



# Country Trust

Where children learn and grow

## HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

The Country Trust is a registered charity no. 1122103 and is a company limited by guarantee registered in England no. 6436266  
Registered address and head office: Moulsham Mill, Parkway, Chelmsford, CM2 7PX

Policy Ref	H&S
Date Created	Feb 2016
TCT Version	2
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## **Health & Safety Policy**

The Country Trust is a national educational charity dedicated to bringing alive the working countryside for children least able to access it. We operate throughout England and Wales, working mostly with primary schools in urban areas of high deprivation. Each year we help around 25,000 children to understand and experience the working countryside.

Our work is split into three connected strands:

- Farm Discovery - farm visits to working farms and estates.
- Countryside Discovery - Residential trips primarily for children from London and Bradford
- Food Discovery - Programme which includes cooking, growing, playground markets, CPD for teachers as well as farm visits.

In Hampshire we were formerly known as 'Hampshire Country Learning' and are now known as Country Trust Hampshire.

### **Management and Staff**

The Country Trust's Chairman and Trustees work closely with the CEO, Jill Attenborough, to decide strategy and policies related to the operation of The Country Trust. Other staff:

- David Thompson - Assistant Director
- Vicki Leng - Food Discovery Project Manager
- Kay Whitfield - Farm Discovery Manager
- Catherine Leigh - Countryside Discovery Residentials Manager
- Jo Hatton - Country Trust Hampshire Team Leader
- Farm visits, residentials and Food Discovery Coordinators located throughout England and Wales

This is the statement of general policy and arrangements for:  
 Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of:  
 Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into  
 practice is delegated to:

**The Country Trust**  
**Jill Attenborough**

**David Thompson**

Statement of general H&S policy	Contact	Action
To put in place adequate insurance cover.	Jill Attenborough	
To take reasonable and practicable steps to prevent accidents and cases of ill health and provide adequate control of health & safety risks arising from Country Trust activities.	Country Trust staff	Follow procedures listed in the CT HSE policy
To provide adequate training to ensure employees are competent to do their work.	David Thompson	Training and ongoing support
Ensure that CT staff have skills to assist host farmers and teachers in the preparation of risk assessments and other documents relating to HSE.	David Thompson	Training and ongoing support
Ensure that CT staff have skills to prepare risk assessments for activities that they themselves lead for example, cooking in school and growing activities.	David Thompson	Training and ongoing support
To ensure that CT employees are familiar with the system for reporting and recording incidents. To report to CT Trustees on H&S incidents on a regular basis.	David Thompson	Training and ongoing support
The CT will adhere to government guidance for all organisations working with children, young people, families, parents and carers with regard to safeguarding of children.	David Thompson	Training and ongoing support
CT H&S Policy, Incident report form, and H&S pack made available to all CT staff & volunteers.	David Thompson	Brief existing staff and provide listed documents, make documents available to new staff as part of induction/training
Accident book held by: Accidents and ill health at work reported under RIDDOR: (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations)	David Thompson  David Thompson	
Incidents to be reported in the first instance to:	David Thompson	
<b>Sign &amp; date</b>		
<b>Sign &amp; date</b>		
<b>Subject to review, monitoring &amp; revision</b>	Annual - last reviewed:	<b>February 2016</b>
<b>Signed:</b>	<i>Tina Fanshawe (Chair)</i> <b>Date:</b>	

## Reporting Accidents & Incidents

- Use the Incident Report Form (IRF).
- The IRF to be completed where possible by CT staff, or by a CT volunteer if they are the sole representative of the CT at the visit. Complete the form asap after the incident when it is still fresh in your memory.
- If you don't have all of the information you can update your report when additional information becomes available. The original/first report cannot be changed.
- Only include facts in the IRF, no opinions or speculation as to why the incident occurred, whose fault it was, etc.
- If the incident is classed as a **fatality/major/disease or illness** please inform Jill Attenborough and David Thompson via telephone & email immediately.
- If the incident is classed as **minor/near miss/property damage/dangerous occurrence**, please email the IRF to David Thompson immediately.
- Save a copy of the report.
- Do not discuss the incident with other parties, press, etc. Do not make reference to the incident in social media.
- Incidents will be collated and reported to Trustees on a regular basis.

### Glossary:

- **Incident:** any occurrence before, during or after a Country Trust activity that causes or could potentially cause harm to school staff/children, the host farmer or farm staff, Country Trust staff or volunteers.

### Types of incident:

- **Major:** an incident that requires the emergency services and/or the person(s) affected require hospital treatment.
- **Minor:** The person(s) affected require some attention at the farm/venue before being able to carry on with the visit. School staff to make the final decision regarding treatment and whether person affected can carry on with visit.
- **Near miss:** It is important to report incidents where persons could have been harmed were it not for prompt action or good luck so that activities can be changed and risk assessments can be amended.
- **Dangerous occurrence:** An unexpected incident with the potential to harm persons present at the CT event.
- **Disease/illness:** An illness or infection picked up on a CT visit.

## Incident Report Form

### Contact details

Name	Email	Mobile	Tel
Jill Attenborough	ja@countrytrust.org.uk	07760 171146	01245 608363
David Thompson	dt@countrytrust.org.uk	07957 617619	01665 577216

### General

<b>Visit details</b>	
Date of visit	
<b>School details</b>	
School name	
School address	
Post code	
Telephone number	
Head teacher name	
Class teacher present at visit	
Class teacher email	
Number of children	
Year group	
<b>Host farmer/venue details</b>	
Host name	
Venue/farm name & address	
Post code	
Telephone number	

<b>1. Details of person completing report</b>
Name
Telephone number
Job title
Email address
<b>2. Incident location</b>
Address
<b>3. General information</b>
Brief description of incident
Date & Time of incident
<b>4. Reported to?</b>
Emergency services (delete as applicable): Police, ambulance, fire, none

### Witnesses

Witness 1:	Witness 2:
Name	Name
Address	Address
Town	Town
Post Code	Post Code
Tel.	Tel.
Role on the day (please delete as applicable): School: adult/child, Farm: host/employee, Country Trust: staff/volunteer	Role on the day (please delete as applicable): School: adult/child, Farm: host/employee, Country Trust: staff/volunteer

### Incident details

Incident type: (delete as applicable)	Fatality, Major, Minor, Near Miss, Property damage, Dangerous occurrence, Disease/illness
Injured Party(s)	School: adult/child, Farm: host/employee, Country Trust: staff/volunteer
Injured party 1	Injured party 2
Name	Name
Address	Address
Town	Town
Post Code	Post Code
Tel.	Tel.
DoB or age:	DoB or age:

<b>Description of Incident</b> Please describe the incident (use a separate sheet if necessary)
What was the injury? What treatment was given? Was the injured party taken to hospital? Did injured party return to continue the visit or session after treatment, or was there any update on the condition of the injured party?

## **Responsibilities of Schools, Hosts & Country Trust staff**

### **Schools**

Responsibility for supervision, control and charge of pupils and other persons connected with the school taking part in Country Trust activities at all times remains with the school or other educational establishment. Schools should make sure that they have in force appropriate insurance cover for visits of this type. Schools should ensure that adult to child ratios are appropriate for the Key Stage concerned, or in relation to children's needs.

The teacher in charge of the class and of the pupils taking part in an educational visit is responsible for all the children throughout the day of the visit. This applies to both arrangements for travel to and from the site in question and the conduct and control of pupils and others whilst there.

### **Hosts**

It is the responsibility of landowners, tenants, staff and agents who receive Country Trust educational visits to comply with all relevant legislation connected to farming operations, for example certificates for forklift and sprayer operators. Also to ensure that they have in place adequate public liability insurance cover including cover for visiting school groups. Hosts are responsible for issues around child safeguarding whilst children are on their land in relation to farm staff and other adults connected to the farm.

### **Country Trust Staff**

CT staff help teachers and farmer hosts to plan visits by offering pre visits to farms to assess hazards and plan educational activities. The CT also provides teachers with a generic risk assessment and a description of activities planned for the visit.

Throughout the farm visit CT staff support teachers and farm staff by being vigilant and taking any reasonable steps to safeguard the health & safety of children and adults taking part in the visit.



## Risk Assessment

### Method & Terminology

Preparing a risk assessment is a useful way to look at activities planned for a farm visit, identify hazards associated with the activities, and agree on actions required to reduce to an acceptable level the likelihood of hazards harming visitors.

Key words in most risk assessments:

- Activity:** A farm visit will consist of a number of activities, the first of which is usually 'alighting from the coach'.
- Hazard:** 'Something with a potential to cause harm'. As part of assessing risk identify hazards associated with each activity.
- Risk:** The likelihood that a hazard will harm children or adults.
- Action:** Risk reduction measures taken to remove or reduce the potential harm from hazards. Post action risk level of hazards causing harm should be 'low'.

### Quantifying hazards and risk:

Most risk assessments have some way of quantifying the severity of a hazard, and also of quantifying the risk/likelihood of the hazard causing harm. This will highlight hazards and activities that require some form of action to reduce the risk of harm to visitors or farm staff to an acceptable level.

Severity of hazards and risk levels can be quantified using words (high, medium, low).

### **Farm visits**

The behaviour of the school pupils, staff and helpers is the responsibility of the lead teacher during the visit.

The Country Trust recommends that before a farm visit teachers do a preliminary (pre) visit to the farm where the visit will be held (ideally CT staff also attend). On the pre visit teacher, farmer and CT staff can discuss the learning resources available on the farm and how they can be used to support national curriculum work done in the classroom. They can formulate a plan for the visit to include activities using natural and prepared resources. They can also identify hazards associated with those activities, and formulate actions that will reduce the likelihood of those hazards harming children or adults. In other words, they plan activities for the visit and complete a risk assessment. If the teacher chooses not to attend the pre visit the CT can provide the Generic Risk Assessment document and a brief description of activities planned for the visit. However, it should be made clear to the school that pre visits are an important part of the planning process.

The host farmer should complete their own risk assessment of activities connected to hosting visits for the Country Trust, over and above compliance with legislation connected to farming operations, for example record keeping and storage of animal medicines and crop chemicals, certificates for spraying and operation of forklifts. Risk assessments need to be prepared/reviewed for every visit as farms have different enterprises and features, and different activities may be offered depending on the time of year or season.

### **Country Trust led activities**

Country Trust staff, and self-employed staff representing The Country Trust, must complete risk assessments for any activities that they themselves are delivering on a school site, or as part of a visit to a farm or other venue, and make these available to the school. These will include growing and cooking sessions, teacher training and occasions when CT staff lead an activity or part of a farm visit when there is no-one present to represent the farm. The school should have a risk assessment in place for the site of the proposed activity, i.e. garden area or kitchen, which Country Trust staff should ask to see prior to these sessions. There may be instances when some part of the activity may need to be adjusted in light of the site risk assessment. Country Trust staff will evaluate changes in the weather, the seasons, and other circumstances on the day of the visit and will change delivery of activities accordingly to reduce likelihood of children or adults being harmed.

Country Trust staff sometimes arrange for a farmer or other representative of the food & farming industry to visit a school and speak to the children about their job, lifestyle, etc. If, during such a presentation, there are to be activities in which the children to take part Country Trust staff must liaise with the farmer and school staff to prepare a risk assessment.

### **Country Trust Residentials**

The Country Trust organises activities at various venues for the school, including some activities that take place in the evening for example moon/star walks, listening to bats,

etc. Country Trust staff must prepare a risk assessment for activities that they themselves lead (schools should receive a copy of this risk assessment for their records).

### **Hazards associated with a typical farm visit**

When preparing a risk assessment for an educational visit on a working farm only assess the hazards and risks linked to planned educational activities.

There are many examples of hazards listed in the CT Farm Visit Risk Generic Assessment. They are to help guide school staff, but these comments are not complete, only an indication. The Country Trust recommends that school staff follow HSE advice on visiting farms.

### **Hygiene**

Possibly the most topical and publicised hazard with potential to harm visitors to working farms is 'infection and disease risk', the most publicised being: E. Coli O157 and Cryptosporidium Parvum. People can become infected by micro-organisms such as E. coli O157 or Cryptosporidium parvum through:

- consuming contaminated food or drink
- direct contact with contaminated animals
- contact with an environment contaminated with animal faeces.

### **Code of Practice**

Following the incident at an open farm several years ago when children fell ill after being infected with E. Coli O157, a **Code of Practice** for open farms was written. The recommendations in the code of practice are relevant to Country Trust farm visits.

The Code of Practice, whilst still emphasising the need for careful and thorough **hand washing**, especially before eating food, also strongly recommends that areas of the farm should be designated **contact or non-contact areas** (contact with animals).

What this means in practice for most CT farm visits is planning activities for the day taking the following into account:

- In the 'safety talk' at the start of the visit stress the importance of a thorough hand wash before eating food.
- Planning the programme for the day so that children wash their hands immediately after activities that involve touching/feeding animals i.e. Do clean activities first, feeding/touching immediately before hand washing.
- Take into account the age of the children. Young children are the most likely to pass infection to their mouth during sucking thumbs, touching mouths, holding their nose because 'the farm smells', etc. The health of young children can potentially be affected more than that of adults following infection.
- Choose where the class eats packed lunches with care. Outdoor areas for eating packed lunches must have been clear of animals **for at least three weeks**. If indoors, eating packed lunches in a shed that has been used for animal housing is not acceptable unless it has been thoroughly washed out and disinfected.

- Take into account that visitors' footwear may be contaminated, and that it will need to be cleaned preferably before lunchtime, and also before boarding the bus at the end of the visit.

### Hand washing

#### Key points:

- Use liquid soap (bars of soap can be dropped on the floor)
- Provide running water...essential for rinsing. Sharing a bucket to wash & rinse hands may spread germs.
- Provide warm water. This encourages children and adults to spend longer washing hands. If provision of warm water isn't possible the reason must be included in the risk assessment.
- Dry hands using paper towels (or hot air hand driers), not shared cloth towels.
- Alcohol gels are not an acceptable substitute for washing hands as above.

#### Link to the Code of Practice:

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

### Other Hazards and Links to Resources

- Lyme disease: see attachment 'Lyme disease guidance'
- 'Notes for schools considering educational visits where there will be sheep, cows or goats giving birth', see Country Trust document: NotesSchoolspEVpregnantMar2015
- Leptospirosis, follow link to HSE website: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg84.pdf>
- Passenger trailers: follow link to HSE website: [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais36.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais36.pdf)

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