



Moors Valley

Country Park and Forest



Learning through discovery,
play and adventure

Activity Pack

FOR SCHOOLS & GROUPS

WELCOME

TO THE ACTIVITY PACK

LEARNING THROUGH **DISCOVERY, PLAY AND ADVENTURE**

Inside you will find details of activities offered by the Rangers of the East Dorset Countryside Management Service who are based at Moors Valley Country Park. We aim to make the activities an enjoyable experience for all, with the emphasis on learning through experience and discovery. It is hoped that the activities will help to foster a greater degree of understanding and appreciation of our local environment and its wildlife. The pack gives you all the information you need to plan a visit, but please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries; by phone or e-mail, seven days a week.

We look forward to seeing you at Moors Valley soon.

The Rangers

Contact: Emma Reeks and Tracy Standish
- Education Rangers, Moors Valley Country Park & Forest
Tel: **01425 470721**

E-mail: **education@moors-valley.co.uk**
www.moors-valley.co.uk/education

Moors Valley is a joint venture between East Dorset District Council and The Forestry Commission

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MOORS VALLEY COUNTRY PARK & FOREST

Moors Valley is set in 1000 acres of parkland and forest. Special features include picnic areas, play areas, way-marked walk and cycle routes and an orienteering course. There is a Narrow-Gauge Steam Railway, 18 hole Golf Course, Restaurant and Visitor Centre set in an 18th century barn.

The Park is a mix of managed coniferous forest, broadleaf woodland, grassland, heathland and two lakes fed by the Moors River. Many areas hold special designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area Conservation Sites (SACs) which provide an incredible resource for our outdoor classroom.



ACTIVITIES

The following pages give details of the activities run by the Rangers; general details that apply to all the activities are given below.

Who are the activities for?

All schools and children's clubs are welcome to take part in these activities. Minimum ages are set for the activities; upper age limits are not always given, as many of the activities can be adapted to suit a wide range of ages. Most of the activities are suitable for students with additional needs but some are more suitable than others. Please contact the Rangers if you would like to discuss the suitability of any of the activities for your group.

Cross Curricular Activities

All the activities are linked to the National Curriculum. Each activity has a lesson plan linking it to the Curriculum detailing aims and objectives and containing an outline of how the sessions will run. These are available on request.

When are the activities available?

Ranger-led activities are offered throughout the year, Monday - Thursday during term time.

Where are the activities held?

Activities can be held at Moors Valley or on other sites managed by the East Dorset Countryside Management Service. These include woodland, meadow and heathland sites in Verwood, West Moors, Ferndown, Wimborne and Corfe Mullen. Please call if you would like to know more about these sites or visit www.dorsetforyou.com/eastdorsetcountryside Within Moors Valley most of the activities are held in the Nature Area, situated just to the north of the railway station, about 10 minutes walk from the Visitor Centre.

Who runs the activities?

The Rangers will lead the activities. All are employees of East Dorset District Council, are first aid qualified, have complied with the East Dorset District Council Child Protection Policy and Procedures (including relevant police checks), are educated to degree standard or equivalent in a relevant subject and have received on site training in the activities. Freelance staff are also used for certain activities. All adhere to the same policies and procedures.

How is an activity run?

For a typical Ranger-led activity, the group will be met at the Visitor Centre by a Ranger who will introduce themselves and explain the activity. The Ranger will then lead the group to a location, where they will give further instructions before leading the activity. All equipment will be provided. Group leaders and helpers are encouraged to become involved in the activities. Group leaders remain responsible for the behaviour of the group at all times.

To ensure you get the most out of your visit, activities can be tailored by talking to a Ranger during your pre-visit.

How many children can do each activity?

For most activities we set a maximum group size of 16 children to one Ranger plus a minimum of one teacher/group leader or a responsible adult 1:8 ratio (meeting with the East Dorset District Council's Child Protection Policy 2009).

For many of the activities it is possible to have two sessions running at the same time i.e. 32 children can do the same activity at once but in two groups. Up to four Rangers may be available to run activities at any one time. There is no limit on the number of activities a group can do in a day, though for younger children we do not recommend they do more than two one-hour sessions.

What should we wear?

Old clothes, long trousers and sensible footwear are recommended. Trainers are ideal for most activities. After rain or on dewy mornings Wellington boots may be useful.

What happens if it rains?

We get wet! Normally we try and carry on with the activity; sometimes it may be possible to switch to a more suitable activity. We will cancel an activity in extreme weather conditions when we consider there to be a safety risk. If you feel the weather conditions are unsuitable for your group you will be able to cancel the visit.

There would be no charge under these circumstances.

What do we do with our rubbish?

Please take it home and recycle as we have **NO** bins at Moors Valley.



Mega Minibeasts

During the summer creepy crawlies abound; some delight us, others torment us and a few scare us. Most are quite harmless and children will be amazed at the variety and number of creepy crawlies they will discover and find them fascinating to study.

June to September is the best time to study minibeasts.

Minibeast Hunt

An introductory session for children to explore the world of minibeasts and the habitats in which they live. In the woodland, children will look at pitfall traps and discover creatures such as woodlice and ground beetles.

Out in the meadow children will use sweep nets to catch creatures living on the long grass and can use magnifying pots to take a closer look.



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Session Cost
1 hour	16	1	£32 (£2 per child)



Minibeast Safari

A longer session held during June and July allows more time to study in the woodland and meadow. The session aims to investigate links between creatures and their environment, looking closely at food chains and adaptations, differences and similarities between ground dwelling and arboreal species. The children can use magnifying pots and simple keys to help identify creatures.

Activities include; sweep netting for grasshoppers, lacewings and butterflies, looking in pitfall traps then under logs and in leaf litter for centipedes and millipedes before shaking trees to get all the spiders and shield bugs to fallout!

Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Session Cost
2 hours	16	2 - 3	£64 (£4 per child)

Water Studies

Water provides a home for a huge variety and number of animals. Children will be amazed to see what they can catch with a sweep of the net through a pond; waterboatmen, dragonfly nymphs, water scorpions, newts and many, many, more.

Pond Dipping

An introductory session where children can discover for themselves the huge variety of life in a pond. After a demonstration the children will work in groups, taking it in turns to dip with a net and put the creatures in a tray to study. A Ranger will be on hand to give out lots of information about the creatures and to help the children identify them using a simple key.



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
1 hour	16	1 - 2	£32 (£2 per child)



Water Safari

A further study of pond life as a habitat, looking closely at food chains and life cycles. We will investigate creature adaptations, which link them to their environment.

Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
2 hours	16	2 - 3	£64 (£4 per child)

RANGERS SUGGESTION;

Combining the sessions will give children the opportunity to recognise species similarities, characteristics and adaptations across three different habitats;

Key Stage 1 – Minibeast Hunt and Pond Dipping, 2 hours, £4 per child

Key Stage 2 – Minibeast Safari and Pond Dipping, 3 hours, £6 per child

Key stage 3 – Minibeast Safari and Water Safari, 4 hours, £8 per child

Trees

Tree-mendous Trees

Trees really are tremendous; what would our landscape be without them? Think of all the wildlife they support, not to mention all the thousands of ways we use timber.

These three activities focus on the variety, beauty and structure of trees as well as encouraging children to enjoy being in a woodland.

1) MEET A TREE

A chance to make friends with a tree. Children will be blindfolded and led to their tree; firstly they give it a big hug; not only to be friendly but also to judge how big the tree is. They feel all around the tree touching the bark, branches and leaves until they think they know their tree really well. They are led away and the blindfold removed and then they have to go and find their tree. Most children manage to find their tree and so realise that even trees of the same species are quite different (just like people) if only you take the time to look closely.

2) WIGGLY WAVY

Using some giant leaves as examples the children will be asked to try and find a real leaf to match the giant one. The focus is on looking at the actual shapes of the leaves rather than colour or size.

3) TREE PASSPORTS

A chance to discover all about different trees, looking closely at what makes trees individual. We will take bark rubbings to look at the texture and leaf prints to see the tree's finger prints.



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
1 1/2 hours	16	1 - 2	£48 (£3 per child)

The Vital Statistics of a Tree

We'll start by doing a quick sketch of the tree then measure its' girth (to tell us how old the tree is), its' height and canopy cover. We will also look at some tree sections to count annual growth rings and discover what information the rings can tell us about past events in the life of a tree. Then we will look more closely at individual trees and make tree passports.

Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
1 1/2 hours	16	2 - 3	£48 (£3 per child)

The Heathland Experience

Britain has a very important role to play as we have 20% of all heathland in Europe and in Dorset we have this great habitat right on our doorstep. There are small areas of heathland at Moors Valley but better heathland sites are to be found in Verwood, Ferndown and Corfe Mullen. If you are based in one of these towns we can plan a heathland day on a site near you.

Choose four activities from the options below:

1) PURPLE PLANTS

A look at the unique plants that make heathland and then make a heathland bookmark using all the different plants.

2) REPTILES

One of the reasons that heathland is so important is because it provides a home for reptiles which thrive in the dry, sandy conditions found on the heath. Find out about the different reptiles and maybe meet a lizard.

3) MEGA MINIBEASTS

A minibeast hunt especially for the heathland.

4) TERRIBLE TREES

In many areas trees are tremendous, but they can be the death of heathland by shading out the heather plants. Take part in some practical work to help remove some invading trees from the heathland using small saws.

5) COWS AND CONSERVATION

To stop the regrowth of those terrible trees and to combat invasive plants we graze many sites with livestock; cattle and ponies. Children will learn the benefits of traditional grazing methods by playing a fun and interactive game.



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
2 hours	16	1 - 3	£64 (£4 per child) or £16 (£1 per child) for EDDC school children

Heathland is one of the rarest habitats in the world. It is even more threatened than the rain forest!

Prof. David Bellamy

Woodland Walk

Walk through the woodland to discover why they are so wonderful. The walk will take one and a half hours with stops along the way to discover the different colours, textures, shapes and sounds in a series of fun and interactive games. Activities encourage children to use their senses and learn through self-discovery.

Choose four activities from the options below:

1) CYRIL SQUIRREL'S SHOPPING LIST

A list of different items to find in the woodland to explore their sense of touch, such as crunchy leaves or smooth bark.

2) WOODLAND RAINBOW

By searching the woodland floor for different colours children will soon learn that the woodland is not just brown and green but many colours of the rainbow – if they take the time to look.



3) CLASSROOM TRAIL

The children will follow a short trail through the woodland along which are hidden 10 items from the classroom. Children have to try and spot all the items. This introduces children to the idea of camouflage and encourages them to walk slowly and to be more observant in the woodland.

4) CATERPILLARS AND CAMOUFLAGE

To start, the children have to search out some escaped woolly caterpillars; usually finding the brightly coloured ones first and the dull ones last, so getting across the idea of camouflage. Children can then test their own camouflage skills by having a go at seeing how well they can blend in with the trees.

5) THE UP AND UNDER WORLD

Usually when we walk along we look straight ahead and maybe from side to side so miss out on all the magical sights over our heads and under our feet. By using mirrors children will be able to discover the magical up and under world.

6) SOUND MAPS AND STOMACH RUMBLES

Firstly, children choose a special place in the woodland to sit and then are asked to listen to all the sounds around them and to try and draw the sounds on a card. Secondly, children can try to listen to the rumbling noises made by a tree as it draws water up from the earth by placing a stethoscope against the bark of the tree.

7) SMELLY COCKTAILS

Create a cocktail using only natural materials and add our special pixie juice to unlock the weird and wonderful smells of the woodland. Will you make the prettiest perfume or the most foul and disgusting stink?

Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
1 1/2 hours	16	1 - 2	£48 (£3 per child)

Feathery Fun

The lakes, woods and parkland of Moors Valley are home to a wide variety of resident and visiting birds. The four activities below aim to introduce children to birds, their behaviour and habitat requirements.

1) WHAT MAKES A BIRD A BIRD?

Looking at different characteristics of birds, and what makes them different from other animals. We will discover why birds have feathers, beaks, lay eggs and how they fly.

2) NESTS AND EGGS

Using real examples, children will take a closer look at nests, studying the designs of different species. They will examine eggs to see individual characteristics and try to match each bird to its egg.



3) GRIT AND GRUB GAME

An activity to demonstrate how unique a bird's digestive system is and the different dietary requirements of each species. Children will be transformed into different birds and then have to go and find food for themselves. 'Food' will be hidden around the area and children must find as much of their own food as possible whilst pretending to be a bird.

4) HOME SWEET HOME

An opportunity for children to build their very own nest! Using twigs, mud, straw and anything else they can find.

Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
1 1/2 hours (4 activities)	16	1	£48 (£3 per child)
1 hour (3 activities)	16	1	£32 (£2 per child)

Greener Gardens

Children will have the chance to learn more about plants and how gardeners can help wildlife. They will discover how to encourage good insects into their gardens. Longer sessions allow children to make a special Moors Valley insect house to take back to school.

Activities include:
Gardens for Wildlife, Plant Science, Good Composting



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
2 hours	16	2 - 3	£64 (£4 per child), plus £30 for 3 insect boxes

Autumn

Autumn is a wonderful time of change, with beautiful colours, cold crisp days and fantastic fungi. Children will learn why some trees lose their leaves and others don't, make their very own leaf identification chart to take away and learn how animals survive the winter months.

Get into Autumn

WRAP UP, TUCK UP OR FLY AWAY

All animals have individual survival plans for the winter; some hibernate, others migrate and some stay awake to face the conditions. We will demonstrate just how hard these animals work by doing fun experiments.

TREES AND COLOURS

We will first look at the differences between coniferous and deciduous trees, children will learn how to identify different trees looking at leaf shape and bark, then celebrate the wonders of Autumn on our tree walk; collecting leaves to make a colour palette and identification chart.

FANTASTIC FUNGI

Yellow brain jelly, antler and fly agaric are just some fungi found here at Moors Valley. The children will learn basic identification skills then head off on our fungi bingo walk.



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
2 hours	16	2 - 3	£64 (£4 per child)

Autumn I-Spy

An exciting walk designed for younger children to get into autumn; we will head off on an adventure looking for clues. Every time a child spies a sign of autumn they get a stamp. Then make a pine cone hedgehog to take home.



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
1½ hours	16	1	£48 (£3 per child)

Autumn

Autumn

Arty Autumn

Children can get arty this autumn creating colour palettes, natural dyes and making blackberry ink.

NATURE'S PALETTE

Natural dyes and inks can be made from a variety of plants and Autumn is the perfect time to experiment as many berries are beginning to ripen and leaves are starting to change colour. Children will be able to create a colourful piece of art on the ground illustrating the changes taking place in the trees above before foraging for different plants to create a natural colour palette and have-a-go at making blackberry ink. Be prepared to get messy!

Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
2 hours	16	1 - 3	£64 (£4 per child)

ENVIRONMENTAL ART

A chance for children to explore the countryside and show their discoveries through art. The activities below are designed to look at texture, colour and shape. They are a great way to get children to look more closely at nature.

Choose three activities from the options below:

1) WOODLAND ARTIST

Using anything they can find on the woodland floor, children can have a go at creating a piece of woodland art, either a picture on the ground or even a little sculpture.

2) NATURAL WEAVING

In groups children weave pictures to take back to school. The pictures are made from grasses and leaves which show the different shapes, textures and species found in the woodland and meadow.

3) COLOUR MAPS

Create a natural colour chart by sticking pieces of leaf, bark, grass and other organic materials to a piece of card. When the children have finished they will have created a map of their nature walk.

4) NATURAL PICTURES

Looking through an empty picture frame children explore the woodland or meadow for a perfect picture. Once they have found their favourite view they have the chance to create a natural picture using only materials from the habitat.

Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
1½ hours	16	1 - 2	£48 (£3 per child)



Forest School

Our Forest School programme encourages children and young people to develop their self-esteem and independence by exploring their natural environment come rain or shine. They gain regular access to the outdoor classroom over a period of six weeks, with achievable activities specifically designed to allow progression, promote new skills and gain confidence, whilst breathing fresh air and being healthy.

Forest School programmes are specific to the group's abilities; activities may vary from two year olds collecting leaves to knot tying to shelter building or learning new practical skills using tools.

Sessions are available on a Wednesday morning and last for 2 hours.

Each session is led by a Level 3 Forest School Practitioner.



Time	Max. Group Size	Age	Cost
2 hours	12	2 years upwards	£384 for 6 week block

Pre-schools

A tailor-made session lasting an hour and a half, based around the changing seasons. Perfect for little ones, a mixture of fun activities keep the children engaged whilst they discover our great outdoors.

Activities may include: I-Spy, animal spot, animal homes, smelly cocktails, natural pictures, minibeast hunt, woodland keepers or tree crowns.



Time	Max. Group Size	Age	Cost
1½ hours	16	2 years upwards	£48 (£3 per child)



Woodland Wisdom

A bushcraft day is set around your wishes. It can last between four to six hours depending on the number of activities you wish to cover. In an average four hour session we can cover approximately four activities.

BUILDING BASE CAMP

Using ponchos children will construct temporary shelters to make a camp for the day.

TRADITIONAL FIRE LIGHTING SKILLS

Children will have the opportunity to step back in time and learn traditional fire lighting methods used from the Stone Age and Iron Age up to the modern day.

TRACKING SKILLS

Learn how to track animals looking at footprints, then children can set and follow their own trails using the skills learnt.

NATURAL CORDAGE

Nettles are a great material for providing us with natural fibres: children will make string to take home.

BACK COUNTRY COOKING

Children can prepare and cook a simple snack, such as sausages, over an open fire.

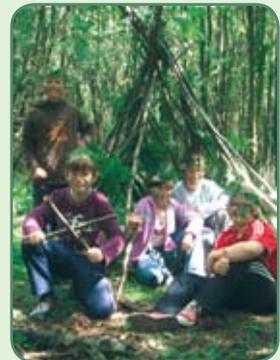


Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
from 4 hours	16	Year 4 upwards	From £150 (from £12.50 per child)

Any child dressed inappropriately will not be allowed to take part.

Natural Shelter Building

A test of ingenuity and teamwork. The group is split into smaller teams (usually five or six). The challenge is to build a shelter from materials they find on the forest floor which the whole team can get into and which can survive a rain shower (provided by the Rangers at the end of the session!). This can be run as a two hour or a whole day activity. On the longer session more time can be spent looking at different designs for shelters, factors in siting the shelter and survival strategies. Offered during June and July.



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
2 - 4 hours	16	2 +	£64 - £128 (£4 - £8 per child)

Orienteering

With over 750 acres of forest, Moors Valley is an excellent place for children to learn and develop map reading and orienteering skills. Introductory, intermediate and advanced sessions are detailed below, offering students progression within the activity.

*Please note, the contents of either a introductory, intermediate or more advanced session can always be tailored to suit your group, varying with the age and experience of the students, the time available and any preferences you may have.

Introductory Session

1) CONE-O EXERCISE

An essential skill is to learn how to 'set the map' or orientate it correctly so it is always set up for the direction of travel.

2) KEYS

An introduction to keys; matching symbols to words and matching the features on the map to those on the ground.

3) STAR ORIENTEERING

Working from a central point the students use a simple map to visit different features and find the control markers hanging there. A good run around within an enclosed area which tests both setting the map skills and keys, relating features on the map to those on the ground.

4) MAP WALK

Students will be introduced to a more detailed map of the Forest before going on a short walk to introduce map work on the move.

5) SHORT COURSE

All the orienteering skills learnt will be put into practice in small groups in the forest.



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
2 hours	16	Year 5 +	£64 (£4 per head)

Intermediate Session

This session will follow on from the introductory session, challenging and developing the students' knowledge of orienteering and will include the following:

1) LOOPS AND RELAYS

Fun and fast moving challenges in the Forest to test the skills learnt so far. Students will get the chance to work individually and in small teams, testing their teamwork and map reading skills against the clock.

2) PACING

For students to successfully use the scale of the map they need to be able to judge for themselves how far they have travelled. They will walk, jog and run 100 metres, counting how many paces they take to cover the distance.

Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
2 hours	16	Year 5+	£64 (£4 per head)

Advanced Session

This session will follow on from the intermediate session, introducing the use of a compass in orienteering, taking bearings and putting all the skills learnt to the test.

1) COMPASS POINTS

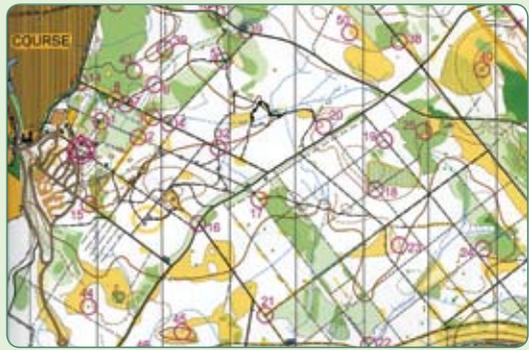
An introduction to using a compass, looking at compass points, direction of travel and how to both take and walk on a bearing.

2) COMPASS CHALLENGE

Armed with only a compass and instructions, students will follow a short course in the forest, testing their knowledge of bearings and judging distances. *Please note, pacing will be recapped or covered if not carried out on a previous session.

3) CROSS COUNTRY

Students will be able to put all the skills learnt into practice, following a route cross country in search of controls.



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
2 ½ hours	16	3 - adult	£80 (£5 per head)

The Orienteering Course

The orienteering course is the perfect follow on from Ranger-led sessions or can be explored separately by schools and groups without the need for Ranger involvement.

An orienteering course can be set to suit the ability of the group and your requirements, can vary in length from 1.5km to over 8km, can be completed by students either individually or in groups, and can be non-competitive or a timed competition.

1) RANGER LED

Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
2 - 4 hours	16	Year 5 +	£64 - £128 (£4 - £8 per head)

Cost includes the use of a map and control card by each student. If you would like to keep the map, a charge will apply.

2) SELF LED

Orienteering packs are available at the cost of £3 per pack (£2 per pack if 10 or more packs are purchased)

The pack includes a map, control card and introductory leaflet. Please let us know beforehand if you are bringing a large group so that we can ensure the right number of packs are available for your use on the day.



Mammals

Moors Valley is rich with wildlife.... some we see all the time like the squirrels and rabbits, but others are shy and only come out when everyone goes home. For a chance to see other resident animals, join in with the sessions below:



Batty about Bats

Did you know there are 17 species of bat in Britain and we have six species present at Moors Valley! For a chance to discover the world of bats and look closely at how they communicate, the habitats they live in and what they eat - join a night walk. Offered between May and October.

Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
Dependant on time of year	16	2 - 4	£64 (£4 per child)

Tracks and Signs

For every young nature detective! Wildlife spotting can be very hard work especially when most of our animals don't want to be seen. However, we always know they are present because of all the clues and messages left behind: food, faeces and footprints.

1) ANIMAL TRACKS

Did you know you can tell which way a deer is travelling just by looking at its footprints? Children will be able to track deer and look out for signs of other animals which live in the woodland.

2) SHERLOCKBONES

Whose skeleton is whose? Children will learn about different animal skulls, seeing how each has adapted to its diet and habitat.

3) POO AND PELLETS

All animals have different shaped poo, depending on their diet. Owl pellets tell a story of what it has had for dinner and show how the species has cleverly adapted to dispose of unwanted food remains.

Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
2 hours	16	2 - 3	£64 (£4 per child)



Squirrel



Fox



Rabbit

ACTIVITY WEEK

A full week of fun and adventurous activities where children will get the chance to learn about and explore the countryside around them. Activities provide an excellent opportunity for personal and social development encouraging children to work in teams and individually. Sessions can be tailor made to suit your group's requirements. Many of these activities can be run as a half day or full day session.

WOODLAND WISDOM

A day dedicated to bushcraft where children will have the opportunity to try traditional fire lighting methods, set and follow trails and learn tracking methods.

NATURAL SHELTER BUILDING

The challenge is to build shelters using only natural materials found on the woodland floor, big enough for the whole team to get into and capable of surviving a rain shower, courtesy of the Rangers!

ORIENTEERING

Suitable for complete beginners to advanced orienteers. The day can include any of the activities found on pages 16 and 17.

ADVENTURE CYCLING

A chance to try real 'off road' cycling whilst learning the technical skills required. Children will cover balance and co-ordination, braking, gear selection and much more.

HABITAT ANALYSIS

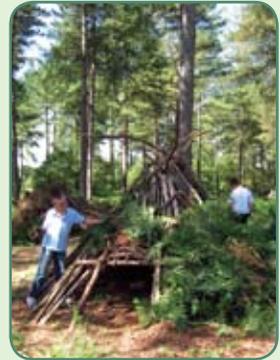
Explore ponds, heathlands, woodlands and meadows, discovering minibeasts and other wildlife before taking a closer look at food chains, adaptations and life cycles. Learn which species are unique to each habitat, including trees, plants and flowers and discover their importance.

PLAY AREA DESIGN

Children will have-a-go at testing all the play equipment before designing their very own play area, a creative activity linked to design and technology and maths.

EVENING ACTIVITIES INCLUDE;

bat walks, night hikes and even campouts, details and price on application.



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
Half and full day session	16	1 - 4	£45 per child based on 16 children per Ranger (evening prices not included)

Recreation

We now offer the chance for children to not only learn about the countryside but also to learn about the activities they can do there.

FISHING

Fishing is a fantastic way to watch wildlife, see the seasons change and relax in the countryside; it is also a professional sport that requires a lot of skill and patience.

GET HOOKED ON FISHING

An opportunity for children to learn the art of angling. Join our fully qualified coach to gain the basic skills and knowledge to go fishing on Moors Lake. All equipment and bait will be supplied. The session will cover; rules and regulations, waterside safety, basic setup of a fishing pole and tactics, demonstration, species recognition and freshwater ecology.



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
2 hours	9	2 - 5	£6 per child

ADVENTURE CYCLING

To give pupils the chance to use and learn skills to ride and explore the forest tracks and trails. The sessions will build confidence on a bike and give pupils an exhilarating taster of off-road mountain biking in the forest. They will cover; balance and co-ordination, warming up and cooling down, braking, gear selection, cornering, climbing and group riding.

All rides are suited to the technical ability of each group.



Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
1 hour	16 (min. group size 8, above 8 to be accompanied by a teacher)	3+	£4 per child, bike hire cost at a reduced rate of £3 per child
3 hours	16 (min. group size 8, above 8 to be accompanied by a teacher)		£8* per child, bike hire at a reduced rate of £7.50 for 3 hour session

*It can be split into 2 x 1½ hour sessions or 3 x 1 hour sessions. Allow a 10 minute turn around time within each session.

GOLF

The Moors Valley Junior Golf Academy is now providing children with the opportunity to have-a-go at golf and learn new skills whether it's a day taster session or a longer course.

Contact the golf team on **Tel: 01425 479776**

Outreach Education



We even get out and about from time to time; the Rangers are available to give talks and guided walks around sites managed by the East Dorset Countryside Management Service, consultations for individual school projects, wildlife gardens and site based education.

Out and about

EDCMS has been running a successful outreach education programme for schools and groups for the past ten years. Work benefits both local schools and local children, encouraging interaction with the natural environment and allowing them to discover their local countryside site or green space. This fosters a greater awareness and understanding of the countryside from an early age whilst instilling a sense of ownership and respect.



Much of the work we do involves children and teachers joining us to explore one of our 23 outlying sites, many hold designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or Local Nature Reserves making each a fantastic teaching resource. Activities include minibeast identification, plant identification, reptile studies, geology and practical hands-on tasks such as removal of invasive species or reptile scrape creation.

We aim for every child to have a positive and memorable outdoor experience where they can take the learning home or back to school strengthening the message to value, understand and care for the natural environment. All the activities in this pack are available to be run offsite in West Moors, Verwood, Corfe Mullen, Sturminster Marshall and Wimborne. Please contact the Education Ranger for details. We believe it's important for children to take their learning home to local sites.

How to improve your school grounds for wildlife and learning

Ever wanted to build a wildlife garden but don't know how or find out which activities encourage children to learn about the environment? The Education Rangers are happy to help you make the most of your outdoor classroom by designing bespoke spaces and suggesting engaging activities for individual programmes. Teacher training is also available. Price on application.



Talks and Guided Walks

Ranger-led guided walks are available throughout the year, topics can cover wildlife, habitat management or the SSSI Moors River system.

Time	Max. Group Size	Key Stage	Cost
Up to 2 hours	16	4+ and FE	£32 per hour

Assemblies

Rangers are available to give interactive and fun assemblies; topics include 'What Rangers Do', 'Conservation and Wildlife' and 'Get Adventurous Outdoors'.

Self Guided Activities

We have a range of interactive self led activity sheets which can be purchased from the Visitor Centre, including nature bingo and scavenger hunts. Bikes are also available to hire from our Cycle Hire centre, for further details please visit our website www.moors-valley.co.uk

THE NARROW-GAUGE STEAM RAILWAY

The Railway runs for just over a mile alongside the lake and play area. Whilst the journey itself lasts for about 15 to 20 minutes, groups should allow at least half an hour to take into account boarding and disembarking.

Groups should book in advance. As a guide, the standard return price in 2012 was £3.20 - adult and £2.20 - child. Discounts of up to 25% are available to groups booking in advance. The Railway shop is located at the main station (Kingsmere Station) and sells a wide range of souvenirs and railway memorabilia, in addition to drinks and icecream.

Please contact the Railway direct **Tel: 01425 471415**

GO APE! HIGH WIRE ADVENTURE

Adventurous adults and children can explore the treetops on the Go Ape Tree Top Junior or Tree Top Adventure Courses. Height and age restriction and supervision ratios apply. No group rates available at present.

For bookings and further details **Tel: 0845 643 9215** or visit www.goape.co.uk



ADVENTURE PLAY AREA

Situated near the Visitor Centre and main picnic area the play area is split into an adventurous area for older children and the 'Castle and Sandworks' area for pre-school and infant children. Both play areas are safety checked each morning and are checked by a certified play inspector annually.

Those in your care must be fully supervised in these areas at all times.

THE PLAY TRAIL AND TREE TOP TRAIL

Ten wooden structures on a trail through the Forest. Play structures include the 'Ant's Nest', 'Crocodile Crossing' and 'Pond Maze' whilst the Tree Top Trail allows you to walk for over 200 metres in the tops of the trees. We recommend you allow 1½ hours to complete both, please be aware that the Play Trail can be very busy so ensure the children in your care are fully supervised. The Forest and Play Trail are owned and managed by The Forestry Commission. For further details on areas managed by the Forestry Commission, please contact the Forest Ranger on **Tel: 01425 477880**

THE GIFT SHOP

Situated at the Information Point and selling a wide range of countryside related items and Moors Valley memorabilia with prices from 50p. A maximum of 10 children are allowed in the shop at any one time. Pre-booked children's souvenir bags, starting at £1.00 can be booked in advance, please contact the Rangers direct for more details **Tel: 01425 470721** or look online.

TOILETS

Ladies, gents and disabled toilets are located at the Visitor Centre and at Kingsmere Station. Please supervise **ALL** those in your care using these facilities.

PICNIC AREAS AND REFRESHMENTS

There is a lakeside Picnic Area between the play area and the lake and a Forest Picnic Area near the start of the Play Trail. Please note: there are **NO LITTER BINS** at Moors Valley therefore you must come prepared to take all your rubbish away with you. There are no undercover eating areas at Moors Valley. For groups on Ranger-led activities we will aim to provide an area undercover for you to eat your packed lunches. Groups visiting independently cannot be guaranteed any space undercover. The Restaurant in the Visitor Centre offers a wide range of hot and cold drinks, cakes, snacks and light lunches.

Groups can be catered for if booked in advance. Please contact the Restaurant direct for details.

Tel: 01425 470537

ICE CREAMS

The wooden kiosk in the car park offers a selection of wrapped, scoop and soft ice creams; groups can be catered for and ice creams can be pre-ordered.

Tel: 01425 474966

The Railway also offer a selection of ice creams at Lakeside and Kingsmere station; please contact the Railway direct if you would like to pre-order ice creams.

Tel: 01425 471415

Information For Group Leaders

The following information answers many commonly asked questions and gives ideas on how to make the most of your visit.

If at any time prior to, during, or after your visit, you have any queries or concerns then please do not hesitate to contact the Rangers.

Pre-Visits

A pre-visit for all group leaders is strongly recommended. A Ranger can help with the planning of a visit even if your visit does not include Ranger-led activities.

How to get to Moors Valley

The park is signposted from the Ashley Heath roundabout and underpass on the A31. A location map can be found on the Moors Valley website www.moors-valley.co.uk

Coaches, minibuses and cars

The car and coach parks are well signposted as you come into Moors Valley. The coach park is only a one minute walk from the Visitor Centre. For groups taking part in Ranger-led activities, your vehicles will have been booked in when your visit was booked.

There will be no charge for the vehicles you bring along for your visit. Groups visiting and not taking part in Ranger-led activities must phone to book in coaches and minibuses. Payment must be made in advance through the Information Point in the Visitor Centre; cash, cheques and credit cards are accepted. BACS payments can be made. Details of this are given on booking. Cars do not need to book, payment is by a 'pay on foot system'. Up-to-date parking charges can be found on the Moors Valley website www.moors-valley.co.uk

Tel: 01425 470721 to make a coach booking. We recommend that all groups visiting by coach bring along an additional vehicle if possible. This has proved very useful in the past when people have fallen ill or needed a hospital visit.

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 then 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.

The Rangers are not trained to administer any medicines, nor are they able to give out any medicines. For bites and stings we are only able to provide ice or water to relieve the symptoms; we are not able to administer any creams or sprays.

If any children in your care have serious allergies or other medical problems please come prepared to deal with any situations that may arise.

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 do recommend a few simple precautions:

Cover all cuts and grazes with waterproof plasters and ensure hands are washed at the end of all sessions.

We recommend long trousers for children and adults taking part in activities in the Forest or meadow e.g. minibeast hunts or shelter building. This will reduce the risk of grazes and of picking up ticks.

Children who have been carrying out activities in long grass or 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 spot them. Some ticks carry a bacterium that causes Lyme Disease, this 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.

We recommend that children cover their skin up as much as possible, wear a sun hat and use sun cream on exposed skin. Please consult your local health authority if you require more information on sun care.

SAFETY

Please follow guidelines set by your Local Education Authority or 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 the activities within this pack have risk assessments prepared for them, if you would like to see any of these risk assessments please ask on booking. If you would like assistance in preparing your own risk assessment for a visit to Moors Valley please contact the Rangers. 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.



INSURANCE

East Dorset District Council has public liability insurance for no less than £5,000,000.

CANCELLATIONS

Please let us know as soon as possible if you will not be able to make a visit. If given one month's notice we will not make a charge, any less notice and we reserve the right to charge in full for the activities you have booked.

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.

Tel: 01425 470721

LOST PROPERTY

Please report any items lost or found to the Information Point in the Visitor Centre.

LITTER

There are no litter bins at Moors Valley, please be prepared to carry all your litter with you and to take it home at the end of your visit.

WET WEATHER

There are no undercover eating areas at Moors Valley. For groups on Ranger-led activities we will aim to provide an area undercover for you to eat your packed lunches. Groups visiting independently cannot be guaranteed any space undercover. It may be useful to check with your coach company if you are able to eat packed lunches on the coach, or to ensure that the coach stays on site in case you wish to cut short your visit.

DUCKS AND SQUIRRELS

There are many ducks and swans on the Moors Lake and squirrels in the Forest. There is plenty of natural food around so please resist the temptation to feed them – they could become aggressive if you start to feed them and then stop.

Please do not let children in your care chase wildlife.

ON THE DAY OF YOUR VISIT

Please report to the Information Point in the Visitor Centre where you will be met by a Ranger.

DRINKING WATER

Drinking water can be obtained from the tap at the front of the Visitor Centre.



BOOKING PROCEDURE

- 1) Look through the pack to get an idea of the activities you might like to do.
- 2) Telephone the Rangers office to book a date for your visit and to discuss the activities you have chosen or visit the website and fill in the online form. Bookings can be made up to a year in advance.
- 3) If you have not brought a group to Moors Valley before we recommend you make a pre-visit to see the Park and to discuss the visit in detail with a Ranger, free parking can be provided for a pre-visit please call in at the Information Point. If you have brought a group to Moors Valley before, you are still more than welcome to make a pre-visit.
- 4) Complete and sign the booking form provided by the Rangers, keeping a copy for yourself. If you are visiting on more than one date please complete a form for each visit. Please return forms to the Rangers Office.
- 5) On receipt of the booking form we will send out a timetable, an invoice and any other information relevant to the visit via email. Please ensure we have your correct email details.
- 6) Check through all the details, if you have any queries then please contact the Rangers as soon as possible, otherwise we will see you on the day of the visit. Please report to the Visitor Centre on arrival at Moors Valley Country Park.

Payment

Payment must be made in advance of the visit either by cheque (payable to East Dorset District Council), cash or credit card. BACS payments can be made. Details of this are given on booking. A minimum charge of £32.00 per 1-hour session applies. Charges do not apply to leaders, helpers etc. Any coach or car parking tickets will be validated at the Information Point.

There are no entrance or parking charges for groups involved in Ranger-led activities.

What you had to say about us

The children had a great day and did not even notice the pouring rain. I thought the day was really well organised and the children were safe and happy at all times. Thank you for making the day so enjoyable for both the children and adults.

COLEHILL FIRST SCHOOL

The staff were knowledgeable, enthusiastic and able to engage all of our students.

PHILIP GREEN MEMORIAL SCHOOL

They have shown lots of interest in camouflage, making mini habitats to hide bugs, making their own camouflage trail etc. It was a big hit!!

WYKE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Excellent as usual - thank you. Pitched well for pupils.

OAKDALE SOUTH ROAD MIDDLE SCHOOL

Thank you for a lovely trip. Thank you for organising the goody bags and thinking ahead about the colours of the pens and rubbers and which colours would be suitable for both boys and girls. We had a thoroughly enjoyable day.

BERRYWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

The children are working at a very low level, so they were experiencing the activity on a sensory level, and got a lot out of it. Lots of looking and smelling, and touching....our blind student enjoyed touching and smelling too.

VICTORIA EDUCATION CENTRE

Great morning's activities - the rangers had good rapport with the children. Good facilities, lovely environment

BULFORD ST. LEONARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

The children had a fantastic time pond dipping. Tracy was excellent, and pitched the activity exactly at the right level and pace. We also enjoyed our self-led activities around the park.

GREENFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

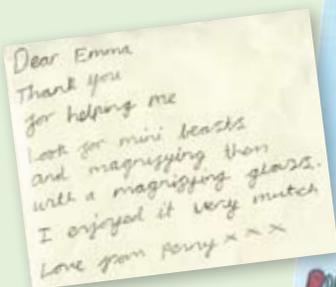
The whole day was brilliantly organised. Thank you!

BROUGHTON JEWISH CASSEL FOX PRIMARY SCHOOL

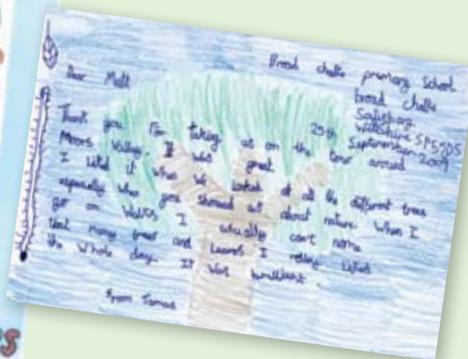
I thought the activities were very engaging for the children. They were always excited by what they found!

ASHLEY INFANT SCHOOL

What the children said...



Dear Emma
Thank you
for helping me
look for mini beasts
and magnifying them
with a magnifying glass.
I enjoyed it very much.
Love you Perry x x x



Dear Matt

From Chalfont primary school
I had a great time
visiting you on the 25th
September 2013

Thank you for taking us on the
Moors Valley. I had great
fun especially when you showed
us the different trees and
the names of the plants. I
was really interested in
the different trees and
plants. I really liked
the whole day. It was
brilliant.

from Emma

Tel: **01425 470721** E-mail: **education@moors-valley.co.uk**

Moors Valley Country Park & Forest, Horton Road, Ashley Heath, Nr Ringwood, BH24 2ET



Please contact the Rangers office if you would like to make a booking or would like confirmation of activities and prices. We reserve the right to withdraw activities or alter the content of activities.

Designed by the Graphics Dept of East Dorset District Council. February 2013.