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MANUAL FOR PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF OVERNIGHT EXCURSIONS, EDUCATIONAL TOURS

Introduction

1. Security and safety of children is the top most priority of any education institution. It becomes more important when children are sent on outdoor activities. In the prevailing environment importance of safety and security of children multiplies many folds.

Common aspects to be there in every school/bus/trip

1. Working CCTV cameras in all buses, whether owned by school or hired from outside.
2. A signed undertaking of understanding and compliance to POCSO by school bus staff, school staff accompanying on bus and external bus staff.
3. Behaviour, dos and don'ts for all children to be defined and communicated to all students on the bus
4. Behaviour, dos and don'ts for all bus staff and other staff on the bus, clearly communicated and understood by all.
5. Fire safety standards to be adhered to and fire safety drills to be conducted before trip and staff should know how to use and what to do during a fire event.
6. A properly stocked first aid kit in each bus with enough supplies for all children on the bus.

Aim

2. Aim of this MANUAL is to lay down guidelines and procedure for planning, executing school field trips and dealing with the variety of situations. These are general guide lines. Every event is different and action taken by all concerned authorities / individuals will be dictated by specific nature of each situation.

For the purpose of this manual the systems and rules given herewith to be followed for any kind of trip that the school organizes whether day, overnight or multiple days.

THE MANUAL IS DIVIDED INTO THREE PARTS

1. PLANNING STAGE
2. EXECUTION STAGE
3. EMERGENCY STAGE

PLANNING STAGE

1. Select a date/period for the trip keeping in mind the suitable climate and other conditions both at the location where the school is and at the location of the destination of the trip.
2. For example if city is on high alert then do not plan a trip during that time, even if the destination city is not on high alert.
3. Avoid monsoons, major festival seasons etc as these are generally difficult times to handle large numbers and emergency situations
4. If school has planned the trip then ensure that proper allotment of staff duties is done to ensure the smooth and safe implementation of the trip.
5. If outside organizer is being appointed, then get credentials checked, take things in writing and only appoint organizers that have been duly passed and sanctioned by the management.

IF OUTSIDE ORGANISER IS IN CHARGE THEN HAVE A CELL COMPRISING OF –

- 1.ORGANSISER TEAM REPRESENTATIVE
- 2.SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE
- 3.PTA REPRESENTATIVE

All parameters and decisions about the trip to be taken in the presence of or communicated to all the above, all to sign and file for use.

IF SCHOOL IS ORGANISING THE TRIP THEN TO HAVE A CELL COMPRISING OF-

- 1.SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE
- 2.PTA REPRESENTATIVE

All parameters and decisions about the trip to be taken in the presence of or communicated to all the above, all to sign and file for use.

Attached **APPENDIX A** to be used to get parents approval and go ahead to take the child.

AREAS THAT NEED TO BE LOOKED INTO FOR THE TRIP PLAN

- 1.Route to be taken for going and returning
 - 2.Transport that is to be used
 - 3.Number of children
 - 4.Health details of each child
 - 5.Phone numbers of each child
 - 6.Phone numbers of staff accompanying them
 - 7.Emergency numbers of the destination where travelling
 - 8.A properly charged cell phone and its charger
 - 9.Supply of torches for each bus
 - 10.Supply of first aid kit for each bus (as given in APPENDIX B)
 - 11.Supply of emergency food and water ration for each bus
 - 12.A megaphone for each bus
 - 13.Blankets, old newspapers for each bus
 - 14.Check the buses booked to see that they have a door that closes and the windows have grills that can keep children safe even from a stone throwing attack, in case of an eventuality.
 - 15.Also send a school representative to find out beforehand if the hotels booked for the trip have safe rooms and do not have balconies and if there are balconies then they should have high railings or should be locked when the children are there.
 - 16.A recee of the hotel before kids come is a must, so either someone goes beforehand to check or 3 to 4 days ahead of the group and then stays there to welcome the group.
 - 17.Staff accompanying the children to be trained in how to use the first aid kit and in basics of first aid.
- Use **APPENDIX C** to inform general manager about the trip, a week before the trip.

DEVELOPING A CONTACT SYSTEM

During the trip right from the time of departure to the time of arrival, key adults of each bus will give sms status to representative at base school, who in turn will inform the general manager. These updates should come every 2 hours and if they do not come on time then the base school person to contact them to find out if any problem. If no contact made then to raise alarm by informing GM. Gm will then declare the situation as emergency and get in touch with principal and formulate plan and inform management and PTA of the same. In emergency situation draft the media information release and keep ready, to be handed out or emailed as per need to avoid speculation and gossip.

TRAINING OF STAFF

It is extremely important that all staff who are part of the TRIP TEAM, BASE TEAM AND MANAGEMENT TEAM, read the following brain based training facts as this knowledge is extremely important in handling agitated, upset and anxious and frightened children, adults etc.

As human beings we think with our prefrontal cortex which is the front part of our brain, (the area behind our forehead) all higher order thinking, logic, planning, intelligence association are done in this part of the brain. But all inputs to the brain first go through a part of our brain called the amygdala, so for any information to go to the prefrontal cortex (the thinking brain) it has to pass through the amygdala. Now the information passes smoothly during happy and positive experiences, but when the human being is upset or scared then the amygdala can hold the information and take its own decisions. Amygdala has only two decisions, fight or flight, so either the person you are trying to handle in a stressful situation will start fighting, arguing or get aggressive with you or will start crying, hiding or not want to meet you or talk to you. In this situation you as the person in charge have to realize that the brain required dopamine chemical to function smoothly and calmly, happy emotions can trigger dopamine. So talk calmly to the person, talk positively to the person, give the person a glass of water (water has oxygen and oxygen is one of the requirements of the brain, it helps calm it) and do not shout or ridicule or blame the person at this point. Or amygdala will hijack the functioning of the prefrontal cortex.

The above is the reason why even intelligent, educated people behave unreasonably or violently during a stressful situation and then after the situation is over they regret the same behavior.

VOCABULARY TO BE USED BY THE PERSON HANDLING STRESSED OUT CHILDREN OR ADULTS

1. I can understand what you are feeling....
2. I have things under control and things will definitely be better....
3. I appreciate your points, and I will look into the same....
4. We are with you and we are happy to have your co-operation.....
5. I am here with you.....

SENTENCES TO AVOID

1. Please don't shout, you are not the only one in this mess, I am also worried....
2. Please go home, we have things under control and will call you....
3. I have no further information to share with you....
4. This is not the school's fault, the organizer should have been careful....
5. Such things happen, what can we do....

The above is called stress handling training and it should be taught to all the teams, so that they can bring in this training during the emergency situation.

EXECUTION STAGE

DEPARTING FOR THE TRIP

1. Note down every bus number, name of driver and name of conductor.
2. Try and click their photo too.
3. Stock each bus with the emergency rations
4. Divide kids for each bus
5. Make a list bus wise of all kids and ensure that throughout the trip every child to only be in the bus designated to him/her
6. Appoint one staff per bus who will be in charge of that bus and the children on it.
7. Give whistles to all staff and train kids to listen for the whistle and report to teacher immediately.
8. Let kids board the bus and do a headcount while boarding
9. Tape a list of kids per bus in the bus, with names of each and every adult on the bus also added
10. Flag off the buses and base school representative to send first sms to GM
11. In the bus brief each child about safety and security in the bus and also about rules once they get off the bus.
12. Every time kids climb in and climb out of the bus do a head count

DURING THE TRIP

1. No unscheduled stops.
2. Headcount every time while embarking and disembarking. And leaving and entering hotel or any location.
3. Children to be briefed every day about rules and regulations.
4. Children to be briefed about not talking to or taking anything from strangers
5. If in a bus then driver to be told not to give lift to any local etc, no stranger should be on the bus.
6. Conductor and staff to be trained to always check bus before and after the trip.

EMERGENCY STAGE

STEPS TO FOLLOW IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

IF NO CONTACT WITH GROUP BY BASE SCHOOL OR IF ANY EMERGENCY SITUATION ARISES THEN THREE TEAMS TO FUNCTION ACCORDINGLY.

1. TRIP TEAM
2. BASE SCHOOL TEAM
3. MANAGEMENT SUPPORT TEAM

KIND OF EMERGENCIES TO BE PREPARED FOR

1. Child has an accident
2. Child lost
3. Full group cannot find way back
4. Group has missed the connecting flight or train
5. The vehicle they are travelling in meets an accident
6. Tour organizer leaves them mid trip

TRIP TEAM

1. It is the trip team's duty to realize when to declare an emergency and start taking precautionary measures in collaboration with base team. They should also realize that delay is deadly.
2. To remind each adult member of the team to start using their stress handling training points.
3. Trip team leader to inform base team head about the issue and take advice
4. Base team to inform and keep GM and PTA leader in the loop
5. Trip team to also give them alternative land line numbers in case of mobile phones not working.
6. Trip team to take decisions based on advice of base team, who in turn is in touch with GM and PTA. Trip team to only take decisions from base team head.
7. Trip team to take all trip staff into confidence.
8. Trip team to ensure that children are kept calm and not agitated or scared.
9. If kids have already realized about the trouble, chances are they will start panicking and calling their parents, in such a case do not stop them from doing so, instead inform all kids if parents call then you would like to speak to them.
10. Then speak to each parent who calls and reassure them, and update them about steps being taken.
11. If parents start advising kids about solutions, this is where you will have to handle both the parents and the kids and convince them that too many different solutions will confuse the scenario.

BASE SCHOOL TEAM-

1. Base team to understand the urgency of the situation and keep GM and PTA completely in the loop, without hiding facts
2. To remind each member to start using stress handling training with parents, etc
3. Base team to discuss way ahead with both GM and PTA head and then co-ordinate with trip team
4. In the urgency and chaos, GM or PTA should not start co-coordinating with trip team, as in this situation it is better if all information and advice goes through one channel only. Decisions can be taken jointly, but communication with trip team to be through base team head only.
5. Base team to ensure that if parents start coming to the school and enquiring, then to keep them as closely updated without hiding facts.
6. Base team to be calm and help parents maintain calm too.
7. Agitated parents can be handled by staff who know how to deal with them.
8. Base team to ensure that parents who have come to the school have food, water and toilet facility.
9. Base team to take instruction from GM about handling media

MANAGEMENT SUPPORT TEAM-

1. This team will comprise of the GM, PTA head and trustees.
2. To remind each member to start using stress handling training.
3. GM to be the connecting factor in this team and needs to co-ordinate with PTA head, base team leader and the trustees.
4. Decisions reached are to be conveyed to base team leader by the GM
5. GM to get into action as soon as emergency situation declared.
6. GM to initiate contact with local police or local contact if there, at the trip location
7. GM to also co-ordinate with the trustees and PTA for press release.
8. GM to get press release in place and based on advice of trustees either brief media or give it to principal to brief media.
9. GM to ensure security at the base team and also to ensure that parents cars etc are assisted in parking and not adding to the general chaos in the school
10. GM to co-ordinate with PTA and solicit the members help in calming the parents
11. GM to keep his entire team active for this situation.

Arrival of group at base School

- (a) Inform all concerned about exact time of arrival of the group.
- (b) Also inform them that first head count will be taken and only then children handed over.
- (c) Do a proper head count per bus.
- (d) Handover kids to parents and take a sign in, this is a must, while taking sign in ask the child if he knows the adult, or check for smart card, but don't make smart card an issue.
- (e) Ensure that all kids took all their luggage and belongings
- (f) Check each bus thoroughly to ensure that nothing is left behind.
- (g) Base team, management support team members to sit with trip team for a short 15 meeting and Evaluate short comings or if any other loose factors need attention.
- (h) Trip team can leave after this.
- (i) Base team to only leave after all have left
- (j) Base team and management team to meet media and brief them or email them.
- (k) Base team and management team to meet next day and compile a proper report for the management
- (l) If required parents of kids can be called for a meeting in a day or two to give them an idea or report about what happened and what steps are now being taken.
- (m) Submit final report to management

APPENDIX A PARENT APPROVAL FORM

- 1.NAME OF CHILD-
- 2.CLASS-
- 3.NAME OF MOTHER-
- 4.CONTACT NO OF MOTHER-
- 5.NAME OF FATHER-
- 6.CONTACT NO OF FATHER-
- 7.ADDRESS-
- 8.AGE OF THE CHILD-
- 9.BIRTH DATE-
- 10.MENTION ANY HEALTH ISSUES LIKE CHRONIC COUGH, COLD, WHEEZING, ETC
- 11.MENTION ALL ALLERGIES, EVEN IF SMALL ONES LIKE CANNOT DRINK COLD WATER ETC
- 12.MENTION ANY SLEEPING PROBLEMS LIKE BED WETTING, SLEEP WALKING ETC-
- 13.IF YOUR CHILD IS UNDER ANY MEDICATION, PLEASE MENTION, WHAT, WHEN TO BE TAKEN AND HOW TO BE TAKEN
- 14.ARE YOU AWARE OF THE DESTINATION OF THE TRIP? PLEASE MENTION WHAT YOU KNOW-
- 15.ARE YOU AWARE OF THE DAYS OF THE TRIP? PLEASE MENTION WHAT YOU KNOW
- 16.ARE YOU AWARE OF WHO ALL WILL BE ACCOMPANYING THE KIDS? PLEASE MENTION WHAT YOU KNOW-
- 17.WHAT TECH GADGETS WILL YOU BE GIVING YOUR CHILD FOR THE TRIP-
- 18.HOW MUCH MONEY WILL YOU BE GIVING YOUR CHILD FOR THE TRIP-
- 19.ANY OTHER DETAILS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE ABOUT YOUR CHILD-
- 20.PLEASE SIGN THE DISCLAIMER FORM GIVEN BELOW-

I, PARENT OF _____ HEREBY AGREE THAT I AM COMFORTABLE WITH THE VENUE, DATES AND TIME OF THE TRIP. I AM AWARE OF ALL THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TRIP AS GIVEN ABOVE AND I AGREE TO THE SAME. I ALSO TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE LOSS OF ANY TECH GADGETS OR MONEY THAT I MAY HAVE GIVEN MY CHILD, I ASSURE YOU THAT MY CHILD WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAME. I HAVE NOT WITHHELD ANY INFORMATION FROM THE SCHOOL AUTHORITIES AND I WILL CO-OPERATE WITH THE SCHOOL AUTHORITIES IN THE EVENT OF ANY EMERGENCY SITUATION. THE EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER THAT SCHOOL CAN USE TO GET IN TOUCH WITH ME IS _____

SIGNATURE OF FATHER

SIGNATURE OF MOTHER

APPENDIX B

LIST OF FIRST AID ITEMS

- 1.CROCIN STRIPS
- 2.IODEX
- 3.VICKS COUGH DROPS
- 4.VICKS BALM
- 5.HONEYTUS COUGH SYRUP
- 6.THERMOMETERS
- 7.BAND AID
- 8.BANDAGES
- 9.SCISSOR
- 10.BLOOD PRESSURE MACHINE
- 11.EXTRA SANITARY PADS
- 12.COTTON SWABS
- 13.LIQUID DETTOL
- 14.MOSQUITO SPRAY BOTTLES
- 15.ANTACIDS- LIQUID AND TABLET
- 16.CONSTIPATION TABLETS
- 17.DIAORHHEA TABLETS
- 18.HOT WATER BAGS
- 19.ICE PACK
- 20.TWEEZER

APPENDIX C

FORM FOR INFORMATION ABOUT TRIP TO GENERAL MANAGER

- 1.NAME OF SCHOOL-
- 2.NAME OF PRINCIPAL-
- 3.NAME OF BASE TEAM LEADER-
- 4.CONTACT NO OF PRINCIPAL- ALL NUMBERS-
- 5.CONTACT NO OF BASE TEAM LEADER- ALL NUMBERS
- 6.NAME OF ORGANISER IF ANY-
- 7.CONTACT DETAILS OF ORGANISER IF ANY-
- 8.CONTRACT COPY OF ARRANGEMENT WITH ORGANISER TO BE ATTACHED
- 9.DATE OF THE TRIP
- 10.TOTAL DAYS OF THE TRIP
- 11.DATE OF LEAVING
- 12.TIME OF LEAVING
- 13.DATE OF RETURN
- 14.ESTIMATED TIME OF RETURN
- 15.LOCATION FO THE TRIP
- 16.ROUTE TO BE TAKEN FOR THE TRIP
- 17.RAILWAY BOOKING DETAILS IF ANY(ALSO ATTACH XEROX OF THE SAME)
18. BUS BOOKING DETAILS IF ANY
- 19.HOW MANY BUSES IN TOTAL
- 20.FLIGHT BOOKINGS IF ANY (ALSO ATTACH XEROX OF THE SAME)
- 21.HOTEL BOOKING IF ANY(ALSO ATTACH XEROX OF THE SAME)
- 22.NAMES OF ALL SCHOOL STAFF ACCOMPANYING ON THE TRIP-
- 23.CONTACT DETAILS OF ALL SCHOOL STAFF ACCOMPANYING ON THE TRIP
- 24.NAME OF PTA PRESIDENT-
- 25.CONTACT DETAILS OF PTA PRESIDENT-
- 26.ATTACH XEROX OF FORM FILLED BY EVERY PARENT-