



School Tours and Excursions Policy

Introduction

Taking into account the age and interests of the children and the curriculum being covered, school tours will be arranged by the school to present the children with a new environment in which they can observe, investigate and relate their findings to their own environment. Tours will be arranged at the discretion of the class teacher.

This policy was drawn up in consultation with the staff and circulated to the Board of Management (BoM) and Parents Association for observations and feedback.

Rationale

The need for this policy arises due to children being exposed to a wide variety of different experiences while on school outings, and the necessity to have a framework for good practice in place to cover all eventualities.

Aims

- To ensure all practical possibilities are covered in reducing the exposure of children to risk on outings
- To provide an enjoyable educational experience for all children

Policy Content

As always the class teacher is responsible for his/her class. However it is school policy to ensure a number of adults accompany a teacher on trips and assign individual groups of children to individual teachers. This number varies on the age and needs within a class. No matter what size a class is, there will always be a minimum of 2 adults on each tour.

This policy is drawn up within the contexts of:

- Health and Safety Legislation
- Child Protection Guidelines
- Curricular demands

Procedures for school tours

Permission

Any teacher planning to organise a school tour must first inform the Principal of the intended date and nature of the activity, its educational and/or other benefits that the pupils will gain from the tour.

Once approved the organising teacher must supply each pupil with an information letter to take home giving full details of the tour and a consent form to be signed by parents/guardians.

Tour Kit

Leaders will take a tour kit on all outings. These will be available from the office. The kit will contain;

- First aid bag, refuse and illness bags, water, kitchen roll
- Own mobile phone, umbrella
- Any additional medication needed by an individual child (according to our Policy on the Administration of Medication)

Cost

The teachers will ensure that the cost of the tour is reasonable and represents value for money. All children will be actively encouraged to save towards the cost of the tour.

Venue

The teacher will be knowledgeable about the venue, with particular reference to educational opportunities afforded, and services available (phone, toilets, emergency facilities).

Weather Conditions

Parents should be aware of changing weather conditions depending on the time of year. Rain and head gear may be essential for all children and a change of clothes may be necessary, depending on the venue. Likewise sunscreen should be applied by parents before children depart on tour.

Equality of Access

Classes may choose a venue suitable for their own level or lower but not from levels above. Teachers will ensure that venues are suitable for pupils with special needs, physical disabilities or other individual considerations. Teachers should consult with the Principal about choice of venue if there are any queries of accessibility for individual children.

No child is to be refused participation in any proposed activity because of a families inability to pay in full.

Uniforms

Teachers travelling together will decide whether uniforms or tracksuits should be worn by all. Children should never wear name badges at outdoor locations under Child Protection guidelines.

Reports

Where problems arise either with venue or transport teachers will report back to the Principal.

Conduct on Tours

Pupils' behaviour on tours will comply with the standard set down in the School's Code of Behaviour. In certain circumstances parents may be asked to agree to a contract on behaviour. Where it is felt that a child's conduct would pose a safety risk or inhibit the educational benefit for self or others, the teacher may refuse the child permission to travel. Parents will be advised of this in advance.

School Rules for tours & excursions

- Children must obey their supervisors & teachers at all times
- Children must remain seated with buckled seatbelt while the bus is in motion
- Children are not allowed to eat/drink on the bus
- Children are not allowed to bring electronic devices, smart watches or mobile phones with them on tours
- Children should not bring money with them, unless specified in the parent information letter
- A packed lunch will be brought by each child going on tour
- Children must remain with their allocated grouping and supervisor at all times
- Children will line up in their individual groups on disembarking from the bus
- Children should never attend a bathroom alone
- Roll calls/head counts are taken when children return to the bus or centre after each segment of the tour

- Eating chewing gum is not allowed on school tours. While one treat is allowed, this should be at the parent's discretion
- Newly qualified teachers and substitute teachers should be accompanied by an experienced member of staff on all outings in their first year in the school.

Safety and Supervision

Teachers will be extra vigilant when taking children out of the school. Special attention will be paid to: Road Safety, Behaviour on bus, Risks posed by particular venues (e.g. adventure playgrounds, areas of water etc.). Teachers must accompany their class throughout the tour.

Teachers should ensure adequate supervision at all times. On all school tours a minimum of two teachers will accompany the class on trips. On Peace IV related activities one class teacher and one SNA will accompany the class on local trips. Depending on the needs of the class on tour, a member of the SET team and/or an SNA may also attend trips.

In cases of accident or emergency, the class teacher will accompany an injured child to hospital, while the remaining teachers and/or SNA shall remain with the rest of the children. In the case of a child/ren becoming detached from the class, the class teacher will be responsible for locating the child/ren whilst the second teacher remains with the class.

The teachers on tour will phone the school Principal to give the necessary details of the accident/emergency so that the child's parents may be contacted and informed. All procedures under our Health & Safety and Critical Incident policies will be adhered to.

Informing Parents

Teachers will ensure that Parents are given sufficient notice of;

- Itinerary & Timetable
- Cost
- Special clothing necessary and packed lunch (no glassware)
- For tours which extend beyond normal school hours, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place for their child's journey to/from school.

Overnight Trips

In the case of overnight stays the Principal, on behalf of the BoM, will:

1. strive to ensure in advance that the accommodation is clean, safe and appropriate for the pupils
2. ensure that 3 adults attend the trip to supervise the group of children
3. ensure that the venue is Child Protection Compliant

4. ensure the children are supervised during the night by staff of the venue with ultimate responsibility remaining with the designated teacher
5. ensure that boys and girls have separate living quarters
6. establish a list of the items that the students should bring with them
7. become aware of whether students are prone to any problems that may have particular relevance to overnight stays
8. ensure that the students are made aware of an evacuation plan in the event of a fire
9. conduct regular headcounts to ensure all students are accounted for
10. make provision for medical care if it should be required
11. provide parents with the address and phone number of the Hotel/Hostel where the group are staying
12. parents will be expected to reimburse the school for any medical supplies or for any expenses incurred on behalf of their child.

Sporting Events

Pupils who are participating in sporting activities which take place in other locations are not required to obtain written permission from parents/guardians.

Each sports coach is responsible for taking a properly equipped first-aid kit to matches/events.

If a minor accident occurs the teacher/coach will treat it on the spot. In the event of a serious accident the teacher will inform the school and ring an ambulance. The school will contact parents and arrange alternative modes of transport if necessary.

Any incident of a serious nature is recorded in the Incident Report Book.

Success Criteria

- Positive experiences for all
- Children having a safe enjoyable learning experience
- Teacher/Parent Satisfaction

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the BoM on 25.06.2019.

Signed: *Francis Conaghan*

Chairperson to the Board of Management

Signed: *Nicola Mc Carthy*

Principal