



## **School Tours/Excursions Policy 2023-2028**

### **Introduction**

This policy was drawn up by the staff and ratified by the Board of Management (BoM) in November 2023. 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 ensure all practical possibilities are covered in reducing the exposure of children to risk on outings
- To provide an enjoyable educational experience for all children

### **Policy Content**

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

The tours are structured in such a way as to provide an educational aspect in addition to an entertainment and recreational value. It is school policy not to allow shopping in shopping centres due to the unnecessary dangers children can be exposed to and the difficulty in providing adequate supervision.

No teacher is responsible for more than 20 pupils. It is school policy to assign individual groups of 10 children approximately to individual teachers. This becomes possible as support and special class teachers accompany mainstream classes on school outings.

- Children must follow instructions their supervisors at all times

- Children must remain seated while the bus is in motion
  - 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
- Nut products and chewing gum are strictly prohibited.

### **Success Criteria**

- Positive experiences for all
- Children having a safe enjoyable experience
- Teacher/Parent Satisfaction

### **Review**

The school is moving towards a policy of single class tours as opposed to multi-class outings. This is proving to be successful and less stressful to all. Further reviews will be conducted in the light of experience.

### **Transport**

The transport organiser of the tour will ensure that:

- Tenders are sought for all tours
- A form of transport, appropriate to the distance and the numbers traveling 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. The driver will be used to dealing with children and have a thorough knowledge of and follow the itinerary and timetable for the tour. The driver is responsible for the safety of the children while they are travelling, but teachers have the right to intervene if it is felt the the safety of the children is compromised:

- The group will have access to the bus for the full day
- If the weather conditions are unfavourable the group will have the use of the bus for sheltering or for eating lunch.
- The consumption of food(snacking) and singing on the bus - at an acceptable level - will be at the discretion of the teacher in consultation with the driver
- Buses will be left as they were found

### **Tour Kit**

Leaders will take a tour kit on all outings. These will be available from the office. The kit will contain:

- First aid materials, refuse and illness bags, kitchen roll etc.

### **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 1st or 2nd term for a date as early as possible in the 3rd term. Teachers will be conscious of the likely "busier" days. Not more than two classes will travel together, unless venue and transport arrangements warrant otherwise. Where more than one class travels, one teacher will accept the role of "leader". The teacher will be "au fait" with venue, with particular reference to educational opportunities afforded, and services available (phone, toilets, emergency facilities).

### **Weather Conditions**

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

### **Tours list**

A list of suitable tours for all classes will be available. Classes may choose a venue suitable for their own level or lower but not from levels above. Teachers will ensure that venues are suitable for pupils with special needs.

### **Reports**

Where problems arise either with venue or transport teachers will report back to the transport/tour organiser who will in turn will discuss it with the Principal.

### **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.

### **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 bus, Risks posed by particular venues (e.g. adventure playgrounds etc.). The minimum supervision ratio will be 20:1 (adult).

### **Informing Parents**

Teachers will ensure that Parents are given sufficient notice of:

- Itinerary & Timetable
- Cost
- Any special clothing necessary (swim gear etc) and packed lunch (no glassware).

## **Fieldtrips**

Fieldtrips which relate to a particular curricular area are 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. Where necessary, an SNA or 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.

See also First Aid Policy.

## **Sporting Events**

The relevant teacher will ask the school secretary to book a bus for a match.

Parents will be informed through Aladdin about the match. They will give permissions through Aladdin Connect and an epayment request for cost of bus will be made directly to the parent. Any relevant information in relation to packed lunch and gear required for the match etc will be given to the parents when they accept permission for their child/ children to attend matches. No child is to be refused participation in any proposed activity because of family inability to pay.

No fewer than 2 staff members will travel to matches.

Where possible, teams will travel on the same day to reduce cost of bus and disruption to classes.

In situations where the relevant teacher has students in their class who are not participating in the matches, these children will be assigned work and will be supervised by another class teacher.

## **TOURS/ TRIPS CHECKLIST**

### **Before the tour**

- Venue booked
- Transport booked
- Jerseys ready
- Parents informed by Aladdin as to
  - itinerary
  - timetable
  - cost
  - lunch arrangements
  - clothing necessary

### **Day of Tour**

Tour leader will ensure;

- \*Tour kits are available for each bus
- Invoice for venue given to the office for payment
- Jerseys collected and washed.

### **After Tour**

- Report back to office

*Eugene Wall*