- be aware of the Council's policy on the transport of pupils to and from centres.
- smoking is not permitted at any of the centres or associated sites. Alcohol is not permitted at the centres.

General Information about the Centres

Website

For more information on the Environmental Education Day Centres, and to access the centre risk assessments, visit the website: www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/outdooreducation or (for Nottinghamshire schools) the Schools Portal website.

Curriculum Resources

To support the wide variety of activities available at the Day Centres there is a range of materials, linked to the National Curriculum, produced by teachers. There are a wide variety of materials for all ages, ranging from historical trails to literacy, science, sensory and maths activities, to name but a few.

Equipment/Materials

A wide range of equipment is available at the centres. Check with staff if you require specific resources.

If you have encountered minor problems or loss of equipment etc, a note left on the office door will allow us to rectify the situation before the next group visits the centre. If you should inadvertently return to school with any of the centre's equipment, please inform us immediately and arrange for its speedy return!

You will need to provide any paper or consumable items you wish to use during your visit and some photocopying of recording sheets may be required prior to your visit.

Doing our bit for the environment

The Environmental Education Day Centres aim to inform pupils about education for sustainable development. All the day centres are Eco Centres. Please ask centre staff about this or visit www.ecoschools.org.uk. There are paper and compost recycling schemes at each of the centres. Please take any other packed lunch rubbish back to school. Centres now recycle crisp packets. Children can place their empty packets in the recycling bin provided.

Turning off lights when not needed will not only save precious resources but keep our bills low too! The Environmental Education Policy of the centre is on display. Do try to build environmental awareness into your visit.

Care of the Centres

Care of the Centres is the responsibility of the teacher in charge of the visiting group. We do our utmost to create a pleasant, stimulating environment for your visit and appreciate it when groups treat the building, displays and equipment with care and respect. There are brushes and dustpans in the classroom and although we do not expect the Centres to be spotless after your visit, a quick sweeping up would be a great help (especially if children have eaten lunches inside or brought in lots of collage materials).

When leaving the centre please check:

- close any windows you have opened
- lights and taps are turned off
- the room is clean and tidy
- rubbish is taken away with you
- equipment has been returned tidily in a clean condition
- the building is locked
- keys have been returned

Please leave the Centre as you would wish to find it! HAVE A GREAT DAY!

After your visit

Please fill in an **evaluation form** to help us continue to provide what you need. There is also a pupil's evaluation sheet, both will be provided during your visit.

After your visit, children's work, letters, drawings, artwork, photocopies of Trailblazer record books etc will be gratefully received. By sending us such materials you will be helping to make displays relevant, interesting and informative for other schools when they visit.

Brackenhurst Environmental Education Centre

History of Brackenhurst

Brackenhurst School of Animal, Rural and Environmental Sciences is located on the A612 Southwell to Nottingham Road. The estate covers 200 hectares and comprises of Home Farm, the Equestrian Centre, the Animal Care Unit, a Horticultural Centre and a Veterinary Nursing Unit.

The estate land was first bought by a Reverend Thomas Coats Cane in 1827 and he built the Hall you see today in 1828. Since that date the house has been enlarged, mainly by Canes' successor William Norton Hicking, a successful businessman from the lace industry of Nottingham. He established the beautiful gardens, the dewpond, Italian tiles in the rose garden and the Willow Pattern bridge and summer house. He also bought more land, 250 acres in total. He became a nationally known breeder of dairy cattle.

He became a County Councillor and in 1918 was created a Baronet. In 1947 he died and the estate was sold to Nottinghamshire County Council and opened in 1949 as a Farm Institute. Nottingham Trent University took over in 1999 and it is now known as the School of Animal, Rural and Environmental Sciences.

The Environmental Education Centre is based next to the Engineering Workshop with a second classroom in the old dairy at Home Farm. A tutor is based at the centre all year round to assist with school visits.

Working on the Estate

Brackenhurst is a working estate and all visiting teachers must be aware of this whether they are being led by centre staff or self-leading. Please respect the nature of work carried out on the university campus by the farm staff, lecturers and students.

Roads can be busy with student traffic; farm machinery, deliveries etc so always follow the Country Code when walking around, keep to the right and stop to let large vehicles pass.

When in the garden/farm/equine areas, equipment may be left out e.g. tools, hose pipes, machinery, so always remind children not to touch and to walk clear of any obstacle.

Electric fencing is used throughout the estate so please read all signs and act accordingly (see '*Farm Visits at Brackenhurst*', pages 27-29 in this booklet).

Washing of hands is very important after all activities and visits to the farm especially before eating. All cuts and/or grazes should be covered if working near water.

All the animals on the estate should be treated with care and respect. A quiet, gentle approach is requested especially when visiting the sheep, cows and horses. To minimise risk of cross transmission of infection, children should be discouraged from stroking the calves. We do let children stroke the lambs but we always wash our hands afterwards.

Your visit to Brackenhurst

Booking

To ensure the date you require it is wise to book a term in advance firstly by telephone and then by booking form. Always establish the support you require for the day either to self- lead or with the centre staff. The objectives for the visit must also be given in advance so that the staff at the centre can plan your activities and prepare any resources you may need. A preliminary visit to Brackenhurst is essential and a condition of booking before bringing a school party to the centre. This will be arranged by teachers with centre staff as a pre-visit.

The Centre

Brackenhurst Centre consists of 2 classrooms. The main one is situated adjacent to the Engineering Workshops building and the second classroom is in the Home Farm complex, approximately 75m from the main classroom. Both these classrooms will be open for you on your arrival. There will be a form to fill in detailing date you visited and activities, but also numbers of children and adults attending.

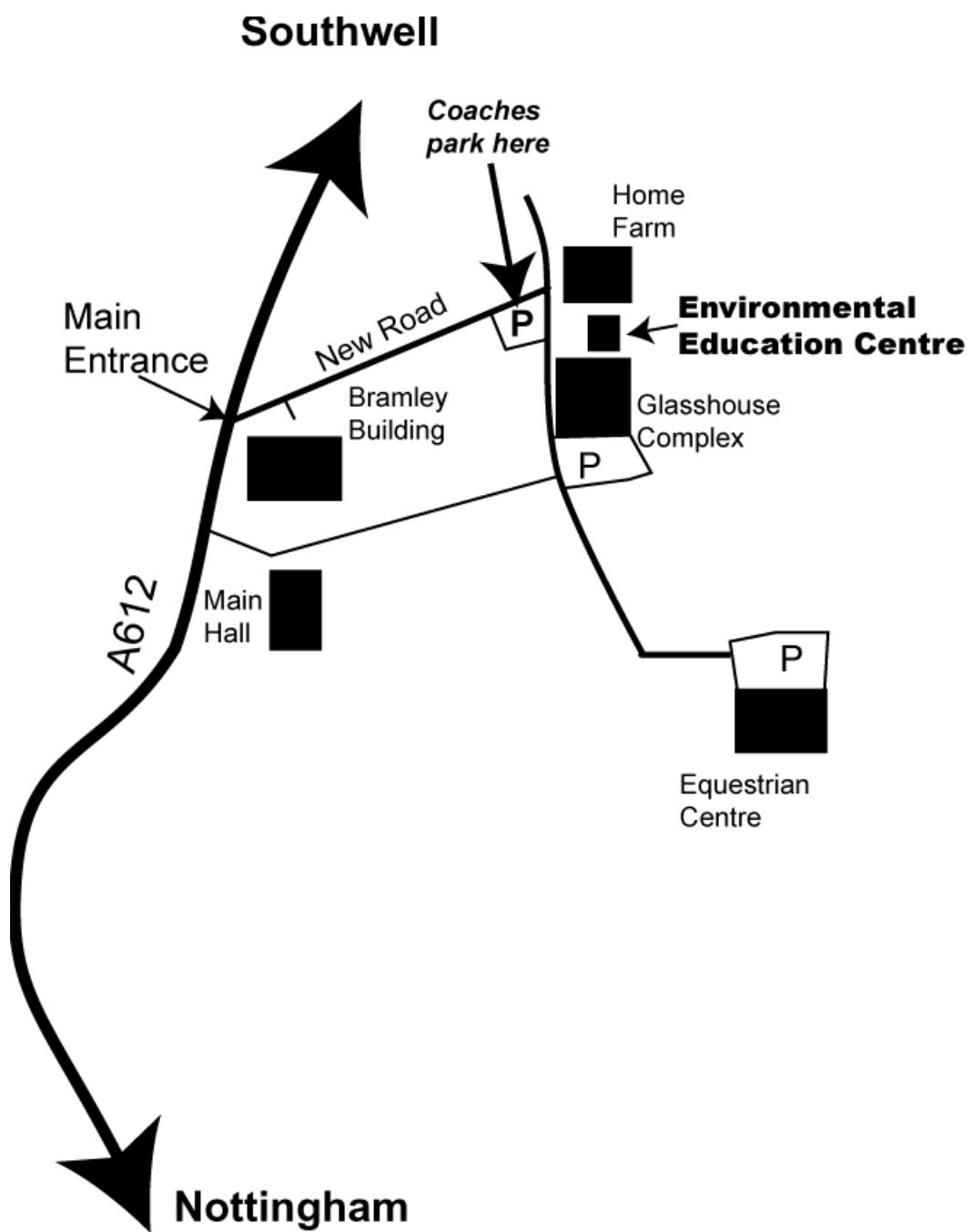
Parking

All visiting coaches should take the main turning off the A612 signposted 'main entrance' and drive along the new road that runs behind the student accommodation. At the end, turn right and either drop off the children in front of the Engineering block toilets or carry on approx. 150 metres to the large car park at the Equestrian Centre where there is a large tuning circle. Coaches are not allowed to park in the car park at the corner of the sports field due to the nature of the surface. Parking for visiting teachers attending a pre-visit is available in the car park at the corner of the sports field.

Facilities

Both classrooms are well equipped with many resources to support your visit. There are tea and coffee making facilities in both rooms for which we ask a small donation. A microwave is available in the main classroom for cheese making activities, but also for warming food. Toilets (including disable toilet) are situated at the front of the engineering block. There are 2 toilets in the Home Farm complex. There is also a toilet block at the Equestrian Centre and also toilets in the Animal Science building.

Map of the Brackenhurst Grounds



Safety Procedures at the Centre

Notes for Leaders

Fire Procedures

1. All staff should be aware at all times that a fire could occur. All pupils and adults should be briefed at the start of the visit re fire procedures and the location of fire alarms, extinguishers and exits. Fire procedure and assembly points are displayed in all rooms.
2. An emergency roll call list must be completed and displayed on the visiting schools' noticeboard in the entrance halls of all centres.
3. On discovery of a fire, the alarm should be raised immediately (by voice, bell or alarm system according to individual centre's provision).
4. The fire service should be called by dialling 999 and stating the address of the centre.
5. The teacher in charge of the group checks all rooms are clear (including toilets and storage areas). Other adults should lead pupils to the assembly area. All of the group are to assemble in the areas designated (see signs in each centre) and a roll call completed. No one should re-enter the building until declared safe by the emergency services.
6. If there is an opportunity to fight the fire, extinguishers in the building should be used. Ensure the correct extinguisher is used for each type of fire. No one may re-enter the building unless authorised to do so by a fire officer.

Medical Information and First Aid Arrangements

1. All day centre teaching staff have current first aid certificates.
2. Relevant medical details of pupils and staff should be brought to the centre along with the register of those on site. Visiting teachers should make appropriate arrangements for the storage and administration of prescribed drugs and inform centre staff of any relevant medical conditions of staff or pupils.
3. Schools should bring their own first aid equipment for their group's use on the journey and on site. However, first aid equipment is located in each centre and leaders should familiarise themselves with its location. Items used from the kits should be reported to the centre staff in order that they may be replaced.
4. '**Teacher safety packs**' are available at each centre for schools' use while on site. The contents include first aid kits, whistle, spare clothing, sterile water, maps of the site and location of nearest hospital, and emergency blankets.

Local doctors' number:

Southwell Health Centre
Telephone: 01636 813561

5. It is recommended that a mobile phone is carried when groups are working away from the centres.
Make sure a signal is obtainable.

6. A trained first aider should accompany each school class on site.

7. If your school is planning studies in water, please read the advice on page 34 in relation to Weil's disease.

8. In the event of a serious emergency requiring medical treatment, leaders should call the ambulance service on 999. Any pupil transported to hospital must be accompanied by an adult.

9. Ambulance access: in the event of an accident a competent adult must meet the ambulance and direct them to the location needed.

Recording and Reporting of Accidents, Illness or 'Near Miss' Incidents

1. Any significant accident or illness should be reported in the accident/near miss logbook at the centre. Accidents or illnesses requiring a visit to the doctor or hospital should be recorded on an SR3/5 form. **A copy of this form should be left with or sent to the centre as soon as possible after the incident.**

2. If an accident requires anyone to be taken to hospital, the Health and Safety Executive must be notified within 24 hours.

3. The head teacher of the school should be informed first of serious injury or illness. The parents are then informed by the head teacher.

4. Any incident which does not get recorded as above, but in the opinion of centre staff or visiting staff could have resulted in injury or illness, should be considered as a near miss. Near miss incidents should be recorded in the logbook. These will help minimise future accidents.

5. If any child sustains a bump on the head and is not referred to a doctor, centre staff and/or visiting staff should ensure a 'head bump' letter is sent home with the child.

6. All SR3/5 forms should be reviewed once a term by the Head of Day Centres and relevant day centre staff.

7. In accordance with Nottinghamshire LA's '*Visits Guidance for Children and Young People*', centre staff and visiting staff cannot administer drugs to pupils except those prescribed by a doctor. It is the school staff's responsibility to store and record the administration of such prescribed drugs.

Weather Forecasts (and water levels for activities by or in water)

- During all outdoor activities, a daily weather forecast must be noted and the day's plans reviewed in the light of the forecast and prevailing conditions. Under certain conditions, a change of plan may be needed. Centre staff will be able to advise on this matter. Self-led groups must always check the suitability of the activities to the prevailing conditions an alternative plan of activities should be available in case needed.
- Groups operating independently of centre staff must make arrangements to obtain a weather forecast and review plans for their day if necessary.

Food Hygiene

Pupils must always wash their hands thoroughly with soap and running water before eating lunch. An adult must supervise hand washing. Do not allow pupils to consume food or drink while taking part in an activity. If a picnic lunch is planned away from the centre, arrangements will need to be made for pupils to wash their hands. This is especially important after pond and river activities, or during farm visits.

Road Safety

1. Although many of the roads and tracks at the centres are quiet, they are used by a variety of vehicles including farm and industrial vehicles. Care must be taken at all times when crossing roads and pupils must always be supervised.
2. Always walk on the right hand side of roads, to face the oncoming traffic, with an adult on the road side. Always stand still when traffic approaches and keep together at one side of the road only.

Outdoor Conditions

Schools must ensure that the group is suitably protected, clothed and shod for the expected weather conditions. Some wellingtons and waterproofs are available for children who are poorly equipped for the outdoors. Please ensure these are returned tidily to the cloakroom area. Wellingtons should be clipped together in pairs and turned upside down in the boxes so they can dry out. There are a small number of adult sized waterproofs.

In particularly hot weather please protect pupils' heads, necks and shoulders and include sun lotion in your equipment.

Insurance

The insurance position is as explained in Nottinghamshire LA's '*Visits Guidance for Children and Young People*'. Teachers are covered by the Council's standard insurance for staff during visits, INSET meetings and pre-arranged planning meetings, but this provides no cover for teachers' personal belongings and no cover for pupils. Schools can arrange school travel insurance or personal insurance for teachers through the County Council's insurance section (telephone 0115977 3331).

General Emergency Procedure

1. All leaders in charge of a group at the centres should be prepared for and ready to deal with any emergency which may arise. Groups are advised to have a mobile phone with them when away from the centre.
2. Take charge of the situation. Ensure safety and wellbeing of the whole group. Make sure all members of the party are accounted for.
3. Establish who is injured or ill and the extent of injuries or illness. Give emergency aid if necessary (to sustain breathing and circulation and prevent bleeding).
4. If the situation is urgent or life threatening, telephone 999 and ask for the required services, giving your name, location, number of casualties and an assessment of injuries/illness. Ask for immediate medical advice if necessary.
5. If you are on a walk away from the centre and have a mobile phone or radio contact with staff there, make contact with the centre for help. If you have no contact with the centre, a written message may need to be taken to the nearest telephone or the centre by an adult and/or by two or three responsible pupils (if this is appropriate to the age of the group).
6. Once any urgent situation has been dealt with, take time to reflect and decide the best course of action. Inform the centre staff, if you have not already done so, and share the problem.
7. Ensure any pupil taken to hospital is accompanied by an adult.
8. Control access to telephones, including mobile phones, to ensure information about the event is managed appropriately. Contact the head teacher giving clear details of the situation. The head teacher should contact parents of any injured pupils, but if necessary the leader must do this.
9. Ensure that other pupils are cared for, that they understand what has happened and are distanced from the situation if appropriate. Be aware that others in the party, adults and pupils, you included, may be suffering from shock.
10. In the event of a serious incident or fatality, centre staff, via their line management, should contact Children, Families and Cultural Services and the Health and Safety Executive. At Brackenhurst, the Head of Department should be informed. Press releases are the responsibility of the Director of Children, Families and Cultural Services (in conjunction with Nottingham Trent University as appropriate). Everyone should be instructed to direct any press enquiries to Public Relations, Nottinghamshire County Council, tel. 0115 9773729.

Activity Codes of Practice

The pages which follow provide guidelines on the undertaking of activities at the Environmental Education Day Centre Brackenhurst. **All activities at these centre must be undertaken according to these guidelines.**

Risk Assessments

These codes of practice are formed alongside the centre risk assessments of the sites and activities. If you wish to view these risk assessments on the internet, visit www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/outdooreduction and go to the website for the centre you are visiting. However, for planning and leading activities it is more important that leaders familiarise themselves with these codes of practice than the risk assessments.

Schools should also refer to their LA's generic risk assessments and their school's specific risk assessments for these types of visits. If necessary the visit leader and Educational Visits Coordinator may need to complete a specific risk assessment for their visit to the centre, particularly if there are some pupils with special needs in the group.

Group Sizes and Staffing Ratios

The whole group must be led by a qualified teacher. It is expected that each separate working group will be under the supervision of a qualified teacher. Head teachers may, however, decide that other members of school staff may fulfil this role. Parents and other adults significantly contribute to good supervision and adult/pupil ratios. It is expected that groups will operate in ratios of not greater than one adult to 10 pupils, though with younger and special needs pupils and for certain activities ratios of 1:6 or less are recommended.

Recommended group size

Larger class groups should be split into smaller groups with an adult. Recommended ratio one adult to 10 pupils (maximum), although this will vary with the ages and abilities of the pupils.

Personal equipment

In wet, cold and muddy conditions, boots or wellingtons are strongly advised (some available at certain centres) with additional warm clothes (depending on the weather conditions), waterproofs, hats and gloves brought if required. Full length trousers are recommended when walking in woodland or scrub areas, or in areas where deer and sheep are present. (Small ticks can carry Lyme Disease). Medication/asthma inhalers, epi pens, sun creams etc. where necessary. In hot/sunny weather, pupils will need a sun hat, sun cream and a long sleeved top to cover up.

Group equipment

Teacher safety rucksack containing a first aid kit Mobile phone/radio (if available) Maps, compass (if needed), whistle Throwing line if walking near water

General considerations for visits to all centres

Discuss with pupils beforehand awareness of and consideration for other groups, such as horse riders or dog walkers. Follow the Country Code; discuss it with group before the visit. Take extra care on country roads. Walk on the right hand side of the road, with an adult on the road side, and stand still when traffic approaches together on one side of the road.

Inform pupils of possible hazards during visit – see Field Studies/Walks Around Site (p23). Follow agreed access arrangements closely and adhere to any special circumstances or warning notices (e.g., no access to deer parks during rut in October/November).

Routes should be planned to take into account the prevailing weather conditions and altered on the day if necessary. For example, a walk through woodland could be hazardous and therefore inadvisable during extreme windy conditions.

Female visitors to farms should be advised there is a possible risk of diseases being transmitted to pregnant women in contact with pregnant sheep and goats. For further information see Farm Visits (p27-29).

Hands must be washed thoroughly before eating with running water and soap, under adult supervision.

Other visitors to sites/general public may be in areas used by schools. Pupils need to be aware of this and how to behave.

Be aware of barbed wire and electric fences on all sites.

At lunch times pupils are supervised by visiting school staff/parents. There should be a first aider with the group and activities the children engage in should be suitable to the terrain and weather conditions.

Children at Brackenhurst should be accompanied to the toilet block.

Watch out for tractors and other farm traffic at Brackenhurst.

When using the Anderson Shelter at Brackenhurst (on Evacuee Days) a safety talk on the correct access and exit procedure should be given before entering and warn pupils of uneven floor and low roof. A maximum of 6 pupils in the shelter at one time.

Conservation

**(including conservation & gardening activities during
an Evacuee Day and Forest School activities)**

Location

Centre staff, in liaison with other agencies, will organise locations and projects.

Leader in charge of activity

Usually centre staff, Brackenhurst staff or other outside agency.

Teacher in charge of pupils

Required to be in overall charge of the group, ie disciplinary matters, motivation etc.

Recommended group size/staffing ratios

Larger class groups split into smaller groups according to the activity – for example, litter picking groups of about six pupils to one adult, depending on age and ability. In activities where tools are used, more adults will be needed. These can be students, classroom assistants or other responsible adults. See '*Visits Guidance for Children and Young People*'.

Personal equipment

Old, warm clothing (full body cover – ie long sleeves and trousers), hat and gloves (depending on weather conditions), waterproofs, protective footwear, wellingtons or boots (some available at some centre), protective overalls if available, work gloves, goggles etc, as appropriate. Medication/asthma inhalers, epi pens, sun creams etc. where necessary.

Group equipment

Teacher safety rucksack (containing First Aid kit)
Flasks – hot/cold drinks depending on time of year
Mobile phone/radio (if available)
Conservation briefing sheets
Tools for the job (centre staff will help organise)

Other considerations

A briefing on how to use, carry and lift objects and any tools must be given at the start of the session. When litter picking, pupils must wear disposable plastic gloves and be briefed about dangerous litter which may carry disease (e.g. needles, sanitary protection etc). It is essential that hands are well washed after conservation activities, especially before eating.

Weil's Disease – When working in or near water, refer also to 'Pond, River & Stream Dipping' and 'Weil's Disease' on p24-25..

Conservation activities should be suitable for the age and abilities of the pupils.

Cover cuts and grazes with a waterproof plaster or rubber glove (check for allergies).

All to be made aware of Greater Crested Newts on site and that they are a protected species and as such should not be picked up or collected.

Orienteering Codes of Practice

Location

On centre site or in surrounding woods, fields etc.

Leader in charge

Experienced visiting teacher or centre staff, preferably having completed an appropriate orienteering leaders' training event.

Recommended group size/staffing ratios

Up to one adult per six pupils recommended to be out on the course in case of emergency or to accompany inexperienced groups on the course. Can be teachers, classroom assistants, students, parents or other responsible adults. A minimum of 5 adults. Less are recommended. Group ratios – ratio for under 5's on the farm is 1:2

Personal equipment

Map (in plastic bag if weather is wet) and whistle (not required on all courses)

Compass (if needed)

Medication/asthma inhalers etc where necessary.

Bad weather Good weather

Training shoes/boots/wellingtons Training shoes/boots

Waterproof coat/jacket/cagoule Suitable clothing (full body cover)

Suitable clothing (full body cover) Sun cream, sun hats etc

Hat and gloves

Group equipment

Teacher safety rucksack containing first aid kit

Mobile phone/radio (if available)

Teachers' maps

Other considerations

Before setting out run through the safety checklist:

- Don't touch/eat fungi or berries.
 - Vehicles (Tractors, Cars, Lorries) – stand to one side of the road.
 - Dogs/horses – do not approach them, stand still and quiet.
 - Children who use asthma inhalers, epi pens should have them at all times.
 - Do not run down hills.
 - Stay together in pairs/small groups.
 - If unsure of direction, go back to base and consult teacher.
 - If members of the public are bothering groups, return to base & consult teacher.
- Once at orienteering site, define clearly the area to be used and revisit any safety points necessary.
- Adults, preferably in pairs, placed at strategic intervals round the course will avoid children straying from the defined area. Adults may be provided with whistles or personal alarms in case of possible incidents which may affect personal security. Build on skills, gradually increasing difficulty and length of each course. Courses should not involve crossing busy roads.

Shelter Building

Location

Woodland areas surrounding the centre.

Leader in charge

Visiting teacher or centre staff.

Recommended group size/staffing ratios

Larger group split down into groups of 2–6 for each shelter. Preferable to have an adult with each group. 1:10 minimum.

Personal equipment

Boots/wellingtons, old clothes, hat, waterproofs etc. depending on weather conditions (fully body cover). Medication/asthma inhalers, epi pens, sun cream etc. where necessary. Work gloves (old gloves or gardening type).

Group equipment

Teacher safety rucksack containing first aid kit

Mobile phone/radio (if available)

Other considerations

Groups should only use natural debris and be given strict instructions not to cut or uproot any of the vegetation. Bracken is invasive and can be used, however, when pulling bracken gloves should be worn. **Do not use sporing bracken during late July/August as spores are considered a health risk.** Session best started by having a planning/drawing session indoors first. Define the area to be used, set boundaries and limits.

Children should be made aware of safety precautions to be considered while lifting or carrying logs, branches etc., and particularly while demolishing shelters (e.g. always have one person on either end of long pieces of wood). The size of shelters should be appropriate to the age of the pupils.

Make sure all children are accounted for all the time.

Pull down any shelters by the end of your visit to the centre. The group who built each shelter should demolish it themselves carefully, piece by piece, under supervision. Pupils not involved in demolishing should stand well back. No one should be inside the shelter during demolition. **There should be no evidence that you have been there (including no litter).** Hands must be washed thoroughly before eating – if necessary use medicated hand wipes. Consider weather conditions when shelter building (e.g. very strong winds or thunderstorms would make woodland activity inappropriate).

Field Studies/Walks around the Site

(E.g. Habitat Studies, Earth Walks, Discovery Trails)

Location

Centre grounds and surrounding areas, woodland, farmland, hedgerows, fields, lanes etc.

Leader in charge

Visiting teacher (who is experienced in working in and familiar with the environment and the activity which is proposed), or centre staff.

Recommended group size/staffing ratios

Group size varies according to age of pupils and activity – larger class groups should be split into smaller ones. 1:10 minimum.

Personal equipment

Boots, wellingtons, waterproofs, hat, gloves (dependent on time of year/weather/activity), food, drink, map, compass (if required). Medication/asthma inhalers, epi pens, sun cream etc where necessary.

Group equipment

Teacher safety rucksack containing first aid kit

Mobile phone/radio (if available)

Map/compass

Whistle

Specialised field study equipment (dependent on activity)

Other considerations

It is important that teachers are aware of the environmental implications of over use of sites and consideration of others in the environment (forestry, farming, traffic, public etc) and that studies are planned according to prevailing weather conditions.

Pupils should be briefed before the activity about the possibility of encountering horses, dogs, poisonous plants, berries, fungi or hazardous litter and how to behave if they do so.

It is essential that farm visits are arranged by centre staff.

Pupils should be shown how to use any equipment before the activity begins, to ensure it is used safely and correctly.

Pupils should not put their fingers in mouths, nostrils or eyes.

Hands should be thoroughly washed before eating, under running water with soap with adult supervision.

All to be made aware of Greater Crested Newts on site and that they are a protected species and as such should not be picked up or collected.

Pond Dipping/Studies

Location

Ponds in areas surrounding the centre.

Leader in charge

Experienced visiting teacher or centre staff.

Recommended group size/staffing ratios

Recommended group size of a maximum of six pupils to one adult for younger pupils.

Pupils should work in pairs or threes.

Personal equipment

Wellingtons, suitable old clothing and spare clothing, waterproofs, hats, sun cream etc (depending on the weather conditions). Medication/asthma inhalers, epi pens, sun creams etc where necessary.

Group equipment

Pond dipping equipment – nets, buckets, trays, hand lenses etc

Teacher safety rucksack containing first aid kit

Centre staff/teacher to carry throw line at all times

Mobile phone/radio (if available)

Map of site

Water safety equipment, if appropriate to the venue, e.g. throwing line

Spare clothing and towels

Other considerations

Inspect the site before the visit to assess water depth and speed, ease of access, state of banks or edges and the overall state of the water. (Does it appear to be clean, does it smell or have scum or algae on the surface, is it suitable for the activity?) Assess weather conditions and alter plans if appropriate. Where provided, use steps or platforms to access water.

Please read advice on Weil's disease over page. You may wish to inform parents of this very rare disease.

Define clearly the areas used and safety precautions before setting out. Ensure the group stays in visual contact with the teacher throughout the activity and that no one wades into the water unless asked to do so, or pushes/splashes others. Cuts and grazes must be covered with plasters/plastic gloves (check for allergies).

On the dipping platform at Brackenhurst no more than 10 children at one time and always accompanied by 2 adults.

Pupils should not put fingers or equipment into their mouths, nostrils or eyes and should not eat at the study site. Hands must be washed thoroughly before eating under running water with soap. Adult supervision of hand washing is essential.

Avoid disturbing water wildlife and do not put any creatures under undue stress by keeping them out of the pond or stream for long. All water life must be returned to the original site at the end of the session.

All to be made aware of Greater Crested Newts on site and that they are a protected species and as such should not be picked up or collected.

Weil's Disease

Weil's disease (or leptospirosis icterohaemorrhagiae) is an infection caused by bacteria carried in rats' urine, which contaminates water and wet river banks. The bacteria does not survive long in dry conditions. The likelihood of becoming infected is greater from stagnant or slow moving waterways, where rats are present.

Weil's disease is rare, but it can be a serious illness requiring hospital treatment and can lead to kidney or liver failure. The disease is a notifiable illness.

It is caught by absorbing the bacteria through the skin and the mucous membranes of the mouth and eyes. The bacteria gets into the bloodstream more easily through a cut on skin.

Should anyone fall ill with the symptoms after contact with infected water, particularly within a period of 3-19 days, they should see their doctor immediately. The most common symptoms are: temperature, an influenza-like illness, and joint and muscle pains. Tell the doctor you have been in water and where. It is important that antibiotics are administered straight away if there is any chance of having contracted Weil's disease. A blood test is usually taken to confirm the illness. Doctors can obtain advice and more information about the disease from the Leptospirosis Unit, Hereford Hospital on 01432 818822.

Preventative action to take

1. Cover open scratches or wounds with waterproof plasters before arriving at the centre. Bring plastic/rubber gloves for any pupils with such scratches to wear during the water activity.
2. Always use suitable footwear to avoid cutting feet.
3. Wash hands after contact with streams or ponds.
4. Tell all pupils and parents that Weil's disease is rare. However, if they have a flu-like illness up to 19 days after the visit to go to their GP and tell him/her that they have been in contact with water and could possibly have contracted Weil's disease.

Outdoor Adventurous Activities

(e.g. blindfold walks & games, use of adventure playgrounds, problem solving activities)

Location

Woodland and areas surrounding the centres including adventure playgrounds.

Leader in charge

Experienced teacher or centre staff.

Recommended group size/staffing ratios

Varies according to age of pupils and activity planned. Suggested maximum of six children to one adult for younger pupils.

Personal equipment

Suitable old clothing for the prevailing weather conditions (full body cover), wellingtons/ boots, gloves, hat etc. Medication/asthma inhalers, epi pens, sun cream where necessary. Work gloves where necessary.

Group equipment

Teacher rucksack containing first aid kit

Mobile phone/radio (if available)

Map/compass (if needed)

Whistle

Equipment for activities, for example ropes, blindfolds etc

Other considerations

Pupils and adult helpers should be introduced to the equipment, activities and safety procedures before setting out from the centre, including information on safe lifting and carrying of objects and other people (e.g. team challenges).

The site chosen for the activity should be suitable. Boundaries need to be set for activities to take place.

Teachers should be familiar with the area and with the ability and confidence levels of the pupils. Any children who are not at ease with the activity should be allowed to watch and join in only when they feel confident to tackle what is required of them.

Children should be closely supervised when undertaking activities such as blindfold walk & blindfold games, with adults placed by obstacles and at suitable intervals to ensure safety.

They should hold on to the rope at all times on the blindfold walk and younger pupils work in pairs with one sighted to support the other. Glasses removed for all blindfold activities.

Ensure pupils are accounted for at all times during the activities. Hands must be washed thoroughly before eating under running water with soap and adult supervision.

Farm Visits at Brackenhurst

(e.g. Home Farm Barns (when lambing), Trailer Ride, Evacuee Day, Victorian Garden, Greenhouse Visit, Nativity)

Location

Three farms at Brackenhurst College: Brackenhurst Farm, Durdham Farm and Home Farm. The Equestrian Centre, Animal Care Unit, Brackenhurst Hall and Horticultural Unit. Trails and walks will vary according to season and required programme.

Leader in charge

Qualified teacher must have attended INSET at Brackenhurst and be familiar with site.

Recommended group size/staffing ratios

No more than one class per group (25 to 35) for general walking.

No more than 15 children in the Greenhouse or 8 in each room of the Animal Care Unit..

No more than 8 children in the Anderson Shelter.

Ratio of adults to children will vary according to age and ability. For the youngest children (fives and under) and children with special needs, a ratio of 1:2 is recommended.

For older children, a ratio of 1:5 or 1:6 may be more appropriate. This group must stay in close contact with the adult at all times and in overall contact with the teacher in charge.

Personal equipment

Wellingtons are ideal – some are available at the centre. Boots or strong shoes which can be easily cleaned are a suitable alternative. A change of footwear is recommended and a carrier bag to take home dirty footwear will be needed, a slip will be provided to take home.

Group equipment

Whistle Map of site Mobile phone (if available)
Centre teacher safety Farm safety checklist
rucksack containing first aid kit

Hygiene

No eating or drinking on site.

If visitors are in contact with farm animals they should not place their faces against the animals or put their fingers into their own mouths or near their own faces afterwards.

Wellingtons will need to be cleaned after use.

Before contact with animals, ensure cuts and grazes (especially on hands) are covered with waterproof plasters and/or plastic/rubber gloves (be aware of allergies). After contact with plants and animals, and particularly before eating or drinking, ensure all visitors wash their hands thoroughly with soap and running water and dry well. **NB** – washing should be supervised by an adult.

Children must not let calves suck their fingers as this can transmit disease.

Other considerations

- Leader should assess floor surfaces in Home Farm barns, green house and slabs at the Main Hall.
- Always follow the Country Code. Walk on right hand side of all roads/lanes. Watch for farm and Equestrian Centre traffic and cars (students at Brackenhurst). When taking children to the toilets be aware of the road immediately outside the classroom.
- Everyone must be seated at all times on the trailer.
- Weather conditions (e.g. high winds) should be taken into consideration when visiting Greenhouse area.
- Animals – some may bite/kick.
- Animal food – do not taste etc.
- Farm chemicals.
- A quiet, gentle approach is requested particularly when visiting the calves/lambs.
- Farm chemicals.
- Debris lying around – rusty metal, concrete blocks or bricks.
- Slurry on the ground – danger of slipping.
- Farm machinery – children should be made aware of the safety precautions before setting off.
- Animal food taste.
- Poisonous berries/fungus may be found on the site.

.And all areas where mature trees are growing

Everyone must wash their hands

after touching any animals, farm buildings, fences etc and before eating or leaving the site. They should wash with liquid soap, under running water, with children supervised by an adult.

Always follow the Countryside Code!

Walk on the right hand side of the road and at all times be aware of farm traffic and cars on site.

To avoid risk of infection

following contact with animals (e.g. E coli O517), children must not put their faces against animals or put anything in mouths or near faces.

Farm Safety Check List

Brackenhurst Environmental Education Centre

To avoid risk of infection
following contact with animals
(e.g. E coli 0517), children must
not put their faces against
animals or put anything in mouths
or near faces or near faces.

Everyone must Remain seated when riding on the trailer.

Watch out for barbed wire and electric fences.
If you are unsure whether a fence is electric, assume it is!

Brackenhurst is a working farm.
Watch out for signs of chemicals use, e.g. spraying and avoid.

Everyone must wash their hands after touching any animals, farm buildings, fences etc. and before eating or leaving the site. They should wash with liquid soap, under running water, with children supervised by an adult.

Staff from the centre must supervise any contact with animals. Do not allow your children to touch or feed animals unless centre or farm staff are supervising.

Food and drink (including sweets) must not be eaten around the farm.
Remember to wash hands before eating!

Children must not climb on hay or straw bales, walls or fences

Cover any **cuts or abrasions** with plasters.

Brackenhurst is a working farm.
Watch out for tractors, trailers, ploughs, pitchforks etc. and other debris lying around.

Pregnant female visitors should be advised of the possible risk from contact with pregnant sheep or goats.

Always follow the **Countryside Code!** Walk on the right hand side of the road and at all times be aware of farm traffic and cars on

Change or clean footwear before leaving the site and then wash hands.

If someone suffers sickness or diarrhoea after a farm visit, they, or their parents, should explain to their doctor that they have had recent contact with animals.

Animal Care Unit at Brackenhurst

Location

Animal care unit at Brackenhurst Farm

Leader in charge

Centre teacher

Recommended group size/staffing ratios

Maximum one class (30 pupils) split into smaller groups of no more than 8.

Personal equipment

Wellingtons or boots, as for farm visits. No specialist equipment required.
Medication/asthma inhalers, epi pens, sun cream where necessary.

Group equipment

Teacher safety rucksack containing first aid kit

Other considerations

The rooms are quite small inside the centre and the children may need to be reminded to show self-control in order to prevent accidents or disturbing any animals.

The group should be reminded to show respect for the animals and only handle something when authorisation has been given. They should be shown the correct way to handle each animal. Be aware – some animals may bite or scratch, and some visitors may be allergic to some animals. After a visit to the unit, hands should be washed thoroughly before eating food and preferably while on site at the Equestrian Centre or Animal Science Building. Washing under running water, with soap, must be supervised by an adult.

During the visit, fingers must not be put into eyes, nose or mouth.

Female visitors to farms should be advised there is a possible risk of diseases being transmitted to pregnant women in contact with pregnant sheep and goats.

Working In The Centre Classrooms

(including art/craft sessions)

Location

Classrooms at Brackenhurst

Leader in charge

Centre Staff or Visiting Teacher

Recommended group size/staffing ratios

1:10 minimum, 1:5/6 recommended – depending on activities undertaken.

Group equipment

First Aid Kit

Other considerations

RCDs must be used with all electrical equipment and equipment must not be used near water.
Spills on floors must be wiped up immediately.

No hot drinks to be carried around classroom and children are not allowed in kitchen/drink making areas.

When using glitter, be aware that children must not rub their eyes.

Scissors are to be handled sensibly and must have rounded ends.

Any equipment for adult use only must be clearly demonstrated and the pupils informed of this fact.
Low temperature glue guns are to be used by adults only.

Leader in charge must remind pupils of how to safely move around the centre i.e. no running, door slamming etc.

First aider must be in the classroom with the group.

Doors are to be locked at all times.

Contacting Brackenhurst Environmental Education Centre

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