

Education Team – Thunderstorm Policy

If thunderstorms are forecast, the following action should be taken:-

- If there are low rumbles of thunder in the distance, it is OK to continue but weather conditions should be monitored closely.
- If the thunder is growing louder and bolts of lightning are visible in the distance, then action may need to be taken and you may need to take your group back to the visitor centre.
- As a rule of thumb, if the gap between visible lightning and thunder is greater than 30 seconds, it is OK to remain outside. However, if the gap between visible lightning and thunder is 30 seconds or less, you should not be outside.
- If you find yourself caught outside in a storm, you should take immediate action: -
 1. Leave open fields and watery areas.
 2. Find shelter, ideally in a building as small structures like sheds or outhouses may not provide earthed protection.
 - At Weald, Thorndon, Belhus, Hadleigh, Notley and Cressing, seek shelter in the visitor centres.
 - At Danbury and Cudmore, seek shelter in the bus or coach rather than remaining outside, and/or call the neighbouring Essex Outdoors centres (Danbury - 01245 223342 / Mersea - 01206 383226) for assistance.

If you cannot find shelter, look for a dry, low-lying areas such as a hollow.

If you are in woodland, look for an area of trees which is surrounded by taller trees.

Avoid lone trees and other tall objects.

If anybody is struck by lightning call 999 immediately and commence CPR (if first aid trained)