

The John Simonds Trust at Rushall Farm

Health and Safety Procedures for River Visits

(see also: Information for teachers or leaders bringing a group to Rushall Farm)

Note:

In recent years climate change has resulted in unpredictable rainfall and river levels. We cannot always guarantee that the students will be able to take their own measurements. We do not recommend river studies in the Spring Term especially as in Keystage2 river studies are being undertaken earlier

Here is a list of suggested procedures for students involved in fieldwork using the River Pang. A number of different sites are used each of which has its own risk assessment.

HEALTH

- Prior to your visit please make sure all students are currently up to date with their Tetanus immunisation.
- Before starting any practical investigations, please make sure that any student with cuts or grazes on their hands or arms has them adequately protected with waterproof plasters which are securely fixed. Staff at the farm will supply disposable gloves where they are needed.
- Please be aware of the possibility of water-borne infections e.g. Weil's Disease. The risks of such infection are low and extremely slight in the River Pang which is a fast flowing clean chalk stream. Still or slow flowing water bodies such as canals and ponds represent more possibility of the disease being present.

Any student who shows any signs of flu-like symptoms within fourteen days of having been in contact with a body of water should see their doctor and explain exactly what they have been doing.

- Please have an adequate first aid kit and mobile phone with you at all times. Staff at the farm will also carry these.

SAFETY

- Pupil-teacher, or supervisory adult, ratios will depend on the age of the student and the nature of the investigations. Please consult <http://www.rushallfarm.org.uk/costs-for-school-visits> for our suggested ratios. Pupils with special needs should be accompanied by a higher ratio of adults.
- Students should not at any time be allowed out of the sight of a supervisory adult. This guide-line should apply even when students are walking from one section of the river to another.
- The Education Officer will advise visiting schools of the safety of the river at a given time. **However the final decision on whether it is appropriate for children to enter the river will be taken by the teacher in consultation with the Education Officer.**
- Waders are available for use in the water and may be worn if considered appropriate by the teacher in consultation with the Education Officer. The waders will not necessarily be the correct size for the student.
- No pupil should ever be allowed into the water with bare feet.
- A 'B-line' water safety device (Throw line) will be available as a precautionary measure.
- It is important that the John Simonds Trust staff are informed on or prior to a visit, of any special needs or other circumstances that might affect safety or the educational effectiveness of the visit. For example, the medical conditions of certain children.

GENERAL NOTES

1. The River Pang is a clean lowland chalk stream of high ecological worth. Please ensure that all visiting students are aware of this prior to the visit and that it is impressed on them that any environmental damage should be avoided at all costs. Disturbance of the river bed is inevitable when carrying out investigations and is capable of being accommodated within the river ecosystem provided it is only temporary in nature.
2. The fieldwork sites are all in private ownership. Some of the landowners accept visiting students under the Environmental Stewardship Scheme. Others have provided the facility out of the desire to help the Trust and share their amenity. Please make sure all students are aware of this and ask them to act in a responsible manner when they are at the sites particularly with regards to noise. It would be a great pity if we were to lose the good working relationship we enjoy with local land owners.
3. Most fieldwork sites are on farmland. Please ensure that all students behave sensibly near farm stock, close gates after them and leave no litter.
4. **The general discipline of pupils during fieldwork is the responsibility of the school staff. If, in the opinion of the JST staff member, the behaviour of pupils or school staff compromise the safety of the children or may lead to breach of the goodwill we have with the landowner, the JST reserve the right to terminate a school visit at any time.**
5. Active involvement by teachers during visits sends a positive message to children and helps to ensure an enjoyable and successful day.

THE JOHN SIMONDS TRUST HOPE THAT YOUR FIELDWORK VISIT TO THE RIVER PANG IS AN ENTIRELY ENJOYABLE EXPERIENCE!