

Educational visits to Essex County Council Country Parks

Information Sheet

Car parks

Some of the larger parks have designated coach parking. If going to Danbury the driver may or may not choose to enter the park. The common practice in this case is for the driver to ensure that the children are dropped off on the correct side of the road at the entrance to the park. The staff are familiar with this and will be ready to act. If you are on a Ranger lead experience you do not have to pay for the car park. We are unable to refund or retract any money put into the machines. Please advise the coach driver if they choose to remain on the park for the day.

Arrival

You will be met at the visitor Centre or the car park by one of the Education Rangers. They will advise you where to put school bags etc and where the toilets are.. Please do not bring anything valuable with you. We do not lock things away and you will want to have your hands free for activities. The Education Ranger will confirm the expected learning outcomes for the day and do their best to ensure that any priorities are met.

Toilets

The number of toilets varies in each park. Each park has a disabled toilet. For large groups we will ensure that all the facilities we have will be available on arrival, before lunch and home time.

Weather

The Education Rangers will continue to teach regardless of the weather. In the event of poor weather we are happy to alter our timetable to ensure that we get the most out of the day. In the event of extreme weather a joint decision between the lead teacher and the Education Ranger will take place. We are able to provide drinking water at all parks and can refill bottles in hot weather. During the cold weather one or two hot water bottles are useful for more delicate types.

Timings

Please arrive at the Country Park at 9.45am for a 10.00am start. The day finishes at 2.30pm.

Discipline

Whilst at the County Parks the discipline of the class remains the responsibility of the class teacher. Our Education Rangers are experienced outdoor educators and if they see something that may cause immediate harm or danger they will act without delay to prevent injury.



Ratios

Nursery at your discretion as there is no adult charge but a minimum of 1:4 is recommended.

Primary school children 1:6

Secondary school 1:10

The Education Ranger ratio is 1:35

Lunchtime

During this time the Ranger will leave you with your class. There are a wide variety of picnic areas within the Country Parks. Some of them are dog free and enclosed, others have play equipment. We are happy to leave you with a few props for games, please ask. Lunchtime is usually for 45 minutes.

Waste Free Lunch

We are unable to accept the waste from school trips and request that you take it back to school with you. We are happy to provide black bags if you have none. There are lessons plans available if you wish to discuss the concept of Waste Free Lunches with your class before your trip.

Health and Safety The Education Ranger will have completed a risk assessment prior to the start of the day. Please ensure that you have read this and signed it. This will be kept on file in the park office.

Extra bits!

Please bring as many digital cameras as possible. We work as practically as possible and don't often use worksheets out in the parks. We are all aware of the importance of recording evidence and data collection and try to use as many different methods of using the natural environment as we can.

Spare clothes, not often needed, but can cause quite a stir if there aren't any if required.

Food, if your class normally has fruit or a snack mid morning you are welcome to bring it with you and we will plan snack time in.

