



**Stanwick  
Lakes**

# Ranger-led Activities

Educational sessions at Stanwick Lakes –  
A Guide for Schools and Group Leaders

**Use of  
Discovery Zone  
and Adventure  
Play included!**

Options include:  
pond dipping, outdoor art, shelter building, forest  
school, river studies and more!



**From £4.50  
Per child, per activity**



[www.stanwicklakes.org.uk](http://www.stanwicklakes.org.uk)



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# Stanwick Lakes

## Overview

Nestled in the heart of the Nene Valley and with a fascinating history, Stanwick Lakes is the ideal location for children to learn about science, geography, history, art and more!

The extraction of gravel, deposited during the Ice Age, resulted in the formation of the lakes, which are now a haven for wildlife and people. Archeological digs have uncovered evidence of human settlements dating back as far as 5500BC, including a Roman villa, a Saxon manor and Bronze age burial mounds.

The site is designated a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar convention, a Site of Special

Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its overwintering bird species and is an important part of the Nene Valley Special Protection Area (SPA).

Since opening in 2006, Stanwick Lakes has become a hugely popular countryside attraction, managed by the Rockingham Forest Trust; an environmental charity that works to bring wide-ranging community benefits through creating and conserving special green spaces, and exploring local heritage, in ways which educate, involve and inspire.

# Facilities



The Visitor Centre



Adventure playground



Pond dipping platform

**The Discovery Zone** – a room suitable for 60 pupils with space for bag storage and seating.

**Visitor Centre** – a great place for the children to purchase a memento of their visit – there is a range of nature and historical toys and gifts available. Our friendly staff enjoy welcoming groups of children in a smooth and efficient manner.

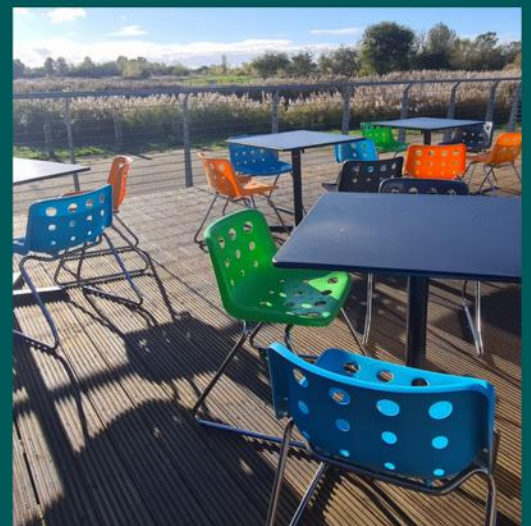
We also offer the opportunity to **pre-order ice creams** for a treat during the day.

There is a **coach park** with sufficient space for several coaches and the Visitor Centre offers a shop, café and indoor toilets.

**The Adventure Playground** – very popular with children and has several picnic tables around it. A 10 minute walk from the hub will lead you to the full-sized Assault Course, popular with older children. The Adventure Trail is a mile long circuit with climbing rocks, a rope bridge, some large tyre swings and a double zip-line on the way around it. There are also some large grassy areas on the adventure trail suitable for playing games or picnicking, as well as bird hides and a sculpture trail that may be used as part of your visit.



The Discovery Zone



The Decking



# Booking information

## Please note

### Pricing

The cost of our 'Ranger led' activities is **£4.50 per child, per activity** with a minimum charge of £80 per visit.

As availability is limited and demand is high, we are unable to confirm your visit until we have received your booking form. We also recommend checking coach availability before booking.

### What's Included

Ranger-led activity (usually 90 minutes)  
Coach parking  
All day use of the Discovery Zone  
Use of other on-site facilities (please note that these facilities cannot be reserved for sole use by the school).

### Payment

Once your booking is confirmed, our administration department will invoice you for the full amount of your visit. If the number of children attending changes from that on your booking form, please notify us as soon as possible so that your invoice can be amended.

### How to book

Contact Ranger Michelle ([m.branson@rfttrust.org.uk](mailto:m.branson@rfttrust.org.uk)) with your preferred dates, activity and group size.

A booking form will be sent to you and once this is returned, your booking is confirmed. You will receive a confirmation email. Schedules will be finalised the week before your visit.

### Cancellation

If you have to cancel, we will do our utmost to find another booking for that session. However, we are a small charity and if no booking is made, a cancellation fee will be deducted from your refund at the appropriate rate

>30 days before = zero cost  
10 – 30 days before = 50% of fee  
<10 days before = 100% of fee



# Important information

## Session Information

The maximum group size for a given session is 30, with the exception of pond dipping sessions, when it is reduced due to extra supervision requirements. If you would like to bring more than 60 children then this can usually be accommodated but does mean that sessions will be shortened to 1 hour so that we can fit everyone in.

Sessions last approximately 90 minutes and schools usually aim to arrive by 10am to allow sufficient time for snacks, toileting etc.

## Health and Safety

Although the Rangers are happy to give advice and guidance on health and safety matters before and during your visit, the ultimate responsibility for the children lies with the school and we expect the school to:

- Provide an adequate ratio of adult supervisors (minimum 1 adult to 8 children, not including the Ranger)
- Look after every individual in the group including registration, checking numbers and ensuring that no-one gets lost.
- Maintain discipline. We reserve the right to stop a session if we feel that discipline has not been maintained and we cannot adequately deliver the session in hand. You will still be charged the full price.
- Ensure everyone has suitable clothing and footwear for your visit, whatever the weather.
- Comply with any safety requests.
- Provide first aid cover and equipment for your visit.
- Undertake your own risk assessment for your visit (we can provide risk assessments that can be used as guidance for this).
- Provide insurance for your visit.



# Sessions on Offer

- Pond dipping
- Mini-beasting
- Wildlife detectives
- Brilliant birds
- Rivers and the Nene Valley
- Shelter building
- Forest School
- Natural art
- Sensory explorers



We are able to adapt sessions to suit the age and needs of your group – please contact us for more information and let us know in advance so we can plan accordingly.



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# Pond Dipping



**Themes:** Science, habitats, adaptations

**Audience:** KS1-5

**Group Size:** Max 20

**Availability:** April – September

**Accessibility:** The dipping platforms are accessible by hard paths and are suitable for wheelchairs

## Links to the National Curriculum:

- Working scientifically
- living things and their habitats
- seasonal change
- evolution and inheritance
- nutrition
- food chains and life cycles.

## The Session

Following an introduction and health and safety briefing in the classroom, the group will be taken to the pond dipping platforms. The Ranger will introduce the pond dipping activity, explaining how to use the nets and trays and the importance of handling the creatures they catch carefully. We will discuss the creatures we are likely to find and why they are important. The group will then be divided into smaller groups, given their pond dipping kits and take it in turns to dip. Identification keys are provided and each group is encouraged to use these and learn about the creatures they find (incl. classification, habitat, diet etc). We will end on a group discussion with each group encouraged to share what they have learnt about their 'favourite' creature.





# Mini-beasting



**Themes:** Science, habitats, adaptations

**Audience:** KS1-5

**Group Size:** Max 30

**Availability:** April - September

**Accessibility:** mini-beasting area is on rough ground, accessed by hard paths. Sessions can be adapted for wheelchair users.

## Links to the National Curriculum:

- Working scientifically
- living things and their habitats
- seasonal change
- evolution and inheritance
- nutrition
- food chains and life cycles.

## The Session

Following an introduction and health and safety briefing in the classroom, the group will be led to the mini-beasting area. The starter activity introduces the group to the concept of camouflage. The Ranger will then introduce the mini-beasting activity, explaining the methods of sampling invertebrates including leaf litter collection, dead wood habitat investigations, sheet sampling and the use of sweep nets. Identification sheets will be given and the group will be encouraged to identify and learn about the creatures they catch.

The session ends on a discussion with the group sharing the creatures they have caught and covering adaptations, habitats, food chains and the role of invertebrates in the ecosystem.





# Wildlife detectives



**Themes:** Science, habitats, adaptations

**Audience:** KS1-5

**Group Size:** Max 30

**Availability:** All year

**Accessibility:** The woodland area is uneven, session will need to be adapted for wheelchair users.

## Links to the National Curriculum:

- Working scientifically
- living things and their habitats
- seasonal change
- evolution and inheritance
- nutrition
- food chains and life cycles.

## The Session

Following an introduction and health and safety briefing in the classroom, the group will be led outside. The starter activity introduces the group to tracking and the signs animals (including humans) leave behind. The Ranger will then lead the group to the woodland area, looking for animal signs along the way! The group will then complete a track-matching scavenger hunt, learning about the range of species found at Stanwick and how to identify them. There will then be time for some exploring and for the group to interact with the items from our 'nature table'. We will discuss the importance of monitoring wildlife and the methods used to do so (including camera traps, small mammal traps, footprint tunnels).





# Brilliant Birds



**Themes:** Science, habitats, adaptations

**Audience:** KS1-5

**Group Size:** Max 30

**Availability:** All year

**Accessibility:** The bird hides are accessible via hard paths so are suitable for wheelchair users.

## Links to the National Curriculum:

- Working scientifically
- living things and their habitats
- seasonal change
- evolution and inheritance
- Migration
- food chains and life cycles.

## The Session

Following an introduction and health and safety briefing in the classroom, the group will be led outside. The Ranger will inform the group about the bird species that inhabit Stanwick Lakes and why the site is important for their conservation. Binoculars will be handed out and the group will be led to the bird hides. The Ranger will introduce the 'build a bird' activity - encouraging the group to think about adaptations, life cycles and food chains. We will then spend some time in the hides birdwatching and recording what we see.

The session will end with a game focussed on migration and the challenges faced by the birds that migrate to and from Stanwick and a discussion about what we have seen and learnt.





# Rivers & the Nene Valley



**Themes:** Geography, land use

**Audience:** KS1 and 2

**Group Size:** Max 30

**Availability:** All year

**Accessibility:** The session uses wheelchair suitable hard paths but some may be muddy at certain times of year.

## Links to the National Curriculum:

- Understand the processes that give rise to key geographical features.
- Study the human and physical geography of a small area of the UK
- Use basic geographical vocabulary key geographical aspects.
- Use fieldwork to observe and record

## The Session

Following an introduction and health and safety briefing in the classroom, the Ranger will briefly discuss the key features of the water cycle. The group will then head out onto site and visit key locations that demonstrate how the course of a river changes over time, how the river can be controlled to reduce the risk of flooding, how the power of the river can be harnessed, how the Nene Valley has changed over time, how the lakes were formed and the problems associated with erosion. The session will end with the group producing labelled field sketches of the river which can be taken back to school.





# Shelter Building



**Themes:** Design, technology, problem solving

**Audience:** KS 2-5

**Group Size:** Max 25

**Availability:** All year

**Accessibility:** The den building area is uneven and unsuitable for wheelchairs. Please speak to a ranger to discuss how this session can be adapted.

## Links to the National Curriculum:

- Critique, communicate, evaluate and test ideas
- Perform practical tasks
- Build structures, exploring how they can be improved.
- Team work and communication

## The Session

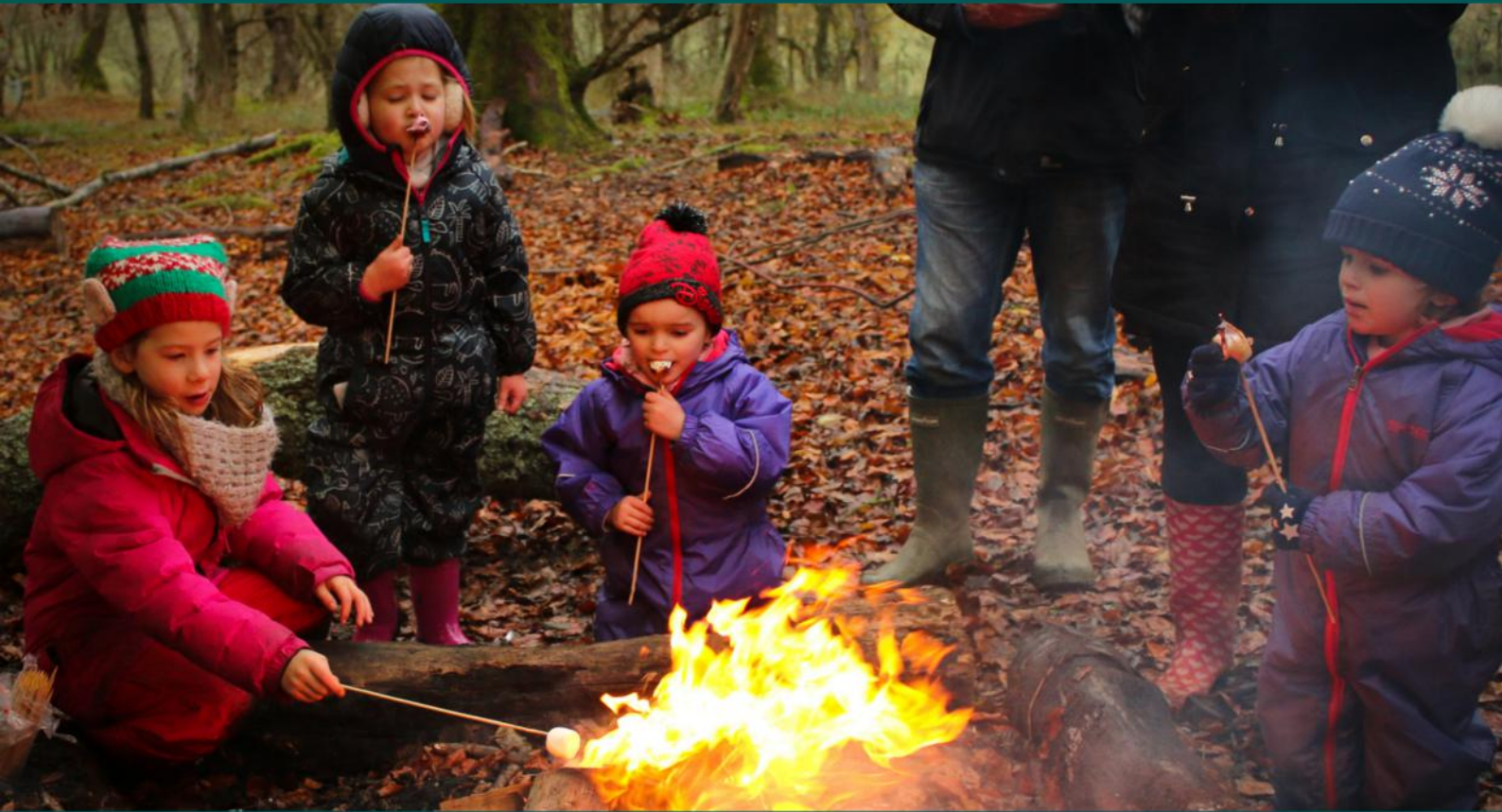
Following a health and safety briefing in the classroom, the group will be taken to the den building area and introduced to the tools and materials available to them. The group will discuss the main properties a shelter should have if it were to be needed in a survival situation.

The group will then be split into sub-teams and set their challenge: to build a 'weatherproof' shelter that can fit their whole team in! At the end of the session, the Ranger will gather the groups and visit all the shelters, one at a time - each team will explain their techniques and vision and then the shelter will be weather tested! The groups will then pack away their materials, emphasising the importance of 'leaving no trace' when in the natural environment.





# Intro to Forest School



## Themes:

**Audience:** KS1-5

**Group Size:** Max 30

**Availability:** All year

**Accessibility:** The forest school area is uneven and unsuitable for most wheelchairs.

## Links to the National Curriculum:

- living things and their habitats
- seasonal change
- Produce creative work, exploring ideas and recording experiences
- Learn about animals, including humans.

## The Session

Following an introduction and health and safety briefing in the classroom, the group will be led outside and to the woods! Forest school sessions are holistic and young people led, with young people able to explore and take appropriate risks in the outdoor environment, enabling them to develop their self-confidence, self-esteem and resilience through experiential learning and adventure in a natural setting. Activities may include shelter building, natural arts and crafts, knot tying, sensory games and problem-solving challenges. The session will end with a fire lighting demonstration!





# Natural Art



**Themes:** Art and design

**Audience:** KS1-5

**Group Size:** Max 30

**Availability:** All year

**Accessibility:** This session can be made suitable for wheelchair users.

## Links to the National Curriculum:

- Produce creative work, exploring ideas and recording experiences
- Evaluate and analyse creative works
- Know about great artists

## The Session

Following an introduction and health and safety briefing in the classroom, the Ranger will initiate a discussion about what art is. The group will shown various pieces of art (including photography, sculptures and paintings) and will be encouraged to discuss how it has been created, why and how it makes them feel. The Ranger will then introduce the main activity - creating natural art - split the groups into teams and hand out paper bags for collecting natural items. The group will then gather items they like on the walk over to the art area where they will plan and create their pieces. The session ends with a tour around our newly created natural gallery, with each team invited to explain their creation and the ideas and materials involved.





# Sensory Explorers



**Themes:** Early years,

**Audience:** Early years – KS2

**Group Size:** Max 30

**Availability:** All year

**Accessibility:** This session can be easily adapted to be suitable for wheelchair users – please let us know in advance

## Links to the National Curriculum:

- Learn about the 5 human senses
- Find out how animals use their senses in different ways to humans.
- Learn about animals, including humans.
- identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense

## The Session

Following an introduction and health and safety briefing in the classroom, the Ranger will initiate a discussion about the 5 senses, inviting the group to think about how animals use these senses and how they might experience the world. The group will then head outside and walk to the education area – the Ranger will encourage them to tune into as many senses as possible on the way. Once there, the Ranger will initiate a series of nature-themed games designed to focus attention on the different senses (e.g. an echolocation game using blindfolds). The session will end on a recap of what we have learnt and a discussion about how differently animals experience the world.

