



ORGANISING A VISIT TO A PRIMARY SCHOOL SOME GUIDELINES FOR AAA MEMBERS

At your local level establish initial contact with the school using one or more of the following ways.

- Phone the school direct. [It is a good strategy to phone the school and ask for the name of the person who handles incursions, new materials/resources and also ask when would be the best time to speak with them.] Once you have established who the best person is to contact, call or email them with the details.
- Send the school a flyer with details of an alpaca visit you can arrange, together with some support materials for use in classrooms both before and after the visit.
- Email the school with the information.

Once contact with the school has been made and interest is indicated, provide the person with an overview of what you as a breeder are prepared to do.

Promote the suggested activities package... teachers like to have ideas on how they can develop the topic further (especially if it is a topic which they know little about) and it enables them to direct the students in activities that will meet the desired educational outcomes which they are responsible for reporting on. (It is recommended that the activities package be presented in an inexpensive vinyl display book, readily available from supermarkets and newsagents).

Discuss safety issues, possible number of students for each session (if you are doing more than one session), times, length of visit and age of students.

Once the booking is made, confirm with the teacher exactly what it is you will cover in your presentation. Give the teacher a copy of your detailed overview. It will help them direct student questioning for further learning. Confirm also:

- The number of students attending each session.
- Where the alpacas will be located for the talk (biosecurity measures will need to be taken into account).
- All safety measures that are to be adhered to.
- The learning activity support materials you will provide.
- Where you will report on arrival at the school.
- Whether they require a copy of your insurance policy.

Some additional points for consideration

- Insurance. Some schools will ask you for a copy of your cover.
- Police Clearance/Working with Children Check. Some states require all people working in schools (this includes guest speakers) to have a Police Clearance or a Working with Children Check. There are no national standards regarding police checks and clearances however be aware that each State and Territory has its own procedure. It is necessary to fulfil the requirements in each State or Territory in which you are working so check the following web site for further details.
<http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/resources/police/policechecks.html>



- Visitor's form. Some schools will ask you to fill out one of these. It is a record of all visitors who have been in their school.
- Visitor's badge. Some schools will ask you to wear one during your visit. It is so all personnel in the school know that you are there on official duties.
- Visitor's register. Most schools will ask you to sign this both on arriving at the school and on your departure. Its location will normally be at the main administration office.
- If the school is not too far away, visit the school personally before the visit.
- Phone the school the day before to confirm arrangements.
- Promote the visit. Ask the school contact person if they would like the local paper to record the visit but remember to follow school protocols on who and what can be photographed and published.

If you are going to the school just as a guest speaker without animals, arm yourself with as many different visual aids as you can. Consider taking a stuffed alpaca; as many posters, pictures, magazines as you can; the AAA DVD "Introduction to Alpacas"; fleeces; fleece samples; spinning wheel; craft samples; show awards; product; and even consider donating a fleece for students to use later.

NB: It is advisable not to take anything valuable because students like to touch as it is one of the most powerful ways to learn.

Some suggested safety procedures

- Make sure you have insurance cover... the school will ask for it.
- Make sure you have discussed the safety measures with the teacher prior to the day e.g. stand well back from pens, mark the line on the ground where they must stop, especially with younger children.
- Make sure you take an animal that enjoys being handled, is used to being in a confined space, doesn't react to lots of noises and especially enjoys being looked at.
- Make sure you clean up at the end of the visit. (Biosecurity measure)
- Make sure that if you allow the students to touch the alpaca, that you have very clearly established with the teacher the guidelines for this to happen.

Children are naturally inquisitive so be prepared for lots of questions to be asked. For a number of them it will be the first time they have been introduced to this wonderful species, so have patience and above all enjoy the experience!

Other visits could be to Girl Guide centres, Cub or Scout centres, After School Care or Aged Care facilities.

Some ideas you can promote in the school with the teachers are: set up an alpaca display in the classroom, provide an "I love alpacas" sticker for each student, set up competitions for colouring in, alpaca stories, cartoons, rebuses, posters, jigsaws, board games, alpaca logos.