



# School Tour Policy

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**Mission Statement:**

Presentation Secondary School, Coláiste na Maighdine, is a Catholic school for girls (only), inspired by the vision of Nano Nagle, and under the Trusteeship of CEIST. This school is a community of students, parents/guardians, staff and management. Together we aim to provide our students with an education for life, recognising and fostering, in a caring environment, the unique dignity and value of each.

Presentation Secondary School's School Tour Policy should be read in conjunction with the school's **Code of Behaviour**. This policy applies to all school activities (outings, overnight trips, foreign tours) both during and outside of normal school hours, where students are identifiable or representing Presentation Secondary School Waterford.

This policy is in line with Safeguarding procedures and in line with the Department of Education and Youth (DEY) *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools* (revised 2025).

**1. Rationale**

This policy designed to ensure that students stay safe and healthy as they enjoy the educational experiences of school tours:

- School tours allow learning to extend beyond the walls of the classroom and as such are an integral part of a balanced educational process.
- School tours require good preparation and organisation to optimise the learning experience for students.
- The Board of Management would hope that all school trips and tours would have a beneficial effect on pupils, enhancing both their academic prowess and their social skills.
- Students and parents/guardians shall be acquainted in advance of the tour with this policy.
- The curricular content of many subjects requires field studies/tours/outings which take place off campus. Students gain maximum educational benefit when they experience

language, culture, geography etc... first-hand. This is imperative as we live in a global society and diverse community.

- All educational tours must be consistent with the rationale as specified by the Department of Education (DOE) in Circular Letter M 20/04, particularly that school tours should be an extension and reinforcement of classroom activities. All reasonable efforts will be made to satisfy these criteria.
- Presentation Secondary School, with our ethos of inclusion, strives to ensure tours are organised with budgetary constraints in mind so as not to prove too costly for parents/guardians.
- Only when there is sufficient student enthusiasm and teachers are prepared to give up their teaching time and act in loco parentis outside of the school building may school tours and excursions take place. For these reasons, school excursions might not take place annually.

## **2. Planning and Procedures**

- Staff organising a school tour present an outline proposal to senior management for approval in principle.
- Tour leaders must confirm with the Principal/Deputy Principal that proposed dates do not interfere with normal school routines.
- Requests for permission must include key tour details: dates, tour company, insurance, costs, and a draft itinerary.
- All tours must meet the requirements of DES circular M20/04
- Once approved, the tour is offered to students via correspondence explaining the educational purpose, application procedure, full cost, payment timeline, and the school tour policy.
- The method of allocating places must be clearly outlined.
- A risk assessment must be completed by the tour organiser.
- Upon return, all photocopies of passports and other documents containing personal information will be shredded in accordance with GDPR guidelines.

### **3. Eligibility / Selection of Students**

- Expressions of interest are collected and reviewed by the Principal, Deputy Principal, year heads, and form teachers before any places are offered.
- The principal, in consultation with management, has discretion to decide on student participation, considering behaviour, attendance, and health and safety considerations.
- If applications exceed available places, students and parents are informed of the selection procedure, and a lottery is used. A waiting list is created based on lottery order.
- At times, trips will be funded or ran in conjunction with outside agencies (e.g. Town Twinning or Erasmus+). Places may be allocated based on interview and/or an application process. Interest in the subject, work ethic and academic achievement in the subject can all be taken into consideration.
- Students may lose their place on the tour/trip if suspended or subject to serious discipline in the time between having a place offered and leaving for the trip
- In some circumstances the ability and willingness to host a student from a twinning school maybe be a deciding factor.

*Please note, in France there are laws banning “conspicuous” religious symbols in public schools, such as hijabs, kippahs, and crosses. Students intending to participate in exchange programmes in France should be aware of and prepared to comply with these regulations. Parents/guardians are encouraged to take these requirements into consideration prior to enrolling their child in the tour.*

### **4. Finance / Payment Policy**

- A deposit is required to secure a student’s place; the amount is set by the school management/tour company/trip organisers.
- Payments may be made in full or in instalments to support different financial situations.
- Parents should be informed of the full cost as early as possible, and payment must be completed according to the company’s schedule—usually in full at least 10 weeks before departure for foreign trips.
- Students and parents are expected to meet all payment and paperwork deadlines.

- Financial records must be kept for each tour and reported to the Board of Management; all accounts must be finalised by year-end.
- A detailed record of student payments should be retained.
- Tour costs may include a contingency fee, which will be communicated to parents. All contingency funds and receipts must be fully accounted for.
- Trips taken with Erasmus+, may be partly funded by grants.
- If a student withdraws from a trip without a valid documented reason, the full amount must be reimbursed to the school.
- Families must confirm commitments before payments are made.
- Failure to reimburse Erasmus+ or any other agency after withdrawing from a tour/trip without a valid documented reason, might result in exclusion from other tours.

## **5. Insurance**

- Insurance will be offered through tour operators wherever feasible and is included in the tour price. The trip paperwork will provide a comprehensive explanation of this.
- If this isn't feasible, we strongly advise parents and guardians to get their children insurance.
- At the beginning of each school year, parents and guardians are urged to get school insurance. They can purchase:
  - 9:00 a.m. to 16:00 p.m. insurance
  - 24-hour coverage

## **6. Student Medical History**

- Parent/guardians must inform the school in writing of any special needs, medical conditions or medication required by their daughter while in the school tour/trip
- The school may request to meet with parents/guardians
- The school reserves the right to request a fitness -to-travel certificate and clear guidelines on how to proceed in the event of an episode/seizure/reaction/incident from a medical practitioner, where a medical condition has been notified to the school.

- Parent/guardians will be required to sign a consent form which will allow medical advice to be followed in the event of injury/illness and where it is not possible to contact them in the time available
- Teachers may be required to store and administer prescribed medication for students during school trips, provided that written parental consent has been obtained in advance and all medication is clearly labelled with the student's name, dosage instructions, and any relevant medical information.

## **7. Parents/Guardians**

- Parents/guardians are expected to attend a meeting ahead of an overnight tour to ensure that they are fully informed of the tour specifics
- Parents/guardians are issued with important contact details of the hotel and lead teacher in the case of emergency at home

## **8. Prior to Outing/Tour**

### *a. Itineraries*

- Students must attend all meetings within the school relating to these trips
- Students will be given an itinerary of the trip where the activities for each day are clearly outlined
- Students will also be given an outline of what they are required to bring with them
- For school outings, students are required to have a completed and signed permission slip to allow them to partake in the trip

### *b. Passports/Travel Documents*

- All students/staff are responsible for obtaining their own passports for overseas trips. It is the responsibility of the student, parent/guardian, that passports are valid and have adequate time left on them before they expire, well in advance of the school tour.

- A photocopy of valid passport must be given to the tour leader in the weeks prior to travel. The teacher(s) will bring a photocopy of each child's passport on the trip in case a passport is lost and an emergency passport needs to be sought
- Students within the European Union will be required to have a completed EHIC form.
- Students other than Irish nationals holding an Irish passport should be made aware that they may require and, in this event, take responsibility for a separate passport and/or visa/ESTA and accept that this student may need to use separate passport control channels from the rest of the group. Please visit the following websites for further information.

<https://www.dfa.ie/travel/know-before-you-go/advice-for-school-trips/>

<https://www.irishimmigration.ie/>

It is the parents' responsibility to secure these visas/waivers if necessary.

- If a student is subject to a care order, foster parents will need to ensure that Social Services consent to any proposed trip. If a student is a Ward of Court, it may be necessary to seek advice from the Court in relation to trips abroad well in advance.
- 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
- Students are responsible for their own passports and boarding passes during security check and when boarding.

## **9. During Outing/Tour**

### *a. Tour Supervision*

- Students are divided into small groups and allocated a particular teacher/supervisor for their group
- Mobile phone communication between teachers/supervisors and students on the tour may be necessary, generally for foreign tours. Each tour participant and parent/guardian will be supplied with this contact number and is to be used in the case of an EMERGENCY only – not as a means of contacting the student while they are away. Specific details regarding this form of communication will be detailed to parents/guardians and student in advance

- For all school trips and tours, the pupil-supervisor ratio will be determined by the year group involved and the specific nature of the trip
- Students are called to these groups each morning prior to departure for the day, before and after every activity and each evening.

*b. Financial Guidelines for School Tour Activity*

- Students are responsible for their personal spending money; guidance may be provided.

*c. Student Conduct and Responsibilities / Tour Code of Behaviour*

- Students must always obey members of staff/external instructors/supervisors and be courteous, friendly and co-operative.
- Students are expected to work together in the spirit of inclusion
- Students must remain with the tour group and be punctual
- When permitted to go shopping or participate in an unsupervised activity, they must do so in groups of two or more
- It is expected that students' use of mobile phones will be responsible and in line with the school's Acceptable Use Policy. Recording, videoing or photographing students or staff without their permission is strictly prohibited as is posting to social media.
- The use of phone pouches during the trip will be at the discretion of the supervising teachers, who will determine appropriate times for students to access or secure their devices based on the needs and safety of the group.
- Students should respect any cultural, environmental or social sensitivities or hazards that may be encountered when on tour.
- Students take personal responsibility for their health and safety by making themselves aware of emergency exits, and fire assembly points.
- Students must also wear seat belts when provided.
- Students must not purchase or use alcohol, tobacco, vaping items, 'snus' or non-medically prescribed drugs/products

- Students are responsible for their own belongings for the duration of the trip. The school does not take responsibility for loss/damage to personal belongings.

d. *Overnight Trips:*

- The tour leaders reserve the right to assign bedrooms
- Students must not visit another guest's hotel room or permit anybody into their room
- Once the group has retired at night, no student has permission to be in another student's room, on the corridors, or in any other area of the premises
  - Students will only be permitted to leave their bedrooms after curfew for essential purposes, such as using toilet facilities located outside the dormitory, and must return promptly to their assigned rooms.
- Students staying in boarding schools or with host families must ensure that they are abiding by the rules of host.
- Students will be held responsible for the condition of their rooms. Each room will be checked upon entry and students will be liable for any subsequent damage
- Parents must guarantee that students do not pack alcohol, tobacco, vaping items, 'snus' and illegal substances in their luggage
- If there is a suspicion that contraband is present, tour leaders reserve the right to search students' bags/rooms at any time and to remove the item(s) of concern
- Students must bring appropriate clothing and comfortable walking shoes.
  - Students will be informed ahead of day trips if the school uniform, PE uniform or their own clothes are most suitable.
- All school rules apply for the duration of the tour
- A student may be sent home, at the parent/guardians' expense, if the conduct of the student warrants it. – teachers' judgement

e. *Sanctions*

All incidents shall be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour. Minor incidents may be addressed immediately through verbal warning. In the case of a major incident, further action may be required, e.g. limited participation in activities, contacting a parent/guardian, referral to Year Head/Deputy/Principal or removal from trip.

Examples of unacceptable or serious misbehaviour:

- Use/possession of alcohol, tobacco, vaping items, 'snus' and illegal substances
- Misuse of substances of legal substance e.g. lighter fluid, Tipp-Ex, nitrous oxide etc
- Seriously or repetitive disruptive behaviour
- Students in out of bounds areas at night
- Serious and consistent disregard for directions of the tour leaders
- Theft or criminal damage to others or property

*This list is not exhaustive*

A student who is part of a group or a bystander in the group engaging in the above behaviours or have knowledge of without sharing with the tour leaders is considered a serious violation of the rules and dealt with accordingly.

If it is necessary for the tour leader, or any member of staff accompanying the tour/trip, to question a student about a serious matter, the tour leader will ensure that there is another adult present on the occasion of the interview.

## **10. Post-Tour Review**

- On return from the tour, accompanying teachers will complete a short review which will include any points which arose during the tour or lessons learnt which will benefit future tour-planning

*Please note: All relevant school policies and Department circulars will apply to all trips and tours undertaken in the school's name.*

*D.E.S. Circular M20/04*

*Anti-Bullying/Bi Cinealta*

*Code of Behaviour*

*Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment*

*This list is not exhaustive*

**Ratified by the Board of Management on**

**Chairperson of the Board    Date May 11<sup>th</sup> 2026**

*Elaine Sheridan*

**Principal    Date May 11<sup>th</sup> 2026**

*St. Ronayne*