

Schools & Student Groups **Safety Procedures in Relation to Group Visits**

Mersey Ferries will provide one free adult ticket to any group organising a trip at Mersey Ferries in order to conduct their own risk assessment. The following guidance is provided to assist in this respect. Mersey Ferries encourages all groups to provide appropriate supervision by allowing one teacher or assistant to travel free with every 6 students under 16 travelling provided the trip is pre-booked by ringing the Mersey Ferries Sales Office on 0151 330 1444.

Task: Ticket Collection

Procedure

On arrival at the terminal ticket office the group should wait away from the flow of other passengers whilst the group leader obtains tickets for the group from the ticket counter. Booking in advance on 0151 330 1444 will not only provide a cost saving but will also speed up this process. The group should allow appropriate time to obtain the tickets and walk to the ferry boarding point as the ferry will leave precisely on time. The latest information in relation to the Liverpool, Pier Head boarding point can be found on www.merseyferries.co.uk or by ringing the Mersey Ferries Sales Office.

Task: Movement Between Ticket Collection Point and Waiting Area

Procedure

Whilst walking to the ferry or the ticket office special attention should be paid to the busy traffic and buses operating around the Mersey Ferries terminals. The group should be safely controlled at all times with the appropriate supervision ratios.

Task: Arrival At the waiting area.

Procedure

On arrival at the waiting area on the landing stage the group leader should advise the Mersey Ferries stage staff of their group, that they are the person in charge of the group, and wait in the appropriate area. This area will be identified by the stage staff. The group should be supervised at all times.

Task: Boarding the Ferry

Procedure

The Mersey Ferries stage staff will advise the group leader when to board their group. Care should be taken whilst boarding very small children. Whilst boarding the group leader should identify themselves to one of the Mersey Ferries' crew that they are the person responsible for the group. This assists Mersey Ferries crew in advising the appropriate person should any problem occur.

Task: When Boarded

Procedure

After boarding the group leader should ensure the group are seated as the vessel departs and that the group are quiet in order to listen to the vessel's short safety announcement played through the speakers around the vessel as the cruise commences.

Task: While the ferry is moving

Procedure

Whilst the vessel is in motion:-

- a. The group should avoid standing on or using staircases
- b. The group should NEVER stand or sit on the handrails
- c. The group's supervisors should pay attention to the gaps between the handrails particularly in relation to small children.
- d. Keep small children particularly away from the ropes and the bollards on the vessel (the rope tying on points) where there are holes in the side of the vessel for the ropes to pass through.
- e. Toilets are situated at the stern (back of the vessel) on the main deck (ground floor)

In the unlikely event of an emergency the group must obey the instructions of the crew and captain who will follow the appropriate safety procedures.

Task: Preparation for getting off the Ferry

Procedure

As the ferry arrives at the terminal where the group wishes to disembark, the group leader should gather their group together and ensure that all know they are to get off. A member of the crew can advise which gangway point is going to be used to disembark the passengers.

Task: Getting off the ferry

Procedure

As the vessel ties up and the gangway is lowered the group should all be kept well away from the gangway area marked on the deck. It is important to control younger children to prevent them running forwards as the gangway is lowered.

Task: Back on the Landing Stage

Procedure

Immediately after disembarking the ferry the group leader should assemble the group at the Group Meeting Point, designated with a yellow circle on the stage, in order to count the students / children off and ensure everyone is present before the ferry departs. The group leader must indicate to the ferry staff that all members of the group are present.

Task: Continuing with your journey.

Procedure

Tickets are checked at the top of the terminal bridges at Seacombe and

Woodside. If the group can wait until other passengers have had their ticket checked on departure the bridges at Seacombe and Woodside this speeds up the ticket checking process.