

School Tour/Trip Policy

St. Joseph's CBS Nenagh

1. Introduction

St. Joseph's CBS Nenagh has a duty of care to all its students and school personnel. The school is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all participants on school tours and trips and to supporting the staff members who accompany students.

2. Policy Rationale

The Board of Management encourages, where appropriate, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities that contribute to the holistic education of students.

This School Tour/Trip Policy outlines the general procedures and standards of St. Joseph's CBS Nenagh and is informed by Department of Education guidelines and school policies including:

- Code of Ethics & Behaviour
- Critical Incident Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Safety, Health & Welfare Policy
- Bí Cineálta Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- AEN Policy
- Child Protection & Risk Assessment Statement
- School Safety Statement
- Substance Abuse Policy
- Student Journal
- Staff Handbook

3. General Procedures for Overnight and/or Foreign Tours/Trips

Overnight and foreign tours/trips are organised on a voluntary basis and are subject to DES guidelines and the availability of appropriate staff. The following procedures apply:

1. Approval:

The tour/trip coordinator must seek approval from the Principal and the Board of Management by submitting a detailed tour plan including:

- a. Proposed itinerary
- b. Dates, timing, and duration
- c. Target year group and estimated numbers
- d. Estimated costs

2. Travel Agency:

All foreign tours must be organised through a bonded travel agency.

3. Supervision Ratio:

The approximate student-to-teacher ratio for foreign tours is 10:1.

4. Group Size:

Determined by the capacity of the tour/trip coordinator and available staff.

5. Selection Process:

Where demand exceeds places, a lottery or suitable selection method may be used.

6. Deadlines:

Students must meet all deadlines for application forms, deposits, payments, passport details, letters of consent, medical forms, and contact information. Failure to meet deadlines may result in forfeiture of the place and deposit.

7. Student Meetings:

Students must attend information meetings and comply with all requirements.

8. Parent/Student Information:

Prior to departure, participants will receive written communication including:

- a. Full itinerary, including departure/return details
- b. Names of tour leaders and accompanying staff
- c. Full cost breakdown, payment schedule, and methods
- d. Accommodation details
- e. Parent/guardian consent form
- f. Medical information form and permissions regarding emergency medical treatment
- g. Insurance policy details
- h. Behaviour expectations, including rules around alcohol, smoking, and conduct
- i. Recommended clothing
- j. Suggested pocket money
- k. List of required personal items

9. Communication:

Mobile phone communication between staff and students may be necessary. A temporary list of student phone numbers may be kept by the coordinator and must be securely disposed of after the trip.

10. Medication:

Students with medical needs are responsible for managing their own medication.

11. Emergency Contact:

The coordinator must be able to contact the Principal/Deputy Principal or designated person during the trip.

12. Incident Reporting:

Any accident or incident must be recorded on an official report form.

Transport Safety:

- The bus must not be left unattended with students on board at any point during the journey
- Regular comfort/rest stops must be scheduled and supervised
- All students must remain seated with seatbelts fastened while the vehicle is in motion

First Aid Provision:

- A fully stocked first aid kit must be carried on all tours/trips

Mobile Phone Use on Transport:

- Students may use personal mobile phones during travel, subject to staff discretion
- Phones must not be used to play music aloud or cause disruption
- Photography/recording of other students or staff without consent is prohibited
- Staff reserve the right to restrict phone use if it becomes disruptive or inappropriate

4. Access to the Tour/Trip

Participation in tours and trips is a **privilege**, not a right. Student and staff safety cannot be compromised.

- Students with a history of misbehaviour in school or on previous trips may be refused participation.
- A student may be excluded if their past conduct suggests they would pose a risk or undue burden on supervising staff.
- Up to departure time, the tour leader, in consultation with supervising staff and the Principal, may withdraw a student from the trip if behaviour gives cause for concern.
- Transition Year students who fail to engage with TY activities may be excluded from overnight/foreign trips.
- All school-related costs must be prioritised before foreign tour payments. Students with outstanding school fees may not travel.
- TY students who do not pay TY fees and do not communicate with the school may be refused travel.
- Parents/guardians must arrange prompt collection of their son at the return point.

5. Supervision of Tours and Trips

Supervision levels depend on:

- Number, age, and maturity of students
- Destination and nature of activities
- Availability of suitable staff (including SNAs if required)
- Additional supervision available at the destination
- Transport arrangements
- Whether students will be divided into smaller supervised groups

Some tours may include periods of **unstructured or unsupervised time**, which will be clearly communicated in advance. Parents who find this unsuitable should not permit their son to attend.

Overnight trips will naturally include periods without direct supervision; parents must consider this when granting permission.

6. Student Behaviour on the Tour/Trip

Students and parents/guardians must familiarise themselves with the school Code of Ethics & Behaviour, all tour rules, and any specific requirements. Both student and parent/guardian must sign a commitment to abide by these rules.

Students must:

- Follow all school rules.
- Comply with the tour/trip dress code.
- Respect accommodation rules.
- Abide by host family rules (on exchange programmes).
- Follow all instructions from supervising staff, accommodation personnel, instructors, bus drivers, travel staff, and host families.
- Keep rooms tidy and ready for inspection.
- Understand that a school trip is not a personal holiday; group needs take priority.

Strictly Forbidden:

- Purchasing, possessing, supplying, or consuming alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or vapes.

- Receiving tattoos or piercings while on tour.
- Arriving at the departure point under the influence of substances or in possession of them.

Additional Behaviour Expectations:

- Students may not enter another student's room or allow others into their room except staff.
- Students must remain in their assigned room once the group has retired for the night.
- Students must obey the laws of the destination country.

Sanctions:

Examples include:

1. Missing part of the day's activities (unless related to safety).
2. Exclusion from specific activities.
3. Exclusion from evening activities.

Serious Misbehaviour:

A student may be sent home at the parent's/guardian's expense for serious misconduct, including (but not limited to):

1. Use/possession of alcohol
2. Use/possession of illegal drugs
3. Use/possession of cigarettes or vapes
4. Misuse of legal substances
5. Disruptive behaviour on transport or in accommodation
6. Disrespecting accommodation rules
7. Disrespect toward staff
8. Theft or damage to property
9. Endangering self or others
10. Persistent misbehaviour

Criminal incidents (e.g., theft, assault) will be handed over to local authorities.

Students are liable for damage or loss they cause. Additional sanctions may apply upon return to school.

7. Travel Documents/Requirements

Parents/guardians must ensure that all travel documentation (passport, ID cards, etc.) is valid and in order.

- Students who refuse required travel vaccinations cannot travel.
- If a visa is required, travel is dependent on visa approval; deposits may be forfeited if a visa is denied.
- A valid **European Health Insurance Card** is required for all travel within relevant countries.

The school is **not responsible** for students prevented from travelling due to incomplete or invalid documentation.

8. Medical

Parents/guardians must provide detailed written information about medical conditions, medications, allergies, and emergency contact numbers.

- Students are responsible for managing and administering their own medication.
- Medication must be supplied in sufficient quantity for the full duration of the trip.

In an emergency, staff may act **in loco parentis** if parents/guardians cannot be contacted and immediate decisions are required. Parents must specify alternative emergency contacts before departure.

9. Refunds

Eligibility:

Refunds may be considered where a student cannot travel due to:

- Documented medical reasons
- Unforeseen family emergencies
- Travel restrictions such as visa refusal

Request Process:

- A written request must be submitted within **10 working days** of the decision not to travel.
- Appropriate documentation must accompany the request.
- Submission does not guarantee a refund.

Conditions:

- Refunds depend on the travel agency's terms, which may include non-refundable deposits or penalties.
- The school is not liable for costs deemed non-refundable by the agency.
- Administrative expenses may be deducted.

Non-Eligibility:

- Students excluded for disciplinary reasons or missed deadlines will **not** receive refunds.
- Students involved in fundraising-supported trips (e.g., immersion projects) are **not eligible** for refunds; funds return to the general project fund.

Additional Notes:

- Refunds will be processed as soon as possible but are subject to agency timelines and school administration.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to review the travel insurance policy and may need to submit claims directly to the insurer.