



One of the largest school farms in the UK, the 47ha Warriner School Farm is a unique resource which provides practical, relevant and realistic experience of farming, the care of animals and the rural environment.

When it was established 50 years ago, the initial focus of the Livestock Unit was simply to teach Rural Studies, but in the last three decades the value of the Farm has become very much more diverse: it is a platform to discover first-hand how food is produced, to learn to care for animals and to appreciate, respect and care for nature; it provides opportunities for pupils to develop their practical skills, problem solving techniques and a sense of responsibility; it is a safe space where those who find classroom environment challenging can be a valued and integral part of the daily life of the farm.

Whilst the pandemic has restricted what we offer, in normal times pupils volunteer to help with whatever jobs need doing around the farm, from stacking bales, mucking out and sweeping up, to moving livestock, helping with lambing, or weighing piglets. For those looking to gain a qualification, we offer BTEC Level 1/2 in Animal Care at Years 10 and 11, and BTEC Level 3 Certificate in Animal Management at Sixth Form.

We also welcome many visitors from other schools and community groups, offering a range of experiences from simply meeting the animals through to hands on practical farm work, as well as a variety of environmental workshops and Forest School sessions.

For some of the pupils, helping out around the farm is simply an enjoyable hobby, but for others it provides a career path, or a focus and stability which helps them through the difficult teenage years. It is not uncommon for ex-pupils to pop in to see us and drop into conversation that 'I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for the Farm', or 'It was the best bit of school'. But perhaps equally as importantly in these times of environmental concern and food awareness is the part the Farm can play in allowing our young people to make informed and educated choices within the world in which they live.

