



## Farm Discovery visits: Issues linked to Covid19

This document outlines Health & Safety issues linked to Covid19 that should be considered by school staff and host farmers when planning and delivering educational visits to farms.

### Planning the visit

- The Government has generated guidelines to reduce the threat from Covid19 both for schools and the general public. The guidelines cover distancing, hand washing, general hygiene and face coverings. Country Trust Farm Discovery visits must be planned so that Government guidelines are satisfied.
- Before the visit can go ahead all parties - school staff/farm host/Country Trust Coordinator/volunteers - should be satisfied that the risk from Covid19 to everyone attending the visit is acceptable.

### Some issues to consider:

#### Pre visit

- In the current situation with Covid19 school staff must attend a pre visit. The Country Trust Coordinator will arrange a date & time for the pre visit.
- At the pre visit school staff can plan activities and curriculum links with farm staff and the Country Trust coordinator and prepare a risk assessment for the visit that satisfies school protocols and Government guidelines, and also farm protocols, for Covid19.
- Farm staff can share their protocols for Covid19. Additional entries in the Host Farm Risk Assessment will be required for risks linked to Covid19, for example social distancing, face coverings, extra hygiene measures, etc. Country Trust Coordinator to support.
- The Country Trust Coordinator will prepare a CT led activity & site risk assessment for activities that they lead.

#### Hand washing/alcohol gel.

A key concern for everyone is obviously to use hand hygiene to minimise the spread of Covid19. However, on a farm, people can become infected by micro-organisms such 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.

#### Therefore:

- Before eating or drinking, and before boarding transport for the return to school, everyone must wash their hands using liquid soap and (preferably warm) running water and dry hands using a paper towel. Adults helping children to wash hands and handing out paper towels must wash their hands first.

At the pre visit it can be decided when soap water hand washes should take place, and when it will be appropriate to use alcohol gel.

School children and adults should apply alcohol gel to hands as they leave the coach on arrival at the farm.

Alcohol gel cannot be a substitute for a soap and water hand wash.

### Activities

- Some activities involve children & adults touching objects, for example seeds or operating a flour mill. If there is visible soiling wash hands with soap and water afterwards. If no visible soiling, and there has been no contact with animals, animal fencing/equipment or soil, alcohol gel will be sufficient.
- Social distancing. Discuss Government guidance and the school's protocols on social distancing at the pre visit, and how these will be followed throughout the visit. School staff, farm staff and Country Trust Coordinator should discuss indoor activities and wet weather contingency plans and agree how activities will be run so that adequate social distancing can be maintained.
- There may be artefacts, resources, machines, flour mills, etc provided by the farm for the visit. Agree at the pre visit who will disinfect the objects before (and after) the visit, and where a number of children will handle a resource, whether any cleaning is required between uses. Also, agree who will provide the sanitising spray\* and disposable cloth to disinfect.
- Equipment provided by the Country Trust Coordinator for the visit should be disinfected as above.

### Lunch time

- Arrangements for lunchtime should be planned so that the farmer host and Country Trust Coordinator can social distance and feel comfortable that they are following Government guidance, farm and school protocols.
- Children and adults should wash hands with soap and water before eating lunch.
- If there isn't a suitable building where the class can eat lunch at the farm, consider a half day visit with lunch eaten back at school.
- If the farm provides a covered space for lunch with tables & chairs, agree who will disinfect them the day before/morning of the visit (using sanitising spray\* and disposable cloth).
- Tables and chairs should be disinfected after lunch. Agree who is responsible for this at the pre visit, and who will provide sanitising spray\* and disposable cloth.
- School groups should take all lunch time wrappers, rubbish, etc away with them at the end of the visit. A bin liner will be required.
- School staff should bring their own hot drinks - there won't be any facilities to make hot drinks at the farm.
- If the lunch time is usually spent in a village hall Country Trust Coordinator will find out whether the hall is available. If the hall isn't available, there may be a building at the farm that could be used for the lunch time hour.

## Toilets

- Toilet and hand washing facilities will be needed for the visit. Hand washing facilities will need running water (preferably warm), liquid soap and paper towels or a hot air fan drier. A temporary hand washing station can be set up using a 10-20 litre container of water (the Country Trust Coordinator can help with this).
- Review toilet facilities used for previous visits. The aim should be for the school group to have exclusive use of the facilities during their visit, to minimise the need for cleaning.
- Toilet facilities should be cleaned before, and after, visiting school and other groups have used them (using sanitising spray\* and a disposable cloth).
- If they are located in a residential dwelling (perhaps the farmhouse) at the farm, the farmer or school may decide that they should not be used by the school group in the current circumstances.
- There may be an alternative facility on the farm or public toilets nearby that could be used on the day of the visit.
- If the usual toilet facilities can't be used, and there is no alternative provision, then The Country Trust can consider providing a Portaloo for the visit. Ideally the Portaloo could be used for a number of visits to the same farm over a short period.

## Face Coverings

- School staff, host farmer and Country Trust Coordinator should follow Government guidance when deciding whether to wear a face covering for part or all of the visit. At the pre visit decide for which activities face masks will need to be worn (following Govt guidelines, and whether the activity is delivered in an enclosed space or outside in the fields, etc).

## School children or adults/farm staff/Country Trust Coordinator begin to show Covid19 symptoms during the visit.

### School children or adults

- At the pre visit discuss the school policy for a child or adult in the school party starting to develop symptoms of Covid19. At the pre visit agree a suitable place on the farm where the child could be isolated with a school adult until transport arrives to take them back to school.

### Farm family or staff delivering the visit

- If farm staff/family develop symptoms of Covid19 during the visit the visit should be terminated, unless the Country Trust Coordinator has led the remaining activity at previous visits, for example a woodland walk for the afternoon session. This eventuality must be discussed at the pre visit when the Country Trust Led risk assessment for the activity can be reviewed.

### Country Trust Coordinator

- It should be discussed and decided at the pre visit whether the farmer can complete the visit without support from The CT Coordinator if they develop symptoms of Covid19 during the visit. If not the visit should be terminated.

## Important: Cancellation/postponement of the visit due to Covid19 symptoms

If school staff or farm staff/family develop symptoms of Covid19 or are diagnosed with the disease, then they should inform the Country Trust Coordinator immediately who will contact all involved in the visit to cancel/postpone the pre visit and the farm visit itself. If the Country Trust Coordinator develops symptoms of Covid19 or is diagnosed with the disease the visit will be cancelled unless other staffing arrangements can be made so that the visit can go ahead.

\*Sanitising spray must be 'anti viral' and 'effective against Covid19'