

WILDWOOD TRUST RISK ASSESSMENT FOR SCHOOL/GROUP VISITS 2009

INTRODUCTION

Please note: Wildwood is a natural woodland site with all the hazards you would expect to find on a walk in the woods – trees, roots and stumps, branches, open ditches which are dry in summer, wet in heavy rain. Our animals are accommodated in natural enclosures and the woodland paths twist and turn through the trees. This contributes hugely to the wild character of the site, but also means that visitors should be aware that Wildwood is not a formal zoo with a concrete infrastructure. Likewise, Wildwood’s play area is a woodland adventure playground for children to explore. We want your children to enjoy their visit and to be safe, so we ask you to ensure their supervision in the woodland and the play area at all times.

| IDENTIFY RISK | RISK LEVEL | MITIGATION OF RISK |
|---------------|------------|--------------------|
|---------------|------------|--------------------|

| ANIMALS | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bites/Kicks/Butts | Low | No visitor contact with animals likely to bite/kick Stand-off barriers to prevent visitor contact Warning notices at enclosures No feeding policy for visitors Feeding only by Wildwood Trust staff taking guided groups School groups invited to leave food bags behind for tours to avoid attracting animals Adder bite emergency procedure in place (advise teachers on pre-visit inspection to warn parents of anaphylactic students to bring their epi-pens) Trained first aiders on site and first aid equipment stored in all permanent buildings on site All park staff, including guides and shop staff, in radio contact in case of emergencies |
| Disease (human/animal and animal/human transmission) | Low | No contact with animals likely to transmit disease, e.g.: salmonella – reptiles (N.B. reptiles may on occasions be used for encounter sessions; strict handwashing advice to be given) toxoplasmosis – wildcats – no contact rabies – imported beavers (quarantined for six months – out of bounds) No feeding policy for visitors (risk of disease transmission to and from animals) Feeding only by Wildwood staff taking guided groups Guided groups advised to wash hands with soap |

Schools/groups risk assessment

and water in public toilets after tour before eating;
water-free hand washing dispenser on restaurant
verandah and in education centre

Insect bites Low
(wood ants/bees/
mosquitoes)

Large wood ant nests pointed out as part of ancient
woodland ecology
Advice given on stepping over wood ant trails
Bee/wasp sting emergency procedure in place
Advise teachers on pre-visit inspection to warn
parents of highly allergic students to bring their own
sting relief cream (first aiders may not administer)
Bee hives behind glass panel and boundary fence -
contact unlikely
Mosquitoes generally a seasonal problem only in
May-June – general advice on presence in woodland
Trained first aiders on site and first aid equipment
stored in all permanent buildings on site

Escapes Low

Established animal escape procedure
Established places of safety
All park staff, including guides and shop staff, in
radio contact

ENCLOSURES

Electric fencing Low
for some enclosures

Stand-off barriers to prevent contact
Warning signs in place

WOODLAND

Trees Low

Staff advised to be alert and keep eyes open in
strong winds in case of falling branches/trees
Paths checked daily for overhanging/fallen branches
Trained first aiders on site and first aid equipment
stored in all permanent buildings on site

Trips/falls Low

Visitors are requested to keep to the marked paths
Most stumps/tree roots eliminated from woodland
paths but reasonable care required as pathways are
natural, not concrete or tarmac
Students advised to be alert and keep eyes open
Trained first aiders on site and first aid equipment
stored in all permanent buildings on site

Nettles/brambles Low

Regular cutting back carried out
Students advised to keep eyes open
Trained first aiders on site and first aid equipment
stored in all permanent buildings on site

Schools/groups risk assessment

Drainage ditches Low

Dry in summer, wet in winter – care required on bridges, especially in wet/frosty conditions

Open water Low

Fences/barriers in place
Close supervision of children required to prevent climbing

Lost children Low

Winding paths run in a complete circle – advise students they will return to the play area as long as they keep going in the same direction; report then to shop staff who will alert education staff
All park staff, including guides and shop staff, in radio contact

Fire Low

Fire procedure in place
Established fire assembly points in park
All park staff, including guides and shop staff, in radio contact

WEATHER

Sunburn/stroke Low

Tree cover extensive through spring-autumn
Small children advised to wear sun hats
Trained first aiders on site and first aid equipment stored in all permanent buildings on site

Getting wet Medium

Tree cover extensive through spring-autumn
Hides and small buildings around park offer brief refuge during downpours
Students advised to bring rainproof clothing
Restaurant verandah available in wet weather; please ask restaurant staff permission as it is a franchise operation – staff very understanding but do appreciate schools collecting their own litter!
Education centre may be available for lunch on occasions if not being used for a school session; no children/students allowed without proper adult supervision

WOODLAND ADVENTURE PLAY AREA

Play equipment Low
(wooden)

Equipment checked daily
Deep woodbark play surface
Some equipment unsuitable for very young children
Staff supervision required at all times
Under fives area separately fenced
Care required in wet weather

Schools/groups risk assessment

No. of children Low
(may be several schools
at peak times)

Guided tours are staggered during school visiting
times to relieve pressure on play area
Staff supervision required at all times

Lost children Low

Single entrance/exit to play area; path leads out of
play area in two directions (towards restaurant and
towards animals)
Staff supervision required at all times



Anne Riddell

Head of Education Risk assessment last updated, January 2009