

Risk Assessment Guidance for Visiting Schools and Groups 2011

Thank you for choosing to come to Blackpool Zoo for your school / group visit. We hope that you have an enjoyable and educational visit.

Blackpool Zoo has been open to the public since 1972 and currently has around 300,000 visitors a year. Like other zoos and wildlife parks we must be compliant with the Zoo Licensing Act. We are subject to official inspections by enforcement officers who assess our animals' welfare and the safety of visitors and staff.

Due to the amount of individual risk assessments that cover the zoo's operation it is not possible to send them out on an individual basis. This document only contains risk guidelines and we would strongly recommend that all organisers make a preliminary visit to Blackpool Zoo to carry out their own risk assessment before bringing a group. A free pre-visit ticket is available on request once a booking has been completed. Please telephone: (01253) 830805.

It is essential that children are supervised throughout their visit. We ask that you adhere to the following ratios recommended by the DfES Health and Safety on Educational Visits:

- 1 adult for every six pupils (primary)
- 1 adult for every ten pupils (secondary)

Zoo Rules

- Please do not feed the animals.
- Please do not distress the animals by shouting, leaping about, tapping on the glass.
- Please do not drop litter.
- Please do not bring dogs and other pets into the zoo.
- Please do not climb on or over any barriers.
- Please do not pick or damage any plants.

Risk Guidelines

Handling live animals and/or artefacts during classroom sessions

School Responsibilities:

Explain zoo rules and potential hazards prior to visit, if you are unsure of these please contact the Education Department. Wash hands thoroughly before and after handling animals and/or artefacts. Discourage children from putting hands in their mouths or near their eyes, and from placing their face near the animals. Eating and drinking is prohibited during classroom sessions. Children should refrain from making loud noises and moving around during handling sessions.

Zoo Responsibilities:

Zoo staff will explain contact rules and suitable behaviour before all classroom sessions. Hand wash will be supplied after all contact sessions. All animals are regularly examined and screened by our vet. Zoo staff will remove animals if they show any signs of agitation.

Further information:

Young children

Children under twelve months old should not handle animals. Children aged one to four years have restricted and/or controlled access to close contact with animals.

Low immunity

Those with low immunity should refrain from handling animals. Zoo staff should be made aware of those with low immunity prior to classroom session.

Allergies

Those with relevant allergies should refrain from handling animals. Zoo staff should be made aware of those with allergies prior to classroom session.

Panic attacks caused by phobias

Those with phobias should make themselves known to zoo staff prior to classroom session. We recommend calmly leaving the classroom session if you feel any animal will cause a phobic reaction.

Close animal contact areas

(Amazonia, Lemur wood, Wallaby Walk-through, Children's Zoo)

School Responsibilities:

Explain zoo rules and potential hazards prior to visit, if you are unsure of these please contact the Education Department. Wash hands thoroughly before and after entering any close contact areas. If soap is unavailable in a dispenser please make a member of zoo staff aware. Discourage children from placing their faces near the animals, putting their hands in their mouths or near their eyes and from drinking from the tap in the Children's Zoo. No eating or drinking in close animal contact areas. All food and drinks should be placed in sealed bags before entering close animal contact areas.

Groups should be quiet and calm when near animals. Please read and follow all instructions on warning signs. All close contact animals should be respected and treated with care. Do not cross safety barriers.

Zoo Responsibilities:

Signage is clearly displayed in all close animal contact areas. Adequate hand washing facilities are provided. All animals are regularly examined and screened by our vet. Zoo staff will remove animals if they show any signs of agitation.

Free roaming animals

School Responsibilities:

Explain zoo rules and potential hazards prior to visit, if you are unsure of these please contact the Education Department. No one should attempt to chase or touch any free roaming animals within the zoo. Wash hands thoroughly before and after eating. All free roaming animals should be respected and treated with care.

Zoo Responsibilities:

Hand washing facilities available where appropriate. All animals are regularly examined and screened by our vet. Zoo staff will remove animals if they show any signs of agitation.

Visiting Animal Enclosures

School Responsibilities:

Explain zoo rules and potential hazards prior to visit, if you are unsure of these please contact the Education Department. Make sure an adequate number of responsible adults are present to supervise children. Groups should be quiet and calm when near animal enclosures and adhere to zoo rules at all times. Keep to designated paths and look out for any potential hazards. Do not cross any safety barriers.

Zoo Responsibilities:

Safety signs are clearly displayed around the zoo. Safety barriers are in place around the zoo.

Further Information:

Electric Fences

Public should be aware that there is electrical fencing around some enclosures to prevent animal escapes. Warning signs are clearly displayed at these enclosures and physical barriers are in place between the public and live electric fences.

Deep Water

Public should be aware that there are some areas of deep water within the zoo. Warning signs are clearly displayed and physical barriers between the public and deep water are in place. Buoyancy aids are provided.

Dangerous Animals

Warning signs are clearly displayed on all enclosures containing dangerous animals. Physical safety barriers are in place between the public and dangerous animals.

Panic attacks caused by phobias

All animal houses have signs indicating what animals are inside.

Animal Foodstuffs

Please note that that our carnivorous animals are fed part or whole animal carcasses.

Lost children protocol

School Responsibilities:

Make sure an adequate number of responsible adults are present to supervise children at all times. Arrange meeting points throughout the day. Advise children to go to zoo reception or contact a member of zoo staff if they become separated from their group. Lost children should be immediately reported to a member of zoo staff. We advise that each child has a sticker displaying their teacher's name and a contact number for the school. Please report anyone acting in a suspicious manner to a member of staff.

Zoo Responsibilities:

Zoo staff are trained in procedures in dealing with lost children. All staff are approachable for help and the majority have access to radios in order to alert other departments of a lost child. On finding a lost child every effort will be made to contact the group leader.

Lost property

School Responsibilities:

Children should label all property they bring to the zoo. Any lost property should be reported to the zoo reception. Items are left in the School Eating Area at your own risk.

Zoo Responsibilities:

The zoo collects all lost property at the zoo reception.

Disabled / special needs visitors

School Responsibilities:

Make education staff aware of any special needs requirements when booking in visit.

Zoo Responsibilities:

Wheelchairs are available for loan. Disabled toilets are provided and a room can be made available for any feeding or changing regimes (we do not provide a winch). All classroom sessions and tours are adaptable to the special needs of each group. Flora is regularly maintained to prevent obstruction of view.

Playground and coin operated rides

School Responsibilities:

Full supervision is required for children using the playground and coin operated rides. Please read instructional signage to determine if it is suitable for your children.

Zoo Responsibilities:

Regular maintenance checks and inspections to comply with all relevant safety legislation.

Escaped animals

School Responsibilities:

Inform a member of zoo staff immediately. Move into a building.

Zoo Responsibilities:

Recapture of animal in accordance with our animal escape procedure. Maintain visitor safety at all times.

Fire

School Responsibilities:

Report all fires to a member of zoo staff immediately. Move to an open area.

Zoo Responsibilities:

Maintain visitor safety as per our current fire procedures.

Medical assistance

School Responsibilities:

Anyone on regular medication should carry it with them or get a supervisor to store all medication and know how to administer it. Inform a member of staff if a member of your group is unwell or in need of medical assistance.

Zoo Responsibilities:

First aid is available in the zoo reception. Our first aiders are unable to administer any medication. Zoo staff can request an ambulance on their radios. All areas of zoo have ambulance access.

Café

School Responsibilities:

Those with food allergies may prefer to bring their own food. Children must be supervised at all times.

Zoo Responsibilities:

The Blackpool Zoo cafeteria adheres to health and safety regulations. The café staff will give details of ingredients on request. An area for eating packed lunches is provided. Ask for details when making your booking.

Train

School Responsibilities:

Adequate supervision required. Children should remain seated whilst the train is in motion.

Zoo Responsibilities:

Regular maintenance checks and inspections are carried out on the train.

Face painting

School Responsibilities:

Children with skin conditions should refrain from having their faces painted.

Zoo Responsibilities:

All face paints used are hypoallergenic and can be removed with soap and water.

Zoo vehicles

School Responsibilities:

Be aware that vehicles will be driving around the site. Children must be supervised at all times. Children should be prevented from climbing on any unattended vehicles.

Zoo Responsibilities:

Only experienced and fully trained staff will drive vehicles around the zoo. Zoo staff will keep to the set site speed limit.