

Short trips, outings and excursions

At St Joseph's Pre-School Unit we recognise the importance of opportunities to explore the world, and where possible trips, outings and excursions offered will remain local.

We understand that the cost of trips, outings and excursions need to be affordable to ensure that all children and their families have these opportunities. Where children are in receipt of EYPP payments these opportunities may be offered free or heavily subsidised, and for all other children plenty of notice will be given so that families can pay in instalments if they wish.

We recognise the importance of developing a positive relationship with the families who attend the Pre-School, and families are always encouraged and welcome to join in trips, outings and excursions.

To ensure the safety of all children and adults whilst on a short trip, outing or excursion the following will apply.

Planning and preparation

- All outings will be purposeful, and link to learning and development outcomes.
- The excursion will not go ahead if concerns are raised about its safety or viability at any point.
- Parents will be informed if their child will be taken off the premises at any time except for walks in the local area where consent will have been requested on the children's registration forms. If consent hasn't been given the child will not be taken off the premises.
- Prior parent permission will be requested writing separately for trips, outings or excursions which are not in the immediate local area. Parents will be requested to sign and return a permission which will be at the bottom of a letter providing full details of the trip, outing or excursion. If consent is not obtained the child will not be taken off the premises.
- A minimum of two staff will always accompany children for walks, outings, trips, or excursions. There will always be a minimum ratio 1:4, although for some children a 1:1 may be required.
- A risk assessment will consider a safe ratio, and this will be identified, this ratio will be required for the trip, outing or excursion to go ahead.
- Prior to leaving the premises children will be allocated to each member of staff/volunteer; they are then responsible for supervising their designated children for the duration of the time off the premises.
- Parents or family carers on outings are responsible for their own children only.
- Parents or family carers who have undergone vetting as volunteers may be included in the ratio, e.g., Committee.

- A mobile phone belonging to the Pre-School Unit, and small first aid kit is taken on all walks, outings, trips and excursions.
- Staff will make sure they have water, plastic cups, spare nappies/change of clothes and wet wipes for the children going out appropriate to the length of time they are out for.
- Sun cream is applied as needed and children are clothed appropriately.
- Children always wear 'high viz' vests whilst off the premises.
- Staff will have the emergency contact numbers, medications and equipment needed for children.

Risk assessment

- A risk assessment will always be completed prior to an outing, and this will be shared with all the staff. (Existing risk assessments for frequent outings to the same place are reviewed/amended as required).
- Children with specific needs have a separate risk assessment if necessary, and any member of staff responsible for these children whilst off the premises will be made aware of the risks.

Outing venue (larger outings)

- Venues used regularly are 'risk assessed' and an initial pre-visit is made to look at the health and safety aspects. If pre-visits cannot be made, a copy of the venue risk assessment is requested.

Transport

- If the children are travelling by coach for an outing, only a reputable company will be used.
- The Pre-School Unit Manager will ensure that seat belts are provided on the coach and that booster seats and child safety seats are used as appropriate to the age of the children.
- The maximum seating capacity of the coach or minibus will be identified and not exceeded.
- Contracted drivers are not counted in ratios.
- All outings by coach or using other public transport will be planned with a ratio of 1-2 for children who are the responsibility of staff whilst off the premises, the same ratio will be recommended to families who are joining the staff on the outing although this will not be enforceable.

Where transport is provided by staff or volunteers

- The insurance details and a list of named drivers will be required as part of the risk assessment.
- Drivers using their own transport will be asked to ensure that they have adequate insurance cover.

Forest School sessions (not on site)

- A separate risk assessment will be conducted, and Forest School standard procedures will be followed.
- The sessions will always be led by a level 3 trained forest school educator.

Farm and zoo visits

All staff are aware of the risks posed by infections such as E. coli being contracted from animals.

They are also aware of toxic substances used on farms that could be hazardous to health.

Staff are vigilant of the natural dangers presented by a farm or zoo visit and conduct a risk assessment prior to the visit.

- The venue will be contacted in advance of any visit to ensure that there have been no recent outbreaks of E. coli or other infections. If there has been an outbreak the visit will be reviewed and may be postponed.
- Staff will ensure that hands are washed and dried thoroughly after touching an animal.
- Staff will ensure that nothing is consumed whilst going round the farm.
- A suitable place for food is eaten away from animals will be identified, and food will only be eaten after children thoroughly wash their hands.
- Children will be prevented from putting their faces against animals or hands in their own mouths.
- If a child touches animal droppings, they will be taken to wash and dry their hands immediately.
- On returning to the Pre-School Unit any shoes or boots worn whilst at the farm will be kept outside of the building or be placed into a disposable bag ready to take home. Children will not be permitted to wear them inside.
- If staff or volunteers are pregnant, they should avoid contact with pregnant ewes, and they may want to consult their own GP before the outing.
- Farmers have a responsibility to ensure that hand washing and drying facilities are available and are suitably located, that picnic areas are separate and clean, and that all other health and safety laws are fully observed. (This will be checked as part of the risk assessment)
- The Pre-School Unit Manager will refer to or contact the insurance company for advice where necessary.

Larger outings checklist

There will be an identified lead person for outings, at St-Joseph's Pre-School Unit this will be the Manager or the Deputy Manager.

- Risk assessments will be completed/updated and shared with every staff, student/volunteer accompanying the children.
- Staff understand the potential risks when they are out with children and takes all reasonable measures to remove minimise risks.
- Bouncy castles and similar attractions which pose a known risk are not accessed by children on an excursion.
- The designated lead person for the outing will be the last to leave the venue, or transport being used.
- The designated lead person for the outing will conduct a 'safety sweep' before during and after the outing.

Further guidance

[Introducing Forest School in the Early Years](#) (Alliance 2022)

[Preventing Accidents to Children on Farms](#) (Health and Safety Executive 2013)