



Information pack for schools.



Welcome to West Lodge Farm Park

We have enjoyed farming West Lodge for three generations and warmly invite you to come and share our enthusiasm for farming and the countryside in a fun and safe environment.

West Lodge is the ideal place to bring groups of children, being part of the CEVAS Farm Accreditation Scheme and in possession of the LOTC quality badge, ensures we offer both high quality and high standards in our educational school trips.

The farm park has also attained the independently audited Animal Attraction Assurance Scheme, verifying compliance with the Industry Code of Practice.

www.westlodgeruralcentre.co.uk

01536 760552

education@westlodgefarmpark.co.uk

A visit to the farm

Our guides have a wide range of tours accommodating groups from pre-school, reception and KS1 through to A Level; they offer a range of specialities including agriculture, ecology, conservation, and local history. (Copies of the curriculum links to farming are available on request.)

Activities that we can provide.

- Tractor and trailer rides around the farm to learn about the surrounding area.
 - 3 and a half miles of farm nature trails.
 - Indoor and outdoor play areas, including a tractor park and an indoor timber-built Adventure Barn and outdoor Play Park
 - Visiting and learning about the farm animals.
 - Bottle feeding lambs (January till April).
 - Young animals to handle.
 - Wildlife tours
 - Mini beast hunts
 - Food for farming
 - Piglet racing.
 - Displays of old farming equipment, timelines & history.
- (Activities can be tailored to individual needs).

Available facilities here on the Farm.

- Welcoming staff and experienced qualified/trained guides.
- Picnic areas, undercover if needed.
- Toilet and hand washing points located throughout the site.
- Space for parking.
- A school package tailored to your school needs.

A typical timetable for guided groups.

10.00am -	Arrive, introduction and safety talk.
10.30am -	Group wildlife walk
11.30am -	Wash hands, lunch, and free time
12.45pm -	Farm animal tour
1.45pm -	Wash hands
1.45pm -	Piglet Racing - Cloisters
2.00pm -	Wash hands and collect belongings

Times allowed for tours include some allowance for toilet stops etc.
We recommend maximum group size of 30 children.

West Lodge is a working family farm which diversified into an open farm park in 1995. The Dee family have been farming for hundreds of years and moved from a Leicestershire farm to Desborough in 1939. West Lodge sits just outside Desborough near to the Northants/Leicestershire border.

Land use.

Allocation of land is as follows:	<u>Type</u>	<u>acres</u>	<u>Hectares</u>
	Arable	318	128
	Pasture	30	12
	Woodland	30	12
	Built up areas	2	0
	Leisure	9	3
	Conservation	65	26
	Set aside	96	38

The land rises from 120m at Harpers brook to 145m above sea level at the farm house. With much of the land having been reclaimed from open cast ironstone mining the soil is quite heavy and of low nutrient value.

The farm is currently running the following livestock:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number</u>
Sheep (3 Rams)	300
Cattle (1 Bull)	70
Pigs	10
Ponies	4
Donkey	2
Goats	30
Chickens	100
Ducks	40
Geese	15
Rabbits	20
Guinea pigs	20

Who lives and works here.

Farmer Ed lives on the farm, with his wife Mo and their 3 children – all of who you can see at the farm daily. Ryan, the farm park manager oversees the day to day running of the park, along with guiding school trips around with the help of Farmer James, Farmer Angelina and Ranger Lisa. Lisa is the Educational Officer for West Lodge and a qualified Forest School Leader. Chef Ed is the Catering manager who makes sure everyone is fed and all dietary requirements are met. In the Shop, you will find Vicky, who deals with all of the general telephone/email enquiries, as well as welcoming everyone on arrival. West Lodge Farm Park is a very busy place, lots of other staff are employed some full time and other's part time all helping with the responsibilities of farm life in general and all play a huge part in the successful running of the farm park.

Machinery.

The following major items are used within the farm.

John Deere tractor-

Used with ploughs, discs, drill/power harrow, rolls, spreader and sprayer for planting and growing the crops.

John Deere self-propelled sprayer-

Used for spraying fertiliser and pesticides.

Ford tractor-

Used with bucket, forks and trailer for lifting and moving. Grass cutter, turner and baler for making hay and straw bales.

Class Lexion combine-

Used for harvesting the crops.

JCB-

Used for moving and lifting earth, gravel, grain etc.


Buildings.

The farm is equipped for schools, groups and general public. It has exhibition and craft areas, function room and activity areas, an indoor and outdoor play area and a restaurant.

The farming year.


We do different things on the farm each season.

SPRING

A line drawing of a farm in spring. A tractor is ploughing a field. In the background, there is a farmhouse, a barn, and a pond. The sun is shining, and there are some clouds in the sky.


- Lambing
- Housed ewes out to grass
- Calving (Beef Cows)

SUMMER

A line drawing of a farm in summer. A tractor is harvesting crops in a field. In the background, there is a farmhouse, a barn, and a pond. The sun is shining, and there are some clouds in the sky.


- Harvest Winter Wheat
- Harvest Oilseed Rape
- Mate Cows for spring calving

AUTUMN

A line drawing of a farm in autumn. A tractor is ploughing a field. In the background, there is a farmhouse, a barn, and a pond. The sun is shining, and there are some clouds in the sky.

- Sowing of Oilseed Rape
- Sowing of Winter Wheat
- Ploughing and cultivating of land
- Mate Sheep for spring lambing

WINTER

A line drawing of a farm in winter. A tractor is ploughing a field. In the background, there is a farmhouse, a barn, and a pond. The sun is shining, and there are some clouds in the sky.

- Some Sheep are housed for winter
- Farm maintenance
- Early lambing starts

Preparing for your visit to the farm.

At Key Stage 1, including the EYFS, the farm visit will enable the pupils' first-hand experiences to be widened in a whole range of visual, tactile, and other sensory situations. Within this are the important messages of the life cycle and seasonal change. There is a wealth of opportunity for language development and literacy skills.

At Key Stage 2 the farm visit can stimulate and excite pupils' curiosity. It also satisfies their curiosity as they begin to apply their knowledge and understanding of ideas. Pupils can consider the farm as a good example of an environment affected by human activity, think about attitudes to farming, the rural environment and the conflicts of interest that arise. They talk about their work and its significance and communicate their ideas using a wide range of language.

At Key Stage 3 many different subject requirements can be addressed. For example, in history, the adaptation of farm buildings over the centuries can offer first-hand evidence of social and technological changes. This readily promotes the skills of handling and assessing. Pupils can investigate and debate a wide range of complex issues and begin to understand the environmental, social, and economic implications.

At Key Stage 4 farm visits can be used to deliver examination subjects both academic and vocational. Contact with farmers will help to focus on the real-life application of skills within the workplace, engaging pupils with contemporary issues and focusing on their role as users and consumers.

For suggestions on planning, pre-visit activities or to follow up your visit then please speak to the Educational Officer. West Lodge has devised video clips in relation to all aspects of farming which can be found on-
<https://en-gb.facebook.com/pg/westlodge.farmpark/videos/>

Themed educational activity sheets and farm resources such as sheep's wool, animal hair, eggs etc. can be provided on request.

An evaluation form will be provided at the pre-visit stage, allowing you time to observe what the visit may entail. We are always grateful for all comments and feedback to continually strive to improve our services.

Other useful links -

<http://www.face-online.org.uk/>

<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/>

<http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/naturedetectives/schools-and-groups/>

Things to remember when visiting the farm.

Risk assessment.

We advise a pre-visit to our farm, during which you can carry out a risk assessment and become familiar with the site. A copy of the farm's risk assessment is available on request, or can be downloaded from our website:

www.westlodgegeruralcentre.co.uk

Clothing.

You and your pupils should wear appropriate outdoor clothing, including sturdy shoes or Wellingtons, not sandals.

Weather

We do have many undercover areas and under roof activities, but as a farm park we are inherently an outdoor site. Weather doesn't have to spoil children's experiences and opportunities. Weather happens out of our control, but being prepared is within your control. Suitable clothing and footwear should be planned using weather forecasts.

- Waterproofs and wellies for wet weather
- Layers and warm hats for cold weather
- Sun hats, sun cream and extra drinks for hot weather.

Behaviour.

Teachers/group leaders are responsible for the children's behaviour throughout the visit. The children should understand how to behave on the farm and always follow the Countryside Code.

Use of the walks, trails and the open countryside.

West Lodge is a working farm and area of open countryside to visit. There are many experiences, sights, sound, smells and numerous learning opportunities with differing landscapes and wildlife.

The farm paths, and natural walks and open areas in the countryside will be uneven and can be slippery when wet or cold. In the countryside tripping hazards will be present. Please walk and take care. Sensible footwear is recommended.

Handwashing facilities are within the immediate area of the farm park, so animal contact or feeding is not permitted around the farm trails and countryside areas.

There are five sections of The Countryside Code dedicated to helping us learn how to respect, protect, and enjoy the countryside: -

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs.
- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home.
- Keep dogs under close control.
- Consider other people.

Use of play areas.

All our play areas are designed to provide a stimulating and challenging environment which may involve some risk taking. Challenge and risk in play areas is recommended as this helps children to engage, develop, become resilient and grow. Higher/more challenging pieces of play equipment have access points which are difficult, to only allow children of a certain size, strength, balance, or ability to progress -therefore, only children suitable to be at the top can pass this intended obstacle. Do not lift children pass these obstacles or if you do, please progress with the child to supervise them as equipment has been designed to allow adult access. Whilst in these areas please follow the rules below –

- Please keep the entry gate closed.
- Please wash hands before entering.
- Due to mixed age/ability equipment, children must be supervised at all times.
- Shoes must be removed prior to playing on the Adventure Barn equipment, and socks to be worn.
- Use the play equipment for intended use only.

Use of Barrel Ride.

There are several rules to follow, to ensure the safety of the passengers when riding. These are displayed on signage at the station of the barrel ride. They are –

- Children under 2 must be accompanied by an adult.
- Do not get on or off the barrels while the ride is moving.
- All riders must be seated within the barrels.
- Sit down while the ride is moving.
- The driver will monitor and manage passengers' behaviour but it is also the responsibility of the adults with them to manage this too.
- Children are to be adequately supervised by their guardians.

Health and safety.

We comply with health and safety regulations, and details of facilities for hand washing, etc., are provided later in this booklet. However, it is important that all children and supervising adults are aware of the correct health and safety guidelines.

The risk of infection is very small, but the disease caused by an infection could be serious. By following the simple guidelines, which are similar to everyday basic hygiene recommendations, the risk can be easily minimised.

**The Health & Safety Executive has produced new guidelines called:
HSE sheet AIS23 – Avoiding ill health at open farms – Advice to farmers.**

www.westlodgegeruralcentre.co.uk

All animals naturally carry a range of micro-organisms, some of which can be transmitted to humans, where they may cause ill health. Some infections which may be contracted on farms, such as the bacterium *Escherichia coli* O157 (*E coli* O157), present a serious hazard and potentially cause severe disease, which may be particularly acute in young children.

While the hazard from infection resulting from a farm visit is real, the risk is small because it can be readily controlled by following sensible steps which will help make your visit safe, healthy, and enjoyable.

Safety Guidelines.

To ensure a safe as well as fun day, please take note of the following guidelines. Adults are responsible for ensuring they and children with them follow the guidelines below and wash their hands properly.

- Keep fingers away from mouths whilst around the animals.
- Do not kiss the animals.
- Hands must be washed with soap & water after visiting animal areas, particularly before you eat, drink, enter play areas or leave.
- Do not eat or drink in animal areas.
- Child dummy/pacifier, if dropped, should be thoroughly cleaned before it is used again.
- Be aware pigs may bite. Do not feed by hand.
- Do not taste or eat the animal feed.
- Pregnant women should avoid all contact with newly born goat kids / lambs and their mothers.
- Please keep to all paths and tracks.
- Paths and open areas may be uneven and can be slippery when wet or cold and tripping hazards will be present. Please walk and take care. Sensible footwear is recommended.
- Please do not climb on or over fencing or gates.
- In the event of a fire follow directions from staff & muster in car park.
- Any visitor with a cut or abrasion must cover the injury. Plasters are available from First Aid in the shop.
- Near animal's act in calm & relaxed manner.
- Please take note of notices around the farm park
- The farm park is a **no smoking area**. Please smoke in the car park below the cricket club and ensure cigarettes are extinguished.

Further information

Copies of information sheet AIS23 and its supplement are available free from the HSE

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais23.pdf>

or by post from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2WA

Tel: 01787 881165

Website: www.hsebooks.co.uk

Fax: 01787 313995

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Farm information

West Lodge Farm Park

Back Lane

Desborough

Northants

NN14 2SH

Contact person: Lisa Male (Education Officer)

Tel no: 01536 760552/07809308125

Email: education@westlodgefarmpark.co.uk

Grid reference: 814846

Booking a visit

In the first instance, please telephone the farm park to check availability.

Details of group bookings and requirements can then be discussed further with the Educational Officer. A booking form will need to be completed and returned once a date has been agreed, to confirm the booking.

Cancellation arrangements

If you are unable to carry out your visit, please let us know as soon as possible – dependant on the notice given you may still be charged for the visit.

How to get here



On arrival

Coaches and minibuses can be parked in the main car park, please make sure you don't block the farm gate (access may be required for emergency procedures).

Please report to the entrance (shop) where you will sign in and one of our guides will greet you and advise you of all the necessary information prior to your visit beginning. You will have an allocated eating area where you will be able to leave your personal belongings.