

St Kevin's College



Policy on School Tours

March 2015

Introduction

School tours have the potential to provide students with experiences that complement and supplement their curricular and extra-curricular experiences – aesthetic, cultural, emotional, sporting, social etc. Tours also enhance the collaborative relationships between staff and students and foster communication across classes and year groups. As such, tours significantly enable St Kevin’s College to achieve its goals for the holistic development of its students more effectively than might not otherwise be the case.

School tours are categorised under two headings: those which are demanded by the particular curriculum subject, such as field trips and those which deepen the student’s knowledge and understanding of the cultural, social and physical aspects of the areas or countries visited. Student tours to develop linguistic skills are a good example of the latter.

Objectives

- To assist staff in the planning of tours and outings, so that they are aware of all necessary precautions to provide for the health and safety of staff and students.
- To ensure that tours and outings are organized efficiently.
- To clarify expectations of behaviour for all tours and to outline the conditions whereby a student may be refused permission to be included on a trip.
- To involve all members of the school community in ratifying this policy on tours/outings in order to promote partnership, ownership and implementation of an active living policy.

Procedures for Tours

1. The approval of any school tour must be sought and obtained from the Principal.
2. Board approval shall be required for each tour.
3. It is for the Principal to decide which teachers will organize the tour and accompany the pupils. Prior to departure, one teacher/teachers shall be appointed as tour co-

ordinator(s). It is recognised that the organisation of or participation in any school tour is voluntary on the part of teachers.

4. Once the Board of Management has been appraised with all the details of a tour and has given its approval, then the tour leader(s) is/are fully empowered to proceed with the tour.
5. Adequate arrangements for supervision of all students should be arranged as well as appropriate insurance. The ratio of members of staff to students shall be one to ten, for trips or tours in Ireland or to Great Britain and one to eight for tours to the rest of Europe or farther afield.
6. Students and parents/guardians shall be acquainted in advance of the tour with rules, regulations and special requirements of that tour. Parents/guardians shall be given an outline of the purpose, itinerary, dates and an estimated cost of the tour before a deposit is sought. Each student and his parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given a form outlining the rules, regulations and special requirements and they shall be required to sign that (i) they understand the rules, ect and (ii) they are willing to abide by them at all times.
7. Students and parent(s)/guardian(s) shall acquaint themselves with the school's Code of Discipline and agree to abide by it. Each student and his parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given a form outlining any additional rules, regulations and special requirements and shall be required to sign this.
8. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be required to sign a consent form which will allow medical advice to be followed in the event of injury/illness and where it is not possible to contact them in the time available. In the event of accident or injury, medical opinion will be sought immediately and best practice will be followed. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted as soon as is practically possible. The Board has full confidence in the staff and their decisions.
9. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be required to give details of phone numbers for contact in the event of an emergency on a twenty-four hour basis for the duration of the tour. Mobile telephone will be supplied to tour leader for school tours. The number of the phone will be given to parent(s)/guardian(s) and students prior to departure for use only in case of emergency.
10. Students on tours within the European Union shall be required to have a completed EHIC form and a valid passport.

The Board of Management specifically wishes to draw attention to the following:

- School tours are seen as a privilege which available only to students with impeccable disciplinary records. The board retains the right to refuse a student's application to go on tour. Students must have paid their registration fee in full, including voluntary contribution, if they are to be considered to go on tour.
- Student co-operation is imperative on tour. Students must obey teachers instructions at all times. Students must stay with the tour group. A student may not go off by himself or wander off anywhere alone: students must stay in groups at all times.
- Students must not purchase alcohol or tobacco products for any purpose at any stage of the tour.
- The use of alcohol or other non-medically prescribed drugs by students on a tour is absolutely forbidden.
- In the event of gross misconduct the student may be sent home early. Parents/guardians are then liable for travel expenses for the student and the supervising teacher.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make the school aware of medical issues or allergies students may have.
- When calculating the final cost of the tour a provision will be made to cover the supervision/substitution costs arising from the absence of the teachers accompanying the tour.

Emergency Procedures

- In the event of a serious incident/accident as many members of staff as is possible/practical in the circumstances shall come together and decide on a course of action. The details and the decision(s) taken shall be put in writing as close to the event as is reasonable. The Board accepts that in cases where there is lack of consensus over the course of action, the tour leader (where available) has the final decision.

- Tour leaders and all members of staff accompanying the tour must ensure that, if it becomes necessary to question a student about a potentially serious matter, another adult be present. In addition to the Code of Discipline, students must adhere to the law of the country which they visit. In the event of a breach of this, due process of law will follow.
- The tour leader shall be given a sum of money (amount to be decided by the Board) which may be used in the event of an emergency.
- All school policies particularly Substance abuse policy (alcohol & drugs) and ICT/ Acceptable Use (posting on social media) apply to all school tours.

Overnight Trips

Overnight trips form an important part of the Transition Year programme. The Board of Management is grateful to the TY coordinator and others who organise and participate in such trips.

- Written consent of parent(s) / guardian(s) is a prerequisite for participation.
- A high standard of behaviour is expected of the participating students.
- A sufficient number of teachers must accompany the students to guarantee adequate supervision
- The teachers on the trip shall take such care to ensure the health and safety of the students as is reasonable in the circumstances.
- They shall also take reasonable precautions, as they would when in school, to protect their own good name and reputation if dealing with students in one-to-one situations
- The classes of the teachers on a trip shall be covered in accordance with the prevailing agreement on such cover
- Prior to departure, the Principal shall be given a detailed itinerary and list of participants

Field-trips/Outings

- As field-trips form an integral part of the school curriculum in a number of subject areas, they shall be encouraged and facilitated, if at all possible.
- Adequate notice of any proposed trip must be given to the Principal.
- Written consent of parent(s)/guardian(s) is a prerequisite for participation.
- A high standard of behaviour is expected of the participating students
- A sufficient number of teachers must accompany the students to guarantee adequate supervision
- The teacher(s) on the field-trip shall take such care to ensure the health and safety of the students as is reasonable in the circumstances
- The classes of the teachers on the trip shall be covered in accordance with the prevailing agreement on such cover.

Occasional class or year-group outings, not necessarily linked to any subject area, are to be encouraged as they help to foster a positive attitude among the participating students. The requirements for such outings are similar to those for field-trips.

Insurance Cover

All officially-organised tours, trips, outings and field-trips are covered by the school's insurance policy.

This Policy has been ratified by the Board of Management in conjunction with the Parents and Students council and will be reviewed in September 2018.