

Education Visits to Longleat 2025-2026

Risk Assessment Guidance

As for all wildlife parks, Longleat operates under the auspices of the Zoo Licensing Act. We are subject to an annual inspection by enforcing officers, who look at the way we take care of our animals and the safety of visitors and staff. The license has to be renewed every six years.

We strongly encourage all teachers to visit in advance of their school coming. The site has many attractions and facilities which are best experienced for effective planning. A free pre-visit is available on request when booking a visit (please see website for terms and conditions). This document provides a general outline of the risks and controls identified that teachers can use to inform their own risk assessment.

It is essential that children are supervised throughout their visit to Longleat. To assist with this, for educational groups, we allow;

- 1 adult free for every 3 children under the age of 4
- 1 adult free for every 6 children over the age of 4

It is important to check with your local authority what their recommended supervision ratios are. In certain locations a minimum 1:12 ratio applies.

It is essential that the children and all attending a visit understand:

- the aims and objectives of the visit
- how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules
- why safety precautions are in place and what standard of behaviour is expected
- who is responsible for the group
- what to do if approached by anyone from outside the group
- what to do if separated from the group
- the time and place of departure of group
- that in any emergency situation e.g. first aid, a Longleat member of staff should be notified

Hazards and Risks & Controls

Hazard and risk: Dangerous animals – risk of being bitten

Controls:

- Warning signs on enclosures
- Safety barriers in place
- Feeding of animals is prohibited except in supervised contact areas where Longleat food is purchased

Hazard and risk: Contact with animals and animal artefacts – risk of disease or accidental injury

Controls:

- Wash basins provided at Animal Adventure, Jungle Cruise and at other toilet facilities
- Warning and advisory signs displayed
- Feeding of animals is prohibited except in supervised contact areas where Longleat food is purchased
- Supervision by trained staff at talks, shows etc.
- The rearing and selection of animals is carefully considered to ensure individuals are suitable for handling
- All animals are on rotas and monitored for stress to maintain welfare

Hazard and risk: Deep water in the gardens, fountains, lakes and streams – risk of falling in water and drowning

Controls:

- Vegetation and fixed metal/wooden barriers
- Warning signs
- Life belts at boathouse and in gardens
- Strict safety procedures in place on Jungle Cruise – see further information below

Hazard and risk: Adventure Castle, climbing and playing on apparatus – risk of accidental injury from falling, collisions, tripping, etc.

Controls:

- Ad hoc capacity control measures to ensure area not over crowded
- Play equipment recommendations in place graded by age or height
- Child age restrictions (14 years and under only)
- Minimum 1:12 supervision ratio applies

Hazard and risk: Mazes, grounds, gardens and the parkland – risk of accidental injury from slips, trips and falls

Controls:

- Safety notices by trees and other areas where relevant
- Minimum 1:12 supervision ratio applies

Hazard and risk: Electric fencing around some enclosures and lakes – risk of injury from electric shock

Controls:

- Electric fence warning signs

Hazard and risk: Vehicles – risk of being hit by vehicle

Controls:

- Signage
- Traffic calming measures
- Parking in allocated areas only

Hazard and risk: General public – child safeguarding risk

Controls:

- Lost children point based at Guest Services
- Staff trained in procedures in dealing with lost children and other emergency situations

Hazard and risk: Jungle Express train - risk of accidental injury from unauthorised activities.

Controls:

- Minimum 1:12 supervision ratio applies
- Minimum 1 adult per carriage
- No admittance policy for children not accompanied by an adult

Further Information

Jungle Cruise

- Full Maritime and Coastguard regulations apply to both the vessels themselves and the operation
- At least one crew on every trip is a Boatmasters licence holder
- All the team are trained in water survival and emergency response

Public liability

- We hold £10 million public liability insurance. Certificate available on request.

Specific Risk Assessment Guidance for Animal Contact Sessions

Hazard and Risk; Contact with animals and animal artefacts – risk of disease

Controls;

- Wash basins and anti-bacterial soap provided for use after session
- Verbal warning given by staff leading session and directed to wash hands
- Teacher/responsible adult to supervise hand washing
- Animals are health checked daily and not used if any signs of ill health are shown
- Supervision of animals by trained staff
- All enclosures where animals kept cleaned regularly
- No eating or drinking allowed

Hazard and Risk; Contact with animals and animal artefacts – risk of being bitten or accidental injury

Controls;

- The rearing and selection of animals is carefully considered to ensure individuals are suitable for handling
- All animals are on rotas and monitored for stress to maintain welfare and ensure individuals are suitable for handling
- Animals handled regularly to ensure content with routines and environments
- Staff trained on the correct handling and restraint
- Animals handled by staff only or under strict supervision

Additional Risk Assessment Guidance for Festival of Light Event

Hazard and Risk; low light levels – increased risk of tripping or bumping into something

Controls;

- Additional lighting in place along pathways and in parking areas

Hazard and Risk; large number of visitors – risk child gets separated from group

Controls;

- Lost children point based at Guest Services
- Staff trained in procedures in dealing with lost children and other emergency situations