

The School Run

Issue 47 Winter 2011

School Escort News • Environment Department

Welcome to the Winter issue of The School Run.

We would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope you enjoy this issue of the newsletter. With this issue we are enclosing a leaflet about First Aid procedures and a copy of the updated Abbreviation List to explain the codes that appear on your route schedule.



Back Row l - r Sally Kidd, Laura Ladd, Jenny Payne, Jenny Wood, Clare Scollick, Bekky Mitchell, Shelby Carr, Chrissie Talbot
Front Row l - r Nick Gammer, Pete Burton, Rob Walker, Ben Brooks-Martin, Lindsey Bloxham, Aynsley Clinton, Alex Gray de Walden

Contact Numbers

School Escort Manager
Laura Ladd
01962 845438

School Escort Area
Co-ordinator (North)
Ben Brooks-Martin
01962 845796

School Escort Area
Co-ordinator (South)
Jenny Wood
01962 846217

School Escort Area
Co-ordinator (West)
Shelby Carr
01962 845210

School Escort Training
Co-ordinator
Lindsey Bloxham
01962 847169

Area Supervisor (South)
Clare Scollick
Mobile - 07718 146885

Area Supervisor (West)
Aynsley Clinton
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Area Supervisor (North)
Sally Kidd
Mobile - 07515 077057

Next Phase of the Retendering Programme

Hasn't the year flown by? You may remember that this time last year we told you that the Council had to find significant savings, and that the school transport contracts were all going to be reviewed and retendered over a 2 year programme. Well, we tendered half of the contracts just after Christmas 2010, and they all started after the Easter break. We are now gearing ourselves up to retender the final batch of contracts which will go out to tender between Christmas and mid-March 2012. It is our intention to tender the routes as they are now, i.e. including you as the current school escort. However, dependant on the tenders that we receive it may, in a small number of instances, mean that we will need to swap some of you around to make the runs more efficient. If so we will make sure you (and the parents) know well in advance of the start dates of the new contracts (16th April 2012).

We are tendering about 300 contracts all across Hampshire and if you want to know whether your route is to be retendered you can ring your Assistant Transport Officer and they will be able to let you know.

We will be writing to the parents of pupils whose routes we know are involved in the retenders to advise them on the potential changes, and we will be giving them at least two weeks notice of any change of contractor. We would ask that you direct any questions or concerns that you might have to the school transport team rather than to the parents of the children on your run. We would remind you of your position as an employee of the County Council and that you should respect confidentiality at all times. We understand that this is a difficult time for all involved in this potential for change, but we saw last year that it didn't take very long for things to settle down once the changes were in place. If you have any particular concerns or things that you think we should be made aware of, please contact us in the usual way.



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Staff Changes

We welcome Jenny Wood who joined the team in October. Jenny will be taking up the role of School Escort Coordinator for South Hampshire.



We also congratulate Jo Cavanagh who has a new position as Assistant Transport Officer for the Education Inclusion Service which is still based in the SEN team. Jo's position of Assistant Transport Officer for South Hampshire will be covered on a temporary basis until July 2012, details of the new team member will follow in the next issue.



Alex Gray de Walden also joins the team, Alex is covering the administrator role at the moment, and has been a welcome addition to the SEN team.



25 Year Service Awards

Congratulations to six school escorts who have achieved their award for 25 years of service with Hampshire County Council.



Lynda Blachford – Ashley Resourced Provision Class
Mary Curtis – Morelands Primary School
Sandra Flowerday – Wolverdene School

Mary King – Rachel Madocks School
Margaret Williams – Vigo Infant School
Diana Wittridge – Osborne School

Congratulations to you all!

Reporting Sickness Absence

Just a reminder that if you are feeling unwell but still carry out your school run in the morning, please be aware that you must also then be prepared to do the afternoon journey as well. There have been instances recently when we have been unable to find a relief escort to cover the afternoon part of the journey, which means parents are then asked to pick their children up which they are not always able to do at such short notice. So remember, it is always better to ring in sick for the whole day if you are unwell.



Are you Visible?

A reminder to you all that wearing your High Vis vest is a compulsory requirement, and it is even more important at this time of year when the mornings and afternoons are getting darker as we approach Christmas. If you need a new jacket, please call the office and we will be happy to send you a new one.



Winter Weather Advice

It looks like we are set for another cold winter, so we wanted to give you some advice on what to do in these conditions. We always advise that school escorts and operators listen to the local radio or check online at www.hants.gov.uk/education/schoolclosures for any school closures to check if your school has been affected. If your school is open, you can continue with your route providing that the driver/operator feel that the roads are safe enough to travel on. If your operator feels that the roads are unsafe to travel on, we would ask that you let the office know that your route is not going ahead. Due to the volume of transport that we organise, we are not always able to contact every parent to let them know, so we would ask that if you do have any contact numbers for parents, it would be helpful if your operator/driver could contact them to let them know.



Training Courses

Lindsey would like to remind school escorts that if you have confirmed a place on a training course then please make every effort to attend. We understand that, on occasion, cancelling a course is unavoidable, but if you know you cannot attend a course please give us as much notice as possible so that we have time to give that place to another escort. Lindsey has to confirm attendance numbers to the training venue one week before the course and if an escort cancels we still have to pay for that place. This costs £90 per escort!

Moving and Handling Training and Risk Assessments

If you have been invited on a Moving and Handling course recently you may have noticed a paragraph in the letter asking you to bring your most recent risk assessment form. You should be given one to sign by your Area Supervisor after you've had a risk assessment. Please can all escorts remember to bring their form with them to the training, as this proves to be very useful during the course if you have to refer to an individual moving and handling situation. Please find below a blank example of a typical risk assessment. Many thanks.

Lindsey

SCHOOL ESCORT MANUAL HANDLING RISK ASSESSMENT							
Date of Risk Assessment:			Controlled use by:		School:	Event Name:	
						Address:	
Description:							
Pupil's Name	Pupil's Age	Pupil's size (H, M or L)	Height	Risk Category	Description of Hazard	Existing controls	Actions

Signed: _____ (School Escort)

Signed: _____ (Area Supervisor)

Used for: Training Plenary Controls Database

If you have any stories you wish to share then please contact Bekky on 01962 845970 or Shelby on 01962 845210

A Pair of Super Slimmers!

We'll be seeing considerably less of two of our school escorts from now on – as they've both lost over 5 stone each!

Trevor Prewer of Totton has lost just over 5 stone and will soon be running his own slimming group in his spare time!

Susan Clark of New Milton has lost 6 stone! She joined a local slimming group and is now a 'target member' because she has achieved her target weight. She also joined a gym and does a pump class. Her eldest daughter is graduating next year and she wanted to look good for the ceremony.

Well done both of you – what an amazing effort. We'll have to organise new ID badges and smaller hi-vis jackets for you!



Recipe Corner

Our super-slimmer Trevor Prewer has provided us with an excellent low-calorie recipe. It serves 4 and only works out to about 67 calories a portion - so we can save our extra calories for Sherry trifle and chocolates!

Winter Vegetable Stir-fry

Ingredients:

- 2 red onions – finely sliced
- 2 garlic cloves – crushed
- 3 carrots – grated
- 1 green pepper – de-seeded and sliced
- 100g bean sprouts
- 2 chicory heads – shredded
- 1 tspn Soy Sauce
- 2 tspns Chilli Sauce

Method:

1. Dry-fry the red onions in a wok or large frying pan with the crushed garlic cloves.
2. Add the grated carrots, green pepper, beansprouts and chicory
3. Add the Soy Sauce and Chilli sauce, toss well until hot and serve.

TOP TIP!

Here's a great Top Tip from Alison Hill in Andover who does a run to Icknield Special School.

The child she takes is visually-impaired and Alison said that she takes a short piece of rope or string and ties any brightly coloured, shiny or noisy objects she can find onto it. She said he loves playing with it and can feel the various shapes and sizes of the objects as well as seeing the brightly coloured ones. In the past she has used bells or milk bottle tops but you could use large buttons or pasta shapes etc.

This is a great cheap toy idea which may be useful if you have any visually-impaired children onboard your transport – just always be careful to supervise any play.

Spina Bifida

This editions' Special Needs condition is Spina Bifida.

Spina bifida is caused by a defect in the neural tube. The neural tube develops very early in pregnancy and is formed to make the central nervous system, linking the brain to the spinal cord. Spina bifida occurs when the tube is split and one or more vertebrae (small bones of the back) fail to form properly. This leaves a gap.

There are three main types of spina bifida:-

Spina bifida occulta is a very mild condition and is usually symptomless, although there may be continence problems and difficulties with mobility. The only sign is a dimple or hair at the site of the defect on the skin of the back.

In spina bifida cystica, a sac or cyst is visible on the back which is covered by a thin layer of skin. There are two forms **Meningocele** and **Myelomeningocele**. **Meningocele** is the least common form of spina bifida and there is little or no malfunction. The sac contains tissues which cover the spinal cord and the nerves within are not normally badly damaged. **Myelomeningocele** is the most common and most severe form. It affects the sac of nerves and part of the spinal cord as well as tissue and fluid which surrounds the brain. Some degree of paralysis and loss of sensation occur below the site of the defect and the extent of the disability is dependent upon the extent of nerve damage.

Cranium bifida is a failure of development of the bones of the skull. The neural tube fails to completely close during foetal development and causes a groove down the middle or back side of the skull or between the forehead and the nose. This can cause sac like protrusions from the brain. The severity of cranium bifida varies, depending on its location.

Hydrocephalus is caused by an imbalance between the production and absorption of the fluid which surrounds the brain (cerebrospinal). About 80% of people with spina bifida also have hydrocephalus.

Spina bifida has some genetic characteristics. For an affected person, the risk of them having an affected child is 1 in 25. There is also a 1 in 25 chance of a subsequent affected pregnancy.

A raised alpha-foeto protein blood test at 16 weeks can indicate the presence of a neural tube defect as can an amniocentesis and detailed scan at 16 – 18 weeks. However it is not always 100% accurate. It is now known that taking a folic acid supplement prior to conception and for the first three months of pregnancy reduces the risk for all women.

Support

ASBAH (The Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus)

Helpline: 0845 450 7755

Tel: 01733 555988

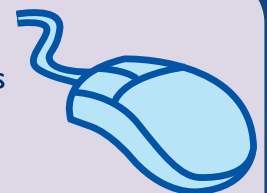
Email: helpline@asbah.org

<http://www.asbah.org>

Contact a Family (2011). Retrieved on November 07, 2011 from www.cafamily.org.uk/medicalinformation/conditions

Newsletter

Would you like to receive the Newsletter by email? Each edition of the 'School Run' has been on the Hampshire County Council website since 2008 and can be found at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/traveltoschool/sch-transport/sen-main/escorts.htm> but with more and more escorts 'getting online' we wanted to know whether you would like us to individually email it to you. This would not only save a lot of paper and waste but will also be a lot more cost effective. If you would like an electronic version please email Lindsey at lindsey.bloxham@hants.gov.uk and the next edition will be sent to you.



Please do not worry we will continue to send a paper version to those who still prefer it this way.

If you have any stories you wish to share then please contact
Bekky on 01962 845970 or Shelby on 01962 845210



Terms and Conditions of Redeployment

When a school run ends we will advise the school escort that they are in a redeployment position – so what does this mean for the escort?

- You will be given a redeployment period (12 weeks in most cases) during which we make it our priority to find you another school run to be redeployed onto.
- During this redeployment period you will continue to be paid your full contracted salary.
- During this period you will be expected to work as a relief school escort, covering absences as & when necessary.
- You must therefore make yourself available for work each day during the redeployment period. If you agree to any other work, paid or voluntary which prevents you from doing relief work for us you will be in breach of the terms and conditions of the redundancy procedure and this may affect redundancy payment.
- If you know you will be unavailable for work (doctors appointments etc) or if you are sick you must contact your area co-ordinator and make them aware of this, just as you would if you were still working on your school run.
- Towards the end of your redeployment period if we have not found you an alternative route you will receive a letter from HR explaining the terms of your redundancy.
- If we fail to find you another route in the redeployment period you will be made redundant. Please talk to us if you would still like to be considered for school escort work as it may be possible for you to start work for us again as a casual school escort.

We understand that redeployment can be very stressful for an individual, please be assured that we are doing everything we can to find an alternative route for you during this time.

CRB Disclosure of Information

We would like to remind you that it is your responsibility to advise us of any criminal convictions which may affect your CRB status. These include spent and unspent (current) convictions or cautions, reprimands or warnings from any offence.

In order to reinforce this responsibility over the coming months you will be asked to sign a CRB declaration slip by your Area Supervisor confirming that you will notify us of anything which may affect your CRB. The supervisors will discuss the form in more detail with you during your next Risk Assessment.

Address Changes – Important Note

Please remember you can only pick up and drop off a child from the address that appears on the route schedule. If the child has moved house or you are asked to pick them up or drop them off from somewhere else please let us know as we may not be aware of the change.



School Escort Coffee Mornings

Here is a reminder of the remaining School Escort Coffee Mornings.

Please note that the date for the Fareham Coffee Morning at Lysses House Hotel has changed.

Please Note: Attendance at the coffee mornings is voluntary. We will not be providing transport to the venues and extra pay cannot be claimed for attendance.

26th January 2012 – Lysses House Hotel, Fareham
2nd February – The Lights, Andover
28th February – Red Lion Hotel, Basingstoke
14th March – The Point, Eastleigh
19th April – Milton Barns, New Milton
16th May – Express by Holiday Inn, Adanac Park, Redbridge
12th June - Lysses House Hotel, Fareham
5th July – Holiday Inn, Farnborough

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