

## **School Tours/Excursions Policy**

### **Introduction**

This policy was drawn up by the staff and circulated to the Board of Management and is available to the Parent's Association. 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.**

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

### **Policy Content**

It has been the policy of the school over the years to organise separate tour dates and destinations for:

- Junior Classes (Junior Infants – 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Class)
- Senior Classes (3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Class)

The tours are structured in such a way to provide an educational and active aspect in addition to an entertainment and recreational value.

### **Safety and Supervision**

Teachers are 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 etc.).

At least two adults (teacher plus one) will attend every outing. More adult supervision may be necessary depending on the nature of the outing organised. The recommended minimum supervision ratio will be 15:1 (adult). This becomes possible as Special Needs Assistants and SET Teachers accompany mainstream classes on school outings.

### **Conduct on Tours**

Pupils' behaviour on tours will comply with the standard set down in the School's Code

Of Discipline. 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.

- Children must obey their supervisors at all times.
- Children must remain seated while the bus is in motion. Seat belts must be worn.
- 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.
- Roll calls/head counts are taken when children return to the bus after each segment of the tour and periodically throughout the day.
- Mobile phones are not to be brought on tours/ outings by pupils. Teachers will have their own mobile and can contact the school, should the need arise.

### **Transport**

The transport organiser of the tour will do their best to ensure that;

- Tenders are sought for all tours
- A form of transport, appropriate to the distance and the numbers travelling, will be chosen
- The bus Company/suppliers and drivers accept the following conditions

### **Conditions of Hiring**

All transport supplied, will be suitable and well-maintained. Teachers have the right to refuse any bus they find unsuitable for their outing. If the bus proves unsuitable a replacement will be supplied or the money refunded. Seat belts must be provided. The driver must be familiar with the tour itinerary and timetable, and must adhere to these, unless an issue regarding safety arises.

- The group will have access to the bus for the full day or as agreed with the teacher organising the tour.
- Buses will be left as they were found

### **Tour Kit**

Teachers will take a tour kit on all outings. The kit will contain:

- First aid materials, refuse and illness bags, newspapers, kitchen roll

### **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**

Tours will be booked early in the school year for a date in the 3<sup>rd</sup> term. Teachers will be conscious of the likely "busier" days. Not more than three classes will travel together, unless venue and transport arrangements warrant otherwise. Teachers will accept responsibility for their own class. All venues must be accessible to all pupils.

### **Weather Conditions**

Rain and head gear will be essential for all children and a change of clothes may be necessary, depending on the venue.

### **Uniforms**

Teachers will decide whether uniforms/tracksuits should be worn.

### **Reports**

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

### **Informing Parents**

Teachers will ensure that Parents are given sufficient notice of:

- Itinerary & Timetable
- Cost
- Special clothing necessary and packed lunch
- Time of return to the school

### **Fieldtrips**

Fieldtrips which relate to a particular curricular area to be encouraged. These trips can range from simple walks around the school to organised trips to relevant places of interest.

The principal must be informed in advance if it is proposed that a class leave the school grounds.

Teachers are encouraged to plan and prepare children in advance of the trip and to carry out some follow up work in the classroom following the fieldtrip.

Teachers should ensure adequate supervision at all times. When necessary, an SNA or a vetted parent/guardian should accompany the class on the trip.

Children should be appropriately dressed for the fieldtrip e.g. raingear, suitable footwear etc.

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

Buses booked for fieldtrips must be fitted with individual seatbelts and these should be worn by all children.

### **Implementation:**

This policy has been in operation since

**Ratification:**

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on

**Supervision**

1. What ratio of supervision is necessary?: (minimum 15/1)
2. Have additional supervisors been approached?: Who?
3. What arrangements have been made for disabled children (if any in class)?
4. What alternative arrangements been made in the event of inclement weather?

**Organiser** \_\_\_\_\_