



The Loft at SPEC

Booking information for Loft-led day programmes

What age group can I bring?

We can run day programmes for Years 3-9 (ages 7-14).

Where will the programme take place?

We use two buildings, The Loft and Loft Towers. We tend to use The Loft for primary groups and Loft Towers for secondary groups. However, The Loft is prioritised for residential programmes so some primary programmes will be run in Loft Towers, especially if it is a large group.

How to make your booking

Please check availability using our online enquiry form (www.spec.org.uk/booking) or telephone or e-mail (spec@rcdow.org.uk) first to check whether there is for the dates you are interested in. Call either 01727 829228 to speak to the bookings administrator or 01727 829218 to speak to the director of The Loft.

It is possible to make provisional bookings by telephone, e-mail, letter or fax. A provisional booking will be held for three weeks after which it must be confirmed and a deposit made.

You will be sent a booking form, which should be returned with the appropriate deposit within three weeks of the provisional booking being made: this will confirm your booking. If a booking is not confirmed within three weeks, we may offer it to another client.

Numbers

The Loft can accommodate the following numbers on day programmes:

The Loft: 30 comfortably, but possibly up to 45.

Loft Towers: 60

Sometimes we run programmes for around 90 for secondary groups, but this has unique staffing requirements and depends on the availability of a larger meeting space, which in turn will involve an additional cost for using that space.

Adult/child ratios

We base the required visiting adult/child ratios on the advice given by Hertfordshire County Council in their document "Guidance for Organisers of Visits for Children". This guidance can be found on the Hertfordshire Grid for Learning website (see link opposite). We strongly recommend that you consult these guidelines, or those of your own LEA, thoroughly as part of your planning.

We base the required visiting adult/child ratios on the advice given by Hertfordshire County Council in their document "Guidance for Organisers of Visits for Children". This guidance can be found on the HCC website (<http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/healthandsafety/visits.shtml>). We strongly recommend that you consult these guidelines, or those of your own LEA, thoroughly as part of your planning. You might also want to consult the guidelines in the DfES good practice guide 'Health and safety of pupils on educational visits' available as a download from the publications section of the Teachernet website (<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/>). The Hertfordshire recommended ratios are given below:

Age	School Year	Ratio adult:child
7	3	1:6
8-11	4 – 6	1:10-15
12-18	7 and above	1:15-20

These are generic ratios which may need to be adapted depending on the risks presented by your particular group: if your group includes children with disabilities or behavioural or learning difficulties, you will need to take this into account in your risk assessment and consider adjusting the ratio of adults to children. Although our staff and volunteers supervise the children for most of the day, we are unable to act in *loco parentis* as

this duty cannot be delegated. You are advised to consult the advice provided by your own education authority regarding ratios.

Irrespective of the ratios and guidelines above, there must be at least **two** supervising adults for any group and there must be at least one female if there are females in the group.

Security

Access to all buildings at SPEC is by electronic keypad.

Costs

The Loft is part-funded by Westminster Diocese. Consequently schools and parishes outside of the diocese will be charged more than those within the diocese. Please see our separate document for the pricing of programmes at The Loft. Prices are updated for each academic year and include:

- All activities on site.
- Resources: e.g. art and craft materials

Please also see our document "*Policy for deposit, payment and cancellation*" for information on payment and cancellation liability.

As an educational organisation VAT does not apply provided educational input is part of the visit.

Cancellation

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Meals

Groups coming on day programmes should bring a packed lunch. A squash and biscuit snack will be provided during the morning.

What to bring

For day programmes we recommend a relaxed dress code so that participants can feel comfortable undertaking any of the activities. Clothing should be as practical as possible bearing in mind that many activities are, well, *active*. Some activities may well be outdoors and our grounds can get muddy: if anyone is worried about getting those new trainers dirty, perhaps don't bring them. We expect students to remove their shoes when coming into the buildings: if they wish to bring a pair of *clean* indoor footwear then they are very welcome to do so.

Supervision

Loft staff and volunteers will run and supervise all activities. However, we do ask that that school staff and parish leaders maintain a presence during activities and take responsibility for supervising the children/young people during lunchtime.

Medical and First Aid

Please ensure that a member of your staff team is briefed and has the responsibility for looking after and administering and medications that your students bring with them. Our staff will not be able to administer and medications.

There is always a first-aider on site during working hours (9-4.30) and there are first-aid kits available in all buildings. Mobile first-aid kits are always taken on activities away from the main building. However, we recommend that your selection of staff includes a first-aider and that you bring your own first-aid kit.

Please notify us in advance if anyone in your group has a medical condition which will require specific support or may require specific emergency treatment (e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, severe allergies).

Special educational needs

Our staff and volunteers can be better prepared to support your students if they are forewarned of and significant special education needs. We ask that you use your knowledge of your students and their needs to decide whether it will be appropriate to disclose their SEN to our staff. The best point of contact for discussing 'need to know' is with the director of The Loft, Jon Rogers, (01727 829218, jonrogers@rcdow.org.uk).

Emergency contact

The most effective way of providing emergency contact with your group is via a leader's mobile telephone (ideally with the phone on silent/vibrate during sessions). Alternatively, on weekdays during working hours (9-4.30) a message can be left via our administrative office (01727 829228).

Alcohol and smoking

We ask that no alcohol be brought into the centre: group leaders are asked to ensure that other adults in the group are aware of this rule. Smoking is not permitted in any buildings and may only take place – by those of legal age - in specific locations within the grounds.

Expectations and rules

We have a few rules, most of which will be explained to students on arrival. Some are listed below to assist with expectation management:

- No chewing gum – for health and safety reasons as well as avoiding 'deposits'
- No mobile phones while sessions are taking place. We recommend – but do not insist – that students leave their mobile phones at home to avoid distraction and risk of loss.

Damage

Occasionally damage does occur to buildings or equipment. If this is due to the negligent behaviour of students then we reserve the right to bill the school or parish for reasonable costs for making good the damage.

The Loft does not take any responsibility for loss or damage to personal property.

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