

Policy regarding school tours abroad and school related outings

<i>Reviewed</i>	<i>Ratified by the Board of Management</i>	<i>Next Review Date</i>
<i>October 2023</i>	<i>December 2023</i>	<i>December 2025</i>

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Code of Behaviour.

In line with Circular M20/04, all tours organised will be educational in nature, and should enhance the learning process for students by providing educational experiences which the classroom cannot provide.

The types of school tours covered are:

- Educational day trips for school groups within the State
- Educational visits involving student exchange
- Educational visits and trips involving instruction
- Educational trips involving cultural, religious or linguistic benefit to students
- Trips and exchanges of a sporting nature organised with schools abroad
- Ski trips
- Tours to holiday resorts
- Trips and tours of various types for transition year students

School tours abroad:

1. The terms of the Department of Education Circular M20/04 will be adhered to for all school tours abroad. School tours are subject to change where the Department of Education has issued guidelines and circulars to schools about latest travel restrictions.
2. Tours will take place during holiday periods with a maximum of two days of term included, subject to the approval of the board of management.
3. A ratio of staff to students, appropriate to the nature of the trip, will be agreed with school management.
4. Once the dates have been decided on, the group leader will provide details to the principal to present to the board of management for approval.
5. Parents/Guardians will be informed about general details of this trip via the school's communication systems to gauge the interest amongst students.
6. All trips abroad will be booked through a bonded licensed travel agent or tour operator in line with aviation authority regulations.
7. Money for travel and accommodation for trips outside Ireland will be paid directly to the school tour company and not to the school.
8. The number of participants will be agreed. The agent will collect a deposit from each participant. The list of applicants will be supplied to the principal. Acceptance of deposit is not a guarantee of a final place on the trip; in a limited number of cases, at the discretion of the principal, a student may not be awarded a place on the trip. If this occurs, parents/guardians will be notified, and any deposits paid will be returned. Otherwise, any deposits paid are non-refundable.
9. Fitness to travel is a prerequisite of going on a tour and where concerns exist the principal has the right to revoke permission.

10. Parents/guardians will receive the following information:
 - Confirmation that their daughter has secured a place on the tour.
 - Details of dates, price and what is included in this price.
 - A list of rules and regulations that each student must adhere to while on the tour and the consequences that will apply should these rules not be adhered to.
 - A consent form acknowledging recognition and acceptance of the rules, is to be signed by the student and the parent/guardian.
11. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians in conjunction with students to ensure that all documents necessary for travel abroad (e.g., passport, identity card, visa, medical certificates, etc.) are up to date and in order. The school cannot take responsibility for a student whose personal documentation is not in order and who is prevented from travelling abroad as a result.
12. Parents/guardians must ensure that up to date medical information regarding their daughter has been supplied to the school and is entered on Vsware. They will be required to sign a consent form which will allow medical advice to be followed in the event of injury/illness where it is not possible to contact them in the time available.
13. While on the tour, the school mobile phone should accompany the lead teacher. The lead teacher should have mobile phone numbers for the students travelling, as well as phone numbers where their parents/guardians on a 24 hour basis.
14. The lead teacher will carry a first aid kit. Students with specific medical conditions will be responsible for their own medication.
15. It will be a condition of travel that all students have travel insurance. If a student must travel home for a reason not covered by the travel insurance (e.g., homesickness), this will be at the parent/guardian's expense.
16. Should a serious breach of rules occur while on the tour, parents/guardians will be contacted and may need to travel to collect the offending student, or the offending student to be sent home immediately accompanied by a teacher. Parents/guardians will be liable for the cost of all flights/travel in these circumstances. (As stated in consent form signed by parent/guardian).
17. Should a student fall ill while on school tour medical advice will be sought and parents/guardians will be informed immediately.
18. Should a serious issue arise, the principal will communicate to the parents any decisions or actions that need to be taken.
19. An Accident/Incident report form should be completed by the lead teacher and supplied to the principal if anything untoward occurs while away from the school.
20. After the tour the tour leader will supply a summary report to the principal to bring to the board of management. The report will contain:
 - Date of tour/trip
 - Number of students participating
 - Number of teachers accompanying the students
 - Achievements of the tour
 - Financial summary of the tour
 - Any difficulties or problems that arose during the tour.

Day Tours/Outings:

1. School tours/outings are organised by staff on a volunteer basis.
2. School tours/trips may extend beyond the normal school day. In these cases, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange for their daughter's transfer to and from school.
3. The terms of Circular M20/04 will be adhered to.
4. Parents will be informed of how much money students will need to bring for food etc; any additional spending will be at the discretion of parents.
5. There will be an appropriate ratio between the number of students and staff travelling.
6. When planning school-related activities e.g., Field trips in subject areas, theatre outings, extra-curricular outings such as cinema trips, etc parents/guardians will be informed of all arrangements and permission sought.
7. Students' participation in such school activities is dependent on parental permission being granted via the school's communication systems. In the case of a whole class/year activity, tuition and supervision will not be available for those who do not partake of the activity.
8. At the discretion of the principal, TY and senior cycle students will travel independently to and from an event.
9. The Principal reserves the right to refuse a student a place on a trip if the student's behavioural record within the school has been a cause of concern. In this event, the students' parents/guardians will be notified.
10. The school's Code of Behaviour applies during all school related outings. In the case where a student breaches school rules they will be referred to the Year Head/Principal.
11. A summary report will be prepared for the principal to bring to the Board of Management after the event has taken place.