

Why you might want to visit the 'Countryside Classroom' at Abbey Farm, Kirkstead....

Our aim is to provide a 'Countryside Classroom' on a working farm, where we have many resources for our visitors

We aim to allow children to see how a modern farm works, see wildlife and the countryside for themselves and to learn about where their food comes from. This all takes place in an enjoyable and safe, CEVAS trained environment.



We hope the 'Countryside Classroom' at Abbey Farm, can be used to give your children inspiration and information about parts of the curriculum that are sometimes difficult to teach in a classroom environment.

Visits are **FREE** to schools.

What you can do on the farm



Fig 1: Children involved in discovering the local wildlife



Fig 2: Kirkstead Abbey ruin

A typical visit to Abbey Farm includes....

On arrival, an introductory talk is given about the farm and a reminder about health & safety. Then the group is taken on a **farm walk** and tractor and trailer ride which takes around 1 hour. We would normally aim to discuss the farming year during this session, the seasons, farming activities and food produced at different times of the year, highlighting how the food travels from 'field to fork'.

Next, the children do one of the **other activities** on offer e.g. drawing in the Abbey field, a numeracy activity, tree & hedge identification, pond dipping, or a tailored activity to tie in with **current curriculum themes** e.g. farming in Tudor times, habitats and food chains etc.

The visit finishes back in the barn with an “**Ask the farmer**” session, when the children get a chance to ask questions.

We aim to send the children back to school with a **plant growing experiment** of some sort!



Figure 3: Hands on in the fields



Figure 4: tractors at work

Examples of 'The Countryside Classroom' activities:

Primary schools: Key Stage 2

Abbey Farm trail – Look at the history, geography and farming year with a combined farm walk and trailer tour. Both Kirkstead Abbey ruin and the small church of St Leonards are situated on the farm. Range of arable crops from carrots to bio fuels.

Where does our food come from? – 'Field to Fork' - let us show you the crops in the field and the journey to your fork. Within the countryside environment work out simple food chains. Look at harvesting through the year with combining (summer), lifting and strawing carrots (autumn) and lifting sugar beet in the snow!

Farming through the Ages – what would this farm land have looked like during Tudor or Victorian times? Learn about the differences in the crops sown, grown and harvested at different dates.

Making Science come to life: a look at different habitats / types of wildlife, seasonality, food chains, farming seasons, Bio fuels: “A fuel for the future?”
Plant growth: inhibitors / accelerators

Woodland activities – tailored activities for pupils to learn more about trees and their environment. This can be tailored to younger children also.

Abbey Farm Numeracy Quiz – putting numbers to work! Learn how to calculate the area of a field or estimate how many tonnes of potatoes a field may produce. Identify old and new farm machinery and their cost price.



Feedback from previous visits:

“Lovely environment and great learning experience”

“ A lovely visit, very friendly, fun and informative”

““Despite the weather the children thoroughly enjoyed themselves and continued to talk about the visit at school the following day. There was a good balance of adult / whole group discussions and working in smaller groups. They really enjoyed their tractor ride too!”

“Really interesting. Pitched at right level for the age group”.

Notes to Teachers:

We are more than happy to run ‘back to back’ visits for one school to allow 2 or 3 consecutive groups to visit on one day, minimising the transport costs and would suggest a class visit lasting 2 – 2 ½ hours each. A maximum group size of 30 is recommended.

If you wish to combine a farm visit with a visit from us to your school classroom please telephone to discuss as we will try our best to accommodate this.

Please note: For EVERY visit we require the group leader or teacher to make a pre-visit meeting covering health & safety, risk assessment and a work plan for the day. This usually takes about ½ hour and will be arranged when you book a visit date. If teachers from the same school wish to run a pre-visit meeting together we are able to accommodate this.

Please contact Jo at joanna@theneilstrops.com or **07795 396979** to book a visit.

Abbey Farm, Abbey Lane, Kirkstead, Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire LN10 6UH