



PLANNING A TRIP TO THE SEASHORE CHECK LIST

Action:	Complete:
1. Access / Facilities	
2. Risk Assessment	
3. First Aid / Emergency	
4. Tide Tables / Changing Tides / Weather forecast	
5. Volunteers	
6. Plan the Day of Activities	
7. Briefing / Designated Meeting Point	
8. Clothing (raincoat/ hat/ warm coat/ waterproof shoes/ wellies)	
<p>9. Equipment</p> <p>For the group leader / students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Simple identification keys to life on the seashore ○ A bucket (one per group) ○ Small hand held dip nets ○ Small Ziploc food bags (for seaweed / shells) ○ Magnifying pots (one per group) ○ Clipboard, Notebook and Pencil (and a plastic polypocket – in case it rains) ○ Hula Hoops (in lieu of quadrants for counting) <p>For the teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Digital Camera (with macro capabilities for close up pictures of small creatures) ○ Tape measure ○ Whistle (attracts attention and to gather pupils) ○ Mobile phone (make sure to check signal) ○ Bags for litter ○ Baby wipes and hand sanitiser 	
10. Games and Activities (list of games / activities)	
11. Safety on the Seashore Code	
12. Conservation Code on the Sea Shore	



Before the field trip to the seashore - check the following:

1. Access / Facilities:

Select a safe seashore where you can safely manage a fieldtrip.
ALWAYS visit the shore BEFORE taking the class.

- Ensure there is good mobile phone coverage in the case of an emergency, easy access to the seashore (e.g. road) and parking.
- Identify where the facilities are on site – toilets, shelter, somewhere to eat lunch, wash hands etc. If freshwater is not available, take a large bottle for washing hands etc.
- Check that the trip is within the time limitations of the school day. It is also important that the coach carrying students can park as close to the beach as possible, in case of rain.

2. Risk Assessment:

Identify potential safety and access hazards and plan how these are to be managed safely. Always look out and observe warning signs. Be aware of cliffs, currents, sharp and slippery rocks, hazardous litter, weather, tides, waves.

3. First Aid / Emergency:

Complete a First Aid / Emergency plan prior to going to the seashore.

The following are the “must haves” items and equipment (but not limited to):

- Details of the location, map and evacuation route – know where the nearest local hospital is.
- First aid kit and someone who knows how to use it (for minor emergencies such as twisted ankles, grazes etc).
- A mobile phone - that has phone coverage.
- Phone numbers (all emergency services / coastguards / local hospital, local doctor, local Garda/ students’ parents and schools).

4. Tides / Changing Tides / Weather forecast:

a) Know your tides and Weather forecast

Remember to look up the **tide tables**. One VITAL piece of information prior to going to the seashore is a precise knowledge of the times of **both high and low tides**. Times of high and low tides change each day, moving forward by 45 minutes approximately every 24 hours. For example, if low tide occurs on a Thursday at 8.04 am, on Friday the Low tide will be at approximately 8.50am.

Tide tables can be purchased from angling and yachting shops or download from <http://www.sailing.ie>, the racing section.

Times for high and low water levels can often be found in the local newspapers or on the internet.

Check the **weather forecast** for the day you plan to go to the seashore. Children can often cope with a little bit of rain (if they have the correct clothing). However watch out for the windy and / or sunny days. Make sure the children bring suitable clothing (e.g. layers for the changeable weather and **suitable footwear**).



b) Be aware of incoming changing tides!

When you are at the seashore, the time can pass very quickly. Therefore, always remember to keep an eye on the time and the changing tide. Set out markers (e.g. large rocks) as a reference of the tide coming in, to ensure students don't get stranded by water surges blocking them off from access to the upper shore.

The best time to go to the seashore is one to two hours as the tide is going out and one hour of the incoming tide. This will allow students to start on the upper zone of the seashore and work down the seashore while the tide is going out.

Working with the tide going out and then back provides a wider window of time for exploration. If you are limited with time and the tide is coming in, it is suggested that exploration starts from the lower shoreline back up to the upper shoreline.

5. Volunteers:

Organise and prepare volunteers well in advance of the field trip.

Make sure that there is an appropriate student: adult ratio.

Ensure that volunteers know the emergency plan and activities for the day.

Ensure the volunteers also have suitable clothing.

On the Day at the Seashore:

6. Plan the Day of Activities:

Have a plan of what is to be done at the beach, giving enough time for briefing the students and volunteers and suitable time for exploration, activities, exercises and games.

- Let the children learn how to simply “*explore*” before introducing organised activities.
- Prepare interesting stories about the creatures that students are likely to find on the beach prior to the fieldtrip.
- Most importantly – have fun – let the seashore be the STAR
- Don't forget snacks and a picnic lunch.

7. Briefing / Designated Meeting Point:

Provide a briefing to the volunteers and students explaining:

- The activities and timetable set for the day.
- Confirm the designated meeting point and a signal (such as a whistle) for everyone to return to the designated point.
- Ensure everyone is aware of each other's safety while on the beach, pairing people up in a buddy system or in small teams may help.
- Ensure everyone is aware of the Conservation Code.

8. Clothing:



Ensure all of the students are wearing appropriate clothing before heading for the seashore. The clothes and shoes must be strong, comfortable and safe. As the weather is unpredictable prepare for rain, wind and sunshine.

The following clothing items are essential:

- Wellies or waterproof boots (hiking) are best. It is very important that the footwear worn on the beach have a gripped surface on the bottom to reduce slipping. The footwear must also be strong to prevent potential cuts from jagged rocks or broken glass. Runners may be suitable if the student's don't mind getting wet feet. However ensure that the students have a second pair of dry shoes and socks – for cold feet.
- Light wind and waterproof coat.
- Suntan lotion (ensure students bring their own or the use of suntan lotion is approved by parents).
- A towel.
- Change of clothing – socks, shoes, trousers (just in case they get wet standing in a rock pool).

9. Equipment:

Try not to take too much equipment and materials to the seashore, as children need to have the freedom to explore and shift seaweed and rocks with their hands to find animals and plants rather than carry things. The volunteers should be encouraged to carry the gear for the children.

Depending on the exercises planned for the seashore - only hand out equipment and materials as it is required.

The following items are the **most essential** for exploration exercises. Most of the items can be put into a pocket until needed:

- **Simple identification keys:** There are a number of simple identification keys to seaweeds and species available from bookstores and websites. See Explorers Education Teachers Resources for more information on animals and habitats on the seashore that can be used at the beach.
- **A bucket (per group):** A white container or bucket is best to put things in to see, show and tell – remember to return living species back into the rock pools etc.
- **Small hand held dip nets:** Hand held dip nets are useful for capturing the quick fish. Handheld nets used for aquariums and fishbowls are best and are often available from garden / pet shops.

Other items that are **useful** include:

- **Small Ziploc food bags** – use to collect samples of different seaweeds.
- **Magnifying pots** – for those small tiny creatures that need to be magnified in order to be seen them properly.
- **Digital Camera:** A camera with macro capabilities is useful for capturing images of species and plants on the seashore to discuss in more detail back in class.
- **Clipboard, Notebook and Pencil (and a plastic insert – in case it rains)** – for drawing and recording activities
- **Hula Hoops** – in lieu of precise scientific quadrates for counting.



10. Games and Activities:

Prepare and take equipment for a number of team activities and games on the seashore to help reinforce learning opportunities about the seashore.

Suggested activities and games that are available on www.explorers.ie may include:

- Build the tallest possible sand castles – use methods to measure the height, slope etc of the sand castle.
- Treasure Hunt – use small egg cartons taped up with treasure inside (e.g. chocolate coins-enough for the class). Split the class into teams to set out treasure hunts on the beach for the treasure boxes. Clues must be given using items on the seashore etc.
- Kite making – make kites to fly on the beach – have A4 sheets of coloured paper, markers, tape, string, use wooden sticks from the seashore to hold string
- Boat making – create a raft from items on the seashore. string, tape, scissors (note children to use items they find on the beach. The boats may be floating structures or sandcastles etc)

Also see the following lesson plans:

- Seashore treasure hunt & making a flotsam and jetsam sea monster
- Make a seaweed maze
- Lighthouse and Rocky shore Game
- Crab Football Game
- Ocean literacy Game
- Organising a Beach Clean / biodegradation quiz

11. Safety on the Seashore:

In the classroom prior to the seashore safari, complete the Seashore Safety lesson plan to ensure students are aware of:

- Safe and suitable clothing for the seashore.
- Warning Signs.
- Cliffs (rocks falling).
- Walking on a muddy shore.
- Take it slow – avoid running and jumping over wet slippery rocks.
- Tread carefully over seaweed – as it often covers uneven surfaces, hidden rock pools and holes.
- Watch out for waves – especially near rocks – keep away from the edge of rocks that drop into deep parts of the ocean.
- Watch out for hazardous waste and litter – tell an adult, your teacher or supervisor.
- Remember to keep an eye on the tide!



On the seashore, remind students of the importance of safety on the seashore

11. Use the Conservation Code on the Sea Shore:

In the classroom prior to the seashore safari, complete the Conservation Code lesson plan to ensure students are aware of:

- Watching out for wildlife in their natural habitats.
 - If taking a close look of the different species (such as the animals that live in the water) pick up the creatures carefully and put in a bucket with the seawater for a short time.
 - Return animals back to the place where you found them – remember what zones species belong to, as they may not survive in other areas of the beach.
- Try not to damage animals' homes – return the rocks to the position they were found so animals do not dry out. Do not kick or force animals that are fixed to surfaces of rocks.
- Collect seaweed not creatures – however only take samples of loose seaweeds.
 - Do not destroy seaweed areas by pulling it all off the rocks.
- Don't disturb birds feeding and stay away from nesting birds
- Don't Litter – always put your rubbish in a bin or take it home with you.
- **Organise a beach clean as part of the day's activities.** Have a rubbish bag to put in the bin at the seashore or take to dispose of back at the school. Try to encourage a new habit of always picking up one piece of litter that has been left on the shore before the students leave the seashore.
- **Take only memories or photographs from the seashore, leave only footprints.**