Scoil Ghormáin Naofa

Castletown, Gorey, Co. Wexford.

Chairperson: School Principal:

Joe O’Shaughnessy Emer Russell

**School Tours/Excursions Policy**

**Introduction**

This policy was drawn up by the staff and circulated to the Board of Management (BoM) and Parents Association 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 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**

The tours are structured in such a way as to provide an educational aspect in addition to an entertainment and recreational value.

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 obey 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
* Eating crisps/popcorn/chewing gum is discouraged on school tours.

**Success Criteria**

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

**Conditions of Hiring**

All transport supplied, will be suitable and well-maintained with fully functional seatbelts for each passenger. Pricing will be competitive. 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 compromise.

**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, newspapers, kitchen roll
* Class list and contact numbers for parents/guardians

**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** Teachers travelling together will agree and notify their group of the upper limit on spending money. This will be based on age and venue.

**Venue**

Tours will be booked early in the 1st or 2nd term for a date in the 3rd term.

**Weather Conditions**

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

**Uniforms**

School uniforms will be worn for identification purposes. Summer versions of the school uniform (as previously identified to parents) may be worn for warmer weather.

**Reports**

Where problems arise either with venue or transport teachers will report back to 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. This may be part of an individual behaviour plan.

**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).

**Informing Parents**

Teachers will ensure that Parents are given sufficient notice of:

* Itinerary & Timetable
* Cost
* Special clothing necessary 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.

**TOURS CHECKLIST**

**Before the tour**

* Venue booked
* Transport booked
* Individual parents informed of travelling embargo (where applicable)
* Timetable organised
* Parents informed by standard letter
  + itinerary
  + timetable
  + cost
  + lunch arrangements
  + clothing necessary

**Day of Tour**

Tour leader will ensure;

* \*Tour kits are available for each bus
* Cheques for venues (where applicable)
* Cheques for bus (where applicable)

**Tour Kits**

*\*check tour kits contain*

* *First aid materials, refuse sacks, illness bags*
* *Newspaper/kitchen rolls*
* *Class lists with phone numebrs for parents*

**Ratification & Communication**

The BOM officially ratified this policy in May 2019

All parents will be able to access this policy via the office and on website following ratification and thereafter prior to enrolment.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson BOM Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_