

## Sustaining Farm Visits

Visiting a farm, even just once, can be a life changing experience for a young person. Our aim is to enable pupils to visit a farm during their time at school in order they may better understand not only how food is produced, but have a clearer understanding of the real food choices they can make. Funding farm visits can often be an issue. Here are a few ideas that might help reduce the cost of farm visits and ways in which some schools have funded their farm links programme.

## Transport

### Community Transport

There are many community transport organisations that operate various projects across the country. Typically, these organisations can provide access to transport for voluntary, community and school groups, often at reduced rates. More details of community transport can be found at the Community Transport website: [www.communitytransport.org](http://www.communitytransport.org)

### Public transport

Some of the schools we work with are in an excellent position to be able to use public transport to get to their link farms. This is great experience for small groups of pupils and provides an opportunity to develop essential life skills. More information can be found at [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)

### Walking to your local farm

Walking to a local farm is a great solution to potentially high transport costs. If your local farm is easily accessible and routes to the farm are safe, why not try walking? Some of the schools we are working with have incorporated the walk into the day's activities, for example stopping to undertake art activities, observing land use in the area or even foraging for wild foods. Why not even ask the farmer to meet you at the school so they can walk with you as well? It is a good idea to plan the route with the farmer and make stops along the way to undertake an activity or two to ensure pupils remain engaged.

### Link up with your local secondary school or college

If you are a primary school, you may find that your local secondary school can help with transport by providing a minibus and driver as part of their community outreach work. It's worth getting in touch to see how you can work together.

## Raising funds

### Class savings account

Singlegate Primary School in Colliers Wood, London has a great scheme in order to raise money for school visits to farms. Each class in the school has a savings account, which they are responsible for keeping topped up. There are many ways the pupils raise money. For example, pupils have recently been harvesting produce from the school garden and cooking lovely seasonal recipes. The food is then sold to parents and the local community with all the profits going into the class savings account. If the class feels they need a little help in being able to afford something they can put together a presentation in order to ask the Head teacher for a loan. This great model is easily transferable to other schools.

### Parent Teacher Associations

Many schools have approached their PTAs to allocate existing funds or to raise funds for farm visits. Cake sales, mufty days and fetes have all been sources of fundraising for schools. More advice on successful fundraising can be found on the National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations website: [www.ncpta.org.uk](http://www.ncpta.org.uk)

### School Farmers' Markets

The Soil Association have been working with the Mid Wales Food and Land Trust in developing school farmers' markets. The initiative involves local producers setting up stalls at the schools and selling their produce to parents and member of the community. Often the school will charge local producers a small fee for a stall, which can then be used to fund visits to farms. More information about establishing school farmers markets can be found at: [www.soilassociation.org/schoolfarmersmarkets](http://www.soilassociation.org/schoolfarmersmarkets)

### Higher Level Stewardship scheme

Higher Level Stewardship is an environmental stewardship scheme for farms managed by Natural England. The scheme involves farmers managing their farmland in a way that creates, preserves and protects habitats. Part of the scheme can include 'Educational Access' whereby farmers receive funding from Natural England for hosting school visits. It is worth discussing this with your farmer to see if they are part of the scheme.

### Pupil Premium

The Government white paper on the environment 'The Natural Choice' suggested that schools may consider using their pupil premium payments to cover trips to places of outdoor learning. In chapter 4 of the paper ( page 48) it states:

*4.15 We have created a Pupil Premium, intended to raise the attainment of children from low-income families. This could be used to give fairer access to nature for pupils from deprived*

*backgrounds, for example funding environment. It will be for schools for the benefit of their pupils.'*



*school trips to experience the natural to decide how best to use the Premium*

### **Enrichment days**

Many of the schools we have worked with are using their budget for enrichment days to support farm links, often incorporating a whole week's worth of related activities. This can equally link in with the other Food for Life Partnership work you have been doing in school, such as growing and cooking. Why not visit a local farm and pick some produce, bring it back to school and cook with it using additional produce from the garden?

### **Local trusts, societies and agricultural colleges**

It is a good idea to investigate opportunities in your local community for outdoor education. There are many charities, trusts and societies across the UK that may be able to offer you funding towards schools visits, provide you with in-school activities or even provide free services on their sites. Agricultural shows and colleges in your local area may also be able to offer some support for farm education so why not get in touch with them? A good place to start your search is [www.guidestar.org.uk](http://www.guidestar.org.uk)

### **Sell your old tech**

There are many websites these days where you can sell old mobile phones, computers etc. An internet search will come up with many websites. Here are just a few that we found:

<http://www.cashinyourgadgets.co.uk/>

<https://uk.webuy.com/phones/>

<http://www.money4machines.co.uk/>