

## EXPLORIS AQUARIUM INFORMATION

### YOUR VISIT

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Exploris is Northern Ireland's only aquarium and seal sanctuary. It is an award winning visitor facility and one of the country's must see attractions. Exploris is located in the conservation village of Portaferry, on the shores of Strangford Lough, one of the most important marine sites in Europe.

Exploris is the perfect venue for an Educational or group visit for all ages.

### DISCOVERY POOL

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A chance for your group to discover a variety of living animals at close hand. For example, you can observe Rays, Starfish and Sea Urchins. Exploris Discovery Pools are run by experienced guides who will help you to understand the marine life found in and around Strangford Lough.

### AQUARIUM TOUR

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A guide takes your group on a journey from Strangford Lough to the Irish Sea via our themed display tanks. Also, our Seal Sanctuary takes you through the seals' journey back to health.

### SHORE WALKS (depending upon tide times) SHOOLS ONLY

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This is an opportunity for visitors of all ages to learn about life along the shore, the different types of seashores, how the shore is divided, and conserving the sea shore. All closely linked to the Northern Ireland curriculum requirements

### BOOKING

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Please complete the booking form which can be found at [www.exploris.org.uk/education/book](http://www.exploris.org.uk/education/book)

Please be realistic about your journey time to the aquarium, as we may not be able to extend the time allocated to you if there is another group booked in after your session. Please try to arrive ten minutes before your session is due to start.

Telephone: **02842 728062**

### ON ARRIVAL

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The leader in charge should report to reception for payment (Cheque on the day) and to confirm group details. Groups will be met by Exploris guides and directed to the appropriate starting point for their tour.

### DISCIPLINE AND SAFETY

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Teachers or leaders are responsible for individual and group discipline at all times. Group members must not be allowed to run around the building or grounds on their own. Visitors must be supervised at all times especially on the bridge over the open sea tank, in the shop or café, and whilst at the Discovery Pool.

We ask that there is a minimum of one adult per ten children for the visit.

## CLOTHING

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Please ensure that for activities such as Shore Walks, your pupils are dressed in wind and waterproof clothing, with sensible shoes, Wellingtons are preferable. Please note it can be damp and chilly on the beach however sunscreen might be required on sunny days.

## LUNCHES

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Our café offers a variety of food and drink including packaged lunches. Group menus are available on request. Lunch arrangements must be made prior to the visit. During the summer term, groups will be allocated half hour lunch intervals for pupils to eat their own packed lunches in our Education Room. This can only be offered if groups keep to their allotted times.

## SPECIAL NEEDS

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Exploris is happy to welcome visitors with special requirements on our education programmes, however for practical reasons, it is helpful if we can be informed of particular needs at the time of the booking.

It is advantageous if we can be told in advance if a group contains a significant number of visitors with special educational needs so that we can ensure that the content of your visit is appropriate to your group.

## VISITING THE SHOP

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It would be helpful if the children could visit the shop in small supervised groups. It is sometimes most appropriate to do this during your lunch break rather than have the whole group queuing at a single till two minutes before your coach is about to leave.

## BEHAVIOUR

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Whilst most groups are very well behaved, there are occasions when problems arise, we will meet these with understanding. It is however the responsibility of the leaders to ensure that group members behave in a sensible manner.

## TOUR PROGRAMME

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### Unguided Tour

Entrance to the Aquarium and Seal Sanctuary for your group. Duration is 1 – 2 hours including the lunch break.

### Guided Tour

Entrance to the aquarium and seal sanctuary. Discovery pool demonstration with a guided tour. Duration 2-3 hours including lunch break.

### Shore Walk / Guided Tour (depending upon tide times)

Entrance to the Aquarium and seal sanctuary. Discovery pool demonstration with a guided tour. There will also be a visit to a local rocky shore to study living things in their natural habitat. Duration - Over 3 hours including lunch break.

### Winter Roadshow

Groups can bring Exploris mobile rockpool to their school from October to March each year. Visit [http://www.exploris.org.uk/education/winter\\_roadshow/](http://www.exploris.org.uk/education/winter_roadshow/) for more detail