
Bunscoil Gleann Sidheáin, Cappoquin

School Tours/Excursions Policy

Introduction:

This policy was drawn up by the staff and circulated to the Board of Management (BoM) for observations and feedback. 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 an 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 experience for all children.

Policy Content:

It is the policy of the school over the years to organise, if necessary, separate tour dates and destinations for Junior Classes, Middle Classes and Senior Classes.

The tours will be structured in such a way as to provide an entertainment and recreational value. The tours may also be of some educational value. It is school policy to limit shopping in shopping centres due to the unnecessary dangers children can be exposed to and the difficulty in providing adequate supervision.

All teachers are responsible for their own classes and teachers/staff work together in relation to the supervision of pupils on school tours.

The following criteria will apply to children on school tours;

- Children must obey their supervisors at all times.
- Children must remain seated with seat belts fastened 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 will be taken when children return to the bus after each segment of the tour.
- Chewing gum is not allowed on school tours.
- Children shall leave the bus in a clean and tidy condition.

- Children will be given specific instructions to be followed in the event of he/she becoming detached from its group.

Health and Safety Considerations:

The Class teacher in consultation with the principal will ensure that:

- There is an appropriate staff/pupil ratio.
- Parents are given details of the tour including drop-off/ collection times.
- There is a First-Aid kit, paper roll and sick bags on the bus.
- The teachers and staff have access to a mobile phone at all times.
- The teachers and staff have a class list and contact telephone numbers for parents on the school tour.
- In the event of an injury to a pupil, the incident will be recorded on the Accident Report Form accompanied by a Witness Form as necessary and the First Aid Policy will be followed. In the event of a serious accident or a vehicular collision the Principal will be informed and the Critical Incident Policy will be invoked.

Teachers will ensure that Parents are give adequate notice of school trips and will be given information regarding:

- Cost.
- The itinerary and destination.
- Special clothing requirements as necessary.
- Lunch requirements.

The teacher in charge will bring a class list and contact telephone numbers for parents on the school tour along with a mobile telephone so that contact with the school or parents can be made if necessary.

Transport:

The organiser of the tour will ensure that:

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

- 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.

Cost:

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 2nd term for a date in the 3rd term. Teachers will be conscious of the likely "busier" days. Teachers will have knowledge of the venue, with particular reference to 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. Teachers will ensure that venues are suitable for pupils with special needs.

Uniforms:

Pupils will wear the school uniform tracksuit on school tour.

Reports:

Where problems arise either with venue or transport, teachers will report back to the transport/tour organiser who will in turn 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 and Behaviour. 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.).

Fieldtrips:

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.

Success Criteria:

The following criteria will used to determine the success of the tour;

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

Approved by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management Bunscoil Gleann Sidheáin, Cappoquin.

Checklist for School Tours/Outings

Preparation:

1. Proposed date
2. Proposed departure and return time
3. Proposed itinerary

Cost:

1. What is the cost involved:

- (a) Transport €
- (b) Visits €
- (c) Spending €
- (d) TOTAL €

2. Has a Special Saving Scheme been started in class or are all children involved in existing scheme?

3. What provision has been made for those who can't afford the cost?

Supervision:

1. What ratio of supervision is necessary?

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?

Before the tour:

1. Venue booked
2. Transport booked
3. Individual parents informed of travelling embargo on disruptive pupils
4. Timetable organised
5. Parents informed by standard letter of
 - a. itinerary
 - b. timetable
 - c. cost
 - d. lunch arrangements
 - e. clothing necessary
 - f. information on any dietary requirements/health issues

Agreement on:

- i. Spending money
- ii. Acceptable behaviour on bus
- iii. Extra supervisors

Day of Tour:

Ensure that all Health and Safety requirements are in place.

After Tour

- Report back to office