**Notes:**

Please replace the red text with the relevant option or name and the text highlighted in yellow should not be included in the final letter/email.

Dear (insert teacher’s name),

(insert child/children’s name(s)) (is/are) thoroughly enjoying (his/her/their etc.) time at school and (I/we) really appreciate the warmth, consideration and professionalism, you and your team are bringing to Year (insert year number).

(I/We) know the class are looking forward to many activities and special days during the school term, but (I am/we are) quite uncomfortable with the upcoming visit to (name of facility) on (date of visit).

Whilst (I/we) know visits of this kind are a common activity in schools, (I/we) feel that the underlying message these visits convey - that it is acceptable to capture, hold, breed and cull wild animals - is in fact not consistent with modern educational practices, and could lead to misconceptions around wild animals and their habitats.

Although (name of facility) has a relatively good reputation and animals may appear to have sufficient space and environmental enrichment (remove if not relevant to the facility), the areas of the (enclosures/tanks) are simply not capable of providing for the needs of the wild animals in their care and animals can suffer from physical and psychological problems as a result. The conservation benefits of keeping these animals in captivity is also minimal, with just a tiny percentage of the facility’s income going towards protecting wildlife in the wild and very few, if any, of the animals ever getting the chance to return to the wild. In addition, facilities of this kind routinely keep and breed animals, many of which are not endangered in the wild, in order to produce baby animals to attract visitors. These animals can end up ‘surplus’ to requirement, be moved between zoos and even in some circumstances could end up being culled.

As well as (my/our) concerns around the treatment of individual animals, (I/we) also feel that the underlying moral principles and possible negative educational outcomes should be considered. (I/We) believe that presenting animals as ‘living exhibits’ teaches children that animals are objects to be put on show for our entertainment and curiosity – that animals have no right to be treated as sentient individuals deserving of respect and compassion.

(I/We) hope you understand why (I/we) would prefer (insert child/children’s name(s)) not to attend this (trip/visit). [Optional] (I/We) discussed this with (insert child/children’s name(s)), and (he/she/they etc.) (has/have) expressed that (he/she/they etc.) (doesn’t/don’t) wish to attend.

(I/We) know this (trip/visit) was organised with the best intentions and of course (I/we) love how much you care about providing a balanced and nurturing learning experience for (insert child/children’s name(s)) and (his/her/their etc.) classmates. (I/We) also love that you and (insert school name) want to inspire pupils about the wonder of nature. To support this (I/we) would encourage (insert school name) to consider alternative experiences that focus on local wildlife, active participation in conservation or embracing VR opportunities.

We very much hope you will continue to do what you can to share a love and respect for both people and wildlife.

With (my/our) best wishes,

(Name(s))