

RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE FOR VISITING SCHOOLS AND GROUPS

Thank you for choosing to visit the Oceanarium for your school / group trip.

We hope that you have an enjoyable and educational visit. The Oceanarium has been open to the public since 1998. Like other aquariums and zoos, we must be compliant with the Zoo Licensing Act. We are subject to official inspections by enforcement officers who assess our animals' welfare and the safety of visitors and staff. Due to the amount of individual risk assessments that cover the aquariums operation, it is not possible to send them out on an individual basis. This document only contains risk assessment guidance and we would strongly recommend that all organisers make a pre-arranged, preliminary visit to the Oceanarium to carry out their own risk assessment before bringing a group. Two free pre-visit tickets per booking are available on request once a booking has been completed. These must be booked no less than 48 working hours in advance with our Marketing team. Please telephone: (01202) 311993 ex 25. It is essential that under 16s are supervised throughout their visit.

AQUARIUM RULES

- You must not feed the creatures
- Please do not distress the creatures by shouting, leaping about, tapping on the glass
- Please put all litter in the bins provided around the aquarium
- Dogs and other pets are not allowed into the aquarium
- Please do not climb on or over any barriers or enter any restricted areas
- Please do not pick or damage any plants
- Any children under the age of 16 will not be admitted without an accompanying adult. The child/children are the sole responsibility of the accompanying teachers/leaders/adults throughout their visit and the group must be accompanied by them, at the relevant child/student to adult ratio, at all times.
- Please do not put your hands or any other objects into any of the tanks and displays
- Please be aware of noise levels especially during feeding presentations
- As you are visiting in a group please ensure that you enjoy the Oceanarium in an orderly manner

RISK GUIDELINES

HANDLING LIVE ANIMALS, ARTEFACTS AND SUBSTRATES DURING LESSONS

School Responsibilities:

- Explain aquarium rules and potential hazards prior to visit, if you are unsure of these please contact the Marketing Department.
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after handling animals, artefacts and substrates.
- Discourage children from putting hands in their mouths or near their eyes, and from placing their face near the animals, artefacts and substrates.
- Eating and drinking is prohibited during interactive sessions.
- Children should refrain from making loud noises and moving around during creature handling sessions.

Aquarium Responsibilities:

- Aquarium staff will explain contact rules and suitable behaviour before all sessions.
- Hand wash will be supplied after all contact sessions.
- All participants will be shown where the hand wash facilities are located to enable them to wash their hands.
- All animals are regularly examined and screened by our vet.
- Aquarium staff will remove animals if they show any signs of agitation.

Further information:

Young children

Children under twelve months old should not touch animals. Children aged one to three years have restricted and/or controlled access to close contact with animals.

Low immunity

Those with low immunity should refrain from handling animals. Aquarium staff should be made aware of those with low immunity prior to the interactive session/ guided tour.

Allergies

Those with relevant allergies should refrain from handling animals, artefacts and substrates. Aquarium staff should be made aware of those with allergies prior to the interactive session/ guided tour.

Panic attacks caused by phobias

Those with phobias should make themselves known to aquarium staff prior to their interactive session/ tour. We recommend calmly leaving the session/ tour if you feel any creature may cause a phobic reaction.

LOST CHILDREN PROTOCOL

School Responsibilities:

- Make sure an adequate number of responsible adults are present to supervise children at all times.
- Arrange meeting points throughout the day.
- Advise children to go to the aquarium reception or contact a member of aquarium staff if they become separated from their group.
- Lost children should be immediately reported to a member of Oceanarium staff.
- We advise that each child has a sticker displaying their teacher's name and a contact number for the school.
- Please report anyone acting in a suspicious manner to a member of aquarium staff.

Aquarium Responsibilities:

- Aquarium staff are trained in procedures in dealing with lost children.
- All staff are approachable for help and the majority have access to radios in order to alert other departments of a lost child.
- On finding a lost child every effort will be made to contact the group leader, and reunite the child and their group.

LOST PROPERTY

School Responsibilities:

- Children should label all property they bring to the aquarium.
- Any lost property should be reported to the aquarium reception.

Aquarium Responsibilities

- The Oceanarium collects all lost property at the aquarium reception.

DISABLED / SPECIAL NEEDS VISITORS

School Responsibilities:

- Make marketing staff aware of any special needs requirements when booking in visit.

Aquarium Responsibilities

- Disabled toilets are provided and a room can be made available for any feeding or changing regimes (we do not provide a winch).
- All sessions and tours are adaptable to the special needs of each group.
- The aquarium is fully wheelchair accessible.

PLAY AREA

School Responsibilities:

- Full supervision is required for children using the play area. Please read instructional signage to determine if it is suitable for your children. The play equipment is suitable for children under the age of 10 years.

Aquarium Responsibilities:

- Regular maintenance checks and inspections to comply with all relevant safety legislation.

ESCAPED ANIMALS

School Responsibilities:

- Inform a member of aquarium staff immediately.

Aquarium Responsibilities

- Recapture of animal in accordance with our animal escape procedure.
- Maintain visitor safety at all times.

FIRE

School Responsibilities:

- Report all fires to a member of aquarium staff immediately.
- Move to an open area.

Aquarium Responsibilities

- Maintain visitor safety as per our current fire procedures.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

School Responsibilities:

- Anyone on regular medication should carry it with them or get a supervisor to store all medication and know how to administer it.
- Inform a member of staff if a member of your group is unwell is in need of medical assistance.

Aquarium Responsibilities

- First aid is available from our onsite First Aiders
- Our first aiders are unable to administer any medication.