

Detail

Procedure name:	Essential Information for visiting Group Co-ordinators and Leaders
Issue Number:	3
Date Created:	20/02/2025
Date updated:	04/08/2026
Review Date:	04/08/2026
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Responsibilities:	

Contents

Introduction	2
Contact details	2
Pre-visit planning	2
Your responsibilities	3
General Hazards and First Aid	3
Extra information for Self-guided Visits	4
Risk Assessments	4
Weather Considerations	5
Respect	5
Internal Forms	6
External Forms	6
Sources of Information	6
Appendices	6
Appendix 1: Weil's Disease	6
Appendix 2: Shared Use, The Public and Dogs	7
Appendix 3: Ticks	7
Appendix 3: Safety Information	9

Introduction

This document outlines safety information and best practice for groups attending a session, activity or event delivered by Learning and Engagement or for those groups who are aiming to deliver self-led activities within Lee Valley Regional Park.

To arrange a session delivered by our experienced staff, please contact us via an enquiry form online, by email or by phone. The catalogue of sessions we deliver, and further information is available on our website visitleevalley.org.uk/learning.

Please let us know if you plan to run a self-guided visit in the Park to help us manage numbers on site and any health and safety considerations.

Contact details

Learning & Engagement Team

Myddelton House Gardens, Bulls Cross, Enfield, EN2 9HG

Email: learning@leevalleypark.org.uk

Phone: 03000 030 618

(Please be aware that staff are often delivering sessions so always leave a voicemail if prompted and we will get back to you as soon as possible).

Learning and Engagement meets the Requirements for Providers listed in the Young Persons Safety Act (1995).

Pre-visit planning

To assist with planning your visit, a free 15–30-minute pre-visit can be arranged for certain sites within Lee Valley Regional Park to discuss the itinerary and any health and safety aspects to inform your own risk assessment writing.

We can also offer maps and advice in the case of self-led visits.

If you are booking a session that will be delivered by our staff, you will receive your booking information that contains a link to the safety information we discuss in [the](#) session, however it is important that you also discuss this with your group, including any accompanying leaders/adults prior to visit.

Please note that during visits certain sites do not have indoor lunch facilities or storage facilities for participants personal items such as bags, lunches, changes of footwear etc. Please discuss this with Lee Valley Park [S](#)taff prior to your session if you have any queries.

Your responsibilities

Ensure you have read your booking paperwork/email which contains important site/programme specific information, Health and Safety Information, payment procedures and Terms and Conditions.

- **Ensure that you follow National Government, Local Authority guidance and additional requirements of your Local Authority establishment policies, including your LEA pupils to adult ratios for offsite visits. Please also ensure that you bring enough adult supervision and assistance for activities you are participating in as some require small group/team activities. Please discuss this with Lee Valley Park Staff if you need advice on ratios.**
- Remember that during your visit you are responsible for the safety and behaviour of all those participating. The Lee Valley Regional Park Authority will only be liable for loss or injury to its employees or through its employee's negligence.

You are responsible for the supervision and behaviour of your group throughout their entire visit, including as they disembark the coach/bus/minibus/train, walk across the car parks on arrival to the site they are visiting, during the session, at lunch breaks and again when returning to the coach/bus/minibus/train when leaving the site.

If Lee Valley Park Staff deem behaviour of the group to be a health and safety risk to participants, staff members, the public, contractors, or a wildlife welfare issue, they will pause the session and speak to you/your visiting staff. If the behaviour is not corrected after resuming, we reserve the right to cancel the remainder of the session/activity on health and safety grounds. There will be no refund given under these circumstances.

- Your group should respect the Park's environment and follow the Countryside Code.
- Lee Valley Regional Park Staff reserve the right to cancel a programme if behaviour of group members threatens the health and safety of the group, Lee Valley Regional Park staff and volunteers, members of the public, contractors, wildlife and habitats within the Park.
- As part of the Park's plan to encourage users who generate rubbish to take ownership of it, there are no litter bins in the open spaces and some venues of the Park. Therefore, **it is your responsibility to make arrangements for disposing of any rubbish you create during your visit once you have left the Park. This is the case with both outdoor and indoor facilities, therefore please prepare to be able to take all your rubbish away with you.**
- Kindly note that by making a booking with Lee Valley Regional Park Authority you agree to indemnify Lee Valley Regional Park Authority against any loss or damage occasioned by you or your party's actions or negligence to any Lee Valley equipment used by you or your party during your visit.

General hazards and first aid

Learning and Engagement staff carry first aid kits, and the session leader is first aid trained. However, it is strongly recommended that your visiting groups have a health and safety trained member present because you will know your group and have any medication, knowledge of medical backgrounds and your students/participating individuals may feel more comfortable coming to you for first aid.

Lee Valley staff carry a throwline, first aid, emergency blanket, whistle, mobile phone which is explained in the safety talk at the start of the session, or if more suitable, prior to going outside.

- Participants are taught our 'whistle stop' procedure, so that everybody knows what to do in the event of a problem or emergency. This is explained as part of the safety talk.
- Park staff are well versed in the hazards of the area or site.
- All our guided programmes are risk assessed, however following establishment guidelines visiting groups are advised to produce their own risk assessments due to their knowledge of the group.
- Hand sanitizers and hand gel can be used in addition to soap and water but not as an alternative.

However, you, as the group leader, know the group and its needs and must ensure adequate preparation, care and supervision throughout the visit.

Extra information for self-guided visits

- If you are leading a group yourselves, you are responsible for all aspects of the visit and its participants.
- You can email or telephone us for site information, but you must risk assess your own activities.
- The Park has many water hazards which often have steep and slippery banks.
- Your group must not enter the waterbodies within Lee Valley Regional Park.
- Past land uses in the park can occasionally cause problems. In some areas there is broken glass, buried waste and other dangerous items underground. Soil studies should only be carried out in consultation with Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.
- Please refer to other sections of the document for further relevant advice on preparing your visit.
- Visiting groups must wash their hands with soap and water before eating and drinking. Hand sanitizers and hand gel can be used in addition to soap and water but should not be used as an alternative.

Risk Assessments

This document has been produced following a risk assessment of the activities and provides information on hazards and relevant control measures so that you can ensure that your safety arrangements are appropriate. Should you require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact us.

Weather Considerations

Please note that Lee Valley Park staff will be monitoring the weather via the Met Office weather/health alerts ahead of and during your visit for any health and safety implications and will amend sessions appropriately (be it content, duration or breaks) to ensure the safety and comfort of your group.

Please note that if a Met Office Red Weather warning is in place the session will not go ahead, and the Learning and Engagement team will liaise with you to try and reschedule your booking wherever possible.

Please contact us in advance of your visit if you have any concerns about the weather.

Remember that drinks and snacks are essential – plenty of cold drinks for hot summer days and warm drinks in winter. (However, groups are asked during certain sessions or activities not to eat or drink due to our strict hygiene rules. Please enquire at the time of booking or with the Lee Valley Park staff during your session.) Groups are advised to wash hands at the end of an activity before eating or drinking.

It is always very important that all members of your group are dressed appropriately, and have the necessary equipment. Below we have listed some of the more important items, however, each group will have different needs, and in many cases the weather will dictate the exact equipment and clothing which will be required.

- Old clothing is always best. Participants are advised to wear long sleeves and trousers tucked into their socks or boots to protect their arms and legs from stinging/prickly plants, insects, and sunburn.
- A hat will keep the sun off in the summer and keep you warm in the winter. Gloves keep hands warm in cold weather.
- A light anorak will protect from summer showers.
- A waterproof coat should be worn in the winter.
- Sunscreen for protection against sunburn
- Strong shoes or waterproof footwear are best for the outdoors.
- A spare pair of indoor shoes can be useful in wet weather.

Respect

The wildlife and habitats within the Park need protection. Please remember that the wildlife and plants are there to be enjoyed by your group and others. Several sites in the Park have special legal protection. Please help by not disturbing the wildlife or picking the plants.

Wherever you go follow the Countryside Code!

- Enjoy and respect the countryside.
- Guard against all risk of fire.
- Fasten all gates.
- Keep your dogs under close control.
- Keep to public paths across farmland.
- Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and wall.

- Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone.
- Take your litter home.
- Help to keep all water clean.
- Protect wildlife, plants and trees.
- Take special care on country roads.
- Make no unnecessary noise.

Internal Forms

- N/A

External Forms

- N/A

Sources of Information

- N/A

Appendices

Appendix 1: Weil's Disease (Leptospirosis)

Appendix 2: Shared Usage, the Public and dogs

Appendix 3: Ticks

Appendix 4: Safety Information

Appendix 1: Weil's Disease/Leptospirosis

The disease known as Weil's Disease (Leptospirosis) is an infection found in rat urine, which contaminates water and wet riverbanks. The bacteria do not survive for long in dry conditions.

It can be a serious illness requiring hospital treatment and can lead to kidney or liver failure, generally one patient in ten dies with it. Weil's Disease is a publicly notifiable illness.

The bacteria are absorbed through the skin and mucous membranes of the mouth and eyes. It gets into the blood stream most easily if you have a minor cut or graze on your skin.

Any area where there is known to be a high rat population can be assumed to be hazardous. The Moat in the Abbey Gardens should be avoided, as should the River Lea at Dobbs Weir because of its previous history.

Should you be leading or assisting a party, sampling or dipping in a pond or stream, or indeed working on your own in such circumstances, the following procedures should be followed:

- Sites known to be high risk should not be used for groups, e.g. River Lea at Dobbs Weir and the Moat in the Abbey Gardens. If sampling is required, waterproof gloves should be worn.
- When water sampling is undertaken, any scratch or graze must be covered with a waterproof plaster or waterproof gloves.
- Waterproof footwear must be worn if water is entered.
- After sampling the water, hands must be washed in clean tap water and soap immediately and particularly before eating and drinking. (If clean water is not available on site, clean water, soap and paper towels should be carried for this purpose). Should any person fall into the water, the individual (or their leader or teacher) should be advised to consult a doctor reporting the incidence if he/she experiences any flu-like symptoms.

Appendix 2: Shared usage, the public and dogs.

Dogs are welcome in our Park, so therefore they may be encountered on your visit. They do not need to be on leads but should be under control if off lead.

If a dog comes up to the group during your visit, participants must not interact with it, remain calm, still and it is suggested folding their arms or keeping them out of reach of the dog.

The Lee Valley Regional Park Authority does provide dog waste bins, but please note there are various community health and safety hazards associated with dogs' urine and excreta.

There is a need to minimise the hazards for groups that we lead into the Park. One disease that has been highlighted is Toxocara, a worm infection of dogs, which can be transmitted to humans from faeces infected with the eggs of the worm. Subsequent ingestion of the eggs by humans may result in blindness.

Groups should avoid sitting and playing in areas that are regularly fouled by dogs. If you are leading groups in the field, and you wish to sit groups down, minimise the risk of infection by following this checklist before choosing a place to stop:

- Use picnic tables if they are available.
- Use dog free zones if there are any near to hand which have been so designated.
- Use areas where the minimum of dog use takes place.
- Ask groups to sit on plastic bags/tarpaulins.
- If the group is having lunch, try to ensure their hands are washed before eating and that playing on the grass takes place, if at all, only after all food has been consumed.

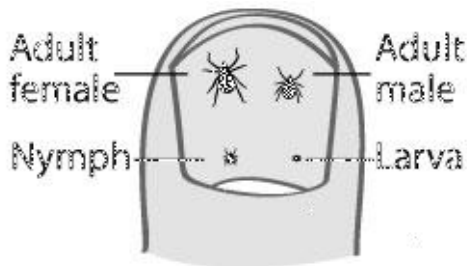
Be aware that Lee Valley Regional Park is open to the public and has many shared uses and therefore paths, bridges and adjacent areas are often shared, by walkers, cyclists, anglers and dog walkers. Please be respectful and vigilant of other users for their and your own safety.

Appendix 3: Ticks

Please be reassured we not aware of any cases of tick bites associated with outdoor learning sessions in Lee Valley Regional Park and the area is not highlighted as having a high tick

population by NHS. This combined with our clothing policy makes bites very unlikely. We advise long sleeves and long trousers, with legs tucked into socks and boots. However, it is still a good idea to be aware of ticks, what to do about them and for parents and carers to be vigilant after a visit.

What is a Tick & What Does it Look Like?



Ticks are small, blood-sucking creatures related to mites. They have eight legs and look like tiny spiders.

Ticks can survive in many places but prefer woodland conditions. This is also where the animals they feed on (deer and foxes) are most likely to visit. Once an adult tick has started to feed, its body will become filled with

blood. As it fills it generally becomes lighter in colour and can reach the size of a small pea, generally grey in colour. The tick bite itself is totally painless, and most people will only know they have been bitten if they become aware of a feeding adult tick attached to them.

Why do I need to be aware?

Apart from being an unpleasant thing to find, ticks can transmit up to three different diseases, the most common being Lyme Disease. Being bitten will not automatically result in contracting an illness, as not all ticks are infectious.

I've found a Tick, what do I do?

- Don't Panic! If you find a tick on your or your child's skin, remove it by gently gripping it as close to the skin as possible.
- Use a pair of tweezers that won't squash the tick (such as fine-tipped tweezers) or use a tick removal tool (available from pet shops or vets). Pull steadily away from the skin without twisting or crushing the tick, unless the tool instructions say it is designed to be twisted (e.g. Tom O Twister).
- Wash your skin with water and soap afterwards and apply an antiseptic cream to the skin around the bite. Don't use a lit cigarette end, a match head or substances such as alcohol or petroleum jelly to force the tick out.
- If you have been bitten, see a 'bullseye' mark on your skin or recently spent time outdoors and start to feel unwell, contact your GP. Further information can be found at:



<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Lyme-disease/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/552740/](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/552740/Ticksandyourhealthinfoabouttickbites.pdf)

[Ticksandyourhealthinfoabouttickbites.pdf](#)

www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk

In all cases of tick bites, please inform the class teacher and the Learning and Engagement staff member leading the session.

Appendix 4: Safety Information

The Lee Valley Regional Park offers easy access and a wealth of educational opportunities in a mosaic of habitats. As with all open areas that are accessible to members of the public, there are ways in which you can enjoy the areas safely. Before your visit, please take time to read through the following safety considerations and information and inform the adults and young people who will be participating in the visit.

For all activities, programmes, events, venues and sites

- Stress importance of listening to the safety talk and following the instructions given.
- If the activity whole or in part is in a building- Instruct participants that if they hear a continuous bell/warning that this is a fire alarm. Participants must not panic but calmly follow the instructions of Lee Valley Regional Park (LVRP) staff. Or school staff if based within a school.
- Throughout the activity participants must stay together as a group (or if the activity requires within small, designated groups).
- Participants must walk in pairs behind the LVRP leader when moving between areas (*N.B. it is particularly important that there are no more than two people next to each other on towpaths and groups allow other users to pass on the navigation side*).
- Participants must not go in front of the LVRP leader or behind the person at the back of the group (*allocate one of the accompanying adults to remain at the back of the group if a LVRPA staff member is not available*).
- Participants should be aware of prickly/stinging/harmful plants – Participants are not allowed to touch or pick any plants or trees within the Park or school unless they are told to do so by a member of the LVRP staff. Participants must then only touch plants and trees as instructed by the LVRP staff
- Participants should be respectful of other users and not to block paths.
- Participants should ignore dogs and should not run away or pet them if they come near but remain still and calm.
- Participants should be aware of wildlife within the Park or their school grounds – Participants are not allowed to touch wildlife unless they are told to do so by a member of the LVRP staff.
- Participants should be careful of uneven ground including hidden obstructions in grass and advised not to run unless they are told to do so by a member of the LVRP staff or they are taking part in orienteering.
- Participants should look where they are walking and be aware that dog mess may be present in LVRP despite dog litter bins being provided.

- To avoid getting splinters do not run your hand along wooden fences.
- Participants must wash their hands with soap and water (hand sanitizers/gel should not be used instead of soap and water but can be used as well as) before eating or drinking and should not put their hand near their face or in their mouth until they have done so.
- To avoid falling in the water participants should keep away from the edge of the water (see additional notes for stream/ pond dipping/White Water Centre) and only use bridges to cross water.
- Participants should be made aware that due to the nature of the Lee Valley Regional Park there may be contractors within the areas being taught. Participants must not touch any tools, machinery or vehicles that they see during the course of their visit, and they must remain vigilant to moving vehicles/machinery, adhere to any out of bounds/fenced areas, diversions and safety signage.
- LVRP staff leading the group will carry a safety sack this contains: A first aid kit.
- A whistle- if this is blown, they should stop whatever they are doing straight away as this means there is an emergency and listen for further instructions.
- A b-line (*a float on a rope*) - if a participant was to fall in the water a member of LVRPA staff will throw this to them while holding onto the rope. The participant should then hold on tight to the float and the LVRP Staff member will pull them out the Water.

The following information is additional safety information for certain sites/venues and activities. Please ensure you are aware of ones that relate to the site you are using and any activities you will be undertaking.

- **Additional if at Waterworks**

- Participants are not to run in the bird hide.
- Participants must not climb over/on or walk on the brick wall, railings, machinery/equipment or benches

- **Additional if at Myddelton House Gardens**

- ▪ Sometimes animals such as pigs and chickens are on site, therefore participants should treat them with respect and not attempt to touch them or put fingers and hands into their enclosures as animals may bite/peck.
- ▪ There may be heavy machinery moving round site such as sit on mowers, contractor's machinery etc. Participants must stay on paths and bridges at all times. Walking on the grass, crossing any fencing and chain link fencing and close to the water's edge is not permitted.

- Participants are only permitted to disembark the coach/minibus/vehicle outside the Lee Valley White Water Centre Building and without exception at any other point on the road to the Centre due to the volume and frequency of heavy construction vehicles on site
- **Additional if at Lee Valley White Water Centre**
- **Additional for playing games**
- Participants must take care and be mindful of people/objects around them if running during games.
- Participants should not run on slippery grass/surfaces in wet or icy conditions.
- If throwing objects such as table tennis balls participants must ensure that they do not aim them at other people or wildlife.
- If 'tagging' someone participants should do it by a gentle touch to the shoulder/back.
- **Additional for using binoculars/ visiting bird hides**
- Participants must never look at the sun using binoculars
- Participants must remain stationary while using binoculars to ensure they do not bump into other/objects or trip up obstacles
- Participants must ensure the binocular strap is hung over their neck at all times
- Participants must not touch bird hide viewing flaps only LVRP staff or visiting adults will do this.
- **Additional for stream/pond dipping**
- Only one adult and one participant on a dipping platform at any one time.
- Dipping must only be done from a designated dipping platform and not from the edges or banks of ponds and streams unless given permission by the LVRP leader under their discretion and Dynamic Risk Assessment (visual in situ Risk Assessments).
- Equipment must be placed safely out of the way from dipping platforms and paths
- **Additional for invertebrate surveys**
- Participants must use plastic/metal spoons to collect invertebrates and never handle them directly.
- Participants must hold the sweep net as directed and stand behind participants who are using sweep nets.

- **Additional for Orienteering/Cunning Running**
- There must be a minimum of 4 people per group.
- If one person is injured a minimum of one group member remains with the injured person while a minimum of two group members go together back to 'base' to summon assistance.
- Groups must not split up to do the course more quickly.
- 3 blasts on a whistle means return to base and there is an incident/emergency

- **Additional if doing river/navigation studies**
- When field sketching/flow reading- Participants must sit or stand to one side of the bridge.
- When field sketching/flow reading- Participants must not sit/stand on the edge beam of the bridge or climb on the side structures.
- When flow reading- Participants not assisting the readings are to stay on opposite side of bridge to avoid knocking those taking readings over/into the water.
- When studying locks- pupils must stay behind the railings and not touch the balance beams ('arms' on lock gates).

- **Additional if crossing roads**
- Participants should wait on the path/verge for the Lee Valley Park Leader to say it is clear to cross and cross quickly without running whilst remaining vigilant for traffic at all times.

- **Additional if lighting tinder**
- All long hair needs to be tied back, and pigtails, plaits and ponytails must not hang down when bending over tinder
- All gloves must be removed
- All carves, coats, lanyards, necklaces, etc. must be tucked in and not hang down when bending over tinder

- **Additional for in school sessions**
- Participants should be aware of any on site hazards in school.