

Helpful Information for Writing Risk Assessments



The following information may be helpful to group leaders as they compile a risk assessment for their visit. A pre-visit for all group leaders is strongly recommended. The Education Ranger can help you with the planning of your visit. If at any time you have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact the Rangers.

Accidents and First Aid

A first aid room is situated next to the Information Point in the Visitor Centre to deal with minor injuries. If the injured person cannot make it to the Visitor Centre please try and contact the Rangers and a first aider will try to get to you.

In the event of a more serious accident either call an ambulance direct or contact the Rangers who can call out an ambulance. If you call for an ambulance directly please let the Rangers know so that we can ensure the ambulance gets through the Park to you as quickly as possible.

We complete accident reports for all accidents requiring first aid treatment. In the event of an accident please follow any guidelines set by your governing body. We advise that you bring at least one car to the Park for emergency transport in case needed.

The Rangers are not trained to administer any medicines, nor are they able to give out any medicines. Ensure that any specific medication for individual children is held by the teacher who has responsibility for them at all times, particularly if / when the group is split. For bites and stings we are only able to provide ice or water to relieve the symptoms; we are not able to administer any sprays or creams.

Lost Children

Should you lose any children in your care please let the Rangers know as soon as you can so we can organise a search. Either phone the Rangers or contact the Information Point.

Safety

Please follow guidelines set by your Local Education Authority, parent organisation with regard to taking groups on trips and carrying out fieldwork. If you would like any guidance on supervision ratios to follow please ask on booking. All schools / groups are asked to make their own risk assessments for visiting the park and will remain solely responsible for the behaviour and discipline of the group.

Both of the two play areas are safety checked each morning and are checked by RoSPA annually. Children in your care must be fully supervised in these areas at all times. The play area is owned and looked after by the Visitor Centre Rangers.

Please remember that Moors Valley is an area of countryside and a working forest; there are lakes, rivers and ponds, uneven footpaths, people and machinery at work. Stay on the footpaths, follow any warning signs and keep those in your care close to you.

Health Risks in the Countryside

We do not want to scare you; the risks of picking up an infection or disease from being in the countryside are very rare, but we recommend a few simple precautions. We recommend all cuts and grazes are covered with a waterproof plaster and hand washing at the end of all activities. We recommend that children cover their skin up as much as possible, wear a sun hat and use sun cream on exposed skin.

We recommend long trousers for children and adults taking part in activities in the forest e.g. Orienteering, Woodland Wisdom. This will reduce the risk of grazes and picking up ticks. Children who have been carrying out activities in the Forest should check for ticks during the visit and also at the end of day. Ticks are small black spider like creatures, less than 5mm long. They attach themselves to the skin to take a blood meal and then fall off; you will not feel them on the skin. Typically they crawl over the skin before attaching themselves in a dark place so regular checking of the skin will usually remove them. Some ticks carry a bacterium that causes Lyme Disease, which can affect the skin or more seriously the nervous system; fortunately it is still a rare disease in the UK. If you would like further information on ticks and Lyme Disease, please ask on booking.

Adders are quite common in certain areas of the Forest. Usually they will disappear out of sight as soon as they are disturbed which will be when you are still quite a way from them. But, if you do come across an inactive snake; please do not touch it, either with your hands or with a stick. Move the group away from the snake; if it is in a busy area please report it to the Rangers on your return to the Visitor Centre.

Insurance

East Dorset District Council has public liability insurance of at least £5,000,000.