

## Group Visits

Reference: GN39

Effective date: 1 April 2018

Page no: 1 of 2

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## Background

The city farm has a finite space in which to operate. At peak times it can become crowded and resources can become over-stretched, which diminishes the experience for all those on site. To alleviate this issue we have a system in place to manage large groups visiting.

## Admission for Groups

A group for the purpose of this policy is more than 10 people visiting as an organised trip. It does not include family groups.

All groups intending to visit should contact reception to ensure that their visit does not clash with a particularly busy time on the farm, and to discuss any particular arrangements that they may need or expect as part of their visit (eg mini-bus parking, tour or other staff intervention). Groups may be asked to adjust the time of their visit to avoid clashes with other groups on site at the same time – priority will be given to groups who have paid for an activity over self-guided groups.

It is helpful and will improve service if groups intending to use the café en masse book ahead and discuss their requirements with the café manager. In most cases it will be better to cater to groups in a separate room rather than the main café area.

Entry to the farm and gardens for general visitors is free. We encourage people visiting to make a donation to support the organisation. For groups visiting without any need for staff support we strongly encourage a donation. Where groups visiting request staff support (eg tours, talks, guidance, access to animals) we may charge a fee (see below).

## School Groups

We strongly encourage school groups to take up one of our established educational offers led by a member of staff, rather than to make a self-directed visit. Staff here can add enormous value to a school visit through

- Their knowledge and access to the site
- Their expertise in outdoor learning
- Provision of additional resources and activities
- Close cooperation with teachers and group leaders to meet their aims for the visit.

We have established booking procedures that are advertised and promoted for school groups. Charges are made to school groups according to the activity undertaken (see below).

It may not always be possible to accommodate self-directed school visits as they are usually focused into the peak 10am – 3pm period of the day at restricted times of the year. All school groups must book ahead to ensure a visit is possible.

## Social Care Groups

The majority of social care groups on site are organised as part of the Health and Social Care programmes that we run ourselves (for example, a group of refugees arriving for an afternoon of volunteering). In general these are free to service users at the point of use.

Third-party group leaders who wish to bring groups with elevated levels of need to the site should contact reception. In some cases we may charge for staff support of such groups.

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## Implementation

The policy on group entry is advertised on our website and other appropriate marketing materials. Groups wishing to visit should contact Reception who will coordinate with other departments to ensure that clashes are minimised.

## Charging groups for entry

It is important that we have flexibility in pricing to allow for

- Adjustments according to the level of staffing anticipated (eg extra support for visitors with particular needs, guided activity)
- In-kind benefit derived from some groups visiting (eg a group of event managers who may be scoping venues, organisations that may refer clients to us)
- Groups that we choose to support in order to meet our social mission (eg as part of a programme funded by a third party)
- Other services being bought by groups (eg a party that rents a room all day may need an introductory talk)

We may decide to waive any fee for a group where the organisation derives a non-cash benefit from them coming.

## Schools

The 'rate card' pricing for schools is as follows

Activities not involving cooking: £4 per child (minimum £100 per group)

Activities including cooking: £6 per child (minimum £120 per group)

Full day workshops: £8 per child

£25 per hour for undercover lunch area

## Other groups

A guideline price for general group visits

£2 per person donation encouraged for self-guided groups

£20 per hour per staff member involved for groups with support requests (eg, tours, guide, talks)