Group Visit Guidelines

All staff employed at Tropical Wings Zoo have Health and Safety training and we do everything possible to make the environment safe for all our visitors. Please see our website for Risk Assessment ZR001 which is specific to visiting schools and groups.

You should find the following guidelines useful and they should be read and understood prior to your visit. Please consider downloading and printing your own Zoo maps from our website in advance of your visit.

- Please note that in order to qualify for the Group Rate your group must consist of 15 or more paying individuals. If your numbers fall below this, please telephone the Zoo on 01245 425394.

- You will have already booked in your group and notified us of the number of vehicles you will be bringing and an estimated time of arrival. If this differs at any time please telephone the Zoo on 01245 425394.

- If you are arriving by coach, parking within the first section of the car park will be cordoned off appropriately for you. Staff members wearing hi-vis jackets may be available to help direct your vehicles to park.
  Please note, coach parking is **not** available during school holidays. Arrangements must be made with your coach company to drop off visitors outside of the Zoo grounds. For guidance on this, please telephone the Zoo on 01245 425394.

- If you are arriving in multiple cars, where possible please park together in the first overflow car park.

- If you are a large group (40 people plus), arrangements will be made for a member of staff to lead you through a side entrance into the Zoo which avoids the busy Reception area and Gift Shop.
  Otherwise, entry will be through the main reception; please ensure you are all together before entering. Suggested meeting places in advance of entry would be the first overflow car park or outside Macawbers Café.

- The group leader should make their way to the Reception to confirm numbers and make payment. Payment must be made on the day by cash, card or cheque (charity or company cheque only).

- Reception staff will hand the group leader wristbands or stickers for every individual, and a timetable of the day's events along with Zoo maps (if not previously downloaded).

- **Please bear in mind you will be exiting your vehicle(s) in a busy car park.** Please ensure you guide any young children to a safe area, being aware of incoming and outgoing traffic at any time.

- Once inside the Zoo you are welcome to explore at your leisure.

- Due to the walkthrough nature of the Tropical House we ask that large groups split into smaller groups and stagger themselves when entering this area.

- If you plan on visiting the Gift Shop, we again ask that you split into smaller groups to attend.

- Please remember to stop by the Reception before you leave to let us know how you have enjoyed your day.

- Exit is either through the exit gate in the Bird Gardens or through the Reception. Please note if you entered through the side entrance, you will not be able to exit this way.

You will have read our Risk Assessment, however here is a summary of some of the Health and Safety points you should consider.

1. Children and young adults visiting the zoo are the responsibility of the staff accompanying them and there should be adequate numbers of adults to supervise them. Children must not be left unattended or allowed to wander freely, do not let any child out of your sight at any time.
2. A number of Zoo staff are First Aid trained. If you should need First Aid assistance during your visit please ask the nearest staff member who will call a First Aider for you. However we do recommend that a proportion of your accompanying adults are First Aid trained in case you should be unfortunate enough to have someone fall sick or have an accident. If someone in your party has specific allergies we also recommend that you bring your own First Aid kit.
3. There are set procedures in place for any accidents that may require an ambulance. Please do not attempt to call 999 yourselves in the first instance, please ask the nearest member of staff who is trained to call for assistance over their two-way radio.
4. We have Accident and Emergency policies in place, records are made and kept for the amount of time required by law and are available for inspection if required (surcharge applicable).
5. Check that cuts and grazes are covered with a waterproof dressing.
6. Visitors are not allowed to climb on fences, up any trees or on tables or chairs, and should be encouraged to behave appropriately when exploring the zoo. There is an indoor soft play and an outdoor play area with climbing frames and slides for closely supervised play. **You will need to assess the suitability of this play equipment for your children and respect the age limits in place.**
7. No balls or ball games, skates, bikes or scooters are allowed in the zoo.
8. Visitors must not chase or tease any of the animals.
9. Please do not allow children to sit on, or attempt to sit on, any animal.
10. The zoo animals are all given a special diet and are cared for by trained zoo keepers. Visitors are not allowed to feed any of the animals unless permitted to by a zookeeper during an Animal Encounter.
11. As stated by safety signs around the zoo, feeding of animals is prohibited so there should be no reason to put hands near enclosures or through surrounding mesh. Even non-dangerous species, which do not necessarily require a safety barrier, can bite or peck if they feel threatened. If a personal possession is dropped over a barrier or fence, **do not attempt to retrieve it**, call a member of zoo staff immediately.
12. The zoo is mostly outdoors with some small undercover areas throughout the site. Please consider the weather and ensure that appropriate clothing and footwear is worn for wet or cold weather, and that in hot weather hats and sunscreen are considered, and extra water is brought with you. A drinking fountain can be found near the outdoor play area if required.
13. We ask that in order not to disturb or frighten our animals (some of whom may have young), low levels of noise are maintained where possible. We appreciate children will get excited, however they should be asked not to scream and shout, or bang on windows of enclosures.
14. It is a Health and Safety requirement that all visitors wash their hands before eating. There are various hand sanitising dispensers situated around our site, and toilet and hand wash facilities are situated near the outdoor play area, adjacent to Macawbers Café and in our Reception area. Close supervision for children is needed and we recommend that hand wipes are also used.
15. There is one main area of water to consider: Tropical House ponds, surrounded by a stand-off barrier.
16. Litter could harm our animals. Please ensure all litter is placed in the bins provided.
17. Please be aware that there are other visitors in the zoo at the same time as you. Please respect their needs so that everyone has an enjoyable day.
18. It is zoo policy for no member of staff to be alone with a child under any circumstances. During any animal feed talks or displays, children must be supervised at all times.
19. Risk assessments, policies and records are available for inspection (surcharge applicable). Tropical Wings Zoo is regularly inspected by Zoo Licensing authorities to ensure we are compliant with the existing legislation. Inspections cover all aspects of Health and Safety and animal welfare standards. Our Zoo License is issued by Essex County Council and is displayed at the zoo entrance.

We have five million pounds Public Liability Insurance. Policy Number 1251258/0.

While every effort is made to ensure TWZ is a safe environment for your visit, we remind you children and young adults must be kept under strict supervision at all times.

Thank you, we hope you have an enjoyable visit.