

SCOIL MHUIRE CLARINBRIDGE CO. GALWAY

SCOIL MHUIRE SCHOOL TOUR / OUTINGS POLICY 2010

This policy was drawn up by the staff of Scoil Mhuire. The Parents' Association and Board of Management were consulted about it and subsequently it was ratified by the Board of Management. It was circulated to staff and made available to parents / guardians of the children. The purpose of the policy is to document current and future practice on school tours. The policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School:

Scoil Mhuire is a co-educational, primary school which strives to provide a well ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed (see mission statement). Our school cherishes all pupils equally and aims to aid them in achieving their true potential.

Aims of Policy:

- To benefit the intellectual, cultural and social development of our pupils.
- To present the children with a new environment in which they can observe, investigate and relate their findings to their own environment.
- To provide school tours or trips taking into account the age and interest of the children and the curriculum being covered.
- To afford all children the opportunity to go on school tour \ outings with their peers.

Tours\ outings will be arranged at the discretion of the class teacher and in conjunction with the Principal (re dates especially) and the School Tour Co-ordinator. The Board of Management will be aware that all teachers take their classes on at least one outing each year. The Board will also be aware that children who play football, hurling, soccer etc. matches away from Clarinbridge will be travelling by bus normally.

Informing Parents:

Teachers will ensure that Parents are given sufficient notice of:

- (a) Itinerary & Timetable including approximate return to school time
- (b) Cost
- (c) Special clothing necessary and packed lunch (no glassware)
- (d) Permission Slip to be signed by parent / guardian and returned to class teacher.
Remember: No permission slip signed = No Tour for that child.

Transport:

Each Class Teacher organising a tour \ outing will ensure that:

- (a) At least 3 tenders are sought by themselves or by the School Secretary for all tours
- (b) A letter, fully informing parents about the tour / outing and seeking permission for each child to go on the trip will be drawn up and a copy will be given to the Principal.
- (b) 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

All transport supplied will be suitable and well-maintained. Teachers and the Safety Officer should ensure that buses have working seat-belts and that all children use these. 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 that the safety of the children is compromised. The group will have access to the bus for the full day or for the stated duration of the outing. If the weather conditions are unfavourable the group will have the use of the bus for sheltering or for eating lunch. The incidental 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.

General Procedures

No teacher is responsible for more than 15 pupils. It is school policy to assign individual groups of 10 children approximately to individual teachers and supervisors. This becomes possible as support and special class teachers accompany mainstream classes on school outings in addition to Parent/ Guardian Supervisors..

- Children must obey their supervisors at all times
- Children must remain seated with seat belts on 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
- Eating crisps/popcorn/chewing gum is discouraged on school tours
- Buses will be left as they were found

Tour Kit:

Teachers will take a tour kit on all outings. This will be available from the Secretary in the Staff Room.

The kit will contain:-

School mobile phone, First aid materials, refuse and illness bags, sun protection cream, newspapers, kitchen roll., an umbrella.

Teachers must bring a copy of the Emergency Contacts for all the pupils in their class as this contains relevant medical details about each child in addition to contact details. Teachers ideally should also have maps of the locality in which they are visiting.

Cost Of Tour / Trip:

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. Funding may be made available through surplus monies collected or from the office for needy pupils.

Payments by Cheque

Teachers should put any cheques they receive from Parents/ Guardians towards a lodgement to the school account that is equal to a payment on the day. They may have to put cash received with cheques to achieve this. The Lodgement book for AIB Oranmore will be available from the Principal.

Spending money:

Teachers may notify their group of a recommendation on the upper limit on spending money. If so, this will be based on age and venue details.

Venues \ Tours List:

Files of possible school tour venues will be kept in the staff room for all teachers to examine clearly marked as to what year they apply to. This will include the previous school year's file of brochures. Teachers should be conscious of the likely "busier" days for travelling.

Classes travelling Together:

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" and carry the school mobile phone. All teachers should be familiar with details of the venue, with particular reference to educational opportunities afforded, and services available (phone, toilets, emergency facilities). The leader will have a prearranged plan to deal with emergencies.

Extra Personal Vacation Course Days & School Tours

Generally, teachers should always consult with the Principal as regards the possible date for taking a school tour to ensure it does not clash with a planned school event, etc. In as far as is possible, teachers should avoid taking EPV Course Days on dates that a class has a school tour. This is because the number of classes that are available to receive pupils for the day becomes more limited.

Weather Conditions:

Raincoats and head gear if weather forecast indicates poor weather likely will be essential for all children and a change of clothes may be necessary, depending on the venue and the activities. Sunscreen and sun hats should also be brought by pupils if hot weather expected.

School Uniforms / School Tracksuit

Teachers travelling together will decide whether uniforms / tracksuit should be worn depending on type of tour. There are advantages to children wearing uniforms for identity purposes.

Lunches \ Snacks

The Tour Organising Teacher will tell children what food if any should be brought. Packed lunches should follow the usual guidelines re the school's Healthy Eating Policy. No glassware is permitted.

Electronic Equipment & Mobile Phones:

In general, it is better for children not to bring electronic equipment with them on school tours \ trips. This is because they can easily be lost or mislaid on such a busy day. It will be up to the teacher to clearly state what hand-held consoles will be allowed. Any such equipment must have age-appropriate software only. Cameras on such equipment and on phones should not be used at any time. All cameras should not be used in dressing rooms. Some music electronic equipment such as ipods, mp3 or mp4 players are allowed provided that children do not use them to go on the internet but “chattable” devices such as Nintendo DS are not. Bus drivers should be told by the Tour Organising Teacher to turn off wi-fi on the bus if it’s available.

As a general rule, children are not allowed to bring mobile phones to school. They have access to contact with their parents/guardians, as indeed do parents/guardians in terms of contacting children, to the school landline phone each day. In addition, teachers will have the school mobile phone with them while on trips and may be contacted if absolutely necessary through this. Parents \ Guardians are made aware of the school mobile phone number which is 0860233013.

However on school tours and outings where the older children will not return to school from their tour/outing until after 3pm, children are allowed to bring mobile phones but must present them to a teacher in charge immediately when boarding the bus. The teacher(s) will keep them in a bag on the bus. Teachers will use their discretion if a child absolutely needs to speak to their parents/guardians during the trip.

When teachers judge it to be appropriate on the journey home, they will hand back the mobile phones to the children and allow them to contact their parents/guardians to inform them of the likely return to school time for collection at the school.

Policy of Inclusion:

It will be our policy to include all children in school tours. Decisions on any exclusions rests with the class teacher in consultation with the Principal.

Reports re Problems:

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 and Safety Officer who is also the School Tour Co-ordinator.

Behaviour on Tours:

Pupil's behaviour on tours will comply with the standard set down in the School's Code of Behaviour. In the unlikely event that 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 unless parents accompany the child. 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 15:1

(adult) and will preferably be 10:1. Any Support Teachers who are accompanying the Class Teachers on tour should make themselves aware from the Class Teachers of relevant behavioural \ medical issues. Class Teachers should also make any accompanying Parents aware of such issues where deemed relevant.

No teacher should be responsible for more than 15 pupils. It is preferable to assign individual groups of 10 children approximately to individual teachers and supervisors. This becomes possible as support and special class teachers accompany mainstream classes on school outings in addition to Parent/ Guardian Supervisors.

- Children must obey their supervisors at all times
- Children must remain seated with seat belts on 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
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Entering & Exiting the Bus

Great care should be taken to ensure that all children enter and exit the bus safely.

When preparing to go on the Bus

- * The children, under the supervision of the teacher will line up in an orderly manner at a safe place and a safe distance from the bus.
- * The children will walk to the bus and enter it under the supervision of the teacher and supervisors.

When exiting the Bus

- * The teacher will exit the bus first.
- * The children will remain in their seats until they are called to come forward.
- * The teacher will direct the children to walk to a nearby assembly point where a teacher \ supervisor supervises them until the group has safely formed an orderly line.

Vetting of Supervisors

For once-off events such as School Tours and Outings, schools will require Parents/ Guardians who help supervise the children, to complete a statement in regards to their suitability to supervise children. This is attached.

Plan for dealing with Emergencies: sick / injured children while on school trip:

1. Follow the School's Policy on the administration of Medicine and First Aid
2. Seek immediate medical attention and call an ambulance if necessary.
3. Contact the injured child's parents.
4. Phone the school contact / the Principal / Deputy Principal/Assistant Principal .
5. A teacher should accompany a sick/injured child in the ambulance to hospital.

Success Criteria

- Positive experiences for all
- Children having a safe enjoyable experience
- Teacher/Parent reports and feedback

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually in the 2nd Term.

Ratification

This policy was discussed and ratified by the Board of Management on

19th October 2010

Signed

R. Allnatty

(Chairperson BOM)

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

Agreement on

- Leader
- Spending money
- Acceptable behaviour on bus
- Extra supervisors (minimum 15:1)

Day of Tour

Tour leader will ensure;

- Tour kit is available
- Cheques for venues
- Cheques for bus
- Money for coffee
- Tip for drivers

After Tour

- Report back to office
- Send thank you cards to parents if appropriate etc

ORGANISER CHECKS TOUR KIT

**Check tour kits contain*

- *First aid materials, refuse sacks, illness bags*
- *School Mobile phone if returning after 3pm*
- *Newspaper/kitchen rolls*
- *Phone cards, umbrella per teacher, map of locality*