

SOVEREIGN HILL SAFETY INFORMATION

THE ENVIRONMENT

Sovereign Hill represents conditions on Ballarat's early goldfields. The terrain can be uneven and slippery. Please move around the site with care. We advise that you wear practical shoes, keep to paths and steps, and observe warning signs.

OUT OF BOUNDS AREAS

All paddocks, gates, workshops, sheds and surrounding property are 'out of bounds'.

The Sovereign Hill Outdoor Museum is open between 10.00 am and 5.00 pm and all students and school groups must leave the museum grounds outside of these times, unless attending organised, booked activities. For their own personal safety all groups must go directly to the dining areas or to the main entrance for the beginning of the Sound-and-Light Show, and may not wander around Sovereign Hill after hours. This includes the diggings area.

Sovereign Hill can only be accessed outside of operational times with the prior approval of Sovereign Hill staff and under supervision of your teachers.

OPEN BODIES OF WATER

There are two open bodies of water accessible to students. These are the Post Office Lake and the gold panning creek. It is the responsibility of visiting teachers to ensure students behave in a responsible and safe manner, and do not enter the water.

ANIMALS

Sovereign Hill is a working and living museum. Care should be taken when approaching Sovereign Hill animals. Animals must not be fed or handled.

HORSE SAFETY INFORMATION

Horses are an important part of the Sovereign Hill experience for all our visitors. Our horses are specially chosen for their temperament and ability for working with and around people. They are well-trained for their roles and are generally very patient. Visitors and staff should be careful around the horses; and avoid doing things that surprise, scare or annoy them.

Here are some guidelines for behaviour around horses which ensure that visitors have a happy and safe experience – and that the horses enjoy their work and play too!

Feeding

1. Don't try to feed the horses; they are well fed by staff in our Horse Department.

Patting Horses

2. Approach horses from the front or side – never from behind. Say something in a normal voice to the horse, and offer a hand for the horse to smell.
3. It is best to stand at the horse's shoulder, where the horse can see you.

Behaviour Around Horses

4. Don't make sudden movements around horses – no waving, running or throwing objects at or around them.
5. Speak quietly; don't make loud or unusual noises.
6. When a horse is wearing 'winkers' (leather shields next to its eyes so it is not distracted whilst working in a team), always let the horse know you are there – for example, say 'Hello' to the horse before you touch it.
7. Children around horses should be supervised by a Sovereign Hill staff member. If not, they must keep a safe distance from the horse.

What To Do if the Horse is Startled

8. Watch a horse's body language for added safety:
 - A startled horse may freeze and look in the direction of something that surprises it, head up and ears perked.
 - The horse may try to bolt – run, sidestep, spin or jump – so get out of the way.
 - Never corner a panicked horse; get out of the way. The horse will normally run back to its stable.