



Gaelscoil Bhréifne School Tours/Excursions Policy

Introduction

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. All school tours will be organised for the month of June in so far as is possible, to allow for standardised testing to take place in the month prior. School tours for multiple classes can be arranged for the same day, so long as they are travelling to the same venue. This will ensure that adequate staffing is available to supervise the children. Staff must clarify venue, date and travel arrangements with the school principal/ deputy principal, before a school tour is booked and information forwarded to parents. This is to ensure that the dates of tours do not clash and that adequate supervision can be provided on the tour.

This draft policy was drawn up in consultation with the staff and circulated to the Board of Management (BoM) and Parents Association for observations and feedback.

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

As always the class teacher is responsible for his/her class. However it is school policy to ensure a number of assistants accompany a teacher on trip and assign individual groups of 10 children approximately to individual teachers or parental supervisors. This number varies on the age and needs within a class. No matter what size a class is, there will always be a minimum of 3 adults on each tour. This allows for an adult to accompany an injured child to hospital while leaving 2 adults with the rest of the class.

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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, water, kitchen roll
- Own mobile phone, umbrella
- Any additional medication needed by an individual child (according to our Policy on the Administration of Medicine)

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

The teacher will be “au fait” with venue, with particular reference to educational opportunities afforded, and services available (phone, toilets, emergency facilities). Where no phone facilities exist, the leader will have a pre-arranged plan to deal with emergencies.

Weather Conditions

Parents should be aware of changing weather conditions depending on the time of year. Rain and head gear may be essential for all children and a change of clothes may be necessary, depending on the venue. **Suncream should be applied by parent before children depart on tour.**

Equality of Access

Classes may choose a venue suitable for their own level or lower but not from levels above. Teachers will ensure that venues are inclusive of pupils with needs, physical disabilities or other individual considerations. Teachers should consult with Principal about choice of venue if there are any queries of accessibility for individual children.

Uniforms

Teachers travelling together will decide whether uniforms or tracksuits should be worn by all. Children should never wear name badges in public under Child Protection guidelines.

Reports

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

Conduct on Tours

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

School Rules for tours & excursions

- Children must obey their supervisors & teachers at all times
- Children must remain seated with buckled seatbelt while the bus is in motion
- Children are not allowed to eat/drink on the bus nor are they allowed to bring electronic devices with them
- Children should not bring money with them
- 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
- Children should never attend a bathroom alone.
- Roll calls/head counts are taken when children return to the bus or centre after each segment of the tour
- Eating chewing gum **and energy drinks are** not allowed on school tours. While one treat is allowed, this should be at the parent's discretion.

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, areas of water etc.). Teachers must accompany their class throughout the tour. Shared supervision will allow for teacher's lunch and toilet breaks.

In cases of accident or emergency, a teacher will accompany an injured child to hospital, while the remaining teachers, SNAs & volunteers shall remain with the rest of the children

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Informing Parents

Teachers will ensure that Parents are given sufficient notice of;

- Itinerary & Timetable
- Cost
- Special clothing necessary and packed lunch (no glassware)

Success Criteria

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

APPENDIX 1

TOURS CHECKLIST

Before the tour

- Venue booked
- Transport booked
- Individual parents informed of travelling embargo on disruptive pupils
- Timetable organised
- Parents informed by standard letter
 - itinerary
 - timetable
 - cost
 - lunch arrangements
 - clothing necessary

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Agreement on

- Leader
- Acceptable behaviour on bus & in venue
- Departure and return times
- Extra supervisors

Day of Tour

- *Tour kits are available for each bus
- Cheques for venues

After Tour

- Report back to office
- Send thank you cards to parent volunteers etc

**check tour kits contain*

- *First aid materials, refuse sacks, illness bags, water*
- *Newspaper/kitchen rolls*
- *Umbrella per teacher, directions, correspondence*