

Welcome to Down at the Farm

Welcome to Down at the Farm! We have tried to list all the information you require before you visit our farm. If you require any extra information you can contact **Catherine on 07968 696 681** or email us at **bookings@downatthefarm.co.uk**. If you are leaving a message or email please leave all the relevant details such as numbers of children and adults and suggested dates so that we can get back to you quickly.



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Information & Prices

We will give you & your class an exclusive experience on a real working farm, guided by our qualified staff to ensure that your children have an authentic farm experience.

Our farm is not open to the public in term time which means that you can be safe in the knowledge that your children will get the very best of their day out at the farm!



Half Day Staff activities £4.90 per child

Teachers and helpers go free
Extra adults £4.00

- All day access to our farm – stay as long as you like.
- Your own picnic space in our barn just for your class
- A morning or afternoon of farm activities which can include a Tractor ride to meet the cows, rabbit petting and lamb feeding (or choose different activities on request).
- A free entry for any new teachers who have booked & wish to view our facilities.
- Health & safety Information.
- Each child receives a free admission to come again & each school receives a raffle prize of 2+2 entry.

This is ideal for toddler groups and schools who are happy to have some free time for part of the day or can only stay a short time.

Staff led session lasts 1.5 hrs.
Minimum group size 20 children

Full Day Staff activities £5.90 per child

Teachers and helpers go free
Extra adults £4.00

- All day access to our farm – stay as long as you like.
- Your own picnic space in our barn just for your class
- A full day from 10am with lunch in between of farm activities which can include a Tractor ride to meet the cows, meet the chicks, groom the donkey, wash the pigs, barrel train ride, rabbit petting and lamb feeding (or different activities on request).
- A free entry for any new teachers who have booked & wish to view our facilities.
- Health & safety Information.
- Each child receives a free admission to come again & each school receives a raffle prize of 2+2 entry.

Staff led session lasts from 10am – 1.45pm with lunch in between. Minimum group size 20 children

Adult helpers. ...are free on school trips according to OFSTED recommended ratios.

1 Adult Free per 4 Paying Children

How do I book?

All schools must be pre-booked. Please contact Catherine on **07968 696 681** or email us at **bookings@downatthefarm.co.uk**. If you are leaving a message or email please leave all the relevant details such as **numbers of children, adults** and suggested dates so that we can deal with your request quickly. We can also book your transport subject to availability which means we can offer a reduced rate on your bus cost. Please read on for more details.

How do I pay?

We ask that payment is to be made on the day of your visit. Please pay cheques to "Down at the Farm". On booking you will be provided with a provisional invoice. We send this as our confirmation but it also allows teachers to authorise cheque limits before the day. We do ask for a minimum of 20 paying children on the day. (T&C's apply to farm + coach package, see below) All prices include VAT at 20%.

Can you arrange our transport?

We can offer a great deal for some schools through a local coach company, recommended by Sunderland City council, with full insurance, fitted seat belts and CRB checked drivers. It applies to all days schools only. Our transport price is based on the distance your school is to our farm but prices always seem to be competitive. If you would like us to give you a price for transport too please ask on booking – there's no obligation to say yes.

Terms & Conditions for Farm & Coach price.

- The coach company provide the following no. seater buses: 33, 49.
- The package applies only to school visits with full paying children and helpers within the Ofsted ratio.

Booking Form

Once we have confirmed availability for the date please copy and paste the following information into an email: bookings@downatthefarm.co.uk.

School Name:	
Date of visit:	
School email:	
Teachers name:	
We will arrange our own transport	Yes/No
Numbers of Children to come to the farm	
Numbers of free helpers	
Number of extra adults £4.00	
Please can we have a farm gift pack (£1.50)	Yes/No Please state quantity
Please open the gift shop	Yes/No
Please provide Farm & Coach price	Yes/No
If yes: Morning pick up time (to arrive for 10am):	
Afternoon pick up time at farm:	2pm
School address for pick up:	
Numbers of people (inc adults) requiring coach	
Do you have any specific pick up instructions?	

Please note: The farm and transport package is a fixed price and applies to pick up and drop off only. The bus will not stay. This package requires the full amount to be paid on the day even if child numbers decrease. On confirmation we will give you all the details for the coach company and an invoice as our confirmation. The coach company is a registered supplier to Sunderland city council. All coaches are fitted with seat belts and drivers are CRB checked.

About us...

The Weightman's have farmed in this area for 6 generations. Edward Weightman moved here with his wife and children during the 18th century and started a humble potato business. The Farm has grown from a small patch of land near Seaham to 245 hectares as we know it today. The family have farmed in many ways over the years from milking pure bred Friesian cows, to growing vast hectares of crops to feed beef cattle.

Twenty years ago the land at Down at the Farm (Haining Law Farm) was purchased from two brothers who set up residence in what is still our cow shed (with the cows!) as they couldn't afford to build a house! William Weightman then operated a large cattle farm on the site for many years after and in 2007 he decided to diversify his business so that he could spend more time with his family - Down at the Farm was the result!

Since 2007 the farm has attracted thousands of visiting schools all wanting to gain a unique experience of a real working farm by a real farming family.

In 2011 we gained "zoo status" which we received as an acknowledgement of our high standard of animal welfare and knowledge that we have as a business. This achievement is very hard to attain and shows our ongoing commitment to education and conservation through our non native species of animal as well as our traditional farm animals.

Our Facilities for Schools

- Car and coach parking is free
- We have disabled visitors parking
- We have trained first aiders on site at all times.
- Toilets / disabled toilet / baby changing facilities.
- We have a large variety of animals large and small to see, hold and stroke.
- We can provide tea and coffee for teachers on request.
- Farm souvenir gift packs can be provided for £1.50 each
- Indoor and outdoor lunch areas exclusively for schools.
- As a farm park, we would not expect you to walk through muddy fields or dirty cow sheds. We have gravel paths all around the farm to avoid muddy situations as much as we can!

Play facilities for schools

Your day will be so full of guided activities that there is sometimes no time for play! We can build some play time into your day if you wish (particularly good for hot weather days and younger children!).

- Large outdoor adventure playground and zip line
- Outdoor sandpit and slides
- Jumping pillow (available on request)
- Corn maze – august to November.



A typical full day itinerary...

We believe in providing your school a personal, fun educational experience and we can ensure that your visit to us will be very busy! Most activities take place under cover therefore even if the weather is wet, we can provide all the farm activities you require.

Arrival: On arrival you will be met from your coach by one of our farm guides. Your packed lunches will be taken from the bus and left in the barn for lunchtime. Remember the farm is not open to the public so your lunch space is just for your class. If you have arrived early we will give you the option of going to the play ground first. The tour will start at 10am.

10am: we will provide a short introductory talk which covers the information you need to know about the day, hygiene, health and safety and the reasons why your class have come to our farm. The tour will then commence.

We try and cater for schools by season. We have "usual" farm activities which you would expect us to provide for most of the year and "seasonal additions" which change according to the time of year. We follow different routes according to the day and weather but the following activities will commence throughout the day....

Usual farm activities:

Pet the rabbits & guinea pigs
Meet the hens & collect the eggs
Bottle feed the lambs
Groom the Donkey
Help feed the animals in the park
Tractor/Trailer ride to meet the cows
Wash the pigs
Collect the egg

Seasonal additions:

Meet the chicks (end March – June)
Sheep shearing (June-July)
Reptiles (summer months on request)
The calving season (from September)
Corn maze tour (August to November)
Santa & his real reindeer (December only)

(Please note: Each activity we provide is an opportunity for your children to learn about the importance of farming and animal care – we provide information for your class on varying levels according to age and ability so that children can really understand why farming is so important!)

Hand washing: Children will be asked to wash their hands after each activity. We will provide hand gel after some activities and soap and water for others, particularly before lunchtime. We always ask that teachers assist us in making sure that all children have washed their hands properly.

Lunchtime: Usually starts at 11.30/11.45. We will discuss with you how long you

would like it to be but it can be up to an hour. This will give you time to eat, take your children to the toilet and have some free time if required. We can discuss this on the day if you wish.

After lunch. Activities resume for 1 – 1 ½ hrs. At approximately 2pm, when our tour finishes there may be a short period of time at the end to allow pupils to play, subject to bus collection times.

We are a farm that believes in flexibility so if you do have any specific requirements, for example more play time, please let us know as I am sure we would be able to accommodate .

Gift shop: Some schools don't have time to visit the gift shop but they do like to take home a memento of the day. We can provide the a small gift set for your children for £1.50 this includes a farm themed pencil, rubber and ruler - please inform us on booking if you would like us to provide this. If you would like us to open the gift shop please let us know – we suggest no more than £2 to be brought by each child.

Time for home: We will ensure that all children wash their hands at the end of the visit. You can then collect your bags and take them to the bus. We will then take payment and issue you with a receipt and any free admissions that the children require.

Our Guidelines for schools...

- Children should wear rugged clothes and shoes which protect them from the elements. This includes wellies (not always required in summer months), waterproofs and a hat according to the weather. If they wear the correct clothing they will enjoy their visit much more. Sun cream is also a must on hot days.
- Children are asked not to put their hands or objects in their mouths or suck their thumbs whilst on the farm. Some animal diseases can be transmitted to humans. There is a small risk of children acquiring infections from hand to mouth contact. This is the reason why we don't encourage children to sit down on the ground, or eat whilst on the move. If you have children under three it is advisable to fully supervise hand washing each time.
- Please do not encourage children to walk around with food in their pockets whilst on the farm tour.
- We don't encourage extra hand gels to be given to children by parents as this can cause confusion at hand washing time.
- We ask all our visitors to approach animals quietly and carefully.
- Always wash hands, using soap and running water before eating and after handling animals.
- Children should not drink from animal water troughs, climb on fences or kiss the animals. Cuts and grazes must be covered by a plaster or dressing whilst on the farm.
- Children's dummies that have fallen to the ground should not be put back into children's mouths.
- We have two smoking areas – in both car parks.

Information for Pregnant Women: Ewes are sometimes infected with an organism which can cause miscarriage in women. The risk is very small but please be aware that pregnant women should not have contact with newly born lambs or goats or any birth products from their mothers. Pregnant women are welcome on the farm all year round. We would advise that you keep your hands clean at all times and make yourself aware of the above notice.

Frequently asked Questions

Why should you come to us?

If you are looking for an authentic, safe, fun experience on a real working farm with a little play time in between then we are the farm for you. The farm is now also fully Zoo licensed and so can also offer a truly unique learning experience, associated with non domestic animals. As the owners of the farm we are confident that you will get the best possible farm visit for you and your class if you come to Down at the Farm.

What kinds of learning opportunities are there?

• Life Cycles and the environment • Patterns and numbers. • Materials and their properties • Problem solving and asking questions • Observation and recording. • Geographical vocabulary. There are endless possibilities when it comes to learning! Please let us know if there is anything specific that you would like to tie in with your visit. (Some previous requests have been to "interview a farmer", take videos for a presentation at school, taking photos to make a website, counting in multiples of 4 and learning about the life cycle of a pig. We can be quite flexible for our schools.

What washing facilities do you have? We have a male, female and disabled toilet. We have 15 alcohol gel stations on the farm, two large hand washing stations and hot water washing facilities in the toilets. The farm works closely with the local environmental health to ensure high levels of hygiene and environmental safety are met. Children eat lunch in the barn in their own specific lunch area. If you would like tea or coffee for adults please ask on booking.

How can I get a risk assessment? Our schools risk assessment is attached to this document.

What if it rains?

We will still go ahead with all the activities which we have talked about previously. Wet weather can affect the tractor ride however it rarely rains all day without a break. If the children are suitably dressed we will make sure that we carry on as normal so that the children can experience most activities. The majority of activities are already under cover.

Cancellations

If you need to cancel or change your booking at any time please do so by giving us one months notice. Cancellations within one month of the trip will incur a 10% booking charge of the total estimated cost. Terms and conditions apply with the bus company if you need to cancel the bus.

Risk assessment

Activity	What are the risks	Control measures
Arriving at the park and alighting to and from the bus.	Child being hit by a moving vehicle.	All schools are greeted at the bus. Children are taken of the bus and moved to a secure point in an orderly manner. The farm is shut to the public therefore there should be little contact with any other vehicles apart from the tractor and barrel train (see later). Children are supervised at all times by farm staff and teachers. All children are helped to cross the road into the farm park.
General Child safety walking round the park.	Children getting lost, running away or going places they shouldn't.	The farm is closed to the public in term time. It is therefore unlikely that children will get mixed up with other children from another school. Children are supervised at all times by staff and teachers and it is made clear that children must be supervised at all times when going anywhere. Safety talk at the beginning covers lost children and where to go. The tour is guided and staff make sure to count the children when we move from one place to another.
Walking/running around the park on uneven surfaces	Children tripping up whilst walking or running on uneven surfaces	As operators of the farm park we would never place machinery or objects in the public space to cause a tripping hazard. There are however uneven surfaces around the farm park which we can't always point out with signage. We ask all children to wear sturdy footwear and the safety briefing at the beginning covers a "no run policy" at all times. If the ground conditions are wet or icy we assess these conditions and their risks daily in staff meeting.
Fire	Being injured in a fire by flammable substances	Fire Safety procedure in place and all staff trained. Fire risk assessment undertaken Extinguishers & alarms correctly positioned and maintained. No smoking policy on the farm except for designated areas. No naked flames allowed in barns, no customers to light their own candles. Two smoking areas in the car parks which customers must adhere to. No smoking in the barns. All flammable substances are locked away and anything deemed flammable such as hay bales in petting barn are sprayed with flame retardant.

Tube Maze <i>Teacher supervised</i>	Injuries such as slips trips or falls.	This is subject to a daily check -signed records available. Checks include safety surfaces, daily check inside and the environment around it.
Zip Wire <i>Teacher supervised</i>	Injuries such as slips trips or falls.	This is subject to a daily check -signed records available. Checks include seat condition, safety surfaces and the environment around it.
Contact with construction zones	Injuries as a result of walking on construction zones around the farm	All work under construction is fenced to avoid the public walking onto them. Warning signs please do not enter. Lock up door is always closed to so that children cannot access. This would constitute as Trespass. Children are supervised at all times.
Contact with all play areas	Injuries as a result of contact with play equipment	All play equipment in the play area is constructed to highest standards – supplier is certified- British/European Safety . All children are supervised on play equipment by their teachers. Daily checks on all play equipment and surfaces are made.
Going on the Tractor/Trailer ride	Slips, Trips, Falls, equipment failing,	The Tractor ride is carried out by a trained staff member training sheets are available. There is a sign on the trailer to prevent children and adults climbing onto the trailer when stationary and not in use. Procedures are currently in place which means that ride does not commence until the back door is shut and all children are seated. Purposely designed trailer. Wheelchair accessible. Children are supervised at all times and the tractor does not operate in wet weather if the ground conditions are deemed unsuitable.
Barrel train	Injuries as a result of contact with Barrel train.	The barrel train path does not come into direct contact with pedestrians. As the farm is not open to the public we can control our groups so that children are not in the path of the barrel train. The barrel train is checked daily and seatbelts are

		fitted by the staff member. Only one child per barrel and children only over the age of three only.
Contact with ponds	Injuries as a result of contact with ponds.	Both Ponds are fenced and inaccessible and the public do not come into contact with them on their way round the park, therefore they pose no risk. Adult supervision is required at all times in the park and is clearly stated on the entrance sign.
Washing the pigs	Injuries such as bites, infections, from washing the pigs.	Staff have had detailed training on how to carry out this activity safely and advise that children under three should not participate. School children are supervised by staff and teachers on the day. Safety briefing. Sponges are soaked in Virkon every evening which kills bacteria. Feed is placed on the floor and children are told to keep away from their heads. All children told to wash hands with soap and water afterwards. Pigs routinely tested by vet. Pigs are secured by gate. Training records available.
Bottle feed the lambs	Injuries such as bites, infections, from bottle feeding the lambs.	Staff have had detailed training on how to carry out this activity safely and advise that children under three should not participate. School children are supervised by staff and teachers on the day. Safety briefing. Bottles are soaked in Virkon after each activity. Children and adults told to wash their hands immediately after this activity. Pregnant ladies advised not to go near lambing ewes by a sign. Children feed the lambs through a fence therefore no fecal contact. Lambing ewes are always separated and pregnant ladies advised. Viewing area controlled. The activity is supervised and all bottles are taken away after the activity to prevent inappropriate feeding. Once children have washed their hands they are not permitted back into the area.
Petting Rabbits and Guinea Pigs and chicks.	Injuries such as bites, infections, from petting small animals.	Children are taught how to hold a rabbit, guinea pig and chick. They are not permitted to hold one until they can demonstrate that they have understood the rules. Our safety briefing explains why sometimes small animals can nip and therefore how to avoid it. Training records available. In the unlikely event of animal

		faeces getting onto clothing staff will wash it off with disinfectant. This is a supervised activity. We provide a towel for children's knees if teachers require.
Groom the donkey	Injuries such as bites, kicks, infections, from petting small animals.	Training records available. Children told not to go near the back end of the donkey. Safety briefing at the start. Teachers asked to help with supervising children. Staff member stands to the rear of the donkey. Children told to wash hands immediately after grooming.
Sheep Shearing	Injuries such as bites, kicks, infections, from sheep shearing.	This is classed as a "show" not an activity as children do not take part in it. Visitors watch this activity through a fence and have no access to faeces or the sheep being sheared. Visitors can touch the wool afterwards but are told to wash their hands afterwards. We are sensible enough to keep the audience back as far as deemed necessary as sometimes sheep can jump from one pen to another during this "show".
Reptile handling	Injuries such as bites, infections, from reptile handling.	Safety briefing at the beginning of the session. Visitors can only hold the tarantula or millipedes, stick insects and small lizard. We need to protect the reptiles as much as the visitors here and are sensible enough to assess whether this activity is appropriate for the age and abilities of the children. This activity is only on request. Hand washing is encouraged straight away after the session.
Help feed the animals in the park	Injuries such as bites, infections, slips trips or falls.	This is an extra activity if there is time – children do not go into animal pens to do this. There is no heavy lifting for children as the staff member carries all buckets and hay nets etc. Sometimes children may help with putting hay into nets but we always ask if there are any allergies before we start. Hand washing is always done after this activity. Children are supervised at all times.
Collect the eggs	Injuries such as bites, infections, slips trips or falls.	This as all others is a supervised activity. Children are briefed at the start about chickens and that they can be pecked. Children are taken into the hen area quietly and in an orderly fashion. They are told not to sit on the floor or put their hands on the grass. Children are asked to

		come forward on small groups to see the hen house and count the eggs. All visitors out hand gel on their hands after leaving this area. Children do not touch the eggs.
Indoor and outdoor picnic areas	Injuries, infections, slips and trips	We have designated eating areas on the farm. The indoor picnic area is sanitised daily and is only used for children on the school trip of the day. Children must wash their hands before entering this area and cannot pet animals whilst in this area.
Zoonosis	Injuries, infections, slips and trips	The location has been assessed in accordance with AIS 23 avoiding ill health on farm visits. Provision of correct hand washing facilities are in place. Animal activities are supervised. Supervisors and parents are advised that children should not put hands in mouths on the farm. This is on the sign on entry and on the what's on. Visitors advised that children should wash their hands before leaving the farm and before eating. Appropriate hand wash signage where necessary. We have clearly defined eating and non eating areas.