



Nene Park Trust

Self-Led School Visits to Ferry Meadows

Teachers Information Pack



Dear Teacher,

At Nene Park Trust we like nothing better than to see the Park being enjoyed by as many people as possible. With its range of habitats, including woodland, meadow and wetland, Ferry Meadows Country Park makes an inspirational outdoor classroom for the imaginative teacher! The wide-open meadows are ideal for sporting activities and the woods make a perfect location for a mini-beast safari or why not just bring your pupils for a picnic overlooking the lakes? Whatever the reason for your visit, our staff will be happy to see you and help in any way we can to make your visit memorable for all the right reasons.

The information provided in this pack is intended to help you plan your visit to ensure the very best experience for yourself and your pupils. While we welcome visits from school groups at any time of year, we ask that you read the enclosed information carefully and contact us in advance of your visit so that we can ensure that your activities are not affected by other events taking place in the Park. You will find a form to notify us of your planned visit at the back of this pack.

You may also be interested in making use of our education service to participate in educational activities led by Nene Park Trust staff. We offer a programme of activities linked to National Curriculum requirements for all ages. For more information go to our website www.nenepark.org.uk/education.

If you have any queries about planning a school visit to Ferry Meadows, or would like to talk about how we can help you to plan a visit, then please feel free to contact us by telephone on **01733 234193** or by email at education@neneparktrust.org.uk.

We wish you and your pupils a very happy visit to Ferry Meadows.

Best wishes,
Education & Learning Team
Nene Park Trust

Planning Information

Transport

Many schools choose to walk to Ferry Meadows, but if this is not possible for your group then school groups are welcome to make use of the large coach park located close to the Visitor Centre. Access to the car park is height restricted. If you are travelling in an oversized vehicle (coach or minibus) you will need to contact our Duty Ranger on **07860 308081** to gain access under the height barrier at the entrance to the Park. Parking charges are in force in Ferry Meadows at all times and are operated by an automatic number plate recognition system. However, parking is free to school groups who have notified us in advance of their visit. In order to claim free parking, simply drop into the Visitor Centre and we can supply you with a bar code to scan at one of our pay machines at the end of your visit.

Facilities

There are two public toilet blocks within the Park, one next to The Den classroom near to the Visitor Centre at the south end of the Park, and one alongside the car park at Lakeside at the north end of the Park. There is an accessible toilet at each block, which includes a baby changing facility. These toilets are opened and locked with the opening hours of the Park. There is a Changing Places Toilet facility next to the main toilet block at Ferry Meadows. Visitors can access this with a radar key during the opening hours of the Park. An additional accessible changing facility is available at Nene Outdoors Watersports and Activity Centre during the centre's opening hours.

For schools wanting to make use of an indoor space The Den and Sett classrooms are available for bookings, please call **01733 234193** to discuss availability.

Appropriate clothing

Ferry Meadows is a very exposed location and there is little shelter from the weather. You are therefore advised to ensure that all pupils are dressed appropriately for the weather and time of year. Appropriate clothing may include:

- Sturdy outdoor shoes/boots (not sandals)
- Full-length trousers (shorts and skirts are not recommended at any time of year)
- Warm hats, scarves and gloves (if visiting in winter)
- Sun hats (if visiting in summer)
- Long-sleeved shirt/jumper (this could be worn over a short-sleeved t-shirt in case of warm weather)
- Waterproof coat with hood

First Aid

Although all Trust education staff are first aid trained, it remains the responsibility of the school staff to ensure appropriate first aid provision for your pupils. In case of emergencies, help can be found at the Visitor Centre or Nene Outdoors during opening hours or by contacting the Duty Ranger on **07860 308081**.



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Teacher in a Trolley Activity Packs

Our Teacher in a Trolley resource packs bring learning to life, with everything you need for hands-on, interactive sessions in the Park. There are three topics to choose from – natural art, plants and animals. These are available to hire for £35 each, or two for £50, and include the activity sheets, essential equipment and guidelines for running the activities. See the following page for the full pack contents.

Free resources

A range of free educational resources created by the Education Team are available for teachers to download and reproduce as many times as you require. To find out more, please email education@neneparktrust.org.uk.

Equipment

While you are welcome to bring your own equipment for most activities, we must ask that you do not use your own equipment for pond dipping in order to prevent the spread of invasive weed species between water bodies.

Other activities

During your visit to Ferry Meadows, you may wish to make use of some of the other activities that operate in or near the Park. Attractions include the miniature railway, watersports, boat trips, pitch and putt golf and the Nene Valley Heritage Railway. Full contact details for all local attractions can be found on our website: www.nenepark.org.uk/visit-us/things-to-do.

Food and drink

There are two cafés at Ferry Meadows, both of which will provide food and drink to eat in or take away. If you intend to take your pupils to either of the cafés, you are advised to contact them in advance to ensure they will be able to accommodate your group. Both cafés are also able to take advance orders for items such as picnics, drinks or ice creams allowing you to easily collect refreshments for your whole group. Contact details and more information can be found on our website: www.nenepark.org.uk/visit-us/where-to-eat. Picnic tables and benches can be found at several locations around the Park and are available on a first come, first served basis. Teachers who would like access to an indoor location for picnic lunches may be able to make use of the The Den or Sett classrooms, however this *must* be booked in advance and priority will be given to groups taking part in activities led by Nene Park Trust staff.

Shopping

The Visitor Centre at Ferry Meadows is well stocked with gift items so you may wish to give your pupils an opportunity to buy souvenirs of their visit. As space is limited in the Visitor Centre, we would ask that you do not allow more than 10 pupils in the Visitor Centre at any one time and that you ensure they are appropriately supervised by an adult. You may also wish to consider setting a limit to the amount pupils are allowed to spend. If you inform our staff, they will be happy to help you enforce this at the till.



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Teacher in a Trolley Pack Contents

Plant Pack	
A folder containing: • Self-led school visit information pack • Activity Guidelines • Recommended locations map • Plant ID keys • Plant recording sheets • Tree ID keys (labelled for appropriate age range) • Tree recording sheets • Parts of plants sheets	Additional equipment: • 7 clipboards • 6 pencil cases (with pencils, colouring pencils and a sharpener) • Back to school pack
Natural Art Pack	
A folder containing: • Self-led school visit information pack • Activity Guidelines • Recommended locations map • Colours in nature sheets • Green man templates • Andy Goldsworthy pictures • Natural mobile example pictures	Additional equipment: • 7 clipboards • 6 pencil cases (with pencils, crayons and a sharpener) • Back to school pack
Animal Pack	
A folder containing: • Self-led school visit information pack • Activity Guidelines • Recommended locations map • 6 spotter walk worksheets • 6 Animal ID sheets • Example pictures of animals homes to build • List of animals' home names	Additional equipment: • 6 small trays containing: 1x bug pot, 1x spoon, 1x paintbrush, 1x magnifying glass, 1x bug ID sheet. • 7 clipboards • 6 pencil cases (with 2 pencils and a sharpener) • Back to school pack

Hire one pack for £35 or two packs for £50.



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Hazards and Responsibilities for School-Led Visits

At Nene Park Trust we will do everything we can to ensure that your visit to Ferry Meadows will be as safe and enjoyable as possible. However, there are some things that require your judgement and the need for you to maintain control of your group.

The following list is a summary of the main hazards likely to be encountered during a visit to Ferry Meadows. It is not a complete list and should not replace your own risk evaluation procedure, but it may assist you in planning your visit to ensure the safety of your pupils.

Please remember that during your visit to Ferry Meadows, you are responsible for the safety and behaviour of your pupils at all times.

Hazard identified	Our responsibilities	Your responsibilities
Open water Ferry Meadows contains several areas of open water including lakes and river. As well as the risk of drowning, activities involving contact with water carry the risk of infectious disease e.g. weils disease. It is possible for school groups to hire pond dipping equipment for use in the Park.	Rescue aids are provided at strategic locations around the Park.	- Warn pupils of the hazards associated with open water. - Activities should not take place close to the water unless it is a requirement of the activity. - When activities take place near open water you should carry an appropriate rescue aid.
Wild Animals Pupils are likely to encounter a range of wild animals during a visit to Ferry Meadows. These will mainly be in the form of small invertebrates but may also include larger animals such as rabbits and wild fowl such as geese.	Signage will be put in place to identify areas with known bees and wasps nests near high use areas with signage being placed as soon as possible at new nests.	- Pupils should be warned of the hazards associated with wild animals. - Do not allow your pupils to approach or feed wild animals, in particular the geese as they can become aggressive. - Make sure you are aware of any pupils with allergies, in particular to bee or wasp stings. Ensure that any medication required by these pupils is with you at all times. - When an activity is likely to involve contact with animals e.g. bug hunting, pupils should be instructed in the correct method for handling animals. - If you find a bee or wasp nest during your activity, please inform a Nene Park member of staff of its location.

Hazard identified	Our responsibilities	Your responsibilities
General public Ferry Meadows is open to the public throughout the year.		- Pupils should be warned not to approach members of the public. - Ensure adequate staffing levels to give appropriate supervision on the day of your visit. - Remain aware of the location of your pupils at all times. - Do not allow pupils to leave the group without supervision.
Dogs and dog waste Ferry Meadows is a popular location for dog walkers and it is likely that your pupils will encounter dogs during your visit.	If a dog is seen off the lead and behaving in a way that is likely to cause a hazard to others Nene Park Trust staff will speak to the owners and ask them to put the dog back on the lead.	- Warn pupils of the hazards associated with dogs - Do not allow your pupils to approach dogs. - If a dog is seen behaving in a way that is likely to cause a hazard this should be reported to a member of Nene Park Trust staff. - Warn pupils to look out for dog waste before sitting down on the ground or picking up natural objects.
Slips/trips/falls Our site is a natural site and the grounds are uneven. Activities are likely to involve walking off the path and crossing areas of grassland and woodland.	- Our rangers regularly monitor the condition of footpaths around the park and make repairs as necessary. - Obstructions to paths are removed as soon as we become aware of them.	- Inspect study areas for safety before use. - Ensure pupils only walk/run where you have told them it is safe to do so. - Ensure all pupils are wearing suitable footwear for the conditions, sandals are not recommended at any time of year. - Warn pupils of trip hazards (e.g. rabbit holes, tree roots etc.) when walking off the paths.
Hazardous vegetation During your visit pupils are likely to encounter vegetation that may present a physical hazard (e.g. brambles, nettles etc.) as well as vegetation that could be harmful if ingested.		- Warn pupils about the hazards of vegetation and how to avoid them. - Sites used should be inspected for hazardous vegetation and where it is identified it should be pointed out to pupils and they should be warned to stay away. - Do not allow your pupils to pick vegetation. - Make sure you are aware of any pupils with allergies. Ensure that any medication required by these pupils is with you at all times. - Do not allow your pupils to eat anything found in the Park.
Litter/hazardous waste	- Nene Park Trust staff monitor all areas of the park at least once every day and hazardous waste is removed as soon as it is identified. - Recycling and general waste bins are provided throughout the park.	- Do not allow your pupils to touch any waste found around the park. Inform a member of Nene Park Trust staff of its location. - Do not allow your pupils to drop litter during their visit to the park. Ensure all waste is placed in the appropriate bin.
Dirty hands before consuming food/drink	Hand washing facilities are provided at the main Visitor Centre toilet block and at the water sports centre toilet block	- Ensure that your pupils have washed their hands before eating or drinking. - Ensure that your pupils wash their hands before returning home either before leaving Ferry Meadows or before leaving school at the end of the day.

Notification of Self-Led School Visit to Ferry Meadows Country Park

At Nene Park Trust we welcome visits from school groups and love seeing you use our Park as a giant outdoor classroom! By providing us with the following information, you will help us ensure that your activities are not affected by other events taking place in the Park.

Date and time of visit	
Name of school	
Name of lead teacher	
Address	
Telephone	
Mobile	
Email	
Would you like to opt in to receive information about our education programmes?	Yes ☐ No ☐
Number of pupils	
Age of pupils	
Planned activities <i>Please give brief details of your planned activities with approximate locations and timings including whether you will be allowing your pupils access to the Visitor Centre.</i>	
Please indicate if you would like to book any Teacher in a Trolley resource packs.	Plants KS1/2 ☐ Natural art KS1 ☐ Animals KS1 ☐ Hire one for £35 or two for £50 .
Will you require access through the height barrier for a coach/minibus? Yes ☐ No ☐	

Please email the completed form to education@neneparktrust.org.uk. If there are any problems with your planned activities a member of Nene Park Trust staff will contact you to discuss how we can help you get the most from your visit.



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