

Off Site - Supervision of Children on Outings and Visits.

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Children must be kept safe while on outings

EYFS key themes and commitments

The Themes and Principles describe the features of our practice on which the Early Years Foundation Stage is based. They emphasise that the child is of first importance and that all relationships, experiences and the environment together influence how the child will develop, plan and learn.

http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2011/10/EYFS_Principles1.pdf.

A Unique Child – 1.3 Keeping safe. 1.4 Health and well-being

Positive Relationships – 2.2 Parents as partners

Enabling Environments – 3.3 The learning environment

Learning and Development - 4.2 Active learning

Policy statement:

Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the pre-school, and which take place outside the pre-school grounds. The pre-school staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the pre-school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.

In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all children at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all pre-schoolers, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities.

Aims

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- Enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our children.
- Provide a wider range of experiences for our children than could be provided on the pre-school site alone.
- Promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.
- Engage parents.

Risk Assessment will be carried out by staff prior to the visit and first aid equipment will be taken on the day. We will ask parents to sign a consent form in advance of such outings and will offer opportunities for parents to accompany their child and the pre-school on the outing.

The pre-school staff are involved in the planning and management of off-site visits.

The Team Leader and Administration Manager will:

- Ensure that risk assessments are completed.
- Assign competent staff to lead and help with trips.
- Organise related staff training.
- Make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained.
- Verify that all accompanying adults, including private car/coach drivers, have had satisfactory police checks.
- Keep records of visits, and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues (for example Mellis Church).

It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

Procedures

- There is a designated lead for each excursion who is clear about their responsibility as designated lead.
- We always ask parents to sign specific consent forms before major outings.
- All staff taking part in the outing sign off every risk assessment. Any written outing risk assessments are made available for parents to see.
- Children with allergies or other specific needs have a separate risk assessment completed i.e. child with allergies visiting a supermarket.
- An excursion will not go ahead if concerns are raised about its viability at any point.
- Our adult to child ratio is high, normally one adult to two children, depending on their age, sensibility and the type of venue, as well as how it is to be reached.
- A minimum of two staff accompany children on outings. Unless the whole setting is on an outing, a minimum of two staff also remain behind with the rest of the children.
- Named children are assigned to individual staff members to ensure that each child is well supervised, that no child goes astray and that there is no unauthorised access to children. Parents are informed which member of staff their child will be accompanied by.
- Staff frequently count their designated children and ensure hands are held when crossing the road.
- Parents who accompany us on outings are responsible for their own child only. Where parents have undergone vetting with us as volunteers, they may be included in the adults to child ratio and have children allocated to them.
- Outings are recorded in an outings record book kept in the setting, stating:
 - The date and time of the outing.
 - The venue and mode of transport used.
 - The names of the staff members assigned to each of the children.
 - The time of return.
- Parents are advised to dress their child appropriately for the type of outing and weather conditions.
- We take a mobile phone on outings, as well as supplies of tissues, wipes, spare clothing, nappies, medicines required for individual children, a mini first aid kit, snacks and water. The amount of equipment will vary and be consistent with the venue and the number of children, as well as how long they will be out for. We apply sun cream to children as needed and ensure they are dressed appropriately for the type of outing and weather conditions.
- We take a list of children with us with contact numbers of parents/carers, as well as an accident book and a copy of our Missing Child Policy.
- We ensure that contracted drivers are from reputable companies, do not have unsupervised access to the children and are not included in the ratios.

Communication with parents

The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their permission before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.

Charges for these outings, if applicable, will be notified to parents in advance of the outing and will be payable before the outing. We will ask parents to sign a consent form in advance of such outings and will offer opportunities for parents to accompany their child and the pre-school on the outing.

Further health and safety considerations

Before a party leaves the pre-school the pre-school will provide a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the off site visit.

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the designated lead, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. All adult helpers will be accompanied by a member of pre-school staff and never left unattended with a group of children. The designated lead will normally carry the groups emergency contact numbers together with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party.

The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity the staff must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical registration forms, and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.

Operational procedures for outings

The same standard of care and interaction with the children is expected of staff, volunteers and students on outings.

Whilst it is acknowledged that under normal circumstances a large proportion of parents will accompany their children on pre-school outings, however, in all cases, the following must be adhered to:

The pre-school's staff prime responsibility on outings is to ensure the safety of the children. However they will be expected to balance this responsibility with ensuring that children have the maximum opportunity to experience and explore new environments, to socialise and to have fun.

- A register will be taken at the beginning, middle and end of the visit or outing. Additionally, regular head counts will be taken by staff.
- An adult/child ratio of 1:2 will be kept at all times for those children unaccompanied by parents.
- Care is taken at times of particular risk, such as when children are walking or getting into or out of a vehicle.

Procedures where a child is lost on an outing

If the pre-school's policies and procedures are being observed, the likelihood of a child being lost is small. Very occasionally a child may become separated from the group on an outing or become lost. With careful planning and co-operative working amongst staff, children should not be out of sight of an adult during an outing.

- If it is realised that a child is no longer with the group, staff should look carefully all around without leaving the group.
- The member of staff's key children should be re-allocated to other members of staff.
- The designated lead will contact the parents immediately.
- The police will be informed, if necessary and all the children will be returned to the pre-school.
- At the end of the day, the designated lead will complete an incident report.

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications:

- Register and Outings Record (2006)
- Risk Management in Early Years Settings (2007)

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