

Group Visits to Longleat

Risk Assessment Guidance

As for all wildlife parks, Longleat operates under the auspices of the Zoo Licensing Act. We are subject to an annual inspection by enforcing officers, who look at the way we take care of our animals and the safety of visitors and staff. The license has to be renewed every six years.

It is strongly recommended that all teachers/group organisers make a pre-visit to Longleat and carry out their own risk assessment. One free ticket per class/group is available on request when booking a visit. In the event that a pre-visit is impossible, this document provides a general outline of the risks and controls identified.

It is essential that children are supervised throughout their visit to Longleat.

- 1 adult for every 6 paying children in school years 1 – 3 for educational groups
- 1 adult for every 8 paying children in school years 4 + or for other educational groups
- 1 adult for every 12 paying children for other groups

These ratios satisfy the levels of supervision recommended by DfES *Health and Safety of Pupils on Education Visits 1998* (where children have disabilities or special needs and require a carer, the admission charge for the carer and for the child is 50% of the normal price).

It is essential that the children and all attending a visit understand:

- the aims and objectives of the visit
- how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules
- why safety precautions are in place and what standard of behaviour is expected
- who is responsible for the group
- what to do if approached by anyone from outside the group
- what to do if separated from the group
- the time and place of departure of group
- that in any emergency situation eg. first aid, a Longleat member of staff should be notified

(DfES *Health and Safety of Pupils on Education Visits 1998*).

Hazards and Risks & Controls

Hazard and risk: Dangerous animals – risk of being bitten

Controls:

- Warning signs on enclosures
- Safety barriers in place
- Feeding of animals is prohibited except in the Deer enclosure and Safari Boats where Longleat food is purchased

Hazard and risk: Contact with animals and animal artefacts – risk of disease or accidental injury

Controls:

- Wash basins provided at Pets Corner, Safari Boats and at other toilet facilities
- Warning and advisory signs displayed
- Feeding the animals is prohibited except where authorised and antiseptic wipes are provided
- Supervision by staff at talks, shows etc.

Hazard and risk: Deep water in the gardens, fountains, lakes and streams – risk of falling in water and drowning

Controls:

- Vegetation and fixed metal/wooden barriers
- Warning signs
- Life belts at boathouse and in gardens
- Strict safety procedures in place on Safari Boats

Hazard and risk: Darkness in the 'Mirror Maze' and 'Bat House' – risk of injury from collisions and tripping

Controls:

- 'Go slow to adjust eyes to light level' signage
- Safety lighting strips

Hazard and risk: Adventure Castle, climbing and playing on apparatus – risk of accidental injury from falling, collisions, tripping etc.

Controls:

- No admittance policy for children not accompanied by an adult
- Ad hoc capacity control measures to ensure area not over crowded
- Play equipment graded by height
- Child entry graded by age (under 14 years only)

Hazard and risk: Mazes, grounds, gardens and the parkland – risk of accidental injury from slips, trips and falls from unauthorised activities.

Controls:

- Safety notices by trees and other areas where relevant
- Parking in allocated areas only
- Group leader ratio policy to be adhered to

Hazard and risk: Electric fencing around some enclosures and lakes – risk of injury from electric shock

Controls:

- Electric fence warning signs

Hazard and risk: Vehicles – risk of being hit by vehicle

Controls:

- Signage
- Traffic calming measures
- Parents/guardians are advised to keep children under control

Hazard and risk: General public – child welfare risk

Controls:

- Lost children post based at the Longleat Railway
- Staff trained in procedures in dealing with lost children and other emergency situations