40. SHORT TRIPS, OUTINGS & EXCURSIONS

Policy statement

Children benefit from being taken outside of the premises on visits or trips to local parks, or other suitable venues, for activities that enhance their learning experiences. At ASK, we ensure that there are procedures to keep children safe on outings; all members of staff and volunteers are aware of and follow the procedures as laid out below.

Planning and preparation

- Outings have a purpose with specific learning and development outcomes.
- If there are agency staff to maintain ratios on an outing, they are fully briefed about the children they are accompanying.
- An excursion does not go ahead if concerns are raised about its viability at any point.
- Parents/carers are informed of an outing and members of staff check that consent forms on children's Registration Forms were signed. Our daily register also has a tick box for parents/carers to confirm their permission for outings.
- A minimum of two members of staff accompany the children on outings. There is a ratio of 1:2 for babies in buggies, some disabled children, and children up to 3 years. Older children have a ratio of 1:4, depending on the risk assessment.
- Children are specifically allocated to each member of staff/volunteer; they are responsible for supervising their designated children for the duration of the excursion.
- Parents/carers on outings are responsible for their own children only.
- Parents/carers who have undergone vetting as volunteers may be included in the ratio.
- A mobile phone belonging to ASK and a small first aid kit are taken on the outing. The mobile phone has contact numbers for parents/carers.
- Staff 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 wear badges or 'high viz' vests with ASK's name and telephone number, but not the name of the child.
- Staff have emergency contacts, medication, and equipment needed for children.

Risk assessment

- Risk assessment, if required, is completed prior to the outing and signed off by the manager and all members of staff taking part. Any existing risk assessments are reviewed/amended as required.
- Children with specific needs have a separate risk assessment completed if necessary.

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, risk assessment is achieved by calling the venue and asking for their risk assessment.

Transport

- If coach hire is required for an outing, only reputable companies are used.
- The setting manager ensures 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 is not exceeded.
- Contracted drivers are not counted in ratios.
- Public transport should always be within a ratio of 1-2 (unless agreed with the setting manager).

Where transport is provided by ASK

- Records are kept including insurance details and a list of named drivers.
- Drivers using their own transport should have adequate insurance cover.

Forest School sessions (not on site)

- A separate Forest School risk assessment is conducted, and Forest School standard procedures are followed at all times. The designated lead is always a level 3 trained Forest School educator.
- The sessions always have a level 3 trained Forest School educator.

Farm and zoo visits

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 is contacted in advance of the visit to ensure no recent outbreaks of E.coli or other infections. If there has been an outbreak the visit will be reviewed and may be postponed.

- Hands are washed and dried thoroughly after touching an animal.
- Nothing is consumed whilst going round the farm. Food is eaten away from animals, after thoroughly washing hands.
- Children are prevented from putting their faces against animals or hands in their own mouths.
- If animal droppings are touched, hands are washed and dried immediately.
- Shoes are cleaned and hands washed thoroughly as soon as possible on departure.
- Staff or volunteers who are pregnant, or may be pregnant, should avoid contact with pregnant ewes and may want to consult their own GP before the visit.
- 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.

For further guidance, refer to the insurance provider.

Larger outings checklist

There is an identified lead person for the outing.

- The outing has an educational purpose and has been agreed with the manager.
- Risk assessments completed/updated and shared with every member of staff and student/volunteer accompanying the children.
- Members of staff understand the potential risks when they are out with children and take all reasonable measures to remove/minimise risks.
- Bouncy castles and similar attractions are not accessed by children on an excursion.
- The designated lead practitioner is the last to leave the venue, or transport being used.
- The designated lead conducts a ‘safety sweep’ before, during, and after the outing.

Further guidance:

Preventing accidents to children on farms INDG472(rev4) (hse.gov.uk)

Stay safe farm safety (hse.gov.uk)

This policy was adopted by:	ASK Kindergarten & Clubs
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Signatory:	Mark Stewart
Role of Signatory:	Owner & Ofsted Registered Provider