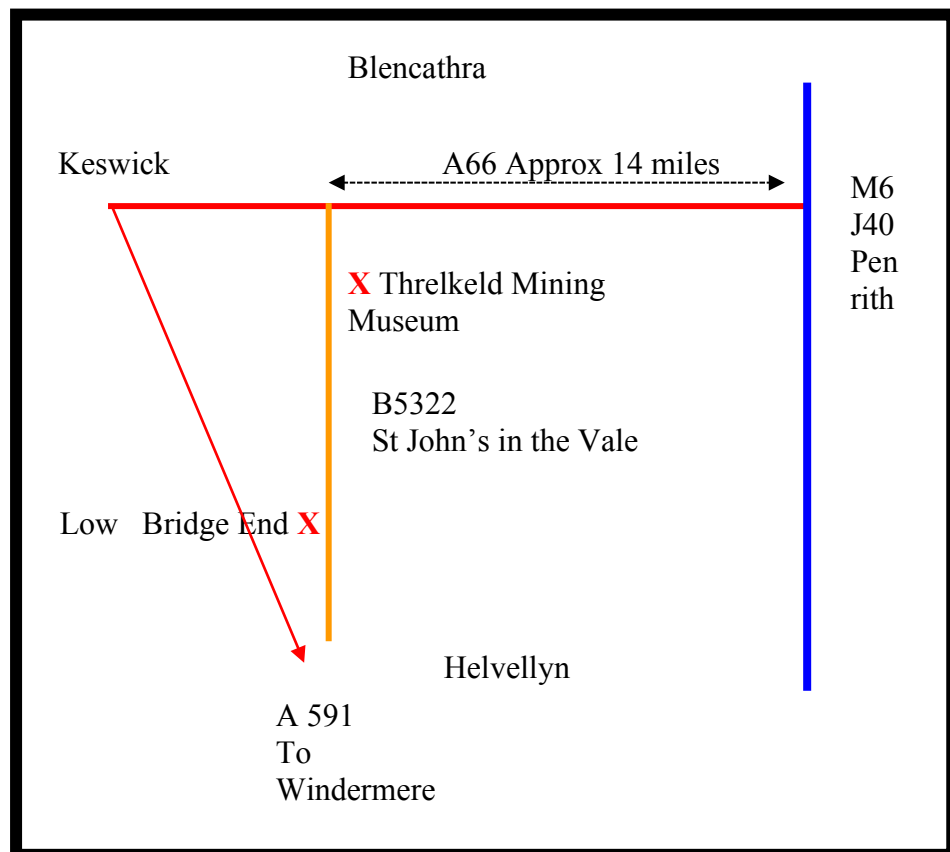


Low Bridge End Farm

TEACHERS' INFORMATION PACK

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Section 1: Pre-visit information

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in visiting Low Bridge End Farm. We hope that the experience will give your pupils inspiration and information. The visit allows pupils to see for themselves how a farm works, in an enjoyable and safe environment. This pack will help you to prepare a successful programme tailored to suit the needs of your group.

What is farming?

Farming is the age-old practice of producing crops and livestock for food, fuel and fibre. The origins of human civilisation are closely linked to the development of farming when primitive hunter-gatherers were gradually replaced by farmers producing the first domesticated plants and animals.

Modern agriculture is a highly competitive global industry. The UK produces **70%** of the food we eat, the rest coming from other parts of the world. It is the first link in a sophisticated chain to prepare and process our food before we buy it in the shops. What a farmer grows depends on individual circumstances such as location, weather conditions, size of the farm, history of the area and market forces.

Farming has created the landscape that we see. It is the hedges and walls that divide fields that give the landscape its pattern, along with areas of trees and the colours of different crops. By carrying out activities such as cutting hedges and planting trees, farmers are helping to look after much of the wildlife in the countryside.

Many farmers now operate broader enterprises to include leisure activities and environmental management. DEFRA provides advice and funding through agri-environment schemes to encourage farmers to follow farming methods that enhance the landscape, encourage wildlife, protect resources, archaeological and historic features and improve opportunities for enjoying the countryside, by providing access. By conserving our countryside in this way we also play our part in the international agreement to maintain the natural diversity of animals and plants throughout the world.

Our Farm contact details:

Sarah & Graham Chaplin-Brice

Low Bridge End Farm
St John's in the Vale
Keswick
Cumbria
CA12 4TS

01768779242

www.campingbarn.com

info@campingbarn.com

Booking a visit

To book, please phone or email us. Visits are free but you will need to organise and pay for transport. I will send a confirmation letter if required once a date has been agreed.

Cancellation arrangements

If you are unable to carry out your visit, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can make alternative arrangements.

How to get here

Grid reference: **NY316205**

Directions: See map on the front

Facilities

- ! We have a barn in which children can eat, or which we or you, the teacher, can use for presenting information before a farm walk.
- ! Parking is available for a limited number of vehicles. We suggest you park at the car park at Legburthwaite where there are adequate toileting facilities and arrive here by foot. It adds to the experience.
- ! Toilets: we have one composting toilet with hand gel.
- ! Further hand washing facilities are available if required.
- ! We can accommodate disabled pupils/students – but please discuss their needs with us before the visit
- !

The visit:

We can tailor the content of your visit to your needs but we would expect to provide :

- ! an introductory talk about the farm
- ! a guided tour – in 2 groups if the group is large
- ! a final discussion

Accreditation: Graham taught in a further education establishment for 25 years and Sarah attended a LEAF course.

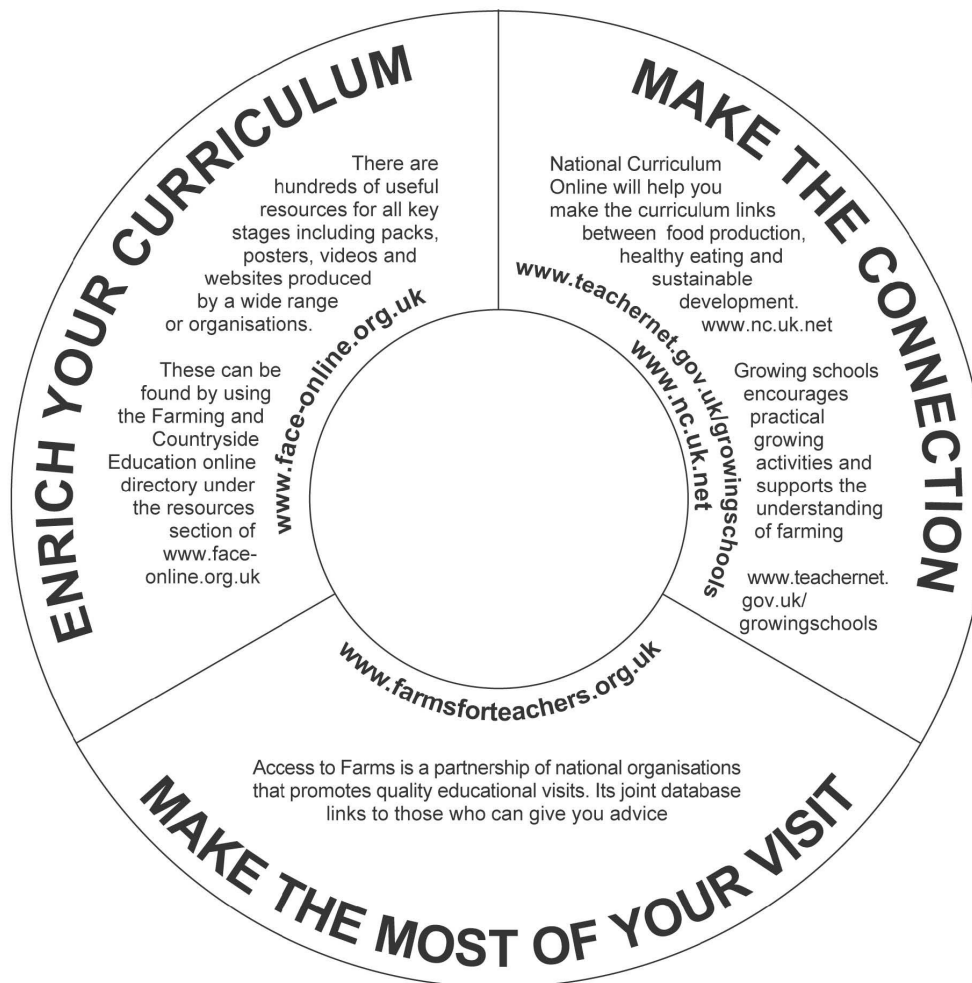
Evaluation Form: This visit is provided free of charge. In order for us to be able to claim a payment as part of our Environmental Stewardship Agreement we require you to complete an evaluation form, which we will provide. Please take a few moments to complete this form after the visit and hand it to us before you leave. Additional feedback regarding the visit is also appreciated. Thank you.

Complaints procedure: If you have any complaints regarding your visit please inform us so that we are able to improve our service. You may also write to: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Rural Development Service Access Management Unit Woodthorne Wolverhampton West Midlands WV6 8TQ.

Section 2: The Countryside Classroom

The countryside offers a valuable teaching resource. Your visit can be used to teach all aspects of the curriculum through learning about farming and the countryside. We hope that this information pack will give you ideas to inspire your pupils and get the most out of your visit.

Please note that we will update this Teachers Information Pack. It would be greatly appreciated if following your visit you pass to us any lesson plans, activity ideas or worksheets that have been successfully used on our farm so that they can be incorporated into our pack if appropriate. Please list any equipment needed for the activities.



Links to the National Curriculum

At Key Stage 1 a farm visit can widen the pupils' first-hand experience in a whole range of visual, tactile and other sensory situations. Within this are the important messages of the life cycle and seasonal change. There is a wealth of opportunity for language development and literacy skills.

At Key Stage 2 the visit can stimulate and excite pupils' curiosity. It also satisfies their curiosity as they begin to apply their knowledge and understanding of ideas. Pupils can consider the farm as a good example of an environment affected by human activity, think about attitudes to farming, the rural environment and the conflicts of interest that arise.

They talk about their work and its significance and communicate their ideas using a wide range of language.

At Key Stage 3 many different subject requirements can be satisfied. For example in history, the adaptation of farm buildings over the centuries can offer first-hand evidence of social and technological changes. This readily promotes the skills of handling and assessing. Pupils can investigate and debate a wide range of complex issues and begin to understand the environmental, social and economic implications.

At Key Stage 4 farm visits can be used to deliver examination subjects both academic and vocational. Contact with farmers will help to focus on the real life application of skills within the workplace, engaging pupils with contemporary issues and focusing on their role as users and consumers.

Sections 4 and 5 of this pack describes the farm in some detail so that teachers can see how the farm resources could be used to support children's' learning. In summary, the key resources on the farm are:

- Livestock (sheep and free range poultry, summer grazing cows.)
- Meat production
- Footpaths – history, maintenance
- Woodland, veteran and specimen trees
- Environmental management – SSSIs, Stewardship Objectives
- Wildlife
- Landscape management

We hope these offer learning opportunities to teachers and we hope to discuss with teachers how best to construct a visit to present the appropriate opportunities to pupils.

We hope to concentrate on groups at Key stage 1 and 2. Some material collected from various websites is included at Annex A and these may be useful to teachers considering how the resources on the farm may present learning opportunities.

Section 3: On the Farm – Risk, Health and Safety and Behaviour

Risk assessment

We recommend a pre-visit to our farm, during which you can carry out a risk assessment and become familiar with the site. Any specific requirements or needs of the visiting group can be discussed. We will discuss our own risk assessment with you during the pre-visit. A copy of the farm's risk assessment is available on request.

Health & safety

We comply with Health and Safety Regulations. However it is important that all pupils and supervising adults are aware of the correct Health and Safety guidelines.

The risk of infection is very small, but disease caused by an infection could be serious. By following simple guidelines, similar to everyday basic hygiene recommendations, the risk can be easily minimised.

The Health & Safety Executive has produced guidelines, HSE sheet AIS23 – Avoiding ill health at open farms – Advice to farmers. The current version is included as Annex B. The supplement to AIS23 advises teachers and others who organise farm visits on controlling the risk of infection from animals which the pupils may have contact with during their visit.

All animals naturally carry a range of micro-organisms, some of which can be transmitted to humans, causing ill health. Some, such as the bacterium *Escherichia coli* O157 (*E coli* O157) cause infections which can potentially cause disease, which may be particularly acute in young pupils.

While the hazard from infection resulting from a farm visit is real, the risk can be readily controlled by following sensible steps which will help make your visit safe, healthy and enjoyable.

- ! read and understand the advice in AIS23, and discuss visit arrangements with the farm management. Assure yourself that the facilities provided match the recommendations in AIS23
- ! decide what the ratio of pupils to teachers/assistants/parents should be, using advice from your local authority. As a general rule, the ratio of supervisors to pupils should be 1:1 for pupils under 1 year old, 1:2 for pupils between 1 and 2 years old, 1:3 for pupils between 2 and 3 years old, 1:4 for pupils between 3 and 5 years old, and 1:8 for those between 5 and 8 years old. If supervision levels are less than this, you should not allow direct contact with any animal for pupils under eight. The ratio of supervisors for pupils between 9 and 11 years old should be 1:10-15, and 1:15-20 for pupils from 12 years old and above. These are examples only and group leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group.
- ! discuss with the supervisors, who may be parents or staff of the school, creche, etc. their role during the visit. They must understand the need to make sure that pupils wash, or are helped to wash, their hands thoroughly after contact with animals, and follow the other rules suggested below.
- ! discuss with pupils the rules for the visit, stressing that they must not eat or chew outside the areas in which you permit them to do so.
- ! check that cuts, grazes, etc. on pupil's hands are covered with a waterproof dressing.

Clothing

Make sure that pupils wear appropriate clothing, including sturdy outdoor shoes (not sandals) or Wellington boots if possible.

Behaviour

Teachers/group leaders are responsible for the pupil's behaviour throughout the visit. Pupils' should understand how to behave on the farm and always follow the Countryside Code (see overleaf).

During and after the visit, make sure that the pupils:

- ! do not kiss animals.
- ! always wash their hands thoroughly before and after eating, after any contact with animals, and again before leaving the farm.
- ! eat only food that they have brought with them, or food for human consumption that they have bought on the farm, in designated areas, and never eat food which has fallen to the ground, or taste animal foods.
- ! do not suck fingers or put hands, pens, pencils or crayons, etc. in their mouths.
- ! clean or change their footwear before leaving, remembering to wash their hands after any contact with animal faeces on their footwear.
- ! allow plenty of time before eating or leaving so that they do not have to rush.

Check that pupils' stay in their allocated groups during the visit, and that they:

- ! do not use or pick up tools (e.g. spades and forks) unless permitted to do so by farm staff
- ! do not climb on to walls or animal pens, machinery, etc.
- ! listen carefully, and follow the instructions and information given by the farm staff
- ! approach and handle animals quietly and gently
- ! do not chase, frighten or torment the animals.

Teachers should supervise pupils during the visit, especially during hand washing, to make sure that each pupil washes thoroughly. Farm staff may be able to help with this supervision.

If a member of your group shows signs of illness (e.g. sickness or diarrhoea) after a visit, advise them or their parent/guardian to visit the doctor and explain that they have had recent contact with animals.

Further information:

Copies of the AIS23 information sheet and supplement and other useful Health and Safety leaflets are available free from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2WA

Tel: 01787 881165

Fax: 01787 313995

Website: www.hsebooks.co.uk ©HSE

The Countryside Code:

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk

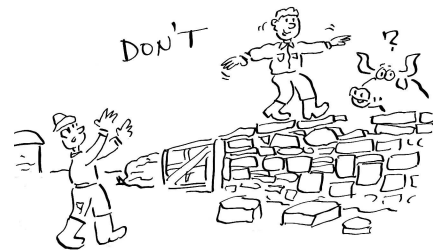
Education packs are available from countrysidecode@face-online.org.uk

How to behave on the farm

If you walk with your group leader, it is safer and will not frighten the animals.



The animals have a balanced diet so avoid feeding them, unless asked to.



Climbing on walls, fences or animal pens can be dangerous.



Do not handle farm equipment or machinery unless permitted to do so by farm staff



SECTION 4: Description of Low Bridge End Farm



This family hill farm was bought in 1911 and is situated in the National Park, 6 miles from Keswick. We are overlooked by Blencathra to the North and Helvellyn to the South.

The Farm was traditionally mixed although the emphasis was on wool. This market has diminished almost in relation to the expansion of tourism.

The seventeen acres of woodland on the fell side intake, a change of use from grazing, have been planted over the last twenty-five years. This acts as a most successful wildlife resource.

The lower fields are all environmentally significant, watered by St. John's Beck, a SSSI. These are lightly grazed by our rare breed sheep. We keep a flock of truly free-range mixed poultry. Some of the fields are shut up for hay in the summer and consequently display an abundance of wild flowers, insect and wildlife.

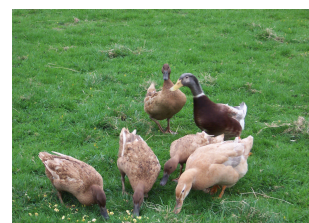
Low Bridge End has seen many social and economic changes since 1911, possibly the most dramatic have taken place during the last 25 years.

How large is the farm?

The farm is about 50 acres. 17 of these are planted with trees. The farm also has stints (historic grazing rights) 2.5 on Helvellyn and 12.5 on High Rigg. These allow animals to graze away from the farm, normally during the summer months.

Livestock:

Currently we have free range hens (for egg production), ducks, geese and turkeys as pets. We also have a flock of rare breed sheep, breeds including Manx, Hebridian and Gotland.. We are constantly reviewing our farming practices to make full use of the HLS scheme and we stock accordingly



Farm buildings:

The buildings on the farm are traditional. The lower field barns have limited usage as they now flood regularly.

The old stable has been converted to a very successful camping barn, and the hay barn is the information centre and craft workshop.

Conversion of these buildings was given very detailed and thoughtful consideration and planning, as we did not want to affect the external appearance of the farm.

History:

The farmhouse dates back to 1630 and originally had a turf roof.

Because of the reliable water supply from our spring, the site has been used for many centuries. It was once called Fornside, a name derived from the Norse language of the Vikings. The Vale was certainly known to people from the Stone Age as an axe was found near Sosgill. The Bronze Age is represented locally, both by the village on Threlkeld Knots and by the nearby Castlerigg Stone Circle,

By diversifying, we have secured the future of the farm, given the contemporary agricultural conditions. These have moved on so far from the mediaeval wool flocks. But who knows what the future may hold? Both Sarah and Graham work full time on the farm and our two eldest sons contribute a great deal to the farming and conservation activities.

Soil:

What soil?! We have very little and what we have we treasure. The beck has proved to be a great problem over recent years, flooding regularly and eroding the banks. We have now fenced in various areas to try and get better grass coverage to reduce the erosion.



Landscape:

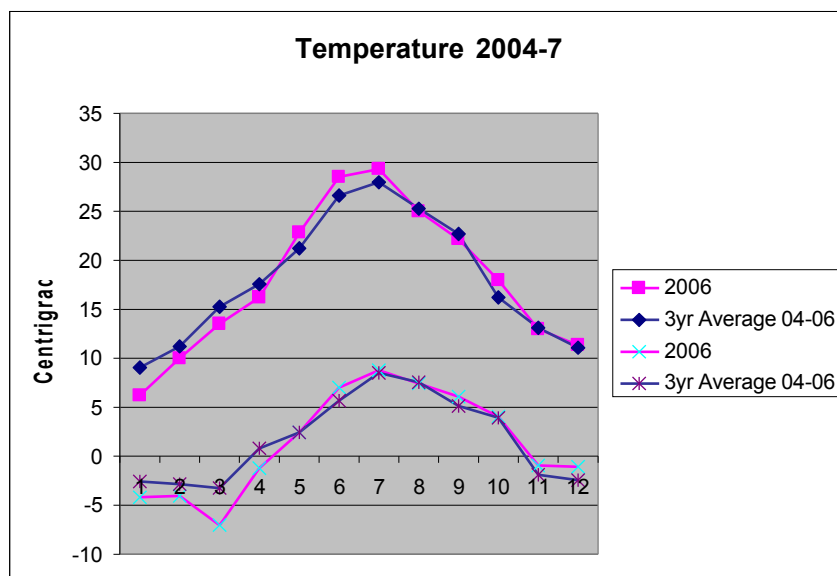
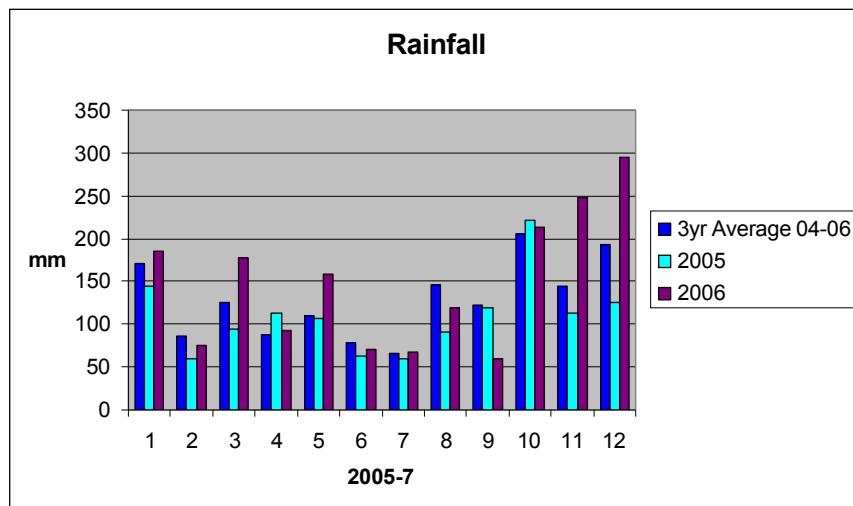
Our landscape is a typical glaciated valley.

The valley bottom was originally a lake and evidence of the ice action can be seen all around. It is a geologist's paradise.



Climate:

The graphs below present data collected over recent years.



Over the past 25 years we've seen the climate change significantly. Fields that were once capable of being grazed for 11 months of the year can now only carry stock for a limited time. They are now excessively wet. This loss to agricultural production has hidden benefits for the wildlife and plants. We have suffered serious flooding in 1985, 1995, 2005 and 2009.

Environmental Stewardship:

From 1995 – 2005 the land was managed under the Environmentally Sensitive Areas scheme. We have recently entered into a Higher Level Stewardship Management Agreement with DEFRA. This continues many of the requirements of the ESA scheme, (e.g. limited application of nutrients, conservation of traditional stone walls and buildings) but will also require us to do more. In particular we have agreed to: -

Fence off a part of the riverbank – this will allow the bank to develop naturally (it will no longer be grazed by livestock) and we expect willow, alder etc to grow. The river bank should also be protected a little better from the eroding power of the river when it is in spate.

Pollard the ash trees over a three-year period. This traditional practice encourages fresh growth and yields fuel for our wood burning stoves.

Rebuild and restore lengths of dry stone wall.

Open up part of the farm for public access

Sites of Special Scientific Interest:

Both banks of the beck are designated an SSSI

Other enterprises:

Tea Garden for walkers using the footpath. (A “green” business)

Self catering for 2 – 4 people

Camping barn for 8

Woodland display and education area

Craft workshop

Education opportunities.

Following discussions at the Farm with Cumbria Woodlands and DEFRA and our earlier research into Forest Schools, the John Muir Trust and associated lower key activities, we can offer facilities for the following areas:

Woodland:

Tree identification

Tree planting

Brash burning

Charcoal making

Looking at woodland products

Overnight wild woodland camping (Ray Mears survival style)

Christmas wreath making

Easter and Harvest Festival seasonal decorations.
Demonstrations of Forestry and Farm hand tools
Coppicing and pollarding demonstrations.
Demonstrations of simple furniture making.
Bird watching and identification
Topography and geology leading to mining and mineral topics (local museum)

Woodland Trail

(half an hour with free leaflet/map available)

Riverside Habitat

Beck and Pond dipping
Fishing, (Environment Agency annual census results available).
Otter watching (they are there but you have to be very lucky!)

Farm General

Outdoor Activities:

Bats.
Star study (we have no light pollution).
Kite flying.
Familiarisation and feeding chickens, ducks, geese etc.
Woollen products.
Fruit and nut picking (wild and orchard), processing and products.
Advanced fencing and hurdle making
Flora studies in the fields (we have rare and local species to identify in season)

Indoor Activities:

Camping Barn for group overnight stays.
Simple pottery.
Rag rug making
Felt making
Charcoal drawing
Willow work, basket weaving.
Pottery space as a mini classroom

All of the above can be made available sometimes at no cost. We ask that a DEFRA Education Form be completed and materials paid for, or labour costs met, where specialist or additional help is needed.

We would also ask that you assume responsibility for your own insurance (in addition to ours) your own risk assessments (in addition to ours) and that you provide reasonably close constant supervision.

Some of these activities are seasonal, some are clearly weather dependent.

<http://www.farmsforschools.org.uk/wholeteachers.htm>

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/growingschools/resources/teachingresources/detail.cfm?id=120>

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/growingschools/resources/teachingresources/detail.cfm?id=181>

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/growingschools/resources/teachingresources/detail.cfm?id=117>

<http://www.naturescalendar.org.uk/record/materials.htm>

<http://www.treeforall.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/7D7955CE-3F1E-4691-BF8D-4038680CFC9D/0/T4AENGpack.pdf>

<http://www.whyfarmingmatters.com/>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais23.pdf>