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Chairperson of the Board of Management: Harold Brooks

Policy: School Tours & Outings

Date of Issue: September 2004

Amendments / Reviews

Reviewed: September 2005
September 2006
January 2012 – amended at Board of Management meeting
January 2016 – Chairperson change.
March 2016 – reviewed and “Dealing with Emergencies” section added.
September 2017 – Chairperson change.

Aim of Policy: School tours/outings will be arranged to present the children with a new environment in which they can observe, investigate and relate their findings to their environment taking into account the age, interest of the children and the curriculum area being covered.

Introduction:

Taking into account the age and interest of the children and the curriculum being covered, School Tours will be arranged at the discretion of the class teacher to present the children with a new environment in which they can observe, investigate and relate to their own environment.

The school's own bus will be used where possible with the driver of licenced teacher employed by the school. Each class books the bus through the use of the Bus Timetable. Each class is allowed one two-hour trip per fortnight – hours must be used before the end of the calendar month and cannot be carried forward. Hours may be saved for longer trips. The principle of fairness applies when booking popular times and days. The driver is to be given adequate notice of trips and cancellations.

Conditions of Hiring:

1. All transport hired will be suitable and well-maintained. Teachers have the right to refuse any bus they find unsuitable for their outing.
2. 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.
3. The group will have access to the bus for the full day if required.
4. Whilst the consumption of food on the bus is generally not acceptable, if the weather conditions are unfavourable the group will have the use of the bus for sheltering or for eating lunch.
5. Buses will be left as they were found

Tour Kit:

The following are suggested items that might be useful - first aid materials, refuse and illness bags, newspapers, kitchen roll, umbrella.

The teacher (or staff member) must carry a mobile phone and bring the phone numbers of the children's parents. Please ensure that the "Sign out/back during school day" form is completed before leaving the school giving the contact number of a staff member.

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. Spending money: this is at the discretion of the teacher.

Venue:

The teacher will be "au fait" with venue, with particular reference to educational opportunities afforded and services available (phone, toilets, emergency facilities). Teachers will ensure that venues are suitable for pupils with special needs.

Weather Conditions:

Rain and head gear will be essential for all children and a change of clothes may be necessary, depending on the venue. Sun cream and hats are essential for hot weather conditions.

Uniforms:

Teachers decide whether or not uniforms should be worn.

Reports:

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

Conduct on Tours:

Pupil's 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 accompany their child or to nominate a suitable person in their absence.

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 decide that it would be unsafe for a particular pupil to travel. Parents will be advised of this in advance.

Risk Assessment:

In consultation with the Special Needs Assistants, teachers should undertake a risk assessment of the proposed venue with regard to possible health and safety hazards that might present themselves, cf attached form.

Particular attention should be given to:

- Appropriate levels of supervision for the group of pupils in question.
- Traffic conditions at or on the way to the venue.
- Parking – are there roadways to cross?
- Alighting from and boarding the bus at the venue.
- Crowds and confusion – what is the likelihood of a pupil getting lost and what is the plan in case this happens?
- Are there any possible dangers from water, streams, rivers etc nearby?
- Are there pupils on the tour with special requirements such as medical, dietary etc. (Please bring Special Care Notices for pupils with medical requirements). If medications are being carried – where are they to be stored during the tour?

Safety and Supervision:

Teachers will be extra vigilant when taking children out of the school. Whilst the teacher is in charge and ultimately responsible, every staff member present must take collective responsibility for the safety and supervision of the pupils. If a teacher is not happy with the levels of safety and supervision, s/he should leave the venue.

Child Protection

Strict adherence to the schools Child Protection Policies must be adhered to particularly in relation to using volunteers/parents and students on work experience to supervise. Plan for supervision of toilets in public areas.

Informing Parents:

Teachers will ensure that Parents are given sufficient notice of:

1. Itinerary & timetable.
2. Cost.
3. Special clothing necessary and packed lunch (no glassware).

Tour and Outing Risk Assessment

Please take the following into account if applicable to your class/outing?

1. How many pupils are on the outing?
2. How many staff members are supervising?
3. How many volunteers/students on work experience are assisting? Will they be adequately supervised by staff?
4. Have the following possible risks been considered?
 - Traffic conditions.
 - Parking.
 - Alighting from and boarding the bus.
 - Crowds and confusion.
 - Dangers from nearby water, streams, rivers, etc.
5. Are the Special Care Notices for those pupils that require them in the “bus file” ?
6. If medication/oxygen is being carried – where are they to be stored during the tour?
7. Does the school secretary/principal have contact numbers if required?
8. Have you the phone numbers of the pupils’ parents?
9. Is there a First Aid Kit on the bus?
10. Is the ‘Medical Emergency Policy’ in the file on the bus?
11. Is the ‘Missing Child Plan’ on the bus?
12. Are Child Protection measures in place regarding supervision and toileting?

Missing Child Plan

1. Stay calm and note time.
2. Ensure safety and supervision of other pupils.
3. Delegate staff members and/or volunteers on the tour to look for lost child and report back within a given time frame, depending on the circumstances.
4. If child is not found, alert school who will contact parents and call Gardai.
5. If for any reason the school cannot be contacted, alert parents and contact Gardai.
6. Continue to look for the missing child, ensuring safety of other pupils.
7. Maintain contact with school.

Dealing with Emergencies

If something untoward or unforeseen happens to a staff member or pupil, other staff on duty will need to take collective responsibility and decide on the appropriate action required.

Overnight Tours

A special risk assessment is carried out for overnight tours. Such tours are considered only if there are sufficient numbers of staff willing to go on a voluntary basis. The venue for such tours is a matter for school staff to decide. The school may decide to hold a fund-raising event to defray the cost to the pupil

School Staff are not permitted to take alcohol or other substances when they have pupils in their care.



SIGN OUT / BACK DURING SCHOOL DAY

*** RISK ASSESSMENT :** Check – *appropriate levels of supervision - traffic conditions at/on way to venue – parking – alighting from/boarding bus – crowd and confusion (likelihood of pupil getting lost and plan if this happens) – dangers from water, streams, rivers, etc. – pupils with special requirements (medical, dietary, etc. bring special care notices) – where are medications stored for outing?*

<i>Please complete when leaving building during school hours</i>					<i>Pupils only</i>				
Date	Adult(s) Name(s)	Contact Mobile No.	Time Out	Time Back	Class	No. of Pupils	Destination	√ Risk Assessment*	√ Meds.