

Residential Guide for Parents and Caregivers

This short guide has been written for parents and caregivers of pupils visiting Springhead for a residential visit. We aim to provide you with all of the key information that you will need about their stay with us. This information is regularly updated and was last reviewed for this version of the guide in March 2023.

About Springhead

Springhead lies at the foot of north Dorset's most spectacular downland on the edge of the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Springhead has a range of thatched cottages and an 18th century mill house formed around a courtyard with a small pool at its centre. The pool is fed by water that runs beneath the mill house to become a gentle stream flowing into the River Stour.



The gardens at Springhead have been evolving since the 1920s. They are centred around a beautiful lake that provides a sense of mystery and tranquility. At the head of the lake, clear drinkable water bubbles up from springs that are crossed by a wooden bridge and overshadowed by trees from across the world. The lake and gardens create habitats for wildlife and children visiting Springhead have the opportunity to learn about the site's amazing biodiversity. In addition, our productive gardens and orchard are an important learning resource at Springhead, enabling children to see where food comes from and to enjoy tasting our fresh produce.

Learn with Springhead

Part of the mission for The Springhead Trust who own and manage Springhead is to provide educational opportunities for children and adults. Learn with Springhead is our educational offer. We welcome hundreds of children every year who stay with us to enjoy being in nature, learning about the environment, and relaxing and having fun with their friends.

At Learn with Springhead we are motivated in all that we do by our core values of *connection with nature*, *stewardship*, *open-mindedness*, *personal well-being*, and *active choices*. Environmental education and outdoor learning is at the core of what we do, but the opportunities we offer also contribute to the personal development and life skills of children who stay with us. This may include communication, team-building, problem-solving, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity skills, for example.

Our programmes always put children at the centre, starting with their natural curiosity for the world around them and building their experience and understanding of new ideas in a manner appropriate to their age and ability. We hold a pre-visit consultation with your child's teachers to help us understand their needs and adapt their programme accordingly.

Our team of practitioners are all experienced in leading children to learn and engage in outdoor activities. They work together closely with your child's teaching staff to ensure that all children benefit from their visit. Although our team may lead activities with your children, their school staff remain present and responsible for them at all times.

You can find out more about Learn with Springhead on our website at www.learnwithspringhead.org.uk

Recommended kit list

Having the right gear will make your child's visit to Springhead much more enjoyable. We are an outdoor centre and aim to use our outdoor spaces in all weather conditions, providing our high safety standards are still able to be met. Please note this list is about **specific items** that children will need **in addition** to basic clothing requirements for their length of stay.

Clothing items	Non-clothing items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellington boots Walking boots/sturdy shoes Waterproof coat (and waterproof trousers if possible) Full-length trousers and long-sleeved top* Plenty of spare socks Hat/Cap (for sun) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rucksack - with comfortable straps for hiking Named water bottle Sunscreen Torch Towel and toiletries A cuddly toy A reading or puzzle book

* Ticks (small spider-like creatures) are present in the local area so these items are to cover up and protect children from ticks when we go on walks in the local environment. You can find out more about ticks here https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1057568/Be_tick_aware_toolkit.pdf

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Question	Answer
Does my child need to bring bedding?	No - all bedding is provided.
Does my child need a towel?	Yes - please bring a towel for a shower plus your own toiletries.
Are meals and snacks provided?	Yes - but children need to bring a packed lunch for the first day . Please ensure your school knows about any dietary requirements in good time.
Will my child be sleeping in a dormitory?	Yes - most rooms at Springhead are basic dormitory style with bunk beds. School staff will decide on the sleeping arrangements depending on class numbers and boy/girl ratios. There are adjoining rooms for school staff.
Will my child have free time during the trip?	Yes - there may be periods of time when your child is not part of a structured activity, but the school staff are responsible for them at all times. Pupils are not permitted to leave the grounds of Springhead.
Can my child swim in the lake?	No - the lake is not suitable for swimming. All visiting staff and pupils will be briefed on water and site safety on arrival.
Should my child bring a mobile phone?	No - we strongly recommend leaving mobile phones, electrical devices at home. We have no mobile phone reception at Springhead or Internet access for children. However, staff will have access to a landline phone at all times .
Is Springhead open for the public to visit?	No - for safeguarding reasons, Springhead is not open to members of the public for most of the year. We do hold 'Open Gardens' when anyone is welcome to visit and these dates can be found on our website www.springheadtrust.org.uk
What if it rains?	Many of our activities take place outdoors, so your child must be prepared for all weathers. We try to carry on with our planned timetable, whatever the weather!
Does my child need any pocket money?	No - there are no opportunities to spend any money at Springhead.* Leave all money and valuables safely at home.

* If your child is taking part in a visit away from Springhead during their stay then spending money may be appropriate. Your child's school will advise accordingly.