

Lead Guide Checklist for School Tours

Step 1: Get in touch with the tour contact promptly after receiving the tour confirmation in StaffSavvy.

(In StaffSavvy, see Shifts/My Shifts, then “View Details” to find tour contact information and any notes from the Tour Office.)

Confirm the contact person is attending the tour. (Often the contact person serves only as the coordinator and does not accompany the actual tour so important tour information may not be communicated.) Confirm the date, time, and number of students on tour. Confirm their lunch plans (with limited availability, they need to book lunch space at the time they book the tour).

If the tour is a general topic tour, ask these questions or confirm the following information (included in the [form letter](#) for tour contacts):

- Confirm that _____ students from _____ grade(s) are attending the tour.
- Confirm any specific artists, artworks, or cultures you would like included on the tour. We will do our best to accommodate your requests, depending on what is on view and accessible.
- Are there special accommodations required for any of the students attending?
- Who is our contact on the tour day? (Please provide a cell number, if possible.)
- Will you be staying for self-guided tours? Are multiple groups at different tour times coming on one bus?
- Are you planning to have lunch at Mia? (With limited availability, we require lunch room reservations at the time of booking the tour, and we are unfortunately unable to accommodate last-minute requests. Please plan accordingly.)

If the tour is an Art Adventure tour, ask these questions:

- Confirm that _____ students from _____ grade(s) are attending the tour.
- Did the Picture Person visit your classroom, so the students know the artworks?
- Are there special accommodations required for any of the students attending?
- Who is our contact on the tour day? (Please provide a cell number, if possible.)
- Will you be staying for self-guided tours? Are multiple groups at different tour times coming on one bus?
- Are you planning to have lunch at Mia? (With limited availability, we require lunch room reservations at the time of booking the tour, and we are unfortunately unable to accommodate last-minute requests. Please plan accordingly.)

For all school tours, request that the contact follows these guidelines when coming to the museum:

1. Have children wear name tags with large legible first names so we can best engage them.
2. Divide students into groups (maximum of 15 students per group) before arriving at the museum, with at least one adult chaperone assigned to each group. Encourage chaperones to help with group organization.

3. If weather permits, please leave the coats on the bus.
4. Arrive at the Third Avenue entrance, and have students wait on the bus while one contact from the school checks in with the school tour coordinator inside the Third Avenue doors. If the tour group is a homeschool group, emphasize with the tour contact that individual parents arriving with students should each check in with the tour greeter in the Third Avenue entrance.
5. Refer to the Mia Tour Guidelines, included in your tour confirmation, and let me know of any questions you have regarding the additional guidelines. We also have Social Narratives available to help prepare for your visit ([link here](#)) and a series of multilingual videos ([link here](#)).

Step 2: Call or email all guides assigned to the tour at least ten days to two weeks before the tour.

(Note: If you use e-mail, ask the guide/s to confirm your message to ensure the information is received.)

- Share pertinent tour information, including any artworks that the contact wished to include on the tour.
- Coordinate and assign tour routes. Art Adventures routes are posted on the guide website, [link here](#). Routes for topic tours are assigned by gallery floor and location; for example, 2 West or 3 East. Check the Daily List or Biweekly schedule for other tours at the same time that might affect the routes.
- After assigning routes for topic tours, ask guides to share their artwork lists in the order they will present (artist or culture, title, and gallery). Check for any conflicts.
- Arrange to meet in Target Atrium 10 to 15 minutes before your tour to discuss last-minute arrangements.

Step 3: On the day of your tour:

- Arrive in the Target Atrium 15 minutes before your tour.
- Introduce and assign guides to tour groups.
- Greet your tour group.
- Distribute evaluation forms when requested by Learning staff.
- If school arrives late, establish the tour end-time and inform all guides.

After the tour is over, and if there is time, it is best practice to check in with other guides and debrief.

Various tour issues and suggestions/procedures for handling those issues:

Issue: Often the contact person serves only as the coordinator and does not accompany the actual tour so important tour information may not be communicated.

Suggestion: Ensure that all tour information is communicated to the person serving as the supervisory chaperone (often a teacher) on the tour. You may ask for a name and telephone number from the contact in order to speak directly with the chaperone/teacher.

Issue: The teacher/tour contact has not responded to your email or voicemail.

Procedure: If you are unable to connect with the school tour contact, go ahead and contact the assigned guides with the information you have on the tour confirmation and give them their assigned tour routes.

Issue: The tour contact lets you know that the number of students listed on your tour confirmation is dramatically different from the number they are actually bringing.

Procedure: If an increase in the group size changes the guide requirements (for example, if the tour confirmation anticipated 30 students, but the school contact now says they will arrive with 60 students), notify Paula Warn in the Tour Office at 612/870-3140 so she can make the necessary adjustments.

If the group size diminishes, so each guide would have 10 or fewer students, the lead should reach out to the other guides to see if one person would like to drop from the tour or if all guides want to give the tour. Let Paula Warn know of the change and decision of the guides.

Issue: One of your fellow guides does not arrive for the scheduled tour.

Procedure: Call Paula at 612/ 870-3140 to let her know the situation. Depending on the number of students and chaperones, groups may be reconfigured to be larger or an educator may sub for the missing guide if available.

Issue: A child may require the museum to provide special services such as a wheelchair, interpreter, assisted listening device, etc.

Suggestion: Wheelchairs are available at both the 3rd Avenue lobby and Target Atrium. Assisted listening devices are available with advance notice. If the child requires an interpreter from the museum, call Paula. Scheduling an interpreter often requires a four-week notice.

Issue: The group is ten or more minutes late.

Procedure: Notify Paula Warn to contact the school. When/if the school arrives, confer and confirm with the school and all guides to determine your tour plan (e.g. return at the originally scheduled time and cut the tour short, or extend the tour end-time). Most school buses run on a tight schedule and cannot alter their schedules. If a group has not arrived on time, and Paula has not been able to get hold of them, guides should wait 20 minutes after the scheduled start time before leaving the building.

All guides are responsible for checking the galleries for changes and referring to the Daily List schedule for other guided and self-guided tours taking place in the museum.

If you have any specific questions about lead guide procedures or responsibilities, contact a Mia educator to discuss.