



## Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan.

### School Tour Policy

#### Guidelines for planning and travelling on overnight school trips.

1. Tour leader and/or Deputy tour leader to obtain permission from the Principal and the Board of Management to take students on a trip. The letter should clearly set out the education benefits of the trip. It is preferable that all trips involving more than a two night stay are planned a year in advance. This is to give all students the opportunity to budget for the trip.  
D.E.S. circular M20/04 states “Educational tours of more than one day duration should be arranged to coincide with normal school holiday periods.” Deviation from this can only be sanctioned by the Board of Management with conditions regarding payment of supervision put in place. Any trip that is sanctioned by the Board of Management to take place on a school day(s) should generally be in line with the teacher to student ratio place system operated by the travel company. (As a guide, most travel agents offer a ratio of 1:8, with the exception of ski trips which offer a ratio of 1:10). This is to minimise disruption to the school in the absence of the teachers travelling. D.E.S. M20/04. “The numbers of teachers absent should be kept to the minimum level required.” However, the final decision will be at the discretion of the Principal.
2. Tour leader completes all planning folder requirements.
3. Select a tour company (with an IATA rating), get an outline itinerary and a price. It is advisable to seek advice from people who have gone on other trips regarding which company to use.
4. The trip should be offered to students and full details should be supplied in the form of a letter to be sent home. This letter should clearly state the educational benefits of the trip.
5. Students should be informed of the procedure for selection of students in the event of over subscription. A student’s disciplinary record can be taken into consideration. A raffle for places will be held where the application of places is in excess of the number of places offered. A waiting list will then come into effect for students not offered a

place. Students refused a place on one trip (for disciplinary grounds) in a given year should not be offered a place on another trip, unless it has been decided by the principal that the cause of initial refusal has ceased to be an issue.

6. An expression of interest deposit should be collected from students. This deposit is used to illicit the numbers interested in travelling. This list should be reviewed with Principal, Deputy Principals, Year Heads and Form teachers before any offer of a place is made.
7. Adults travelling on the tour may come from different departments and areas within the school structure. The tour leader should clearly define his/her role and responsibilities in co-operation and consultation with the team members. Team members may include:
  - Principal & Deputy Principals
  - Assistant Principals.
  - Special Duty Teachers
  - Teachers without posts
  - Temporary Teachers/Part time Teachers
  - Secretarial Staff
  - Caretaking Staff
  - Parents
  - Members of the Board of Management
  - S.N.A.s
8. The Principal should be consulted on the list of staff asked to travel, prior to places being offered by the tour leader. Ultimately, the final decision is at the discretion of the Principal.
9. The Principal should be furnished with a full itinerary of the trip and all contact details prior to departure.
10. Each team member will take equal responsibility for the students under the direction of the tour leader. Responsibilities in relation to supervision and the imposing of sanctions whilst on tour should be the responsibility of the tour leader, deputy tour leader and all team members.
11. Each tour leaving the school merits separate and specific discussion on supervision and the imposing of sanctions.

## **Money Matters**

1. Students are encouraged not to spend excessively on school trips.
2. All money should be paid directly to the School Tour Company where applicable and by due dates which will be specified well in advance.
3. All money collected for a trip payable to the school should be paid using the online Easypay system.
4. Students are responsible for their own spending needs and spending money.
5. Receipts should be kept for all contingency money spent on the trip.
6. If there is money left over, students must be given a refund. Students must sign for the refund and parents/guardians will be informed by text of its return.
7. A set of accounts of all monies paid in and out should be formulated and be available to the Principal at all times.
8. Refunds can only be given in accordance with the contract made with the travel company. Deposits paid to agents are non-refundable.

### **Passports**

1. All students/staff are responsible for obtaining their own passports for overseas trips. A copy of the student passports should be obtained well in advance of the trip.
2. The staff collect the passports before the trip commences for safe keeping and for ease of passage during the trip.
3. Passports remain the responsibility of the tour leader and team members for the duration of the tour. They are only given out when needed. After use they should be immediately collected and held by the tour leader or preferably in a hotel safe.

### **E.H.I.C.**

- The E.H.I.C. form provides medical insurance for students and staff from European Countries while travelling in other E.U. countries.

- In the event of an accident or illness the student may be taken to a local doctor or hospital.
- The responsibility for finding a doctor or hospital when travelling between centres lies with the tour leaders.
- E.H.I.C. cards are available from local H.S.E. offices.
- Each health board has its own form and students with different county addresses must fill in the form relevant to their county.
- Apply for these forms no later than six weeks prior to departure.
- Students must give the tour leader a photocopy of their card prior to departure. The card should be handed in with the passports and be retained at all times by the tour leader/staff members.

### **Student Medical History**

- Some students may suffer from an illness which requires constant medication.
- A medical history should be given by parents/guardians on a student information form handed in with the first deposit (not the expression of interest deposit). This form should include contact numbers, allergies and medication to be taken.
- Underlying medical conditions (e.g. Asthma, Cancer) need to be notified to the insurance company as supplementary payments may be needed to obtain full insurance.
- Tour leader should be informed by parents/guardians of specific details regarding their daughter nearer the time of departure.
- It is the responsibility of the tour leader to communicate with the parents/guardians on matters of insurance eligibility. Subsequently, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to establish if the insurance will cover pre-existing conditions.
- Tour leader must negotiate all claims with the insurance agency. Leaders are legally responsible for all claims up until the student turns 21 years. It is vitally important that all records/details etc of accidents or medical treatment be kept on record until such time that the student reaches 21 years.

#### **Dental Treatment**

- Students will receive dental treatment if advised by a medical practitioner.

#### **Medical Emergencies**

- In the event of an emergency, the parents/guardians will always be contacted first.
- Tour leaders will act on medical advice presented in the event of an accident or emergency where it is not possible to contact parents, guardians or next of kin, either by telephone or due to time considerations. Details of emergency contacts are to be included in the student's information form (see student medical history.)

#### **Financial**

- Any/all medical costs (including transportation and prescription charges) paid by the tour leader are to be repaid by parents/guardians within a period of three weeks after the return of the trip. While such expenses may be eligible for an insurance claim it is unreasonable to expect the school to cover such costs pending an insurance claim.

### **Meeting parents**

- Parents/Guardians should be kept informed in writing of trip details.
- Two to three weeks prior to departure a meeting of the students and their parents/guardians should be held. At this meeting the parents/guardians should be given the itinerary, along with addresses and contact telephone numbers of accommodation. They should also be given the number of the school mobile to contact in an emergency. Teachers should not give their personal numbers to parents/students.
- All students travelling must attend this meeting and sign in at the door.
- The trip rules should be signed by students and parents at this meeting.
- The date for this meeting should be set well in advance to accommodate forward planning for all expected to attend.
- All staff travelling should attend this meeting.
- Parental attendance is compulsory and any parent/guardian unavailable must make alternative arrangements to meet the tour leader/or a teacher who is travelling.

### **Supervision of students**

The following are suggestions for supervising on school trips.

1. Assign each teacher a small number of students. The teacher can call his/her group together at specific times in busy areas and when getting on and off buses, trains, boats, aeroplanes etc. This saves time and minimises the possibility of leaving a student behind.
2. Count students every time they get on/off a bus, train, boat or plane.
3. Arrange specific meeting points to meet students when on a day tour, at various times throughout the day, i.e. Entrance to Disney World, specific shopping mall or the end of a ski slope.
4. Prior to trip departure all students should put the school mobile number into their phone contact list.
5. Junior students, especially first years, should not be left alone for any length or period of time while in big cities. They should be assigned to a teacher to stay with at all times unless they are in a very confined space.
6. In the unlikely event of separation from the group, all students will be given instructions on what to do specific to each tour/location.

### **Teacher Corridor Duty**

1. Decide on a rota for corridor duty (night time).
2. Decide on a rota for calling students in the morning.
3. It is preferable for teachers to work in pairs.
4. Ideally, teachers on night duty should do so until an agreed time. (This must be flexible and situation specific).
5. Students should be aware that there are teachers in the corridor.
6. Students should have teacher room numbers in case of emergency during the night.
7. Male staff members should not enter any student bedrooms alone, unless in case of emergency.

### **Conduct of students and discipline**

1. Students to be addressed by Principal and Deputy Principal before departure.
2. Students must adhere to school rules at all times. Obviously, not all school rules are applicable whilst on a trip.
3. Students must follow the rules of the hotel/hostel where they are staying.
4. Students must be well behaved on public or private transport while on the trip.
5. Students are responsible for leaving their seats on buses, trains, boats and planes tidy.
6. Students are responsible for leaving their hotel/hostel room tidy.
7. Students should do a damage report of their rooms upon arrival and hand it to the tour leader. This precaution is to be taken in the event of breakage or damage to property in the room before students have stayed in the room for any length of time. (Rooms should be inspected by teachers upon departure).
8. Students must be polite and mannerly at all times.
9. Students must treat each other and staff with respect. Bullying will not be tolerated. (See list of rules)
10. Re: Mobile Phones: Normal school rules apply.
11. School Management have the right to refuse permission to travel if there is a serious breach of the code of discipline in the weeks/months preceding the travel date.

### **Sanctions**

1. Any student found to be in breach of the rules of the trip/school will be subject to disciplinary action while on the trip and upon return to school.
2. The sanctions on a school trip can be imposed at the discretion of the tour leader and may not follow the sanction system in place in the formal school setting. E.g. Students who misbehave on a ski trip may be withdrawn from a ski lesson. Students who are late for something may be asked to assist with the morning wake up call.

### **Serious breaches of discipline**

Serious breaches of discipline may result in a student being sent home and parents/guardians will have to cover the expense.

The following is a list of what constitutes serious misbehaviour:

1. Use or Possession of alcohol/illegal substances.
2. Misuse of legal substances (Tippex, solvents etc).
3. Students in out of bounds areas at night.
4. Disruptive behaviour on plane, boat, coach or in the hotel/hostel.
5. Theft/criminal damage to property of others.

The above list is not exhaustive and other behaviour/incidences may constitute unacceptable or serious misbehaviour.

### **Eligibility of suitable Tour Leader**

The role of the tour leader is one of immense responsibility. It should not be taken lightly. The work, planning and preparation necessary for a school tour is time consuming not only during the trip but also well in advance and for a period of time after the trip.

The tour leader should:

1. Be a permanent member of staff.
2. Have, where possible, previous experience of being on and/or planning other school trips.
3. Be able to work as part of a team.

### **Advice on selecting a team of adults to go on a school trip.**

1. Tour leader should pick a Deputy leader. This person should be someone the leader trusts to carry out the trip and all details involved in such, in the event that the tour leader cannot travel. This may occur at any time in the lead up to the trip or in the event that the tour leader must return home at short notice or is sick while on the trip.
2. In the incidence of a trip that is subject based (e.g. Geography, French etc.) preference of teacher places should be given to the other teachers in that specific department, over and above other teachers.
3. Team members must be chosen for their ability to act as a team and consideration should also be given to the personalities going.
4. Experience – First time tour leaders are encouraged to bring at least some staff who have previous experience of school trips.
5. Pick people you trust, who you know will work with you and will do their fair share. It can be a long time away together.

### **Provision for students with Special Needs**

Students with special needs, who have S.N.A.s, should not be excluded from trips. All reasonable efforts should be made to include/facilitate these students. It is necessary for a student with a S.N.A. for her S.N.A. (or another suitable person, usually a parent/guardian) to travel with her. The cost of this is to be borne by the parents/guardians.

Some trips are simply not suitable for a student with special needs to participate in. The ultimate decision rests with the Principal and the Board of Management after consultation with the tour teacher/leader.

### **Risk Assessment**

#### **Appendix:**

The following risk assessment should be carried out prior to travel on each tour.

- The group leader should identify any/all potential risks to the health and safety of the students whilst on the trip.
- The required safety measures must be proportionate to the real risks involved and must be adequate to eliminate, control or minimise the risk of injury.
- Supply contact details of the nearest hospitals and doctor's surgery
- Supply a plan of action in the event of an emergency
- Identify the means of covering any/all medical expenses and how they will be recouped by either the insurance agency and/or the parents/guardians of the student involved.

#### **Please note:**

**All relevant school policies will apply to all trips and tours undertaken in the school's name.**

Signed:  Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed:  Principal/Secretary, Board of Management

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018



**Appendix 1**

<b>Details of School Tour</b>
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Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.	60010P
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Tour Dates		
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From:	To:	School Days:
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Brief Outline of Tour:		
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Number of students Participating by Year Group:	Total Number of students participating:
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Expected Benefit to accrue from the tour:
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<b>Adults accompanying the students</b>		
Class Teacher/Tour Lead	Number of Other Teachers	Number of Other Adults
Tour Leader:		
Contact Details of Tour Leader:		
Deputy Tour Leader:		
Contact Details of Deputy Tour:		

School Tour Company: (if applicable):
Total Cost of Tour (including Contingency & Supervision, where applicable) :

<b>Confirmations</b>		
That appropriate arrangements are made in accordance with Circular PPT 01/03 for those classes whose teachers are absent with the tour.	Yes	No
That adequate insurance is in place to cover all risks while on tour	Yes	No
That parental permission has been secured for each student who is to participate on the tour	Yes	No
Budget for tour attached	Yes	No
Risk Assessment Plan in place	Yes	No

*Note: Monies must be paid directly to Tour Company when applicable. If paying directly to the school monies must be paid either by using the online Easypay system or by cheque or postal order.*