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Thursday 13th February 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

It has come to our attention that there are a few concerns amongst some Year 1 & 2 parents, regarding our visit to **The Tower of London** - which will be taking place on **Wednesday 11th March 2020**. Although as a staff we are highly trained, confident and excited when organising school visits, we recognise this is the first time most KS1 pupils have travelled by public transport, so we do acknowledge concerns parents may have.

As a result, we would like to provide you with some clarity to make you aware of the robust safety arrangements that take place when organising any school trip. At Coopersale, we have been safely using the tube to travel into London for many years now, more so since 2018 onwards – with the introduction of our Creative Curriculum. We have a very structured & organised method of doing this to ensure that our children have the most positive & enjoyable experience.

Transport for London (TfL) are fully aware of our upcoming visit, and they have always been fantastic in assisting us when boarding and disembarking along the platform. We will be travelling during off-peak times from Epping and every child will have a seat as it is the first station on the central line. The guards at the station will always radio to the driver to make them aware there are children boarding the train and they will escort us to the carriages. We will then be met upon exiting the train by a member of the TfL team who will ensure that we exit the train safely and can proceed through the safety barriers. Additionally, we always plan the simplest, safest route to travel.

Our trained EVC's, Educational Visit Coordinators (Mr. Bateman and Mrs. Atwal) decide on a minimum adult/child ratio for both the Tower of London and TfL, and have exceeded these. Therefore, the children will be in smaller groups than recommended to ensure safety comes first. This will give them the opportunity to learn great life skills, enabling them to feel confident in the future when using public transport.

For this visit, high-visibility jackets will be worn by both adults & pupils. This is to assist our children to easily see their adult leads and group members. Our adults on visits do not rely on high-vis, instead we focus purely on appropriate group sizes, or else visits just do not take place. These high-vis jackets are worn on visits where the visit leader and EVC's deem necessary. The Tower of London is an enclosed environment where the children will have access to a private lunch room and a private workshop area. All classes will stay together during the visit and will travel as a Key Stage group. Both teachers leading the visit have had experience of leading school trips, using public transport with this age group and with even younger children!

Miss Edwards will be in close contact with the school on the day, allowing us to update you on the journey and how much fun the children are having! Please feel free to come and speak to your class teacher or Miss Edwards (KS1 Phase Lead) if you still have any queries. *Remember, it is best to speak directly to the school so that we can help support any concerns that you may have, rather than escalating your uneasiness with other parents.* Although you would be able to visit yourself, this is about your children experiencing life skills and making memories with their classmates. The workshop they take part in are not available to the public and the entry cost has been heavily discounted for our school.

As a staff we have discussed at length the pros and cons of tube travel. We feel that having the tube and London on our doorstep is too great an opportunity to neglect and that your children will benefit from the expansion of their cultural capital. We are relentless in ensuring health & safety is at the crux of all our educational visits but at the same time we ensure learning is also at the heart. Please do come and speak to us if you have any further queries.

Yours faithfully,
Miss C. Edwards and Miss A. Hill (Class Teachers)