

Coláiste Muire, Tuar Mhic Éadaigh **Polasaí Turas Scoile**

The Board of Management, Principal and staff of Coláiste Muire recognise school trips as an integral part of school life. These serve to enrich the academic curriculum taught in the classroom and socially and personally develop the students who participate in them. Some trips are organised as part of the course to be followed in a subject area. Other outings and trips are additional to the curriculum and are not deemed a core activity. The lengths of trips may vary from a short local visit to a loner trip involving staying away for several days.

School trips outings and tours are a privilege reserved for students who meet minimum standards of behaviour while at school. Students who do not meet minimum standards of behaviour, as decided by the school management, may be refused permission to participate in a school outing. The Principal reserves the right to disallow a student from participation in a school trip if, in his/her opinion, the health or safety of the student or other students or teachers is at risk.

Approval

1. Prior to booking any trip, the Tour Leader must request permission from the Board of Management and Principal/ Deputy Principal to take students on a school trip. This request must be submitted in writing and should include travel dates, tour company details, insurance details, accommodation details, the travel itinerary, the agreed pupil/teacher ratio and the total price of the tour.
2. Prior to seeking permission, the Tour Leader must ensure the proposed tour dates do not impinge upon the normal teaching routine of the school.
3. All Tour Leaders must ensure that tours conform to the criteria set down in the Department of Education and Science circular M20/04 relating to Educational Tours by School Tours.
4. All trips must be booked with a reputable tour company.

Tour Leader

One teacher should be nominated as the Tour Leader; whose responsibility it will be to ensure that the tour is conducted in accordance with agreed standards.

A tour team should be drawn up as soon as possible, with a reserve list, in the event that a member of the team is subsequently unable to travel. Members of this team can be drawn from:

- (a) Teaching staff
- (b) Special needs assistants
- (c) Secretarial staff.

Supervision

The number of staff which accompanies a group will be influenced by a number of actors including;

The number of students travelling.
The age of the students.
The location of the trip.
Additional supervision which may be provided at the trip destination.
If the group will be dividing into smaller groups, each requiring supervision.
The type of transport uses.

Certain trips may facilitate shopping or recreation which may not be directly supervised. This situation will usually be indicated on the permission slip, itinerary or information letter sent to parents/guardian. The Coláiste expects that all students travelling on an extended tour will display a level of maturity commensurate with their age. Students on trips which involve an overnight stay in Ireland or abroad will not be supervised on a 24-hour basis and all extended school tours will involve periods of time without direct supervision. Parents who are concerned that such a level of supervision is inappropriate should not permit their son/daughter to take part in such trips.

Costs

1. The cost of a trip should be agreed in advance and take into consideration the ability of pupils and their parents to pay.
2. The income and expenditure of funds associated with the trip should conform fully to the accounting practices of the school.
 - (i) Money should be collected in instalments on specific dates. No money should be accepted without giving a receipt in the school journal.
 - (ii) All money received should be lodged through the school office to the school bank account.
 - (iii) All payment of deposits, instalments etc. should be made by cheque from the school account.
 - (iv) In the event a pupil is to be refunded money, this must also be refunded through the school journal for record purposes.

Students who withdraw from a trip after a deposit, or full monies has been paid, may not be entitled to a refund. Similarly, a student who is prevented from travelling for disciplinary or safety reasons will not be entitled to a refund.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians in conjunction with students to ensure that all documents necessary for travel abroad e.g. passport, identity care are up to date and in order. The Coláiste will not take responsibility for a student whose personal documentation is not in order and who is prevented from travelling abroad as a result.

Student Code of Behaviour

The code of behaviour of Coláiste Muire is to be observed in full during the duration of the school trip, and should be reiterated to students, parents and teachers prior to travelling. Insofar as possible the code should be positive and consistent with the

objectives of the trip, while reflecting the age and maturity level of those students involved. Tour leaders should explicitly address:

- the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs
- the full participation by pupils in the activities of the trip
- behaviour during leisure time
- travelling on private/ public transport
- respect for and compliance with local customs and laws, particularly while travelling abroad.
- behaviour of pupils in hotels and other accommodation.

Tour leaders should check all rooms before students access them to make note of any damage done prior to arrival. Vacated rooms should also be inspected for damage.

Sanctions on Tour

Should a student be guilty of a minor misbehaviour, the incident should be dealt with swiftly by the Tour Leader, often by means of a verbal warning. The Tour Leader may however feel that specific sanctions are required such as:

- the student missing a half day activity
- the student missing out on a specific activity e.g. cinema, bowling

Any student receiving such a sanction must be supervised by a teacher from the tour team. Further sanctions may be imposed by the Principal when the student returns to school.

Where a student is guilty of a more serious misbehaviour the tour leader may decide to phone the student's parents/ guardians to inform them of the incident.

If the misbehaviour is ongoing and deemed to be dangerous the student may be sent home.

In the event of this happening the parents will be informed, and if necessary a teacher will travel home with the offending student.

In the case of any serious/ criminal incidents the parents/ guardians will be informed and the matter will be handed over to the local police.

All incidents of serious misbehaviour must be reported to the Principal on return to school, and will be noted on the student record.

Contact Information

It is the responsibility of the Tour Leader to ensure that complete and up- to- date contact information is left available in the school office for the duration of the trip in the event of an emergency. This list should include:

- (i) names, addresses and home contact numbers of all those travelling.
- (ii) a contact number for the tour leader.
- (iii) a copy of the travel itinerary, hotel address, phone numbers etc.

Professional Responsibility of Staff

Because of the burden of responsibility upon teachers acting in locus parentis, a statement of the professional responsibilities and duties of staff for the duration of the tour should be agreed.

Insurance and Indemnity

School trips within Ireland (and Northern Ireland) by pupils and teachers are normally covered by the school insurance, provided the Board of Management properly approved it.

We also have a mandatory 24-hour insurance on all our pupils, which covers both in and out of school activities.

However, for trips abroad, all tour leaders should ensure that when booking with a reputable tour company, adequate insurance cover is also provided.

Notice to parents

Parents should be given notice outlining the following:

- i. itinerary and duration of the tour
- ii. total cost involved and method of payment
- iii. code of behaviour to be observed
- iv. insurance information

Parents/ guardians should be made aware of their duty to inform the school of any relevant health and safety issues which might affect their child while on the school trip.

All parents/ guardians must sign a permission slip as an essential pre- requisite for participation of their children in any school trip.

It is essential that all students are collected at the school premises, by a parent/guardian, in the aftermath of any trip that arrives back outside of school hours.

Signed: _____

Date: _____