



EYFS – EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

PART ONE: INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

INTRODUCTION

Altrincham Preparatory School places great value on educational visits for all of its pupils, including the very youngest, recognising that they provide a unique opportunity to enhance the curriculum and to extend and support class based work. They provide opportunities which cannot be provided on site and can extend the knowledge and understanding of our youngest pupils. All of our visits for this age group are local to us, for example, Stockley Farm, Chester Zoo and into Manchester. We do not take EYFS boys on overnight or foreign visits.

Our policy detailed below has regard to DCSF Guidance *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits* (HASPEV).

OUR VISITS

Supervision

Generous staffing and adults presence levels, close supervision and proper protective clothing are essential for even the shortest of excursions. For all seasonal walks within the enclosed school grounds, the children are supervised by their Teacher and a Teaching Assistant.

For off-site visits, mobile phones are taken and the children are always briefed in advance about the visit and of the standards of behaviour which we expect.

Staff Ratios and Responsibility

We operate an adult:pupil ratio of 1:4 (Nursery) and 1:6 (Reception) for all off-site visits involving children in our Nursery and Reception classes. There is always at least one Teacher, one of whom will have been designated in charge of the visit. One or more of the accompanying staff will be qualified in paediatric first aid. We normally invite parents to volunteer to help with off-site visits. Volunteers are checked and so will either have an up-to-date CRB or will not be allowed to be alone with a boy or group at any time during the visit. Volunteers are thoroughly briefed about their roles beforehand.

The Nursery

We do not take our Nursery boys off-site during the first half of the autumn term. They need time to settle into the routine of going to school, and there are plenty of opportunities for daily outdoor play in the Nursery Department's equipped and secure outdoor play area.

Towards the end of the summer term, the Nursery boys, together with their Teacher, two Teaching Assistants and the correct number of volunteers, visit Chester Zoo, where they look at the animals. We hire a small coach for the journey, fitted with front-facing seats and seat belts, from our regular coach company, who complies with our conditions for using hired transport (see below). The trip takes all day with the boys being back in school by 15.00 (home time).

Reception

By the time that the boys move to Reception, children are ready for more excursions off-site and for a wider range of new experiences.

The children's' creative experiences are, sometimes, expanded by visiting Theatre groups during the academic year. At Christmas there generally is a visit to a Manchester theatre. During the summer term, they have a visit to Stockley Farm to reinforce the work they have been doing on 'living things'.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

All parents of children in the EYFS are invited to a welcome meeting at the start of the autumn term, when the aims of the year's curriculum, the topics that will be studied and the methods of delivering the curriculum through play, structured activities and outdoor activities will be briefly explained. At the beginning of each year, the class teachers present a summary of the year's events which includes details of any visits that may take place during the academic year. We will send you a letter well in advance, telling you about every visit and, if appropriate, its cost and whether it involves an extension to the normal length of the school day.

CONSENT

We require your written consent every time that we take your son off-site. Please note that we are unable to take your son without a completed and signed consent form. Your emergency contact details that you give us at the beginning of the year are taken on every trip so that you may be contacted in an emergency. Please note that you need to up-date us immediately of any changes to your contact details.

PART TWO: INFORMATION FOR STAFF FOR ANY EYFS VISIT

SAFETY: ADVANCE PLANNING

Risk Assessments

Safety is our top priority. Even the shortest of visits needs to be thoroughly planned, and requires its own risk assessment, which must be reviewed thoroughly before a repeat visit is made.

Head Counts

The Teacher in charge conducts, or arranges for another Teacher or Teaching Assistant to conduct a head count of the children:

- Before leaving school
- On sitting down in the coach
- On arrival at the destination
- On leaving the destination
- On arrival back at the school

Where we walk, the children walk in pairs, with one adult at the front, one in the middle and one at the back. If there are more than three adults they are strategically placed to ensure maximum safety. Children are reminded about basic road safety and of the expected standards of behaviour. When we travel by coach, a member of staff will check that all the pupils are sitting properly and wearing their seat belts.

Missing Child Policy

Our procedures are structured to ensure that this does not happen; but in the event that a child is missing – either from school, or on a visit, we follow the procedures set out in our Missing Child policy, which can be viewed on our web site.

First Aid Kit etc

The Teacher in charge takes a first aid kit, list of emergency contact numbers and a mobile phone with him/her on every outing. Teachers carry bottled water on all of our visits for emergency purposes.

Delay

The Teacher in Charge will ring the school if there is any delay, for example, because of heavy traffic. The School Office has copies of all permission slips and contact details and will phone/text the parents to warn them of a delay.

ROLE OF THE DEPUTY HEAD

Ultimate responsibility for EYFS visits lies with the deputy head. S/he is responsible for approving all requests for visits. Otherwise, s/he works closely with the EYFS phase leader in checking that the paperwork is correct, gives guidance on carrying out risk assessments, budgeting for visits and on permission slips, and keeps a "library" of reports on previous visits.

PERSONAL LIABILITY AND INSURANCE

Staff in charge of pupils have a common law duty to act as any reasonably prudent parent would do in the same circumstances. The DCSF Guidance "The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide," (www.teachernet.gov.uk) is required reading for all Teachers in Charge of a EYFS visits as part of their training in the responsibilities of the role. It explains that their responsibility is to "act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances." Staff who take part in visits and activities outside school may feel concerned about the possibility of being held personally liable if an accident should occur. However, they can be assured that Altrincham Preparatory School, as their employer, will always stand behind them in the unlikely event of an accident occurring, provided they have exercised reasonable care and followed the school's guidelines.

Altrincham Preparatory School has £ 10 M of Employers' Liability Insurance and £2 M of public liability insurance, as well as an annual group travel policy that covers visits overseas (KS2 only). Cover includes cancellation or delay, medical expenses, replacement of passports, personal possessions and money. Any member of staff organising an adventurous or hazardous activity should therefore liaise with the Bursar to arrange suitable cover before commencing any organization of a trip. An extension of our policy usually can be arranged. The Group Leader should ensure that s/he takes a copy of the school's travel insurance with him/her on all but the shortest of visits.

Altrincham Preparatory School's policy is to discourage staff from transporting pupils in their private cars (EYFS parents would only be engaged in this under exceptional circumstances), but when this is absolutely necessary insurance is automatically provided through the school's "occasional business use" motor policy. This ensures that motor insurance claims arising whilst a member of staff is using their own car for school business purposes can be settled without involving their own motor insurer. The same "occasional business use" policy is automatically extended to include Governors and Parents of pupils in respect of the use of cars on school business, such as transporting pupils. All Parents are asked to sign and complete a consent form and must use a booster seat (spares are kept at school).

SCHOOL MINIBUSES

No one is allowed to drive the school minibus unless s/he has qualified as a minibus driver. For any minibus journey that involves EYFS children, there should always be a second member of staff. Any EYFS minibus trip will only be local, normally just between the two sites. The school will arrange and fund First Aid courses, as well as courses in driving minibuses for all staff who are involved in visits. At Altrincham Preparatory School, we expect every member of staff to complete a "Drivers' Declaration Form" before s/he drives pupils in a school minibus or privately owned vehicle. The completed forms are held by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC).

USE OF HIRED TRANSPORT

We hire coaches from a reputable company for EYFS visits to, e.g. Stockley Farm, Chester Zoo and any trip to Manchester. The school's long-standing relationship with a local company means they understand that we require proper safety procedures and risk assessment to be in place and we only book vehicles that are fitted with seat belts.

PREPARATORY ARRANGEMENTS

Visits made by the EYFS are all local; but nevertheless, their outline is planned well in advance, when dates need to be agreed with the EVC. Parents will be told about the visits planned for the ensuing year at the welcome meeting at the beginning of the autumn term. At this stage, it will probably not be necessary to finalise the dates of all of the short, local visits planned for the spring and summer terms; but a general indication is given.

Actions for the Teacher in Charge

Dates need to be fixed at least 3 or 4 months in advance for visits involving transport, where there may be a need to draw upon accompanying staff from other parts of the school, or where parent volunteers (who may need CRB checks) are used.

Preliminary planning of a trip involving transport:

- Parents should be invited to express an interest and be given an idea of cost.
- Teachers should check on any medical conditions, e.g. allergies/animal fur etc for the boys in the classes going on the trip so that they can plan appropriately
- The School Office will need to be informed if tickets and transport need to be reserved.
- The Bursary should be asked to arrange CRB checks and take up the necessary references for volunteers.

Medium term planning

- The Parental consent forms should be sent out with a return date specified.
- The travelling first aid kit should be checked as being available and properly stocked
- Bookings should be finalised
- Checks with the bus company, through the Office, should be made
- The Risk Assessment should be finalised and approved by the Deputy Head
- Parents should be advised if special clothing (sun hats, waterproof clothing, wellington boots, sun cream) is needed/advisable

Final Planning just prior to the visit happening

- Parents should be chased to return their consent forms. They should be reminded that their child cannot participate in the visit without a completed form being received within 3 days of departure
- Theatre tickets should be checked and stored in the school safe
- Meeting with other members of staff participating in the visit to discuss risk assessment, the respective roles of the Teacher in Charge, other staff and volunteers and emergency procedures
- Prepare packs for the accompanying staff, the Deputy Head and the School Office containing:
 - The itinerary (*including address, phone numbers etc of all location to be visited*)
 - The Teacher in Charge's mobile number
 - Mobile numbers of all participating staff
 - Collect school camera (if wanted)
 - A list of pupils, together with copies of their parental contact forms (which includes details of each pupils' medical conditions)
 - Emergency contact numbers for the Deputy Head and the School Office
 - A copy of the risk assessment.

The Day of Departure

- Remind the children of the aim of the visit and of the expected standards of behaviour
- Give information packs to recipients
- Collect first aid pack. Check contents
- Ensure mobile phone on teacher in charge and school knows number

DURING THE VISIT

Primary responsibility for the safe conduct of the visit rests with Teacher in Charge. He or she has sole responsibility for amending the itinerary or canceling the visit in the event of unforeseen delay or sudden deterioration in weather conditions. S/He may delegate part or all of the responsibility for the following to one or more of the accompanying staff:

- Carrying out (and recording) head counts of the children on leaving school, on getting on and off each form of transport, entering or leaving a theatre, museum, centre, etc
- Checking that all boys wear their seat belts
- Enforcing expected standards of behaviour
- Keeping account of all expenditure
- Recording any accidents or near misses

ILLNESS OR MINOR ACCIDENTS

If a Pupil has a minor accident or becomes ill, the Teacher in Charge, or another member of staff will phone his or her parent's emergency contact number at once and arrange for him/her to be collected. If contact cannot be made, the Teacher in Charge, or another member of staff, will take him/her to the local hospital or, if the illness is more minor, return him to the care of the school. A member of staff will remain with the child at the hospital or at the school until a parent or carer arrives.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of a serious accident resulting in the death or injury of one or more of the pupils and staff, the Teacher in Charge's first priority would be to summon the emergency services, and to arrange for medical attention for the injured. One of the accompanying members of staff should accompany the injured pupil(s) to hospital and would remain with the child/children until their parents arrived. Ensuring that the rest of the group were safe and looked after, and informing the Head Master or the Deputy Head of what had happened would be the next task for the Teacher in Charge, who would need to give as full, calm and factual account as the circumstances permitted. Where the full facts had not yet emerged, he or she should say so, and ensure that follow-up communications with the Head Master/Deputy Head are maintained. He/she may also need to arrange (perhaps using one of the other members of staff, or the School Office) for the parents of the uninjured children to be contacted on their emergency contact numbers and asked to collect their children from either the venue or the school, depending upon the circumstances. The Bursar would notify the insurers as quickly as possible. A full record should be kept of the incident, the injuries and of the actions taken.

At Altrincham Preparatory School, depending on the nature of the incident, we may implement our own communications system for informing both the families of the injured, and the families of those who are unhurt as swiftly as possible. We recognise that in an era of instant communications, it may not be possible for us to be the first to break the news. Nevertheless, we firmly believe that we have an important duty to speak personally to the parents of any pupil who has suffered some injury or mishap. We will use mass communication methods (SMS and messages on our website) for communicating with those whose children are not affected.

Where possible, communication with the media should be left to the Head Master. The Teacher in Charge should refer the media to the school. If comment is unavoidable, it should be factual, calm and no attempt made to cover gaps in knowledge.

ON RETURN

Each Teacher in Charge is asked to provide the Deputy Head with a verbal report on the visit, reports of accidents and near misses on his/her return. Personal observations and lessons learned are always valuable. The Group leader should return all school property, together with a report of any lost or damaged property.

Expenditure

The Teacher in charge is responsible for producing a schedule of all expenditure on the trip.

Report for Governors

The Head Master will give a verbal report to the Governors of any school trips and visits that have taken place since the last their meeting. The trip os generally recorded on the website with accompanying photographs where taken.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

EYFS staff are to use the Educational Visits (Staff Management) document