

# Countryside Learning



## Countryside and Outdoor Events for Primary School Children

- ✦ Woodland days ✦
- ✦ Countryside Classroom Days on Estates ✦
- ✦ Bespoke curriculum days ✦
- ✦ Let's Learn Moor (uplands education programme) ✦
- ✦ Days in partnership with Harper Adams University ✦
- ✦ Forest School Programme at University of Staffordshire ✦
- ✦ Farm visits (via our Farms for Schools programme) ✦



Countryside Learning have been running outdoor events for primary schools since 1986. This brochure outlines what we do and contains some notes for schools to help the days run smoothly.

*The mission of the Countryside Learning is a simple one. It is to educate, inform and inspire children, parents, and teachers, so that they can enjoy and appreciate the countryside while having a greater understanding of the wide range of issues surrounding it.*

Countryside Learning is focused on providing a variety of educational opportunities designed to connect children with the countryside in a fun and practical way. We hope to nurture a lifelong interest in loving, respecting and learning about the environment. Research shows that learning in the outdoors can bring massive benefits to a child's confidence, understanding and engagement, together with benefits to their mental and physical wellbeing.

We aim to reach 20,000 children per year with our programme of events. A range of small farms and farm attractions who make up our Farms for Schools membership, reach a further 2.5 million annual visitors.

Our events broadly fall into seven categories.

1. Woodland Days – at locations in West Yorkshire, Hertfordshire, Hampshire and Kent
2. Countryside Classroom (Estate Days)- at locations throughout the UK
3. Bespoke days-tailored to each schools' specific requirements
4. Let's Learn Moor Days – a programme of upland education events on moorland in 9 locations over the first week of July.
5. Days run in partnership with Harper Adams University that take place on their campus in Shropshire.
6. We are working with the University of Staffordshire, to establish a Forest School Programme on their site.
7. Nationwide farm visits run by our certified Farms for Schools, farm members.

## Woodland Days

Our woodland days are set up for one or two classes from the same school. The day can be planned to fit the schools' curriculum requirements. There will usually be time to do 3 or 4 hands-on activities in a day all, many of these in the form of quizzes and games. Examples of activities are.

- Mini beast hunting
- Tree ID
- Den building
- Exploring seasonal changes
- Build a tree
- The life cycle of a tree
- Forest school craft
- Seed dispersal
- Seed planting
- Woodland animals and their habitats
- Calculating the age and height of a tree
- Materials
- What do trees give us and help with?
- Climate change and global warming



These days are very flexible and can be altered on the day (subject to discussion with the teachers) due to changed requirements, weather etc. The woodland days are suitable for KS1 or KS2 and we have also taken EYFS children.

At our (currently 4) woodland sites we have undercover space for activities and lunch if needed and access to a lovely safe woodland area and also grass fields.

If you would like to discuss bringing your class to a woodland based day contact Barbara for schools near Leeds and Annabel for schools in Kent, Hampshire and Hertfordshire

[barbara@countrysidelearning.org](mailto:barbara@countrysidelearning.org)

[annabel@countrysidelearning.org](mailto:annabel@countrysidelearning.org)

## Countryside Classroom Days



We are lucky enough to be able to offer days at historic and beautiful rural estates all over the country. We call these our **Countryside Classroom Days**. These days typically have six different activities and classes will be invited from 6 different schools. The children will rotate around the activities in their class groups. Sometimes the days are very much about the Estate and activities could be run by the Estate staff. We would advise the Estates on curriculum links and ensure that activities are safe and appropriate. In these cases, the activities may be-

- Gardens
- Forestry
- Game Keeping
- Farming
- Joinery
- Horses
- Deer



Sometimes we use the Estates as a backdrop and location for our days and we partner with organisations who assist us to put on more general countryside days, activities may include-

- Food chains
- Adaptations- creating the ultimate predator.
- Countryside Code
- Dogs and dog care
- Tree ID
- Countryside crafts

These days take place throughout the year at various venues. To enquire about availability of Countryside Classroom Days near you contact

[anna@countrysidelearning.org](mailto:anna@countrysidelearning.org)

## Bespoke Days

Schools have sometimes approached us and asked whether we can tailor a day to enrich a specific curriculum area or topic. We have been able to offer

- A KS2 day linked to the book *The Explorer*- where the children did activities related to survival including map reading, fire lighting and den building.
- A KS1 literacy linked to *The Secret Garden*, where the children created adjectival phrases to describe the Garden.
- A KS1 day on Mindfulness
- A KS1 Science Day- about rivers
- A KS2 Science Day – about sustainability- including a walk to a hydro-electric scheme.

To discuss specific curriculum days contact

[barbara@countrysidelearning.org](mailto:barbara@countrysidelearning.org)



## Let's Learn Moor

Let's Learn Moor is collaborative event, funded by BASC and hosted by the Regional Moorland Groups. It takes place during the first week of July in 8 locations throughout the north of the country. The activities are related to the protection of the upland landscape, wildlife and people. The activities will typically be

- Wildfire prevention and control
- Food chains and predators and prey
- The emergency services
- Farming in the uplands
- The protection of the landscape through designations such as National Parks
- Different land use in the uplands-such as water catchment



For more information about LLM contact

[anna@countrysidelearning.org](mailto:anna@countrysidelearning.org)

### **Notes for schools.**

The notes below are general. You will be sent specific notes for the day you book on. However, the notes below will be helpful in planning a day and enable teachers to understand the requirements from the schools.

The generic risk assessment is below the notes- this will enable you to write your own RA.

### **Pre visits:**

We offer teacher pre visits for all our days.

### **First Aid:**

Schools are responsible for their own first aid.

### **Wet Weather:**

Whilst we do have indoor or some undercover space at our Education Centres for Woodland Days, on most other days there is no wet weather plan. The children will need to bring coats and we just press on regardless. A bit of rain or drizzle is not a problem. If it absolutely tips it down all day we may need to cancel part way through the day. Fingers crossed!!

### **WC's:**

At locations where we don't have toilets, we hire porta loos with running water for the children to use and wash their hands.

### **Cancellations:**

We would ask that you **book you buses in plenty of time** to ensure that you have transport sorted, and that **if the numbers that you book in change** by more than a few children you let us know. This is because we are a small charity and we offer the days to schools for free, and last-minute cancellations **mean we incur a cost** of putting on a day with fewer (or none at all!) children. Likewise, if you do have to cancel, we need as much notice as possible so we can offer the days to other children.

### **Location:**

Some of our locations are tricky to find, but we always provide schools with detailed directions. Pre visits will enable the teachers to see the location and avoid wrong turns on the day.

### **Rubbish:**

Please can you take all the rubbish back to school.

### **Mobile on the day:**

We will provide you with the number of the Education Officer who is running each day.

### **H and S:**

We provide a generic risk assessment (like the one below) for all our days. **If you are concerned about anything, please let us know in advance.**

## Photos:

We need your consent to take photos of the children. The schools will be asked to sign consent forms. Getting no fixed funding, photos are always important to us to send to potential funders and to promote our work on social media. You can choose to let us use photos in a number of ways, or can opt out of certain areas if you prefer.

## Feedback:

We would be grateful for any **feedback** you have about the day, which we can pass on to the relevant people. Likewise, if you post anything on social media, **we would be grateful if you could tag us**, as we mentioned above, are a small charity and need help to raise our profile, which may help secure future funding to enable us to reach more children.

If you have good photos which we are able to use, we would be grateful if you wouldn't mind e mailing them us.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any queries or further details on work that we do with Universities.

[gary@countrysidelearning.org](mailto:gary@countrysidelearning.org)



# CL Risk Assessment for Countryside Day – for schools and host estates

School should undertake a pre-visit checklist and briefing for the children on safety aspects including any allergies, disabilities, covering of cuts etc. which may be relevant.

School must make sure children have appropriate clothing for the day and that they do not bring items onto the estate, including litter that may be harmful to livestock or other animals.

School asked to have the correct ratio of pupils to assistants/supervisors.

**A pre visit site meeting will be provided if requested or required by either the school, the host or Countryside Learning.** The school must be satisfied that they have enough information prior to the visit to carry out their own risk assessment.

Estates must be confident in the skills and abilities of all staff they have contracted/designated to run activity. **Each activity should be risk assessed.**

HAZARD or ACTIVITY ON THE SITE  Activity it relates to in BLUE	RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE HAZARDS	<i>Potential to cause harm</i>	CONTROLS ALREADY IN PLACE AND ACTION REQUIRED BY VISITORS
Running children All activity on site	Slipping, tripping, falling	Low	Children must be adequately supervised and instructed not to run on the site.
Wet grass  All activity on site	Slipping, falling, sprains	Low	Supervisors and children should be aware of the possibility of wet grass and take adequate precautions against slipping and falling. Appropriate clothing and footwear to be worn.
Uneven grass surfaces  All activity on site (including garden tours/ forest schools)	Slipping, falling, sprains	Low	Supervisors and children should take care when walking on the grass and wear sensible footwear
Road and path edgings  All activity on site	Slipping, tripping, falling	Low	Supervisors and children should take care at road and path edges to avoid tripping and falling. Be aware of estate traffic at all times.
Climbing of objects (children)	Slipping, tripping, falling	High	Children must be adequately supervised and instructed not to climb walls, gates, trees and other objects on the site.
Animals	Infection, biting,	High	All animals on the site are properly controlled and supervised. Visitors



HAZARD or ACTIVITY ON THE SITE  Activity it relates to in BLUE	RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE HAZARDS	<i>Potential to cause harm</i>	CONTROLS ALREADY IN PLACE AND ACTION REQUIRED BY VISITORS
<p>Cattle and other livestock and horses – Penned in and managed by experienced Estate/Farm staff</p> <p>Working dogs area will be supervised by estate contracted staff</p> <p>Birds of prey will be supervised by birds of prey Centre staff</p> <p>Horses</p>	crushing & kicking		<p>should not touch the animals unless encouraged by their handlers. Supervisors should ensure children wash their hands after handling any animal.</p> <p>Ensure that children wash hands before eating.</p>
<p>Bees, wasps and insects</p> <p>All areas on site</p>	Stings	Low	These are natural inhabitants of the countryside. Bees & wasps pose no risk unless provoked.
Alighting from coaches	Slipping, tripping, falling, injury from other vehicles	High	Supervisors should adhere to instructions provided by event organisers to use designated coach alighting points in the coach park and on any access roads in the Estate. A serious accident could occur should instructions provided not be adhered to.
<p>Traffic, vehicles and machinery</p> <p>Embarking and disembarking from their own Coach.</p> <p>Traffic on the estate during the day.</p> <p>Forestry</p>	Trapping abrasion, injury-being run over	High	<p>Children get on and off the busses in a safe area, and be adequately supervised. If necessary, traffic should be stopped.</p> <p>Supervisors should ensure that they and children in their care do not touch any machinery, comply with any safety notices and observe the restriction of any barriers that may be in place.</p> <p>Children kept in a defined area away from forestry Machinery.</p>

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Looking at tractors and farm machinery			<p>Supervisors aware that roads within estate will be used for access.</p> <p>All machinery must be switched off with the key safely stowed. Children should be kept a safe distance away and fully supervised if going for a closer look.</p>
<p>Infection</p> <p>Cattle – Limited if any direct contact only at the direction and request of teachers/handlers Hand washing Facilities available</p> <p>Seeds planting- contact with soil and compost</p>	Various	Low	Supervisors should be aware that there is always a risk from infection in any environment. The countryside and agricultural establishments are no exception. Supervisors should ensure that they and children in their care wash their hands after touching animals and before handling food and drink. It is advisable to ensure that any existing cuts or abrasions are protected by a dressing.
<p>Chemicals &amp; substances</p> <p>Investigating crops and food</p>	Inhalation, skin contact, eye contact	High	All substances and chemicals in use on the site are safe and free from risk when used in a proper manner. Children with known allergies to be identified. Hand washing facilities will be available. If children are touching crops/ seeds etc the activity provider will ensure that the children are not exposed to any harmful treatments or chemicals.
LPG/petrol	Fire, explosion	High	The use of LPG and petrol driven equipment is monitored and controlled by the Estate.

HAZARD or ACTIVITY ON THE SITE  Activity it relates to in BLUE	RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE HAZARDS	<i>Potential to cause harm</i>	CONTROLS ALREADY IN PLACE AND ACTION REQUIRED BY VISITORS
Electrical equipment	Fire, electrocution	High	Electrical installations and appliances are tested and inspected at the required intervals by the Contractor supplying them. Visitors should not touch or interfere with electrical equipment.
Straying into prohibited areas  All activities on site.  Designated areas agreed	Unidentified hazards	Low	Supervisors should ensure that children are instructed not to go beyond the designated areas
Buildings  All activities on site.  Designated areas agreed	Unstable floors/walls /falling debris	Low	The Estate ensures the structural integrity of all buildings that children are allowed to enter.  No planned entry to any buildings.  Estate managed well and no issues detected.
Water  All activities on site.  Designated areas agreed	Falling in the water  Worst outcome - drowning	Low	Teachers ensure adequate supervision of children at all times.  Estate Staff and contracted staff to supervise  <b>No planned access to water.</b>
Transport	Volume of traffic outside the estate.	Low	Children supervised in groups by teachers and assistants. Safe route planned by the school.
Covid  All activities	illness	Low	Children to stay in school bubbles, children and staff to use the toilets allocated to them, children to use hand sanitiser between activities, any touch points to be wiped between activities.

HAZARD or ACTIVITY ON THE SITE  Activity it relates to in BLUE	RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE HAZARDS	<i>Potential to cause harm</i>	CONTROLS ALREADY IN PLACE AND ACTION REQUIRED BY VISITORS
			Social distances outside bubbles to be maintained.
Stone chips  Stone masonry	Injury to eyes	Low	Children to be distanced from any stone chipping activity
Fire  Forest School activity	Burning	Medium	Children to be fully instructed and supervised by forest school leader. Fire prevention and fire fighting equipment to be on site near to forest school area. Only a skilled forest school leader should run any activity involving fire.



**Photographic consent  
between Countryside Learning and  
Participating School attending  
and  
Countryside Learning**

I confirm that I give my consent for Countryside Learning to use photographs from their Estate and Countryside Days 2023 in their promotional material and on their websites and social media pages.

I understand that no child will be identified individually.

I do not give consent for my school to be photographed and will tell any photographer on site my wishes

**(Please tick choice)**

Estate day to be attended:

Signed:

School:

Description of school uniform:

Date- 2023.....

Please sign and return this form to:

Countryside Learning