

## **Policy on Tours / Outings**

Taking into account the age and interest 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.

The health, safety and welfare of our pupils is safeguarded by ensuring that reasonable care has been taken when considering the nature of the trip chosen, the level of supervision provided, the venue, the means of transportation and the demands on the physical ability of the students, having regard to their age and capacity.

### **Tours List**

A file of suitable tours for all classes is available in the office. Teachers will choose a venue suitable for their own classes and will ensure that venues are suitable for pupils with special needs.

### **Transport**

The teacher will ensure that a form of transport appropriate to the distance and the numbers travelling will be chosen.

When booking the bus company, the office will ensure that:

1. All buses hired are operating within current safety standards i.e. the bus hired for the trip must be equipped with seatbelts, one for each child, except in cases where double decker buses are hired from Dublin Bus.
2. All transport supplied will be suitable and well maintained.
3. All relevant documentation associated with the bus company is kept on file and up to date (e.g. licence etc.).
4. All drivers are Garda vetted through their company of employment.

The teacher will check that all children, once seated, put on their seatbelts.

The driver will have knowledge of and follow the itinerary and timetable of the tour. The driver is responsible for driving the bus safely. However, as the teacher has overall responsibility for the children's safety on a school trip s/he has the right to intervene if it is felt that the safety of the children is compromised.

The consumption of food and singing on the bus – at an acceptable level – will be at the discretion of the teacher and in consultation with the driver.

Buses will be left as they are found.

### **Informing Parents**

Teachers will ensure that parents are given sufficient notice of the school trip. Parents will be given information about:

- details of the itinerary and destination
- cost
- special clothing requirements as necessary
- packed lunch requirements as necessary

Parents are required to sign a consent form for each child travelling. Any child who does not have a written consent will not be allowed to travel.

### **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 the bus and in given venues, risks posed by particular venues (e.g. adventure playgrounds etc.).

The ratio of adults will depend on the venue and the supervision provided there, but the minimum required is a ratio of 1:12.

The [National Vetting Bureau \(Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Acts 2012 to 2016 \(the Vetting Act\)](#) is commenced from 29 April 2016.

[Circular 0031/2016 Commencement of Statutory Requirements for Garda Vetting](#) (published 28 April 2016) outlines the statutory requirements that will apply to school authorities from 29 April 2016 along with the practical arrangements that will be in place to support the vetting procedures. This circular supersedes and replaces both [Circular 0063/2010](#) and [Circular 26/2015](#) and applies to all recognised primary and post-primary schools and any other state funded centres for education (as defined in the Education Act, 1998) for children or vulnerable persons.

Since April 2016 new regulations regarding vetting have come into effect. In line with statutory requirements it is necessary for parents who volunteer to help with tours and outings to be Garda vetted. Parents must complete a Vetting Form every 3 years. Forms available from the school's office.

Since September 2014, parents are prohibited from transporting pupils to any **school organised events/activities** in private cars during school time. Buses are hired to transport children to swimming, sports matches etc. during the school day.

### Electronic Devices

The use of any electronic devices with a camera or internet access including mobile phones is not permitted while on a school tour. Teachers are requested to have their own mobile phone turned on for a school tour so that they can contact/be contacted by the school in an emergency.

### Reports

Where problems arise either with venue or transport, teachers will report back to the school and discuss it with the Principal. All pupil injuries must also be reported and an incident report sheet must be filled out and kept on file in the school's office.

### Conduct on Tours

Pupil's behaviour on tours must comply with the standard set down in the school's Code of Discipline. 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, in consultation with the Principal, may refuse the child permission to travel. The child will come to school as usual on that day. Parents will be advised of this in advance.



In the event that a child's behaviour on a school trip doesn't comply with the school's Code of Discipline, the teacher will immediately contact the Principal and parents to advise them of this. If feasible, the parents will be asked to collect the child. If this is not practicable, the child will be required to remain with the teacher in charge for the remainder of the trip and will not be allowed to take part in activities that might endanger him/herself or others.

In the unlikely event that a child does not choose to go on a school trip, the child will be supervised in another class in school for the day.

Policy reviewed by Board of Management on 23-5-16

Date

Signed. Derek Sherwin

Derek Sherwin

Chairperson, Board of Management