

## **Risk assessment for activities at Mill Bank Farm, Hooe, BATTLE, East Sussex, TN33 9HA**

<b>SITE NAME:</b> Mill Bank Farm	<b>GRID REF:</b> TQ6809
<b>OWNER:</b> Mr and Mrs R.W.H Benge	<b>TEL. NO:</b> (01424) 843707
<b>ASSESSORS:</b>	<b>DATE OF ASSESSMENT:</b>
<b>NEAREST HOSPITAL:</b> Conquest Hospital (A&E), The Ridge, St. Leonards –on-Sea, East Sussex Tel: (01424) 755255	

Thank you for your interest in visiting our farm. We are confident you will enjoy your visit. Please do not be put off by the attention to Health and Safety; it is simply there to make you aware of possible dangers. Most of the following is common sense but it doesn't hurt to state the obvious to ensure we all stay safe and well.

Attention is drawn to the Health and Safety Executive's information sheet 'Avoiding ill health at open farms – Advice for Teachers AIS23(revised). The website is: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

Visitors will be briefed about matters concerning the health and safety during their stay on the farm. Hand washing facilities are situated in the farm class room, as are toilet facilities, including a toilet for disabled visitors to use. Child to adult ratio: Children under 8 years of age 5:1; children aged 8 and over 10:1.

Visitors are welcome on the farm as long as they comply with the safety precautions listed in this document and are able to carry out instructions with regard to their personal safety (if necessary with assistance from adult helpers). Mill Bank Farm holds visitor's safety and that of the animals on the farm of paramount importance. If a teacher thinks a child will be a possible risk to themselves or others during the visit then they should be prevented from attending. A Waiver is issued by Mill Bank Farm to ensure visitors and parents/carers are aware that it is a working farm and as such demands a high level of safety awareness. Only visitors who have had an appropriate adult sign the Waiver will be permitted to visit the farm – this does not affect visitor's statutory rights.

Visitors must proceed at walking pace only and refrain from making loud noises.

Children must stay with their group leader at all times. Visitors must stay with the Staff of Mill Bank Farm, especially when walking around farm.

The First Aid area is located in the farm classroom.

Visitors must wear appropriate foot wear; Wellington boots are recommended as Mill Bank Farm operates a Bio-security policy which states that visitors must arrive in clean clothes (but old clothes) and have clean foot wear. They will be required to wash down their foot wear on arrival and before departure and must walk over a disinfected mat to prevent spread of disease. Mill Bank farm suggests children bring in their Wellington boots to school well before the trip to allow time should someone forget to bring their boots on the day of the trip.

Visitors must be aware of moving vehicles (the safety DVD shown on arrival will remind visitors) as visibility from a tractor is limited. Staff at Mill Bank Farm will be aware of where visitors are at any given time but visitors must nonetheless seek to keep themselves safe by constant awareness of their surroundings. The yard area directly outside the farm classroom forms part of the farm driveway and has a blind spot indicated by the traffic cones so children must go where they are directed.

The Farm Teacher will carry a basic first aid kit whilst on the farm walks.

In the event of an accident, the accident book must be filled out before the class leave Mill Bank Farm.

## LIST OF ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY:		
Farm walks		
HAZARD	RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW)	ACTION
The weather	Low	Children will be required to bring warm, rain proof coats if the weather is wet and cold. Children will be required to bring sun hats and sun protection cream to prevent sun damage to skin.
Allergies to dust, forage, plants and animal hair	High	Children must bring with them any medication they require (for example inhalers for asthma sufferers, anti-histamine for hay fever sufferers).  Contact with animals is not generally permitted apart from the horses on the farm. Children with allergies to keep a sensible distance and avoid contact.
Diseases from contact with animal faeces	High	Children must take care not to make contact with droppings from animals. In the event of a child touching faeces the child must return with an adult helper to the farm classroom in order to wash their hands thoroughly.
Contracting E-coli from animals	High	All animals must be assumed to carry E-coli 0157. Hand washing must be carried out after any contact with any animal, before eating, after visiting the toilet and at regular intervals during the visit.
Cattle	Medium	The Mill Bank Farm Teacher will only take children in areas where the cattle will not be disturbed. Children will be in the same fields as the cattle (during summer months) but will not walk amongst the cattle – a safe distance will be kept at all times. It must be noted that many public footpaths in the U.K run over grazed farm land with stock present. No visitors will be permitted in the fields if the Bull is visiting!
Cattle	Medium	When cattle are housed in the barn, physical contact is not permitted. Viewing only. Serious injury can occur by putting hands, arms etc through metal hurdles towards cattle.
Animals escaping	Medium	In accordance with the country side code of practice, gates will be left according to how they are found.

		All adult helpers to ensure gates are left and secured how they were found.
Uneven walking surfaces	Medium	Visitors must proceed at walking pace only. The farm's ground is uneven so care must be taken. Particular attention must be given to areas occupied by sets and warrens.
Risk of drowning	Medium	Children will only pond dip from scrapes on the marsh land unless the water levels are particularly low in the dykes. Children must stay with their group leader. Group leaders must carry out regular head counts.
Barbed wire on stock fence	Low	Visitors must not lean or climb on stock fence; it has barbed wire which can cause damage to skin and clothing.
Danger of climbing	High	On no occasion can visitors climb on farm equipment (unless they are doing the tractor activity when the tractor is stationary). Farm equipment often has sharp implements protruding from it. Bales of hay and straw can crush a person resulting in death.

**ACTIVITY: Pond dipping**

HAZARD	RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW)	ACTION
Access to pond	High	Fenced area, gated access – no access unless supervised.  Only three children to pond dip at a time from domestic pond (other children supervised in class room or activity away from pond.)  Children to pond dip whilst seated to avoid falling in.
Access to dyke	High	Area not fenced (as cattle drink from it) but children must always be supervised.  Farm teacher will instruct children how to pond dip and where. No dipping shall take place by the river side of the Waller's Haven.
Bacteria on pond water	Low	Health and safety talk to all visitors. Visitors with cuts should use disposable latex gloves. Advice on how to use nets to avoid splashing. Hand washing must be carried out before eating. Antiseptic wipes to be used if hand washing facilities not in immediate vicinity.

**Activity: Mini-beast hunt**

Hazard	Risk (Low, medium, high)	Action
Wild life hazards (fungi or snakes)	Low	Warn children not to approach
Trip hazard	Low	Children instructed not to run in the wooded area. They must watch where they walk at all times.
Lifting logs and stones.	Low	<p>Children instructed to ask an adult to turn stones or logs if too heavy. Adults must only do so with bent knees to avoid back injury. If the adult is not prepared to do this then the Farm Teacher will.</p> <p>Care must be taken not to trap fingers under stones.</p> <p>The Farm Teacher will instruct how to carry out the activity to ensure minimal disturbance for the mini-beasts.</p>
Disease from the soil via cuts	Medium	Children with cuts will be given a pair of latex gloves to prevent soil making contact with cut/s in skin.

<b>ACTIVITY: Map/journey sticks</b>		
<b>HAZARD</b>	<b>RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW)</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
Children swinging their journey stick resulting in another child being hit.	Medium	Children will be instructed how to carry their sticks safely (by keeping the ends carried in a vertical position). They must keep them by their side and not swing it around.
Contact with potentially poisonous plants or object.	Low	Only plants and objects advised by the Farm Teacher will be permitted to be attached to stick by wool. Children will be instructed not to touch plants unless given permission.
<b>Activity: Sweep netting</b>		
<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Risk (Low, medium, high)</b>	<b>Action</b>
Metal frame on sweep net	Low	Children instructed to sweep a safe distance away from group members. Teachers and helpers to supervise.
Direct access to river from marsh.	High	Farm teacher will instruct group to stay away from edge and all adult helpers must monitor their group. Life ring in situ.
<b>ACTIVITY: Looking at soils</b>		
<b>HAZARD</b>	<b>RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW)</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
Disease from soil making contact with broken skin	Medium	Visitors to wear latex gloves if they have cuts or grazes.  Hands must be washed after the activity paying particular attention to under the finger nails.

**Activity:  
Tractor demonstration**

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Risk</b> <b>Low, medium, high</b>	<b>Action</b>
Climbing into stationary tractor with ignition off.	Low	Staff to offer assistance into the cab to avoid tripping/falling.
Moving of tractor	High	Visitors must stand a safe distance from the tractor and be within full visibility of the driver.

**Activity: Horses**

Allergies	Medium	Should visitors be allergic to animal hair, they should refrain from touching the horses or being too close to them.  Horses can kick or bite so a safe distance should be kept from them unless staff permit closer contact.
<b>Pigs and chickens</b>	Low	No physical contact with pigs or chickens permitted, only viewing.