

Woodpecker Court

Woodpecker Court | Wigmore Lane | Eythorne | Kent | CT15 4BF

Tel: 01304 830958

Email: office@woodpeckercourt.com

Registered Company: 9629678 registered in England and Wales

VAT registration number: 218990574



Woodpecker Court

"Where learning meets the outdoors"

Woodpecker Court Infection Control Policy V5

Relationships, Respect, Resilience

Routine

Version control

Version	Reviewed by	Future Review date	Comments	Approved by board
V1	IC	Sept 2022	Policy written and implemented	30/09/2021
V2	RM	Sept 2023	Policy reviewed and updated affirming Avian Flu guidance	08/09/2022
V3	GM	Sept 24	Policy reviewed and updated. PPE, foot dip and muck trailer information updated	15/09/2023
V4	GH	Sept 25	Policy reviewed and updated. Location of check records updated.	16/09/2024
V5	GH	Sept 26	Policy reviewed and updated in accordance with relevant guidance.	15/09/2025

All animals naturally carry a range of microorganisms, some of which can be transmitted to humans. Diseases passed from animals to humans are known as zoonoses. Some zoonotic diseases are more serious than others.

There are a range of zoonotic diseases that could be acquired from animal contact including E. coli O157 and Cryptosporidium parvum.

Simply carrying the bacterium will not normally cause an animal any harm or illness but contact with contaminated animals or their faeces can cause illness ranging from diarrhoea to kidney failure in humans. In some cases, the illness can be fatal. Young children, pregnant women, individuals with compromised immune systems and the elderly are at the greatest risk. Very low numbers of microorganisms can cause human infection.

People can become infected by microorganisms such E. coli O157 or Cryptosporidium parvum through consuming contaminated food or drink, through direct contact with contaminated animals, or by contact with an environment contaminated with animal faeces.

Therefore, it is important that activities involving the animals and across the premises consider the risks. The implementation of effective control measures will help to ensure that the risk of infection from contact with animals is low. Control measures taken will include:

- Informing any visitors or those in direct contact with the animals are aware of the risks and where they can locate handwashing facilities. Signage is provided to explain risks.
- Hand washing facilities should be accessible and sufficient. Including running water, soap, and paper towels.
- Hand sanitisers and wipes are not a substitute to hand washing following contact with animals.
- Food or drink will not be allowed on the farm, this is to include the use of chewing gum. Food sales or consumption must only occur after individuals have passed through handwash stations, HSE.

Handwashing

Hand washing is one of the most important ways of controlling the spread of infections, especially those that cause diarrhoea and vomiting and respiratory disease. Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels are recommended.

Hand washing stations are located across the farm for use following contact with animals.

A hand washing station is located in the entrance and exit to the farm. This is to include running water, soap, and paper towels. Paper towels are to be immediately disposed of in the bin provided.

A hand washing station is located outside Classroom 3. This is to include running water, soap, and paper towels. Paper towels are to be immediately disposed of in the bin provided.

All staff and pupils are advised to wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating or handling food and after touching animals.

Cover all cuts and abrasions with a waterproof dressing.

Coughs and sneezes spread diseases. Children and adults are encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue and wash hands after using or disposing of tissues. Spitting should be discouraged.

Wear disposable gloves and plastic aprons if there is a risk of splashing or contamination with blood or body fluids during an activity. Gloves should be disposable, non-powdered vinyl or latex-free and CE marked. Wear goggles if there is a risk of splashing to the face.

Young children on school visits are supervised when washing hands to ensure compliance, and school staff are made aware of their responsibility to ensure handwashing occurs.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Students, staff and volunteers should wear overalls throughout the year when working closely with the animals in higher stress situations or with faeces.

In some situations, overalls are required to be worn to ensure current regulations and guidance is met, such as Avian Flu.

Wellies or an alternative change of footwear must be worn when in any animal pen.

Woodpecker Court implements 'clean' and 'dirty' zones where PPE should and should not be worn. 'Dirty' zones include all animal pens, stables, horticulture areas and the animal wash up area. All other areas on-site are 'clean'. PPE must only be worn in 'dirty' zones.

Foot dip/Foot hygiene

Foot dips and mats are provided across the premises on the entrance and exit of animal pens. These are to be used when entering and exiting a pen to reduce cross contamination.

Yellow foot dip buckets can be found in the entrance to the farm and in the entrance into the rabbit and guinea pig runs.

A specific pig foot dip is stored outside of the pig runs.

A specific chicken foot dip is located inside the entrance to the main chicken run.

Foot dips are changed on a weekly basis unless excessive build up of organic matter and are made to the correct concentration as directed by the manufacturer dependent on the species, further supported by COSHH.

Shared wellington boots are offered to students, staff and visitors as required. Socks must be worn in the wellington boots to prevent the possible transmission of bacterial, fungal, and viral foot diseases.

Wellington boots are regularly disinfected internally.

Following use, all wellington boots are washed using the wellie wash to ensure that all organic matter is removed from the boots. This is located outside the main chicken run.

Drains and water sources

All drains are regularly cleaned to reduce the quantity of build-up of organic matter. All large particles are collected into an animal waste bin, located by the wash up area. When emptied, the contents of the bin are emptied into the compost heap.

Filters are regularly sanitised, and areas disinfected. Drains are rodded as necessary.

Animal water runs off an agricultural supply. All water sources are tested for E Coli quarterly. Results are recorded in the Animal Standards Folder on the Shared drive. pH testing of all water sources takes place at the start of every month. Results are recorded in the Animal Standards Folder on the Shared drive.

Hand sanitisers

Hand sanitisers are located along the boundaries of the farm for easy access to the public following contact with animals.

Signage is included to inform the public that hand sanitisers are not a substitute to hand washing.

Information and signage

Woodpecker Court provides up to date signage around the farm, including the Woodpecker Court Community notice board, informing readers of risks of contact with animals.

Signs are erected in appropriate places reminding visitors to wash their hands when leaving animal contact areas, before eating, and when leaving the farm. These signs are located at every transition point between animal and non-animal areas.

Washing facilities have signs giving full instructions on proper hand washing. Signage is also provided on hand sanitising stations to inform readers that sanitiser is not a substitute to hand washing.

Muck trailer

The muck trailer is located in the first section of the petting paddock.

The muck trailer is fenced off within the petting paddock to reduce foot fall in close proximity to the trailer. The trailer is positioned at an angle to allow for run off in one direction.

The trailer is emptied as necessary by a contractor. The tractor will only ever go within the holding paddock. Wheels are disinfected when entering the farm.

The farm has designated wheelbarrows that always stay on the farm.

Petting paddock

When a farm open event occurs, animals are brought to the petting paddock. Any shelters, housing or bedding are removed as per open farm regulations.

If access to other paddocks is granted during the visit, no access will be allowed into the shelters.

Access to paddocks will be in line with any individual animal's risk assessments.

Animal contact

Any animal that is feeling unwell due to unnecessary stress may exhibit changes in behaviour such as baring teeth or biting.

If bitten, immediately flush with water. Clean the area with soap and water, following any first aid policies and procedures.

Do not kiss any animals.

If licked by an animal, wash the area with soap and water to remove any saliva.

Compost heaps

Compost heaps are located on the bank next to site 1 car park. The compost heaps are used for collection of chicken scrapings, vegetable garden waste and drain residue.

Compost heap use is rotated between all of the heaps. The contents will be left for three months before use on any vegetable patches.

Compost bins may be located on the farm for animal faeces that is not contaminated by straw with the intention of being used as fertiliser on resting paddocks.

Compost heaps are designed so to ensure that run off enters a low foot fall area where no visitors have unsupervised contact.

Woodpecker Court recommends that vegetables used on site or sold on the honesty stall are washed thoroughly before use.

Visitors

Visitors to the farm are not to enter the animal shelters.

Visitors to the farm are to follow all guidance from staff including the washing of hands and use of foot dips.

Visitors are only to enter pens while accompanied by a trained member of staff.

While visitors are on site, they will adhere to all other Woodpecker Court policies and procedures.

Visitor Screening: All visitors will be asked whether they have visited another farm or premises with farm animals within the past 3 days upon signing in. If so, additional biosecurity measures may be required, including the use of disinfectant foot dips and restricted access to animal areas. Please see Appendix 1 for visitor screening questions.

Avian flu

Please refer to the Avian flu RA and procedure.

Isolation requirements of animals

On arrival, all animals are isolated away from existing animals. This isolation period will depend on the species.

During this time, observations of the animals will take place to assess behaviours or any health concerns.

On arrival, animals will be vaccinated with Heptavac (or Lambivac as appropriate) and wormed. A full health check will be completed including teeth, feet, eyes, skin, coat checks etc.

Woodpecker Court stays up to date via NFU and DEFRA updates with current regulations for all animal types on site.

Lockdown for pigs and cloven hoof

Woodpecker Court follows legal regulations on lockdown following the arrival of pigs and cloven hoof animals.

Cloven hoof lockdown – 7 days (including the day of arrival) Pig lockdown – 21 days (including the day of arrival)

Pest control

Woodpecker Court have an ongoing contract with Rentokil. This meets the DEFRA standards as well as trading standards feed storage requirements.

Compliance with national guidance

Woodpecker Court adheres to the DEFRA and HSE guidance on infection control at educational farms. This includes the Access to Farms Code of Practice, which outlines best practices for managing zoonotic risks, visitor hygiene, and animal welfare. Staff receive regular training on biosecurity, and all procedures are reviewed annually in line with updates from DEFRA, NFU, and APHA.

Staff training

Staff are training on zoonotic risks and how to communicate them to visitors.

Training specifically includes conjunctival transmission risks.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of a suspected or confirmed outbreak of a zoonotic disease or other infectious condition on the premises, the following emergency procedures will be implemented:

- Immediate Isolation: Any affected animals will be isolated in designated quarantine areas. Access will be restricted to trained staff wearing appropriate PPE.
- Notification Protocol: The Farm Manager will notify relevant authorities including:
 - DEFRA/APHA (Animal and Plant Health Agency)
 - Local Environmental Health Officer
 - School leadership and safeguarding team (if applicable)
- Visitor Management: Visitors currently on site will be:
 - Informed of the situation
 - Directed to handwashing stations
 - Escorted off-site if necessary, following biosecurity protocols
- Site Lockdown: A temporary lockdown of affected areas will be enforced. This includes:
 - Suspension of animal contact activities
 - Closure of paddocks and petting areas
 - Restriction of movement between zones
- Disinfection Measures: All equipment, footwear, and surfaces in contact with affected animals will be disinfected using approved products under COSHH guidelines.
- Record Keeping: All actions taken during the emergency will be logged in the Animal Standards Folder and reported to the relevant authorities.
- Communication: Parents, carers, and stakeholders will be informed via email and signage. Updates will be posted on the Woodpecker Court Community notice board.
- Review and Debrief: A full review of the incident will be conducted post-event. Procedures will be updated as necessary to prevent recurrence.

Appendix 1

Visitor Screening Checklist

- Has the visitor been on another farm or premises with farm animals within the past 3 days?
- Has the visitor had direct contact with animals in the past 3 days?
- Is the visitor currently experiencing any symptoms of illness (e.g., diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, respiratory symptoms)?
- Has the visitor washed their hands upon entering the premises?
- Is the visitor wearing appropriate footwear or using the provided foot dips?
- Has the visitor been informed of and agreed to follow all hygiene protocols on site?