

Food Education: Farm links

Teachers' checklist

Setting up a farm link

Setting up a farm link can be an unfamiliar area for some teachers so here are a few ideas we suggest to ensure the process runs smoothly:

- Name a Farm Link Champion within the school.
- Find a suitable link farm on the Food for Life Partnership website:
www.foodforlife.org.uk/Whatyoucando/Farmlinks.aspx
Alternatively, try www.growingschools.org.uk or www.naturalengland.org.uk
- Attending a pre-visit at your link farm will enable you to:
 - ensure the farm has liability insurance that covers educational visits
 - discuss the programme of activities for the visits including timings (*the pre-visit proforma will help ensure you come away with the information that you need*)
 - complete a risk assessment and discuss first aid and emergency procedures, informing the farmer of any pupils with allergies, medical conditions or special abilities
 - ensure you are familiar with the site and facilities for hand washing, lunchtime, play etc. (*refer to the HSE guidelines on Health & Safety – 'Avoiding ill health on open farms' including a teachers' supplement (AIS 23) – you will also need to familiarise yourself with farmers' section of the guidance*)

Before the farm visit

To make sure you get the most out of your farm links programme you may consider some of the following:

- Arrange transport early – see **Sustaining Farm Visits** for possible transport options, such as community transport
- In letters to parents, emphasise the need for pupils to come prepared with appropriate clothing including wellies or boots, sun lotion, rain coat, sun hat and a water bottle.
- Brief all staff and parents who will be accompanying pupils on the visit ensuring you have explained the programme for the day and gone over the risk assessment including emergency procedures. They will be responsible for pupil behaviour on the visit, not farm staff.
- Prepare the pupils by undertaking curriculum linked food and farming related activities in the classroom or school grounds. Visit the Food for Life Partnership website for teaching resources at www.foodforlife.org.uk/resources
- Consider how you will record your visit and report back to the rest of the school (*Do you need any equipment i.e. a camera?*)

On the farm visit

A few reminders to ensure your visit runs smoothly:

- Update your risk assessment on the morning of the visit.
- Remember all of your equipment, including your first aid kit and any medicines such as epi pens.
- Provide pupils with a health and safety talk upon arrival to ensure they stay in their groups and listen carefully to any instructions.

After the visit

Just a few more things to round up your visit!

- Feedback to the rest of the school about your visit – by undertaking an assembly about your visit,
- Update your Blog on the Food for Life Partnership website!
- Maintain a dialogue with your link farm and reinforce the visit through ongoing activities within the school (*for example your link farm may be available to work with you on a harvest assembly*)
- Consider dates for next term so that pupils can experience the farm throughout the food production cycle and see the farm change through the year!