



# Food safety advice

## Farm visits by young children: Infection control advice for teachers and carers



You may be aware of several well-publicised cases of children contracting infections while visiting farms as part of a school, nursery or playgroup outing.

All farm animals naturally carry a range of bacteria, some of which can be transmitted to humans where they may cause ill health. Some infections such as ***E.coli* (STEC)** present a very serious hazard and may result in a rare but potentially fatal illness, particularly in young children.

Sensible precautions, particularly good hand washing can reduce the risk of infection, making an enjoyable day out as safe as possible.



# Food safety advice

If you are planning a farm visit, it is a good idea to check with the farm beforehand that facilities are provided to enable children to wash their hands. In particular, hand washing and drying facilities should be available:



- Where animals are handled, touched or fed.
- Where children will be eating.
- After children have been on play equipment.
- At the exit from the farm.

(As an extra precaution, teachers or group leaders may wish to take a supply of antibacterial wet wipes and hand sanitising gel on the trip, to use in addition to hand washing with warm soapy water.)

If children are to eat a packed lunch during the visit, particular care must be taken to:

- Store the packed lunches away from contamination.
- Find a clean dry area to eat the food away from the animals.
- Get the children to remove any dirty, muddy or contaminated clothing before sitting down.
- Washing hands thoroughly before the packed lunches are opened

Finally, responsibility for preventing the spread of infection does not stop at the end of the farm visit. On returning to school/nursery/home, any items of clothing or footwear worn at the farm should be treated as potentially contaminated and thoroughly laundered/cleaned/disinfected as appropriate.