

## Pre Visit Information for Visiting Groups

### Before the day

**Booking form & photo consent** – please ensure you've returned your booking form, and ticked the box to grant your consent for our use of photos of your visit in our marketing activities if given.

**Activity session content** – if you have booked a specific activity or tour for your visit you'll find more information about the content on the website

**Risk Assessments** - We can provide a generic risk assessment on request, please feel free to add, amend or change these to suit your needs. To help you write a risk assessment we have provided a list of safety notes in this confirmation pack.

**Free Teacher Pre-visit** – Once you've made a booking with us, we offer a free teacher pre-visit to familiarise yourself with the site. Please call us in advance if you wish to take up this offer on 01752 275233.

### Getting here

**Parking**– The National Marine Aquarium doesn't have its own car park. There is a coach drop off point at the back of the building. Coaches should only use this space for dropping and picking up. If they need somewhere to park they should go to Bretonside Bus Station.

We have 3 disabled parking spaces at the back of the aquarium that can hold minibuses (satnav postcode PL40DX). These are available on a first come first served basis but users must display a valid disabled badge.

The nearest car parks are the Barbican (Coxside) multi story car park, or the Lockyer's Quay pub car park that is a pay and display with no height restrictions. Please check directly with Premier Inn to confirm permission for Lockyer's Quay car park. Both are directly behind the National Marine Aquarium with a short walk to the entrance.

**Arrival**- The entrance is located at the front of the building, if parking at the rear please follow signs to the main doors and ticketing area.

If agreed in advance, your group can be met by a member of the Learning Team at the main ticketing desk.

**Payment**- Please report to our Ticket Desk to pay for your visit.

We ask for payment on the day. We take cash, cards (in person) or cheques. Cheques should be made payable to National Marine Aquarium Operations Limited.

Invoices can be arranged after your visit for the exact number of students attending

Students with Aquarium Membership or Day Plus Pass- Students who hold National Marine Aquarium membership, will still be required to pay the fee for an educational visit. This is to cover Aquarium staff time and to pay for resources used by the students.

## During your visit

**Lunch areas-**We have several indoor spaces and an open air picnic area suitable for eating lunch. These are allocated during the booking process wherever possible on a first come first served basis

**Bag storage** - Secure bag storage is available on a first come first served basis.

**Safety & Behaviour** - In order to make your visit as enjoyable as possible, please be aware that at all times during the visit teachers are responsible for safeguarding and disciplining students – this is not the role of Aquarium staff members.

Smaller independent groups of students are allowed, but ultimate responsibility for their safety and behaviour rests with the supervising adults. The aquarium is always open to members of the public and to ensure they are able to enjoy their visit students will be asked to leave if their behaviour is deemed unacceptable by the aquarium staff.

**Cameras-** We welcome cameras in the Aquarium, however, flash photography is **not permitted**. If you require assistance with camera settings please ask one of our hosts.

**Visiting the Shop–** While we hope that most groups will wish to purchase gifts from the wide range available in our shop, it would be very helpful if the students could do so in small supervised groups.

**Hosts-** We have a team of Aquarium Hosts around the building who are happy to educate and engage our visitors. You can spot them in their white Aquarium t-shirts - Ask them anything!

**Public shows-** A full daily schedule of talks & shows for the public is advertised around the building. You and your students are welcome to sit and listen to these presentations. Our popular shark feed takes place every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 11am. There is also a dive show every day at 2pm in either of our large tanks (subject to change).

## Safety Notes

The following Safety Notes have been put together based on our own risk assessment. It is requested that you read them prior to your visit so that any queries can be addressed in advance.

- Group leaders should have a full list of all children and adults visiting the Aquarium.
- Group leaders are responsible for getting their party safely from their chosen transport to the main entrance of the Aquarium.
- Group leaders are responsible for the behaviour and safety of their party at all times in and around the Aquarium including the classroom, shop, café, Maritime Garden and environs.
- Stairs, slopes, dark areas, winding corridors, walls and safety rails occur throughout the Aquarium. Visitors should be not run or climb for their own safety and the safety of other Aquarium users.
- Occasionally water spillage may occur especially near open tanks, so care is needed to avoid slipping.
- Some of the exhibits including the rock pool are open tanks. Putting hands or objects into the water or touching the animals is NOT allowed as this may be harmful to both animals and children.
- Some exhibits have viewing areas with curved windows. Care must be taken to avoid bumping heads.
- The classroom and Just Add H<sub>2</sub>O Headquarters contain a number of potential hazards e.g. scissors, craft materials, specimens on display etc. Children should NOT be left unsupervised.
- The maritime garden is a closed-in outdoor area with picnic tables for our visitors to use. There is to be no climbing whatsoever on the fences as in some places they have steep drops on the other side. This is an open area where the weather must also be considered.
- The Aquarium has the right to ask group leaders to remove from the Aquarium, any individual whose behaviour is considered to be unacceptable, or those who pose a threat to the safety of the members of the public, or to the animals on display.
- A team of uniformed Hosts trained in first aid and emergency procedures and with access to radios are on site at all times.
- In the event of an emergency, listen for announcements over the tannoy. The Hosts and other Aquarium staff will ensure the building is evacuated safely – listen to their instructions.
- Lost party members should make their way to the ticketing desk in the shop or ask a member of staff (in a t-shirt with an aquarium logo) for help if they are parted from their group. Group leaders who lose a member of their party should speak directly to a member of the Aquarium Host team, who will help reunite the party.

## Pre & Post Visit Suggestions

If your trip to the aquarium is part of a wider topic, you may well already have ideas about how you will prepare for, and follow up your visit.

If not, try the ideas suggested below, or check the National Marine Aquarium website which features downloadable pre and post visit ideas.

### Pre Visit Suggestions

Before visiting the aquarium it can really help to familiarise yourself with some of the main themes and animals we have here.

- Visit our website - <http://www.national-aquarium.co.uk/>
- If video content floats your boat, try our YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/NMAPlymouth>
- You can also follow us on Facebook for all the latest news and developments – National Marine Aquarium, or JustAddH2O

Here at The Aquarium, we have more sharks and rays than any other aquarium in the UK – why not check out our friends at The Shark Trust - [www.sharktrust.org](http://www.sharktrust.org)

Our local partners at the Marine Biological Association have a great website full of resources to download [www.mba.ac.uk](http://www.mba.ac.uk)

**And don't forget, you're entitled to a FREE pre-visit to come and look around before bringing your group by calling 01752 275233 once you've made a booking**

### Post Visit Suggestions

Below are some suggestions for continuing your learning back at base.

- Draw/make a creature from an ocean food chain then create a food web from the finished animals
- Create a collage/mural or underwater environment for the classroom showing a variety of ocean habitats.
- Create a feely box of shells and other beach combing artefacts on a sensory table.
- Hold a class debate on how we can protect marine habitats.
- Join the MCS and help with a beach clean.
- Write a fact sheet/poster about your favourite animal to include habitat and adaptation descriptions.
- Make sea monsters/mermaids from clay.
- Make sea monster/mermaid puppets and write a play for them to act in.
- Write a story/create your own myth about a sea monster/mermaid
- Build a display using resources from the library and online; collecting posters, pictures and artefacts depicting the diversity in marine life.
- Play classification games or create keys for a variety of marine creatures.
- Draw life size illustrations of fish/whales in the playground for students to compare sizes, and measurements.
- Ask students to design their own tank using scale drawings, volume of water etc
- Explore the properties of salt water.