



# Scoil Mhuire

Email: [secretary@scoilmhuireshankill.ie](mailto:secretary@scoilmhuireshankill.ie) Principal: Brian Coleman

## 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

### Transport

The transport organiser of the tour will ensure that:

- Tenders are sought for all tours
- 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 of Hiring

All transport supplied, will be suitable and well-maintained and are operating within the current safety standards. 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.

- All drivers are Garda vetted through their company of employment.
- 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 traveling, but teachers have the right to intervene if it is felt the safety of the children is compromised:
- The teacher will check that all children, once seated, put on their seatbelts.
- The group will have access to the bus for the full day.
- If the weather conditions are unfavourable the group will have the use of the bus for sheltering or for eating lunch.

- The 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

### **Tour Kit**

Teachers will take a tour kit on all outings. The kit will contain:

- First aid kit,
- Mobile phone - charged
- Contact information of all the parents/guardians of the children on the trip.
- Refuse sacks

### **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.

### **Weather Conditions**

Teachers will advise the children about suitable clothing for the venue. Weather conditions will be taken into account. A change of clothes may be necessary, depending on the venue.

Parents should apply sunscreen before the trip and supply the child with some for during the trip if the venue is outdoors.

Some trips may be postponed due to unsuitable weather conditions.

### **Tours list**

A file of suitable tours for all classes will be available in the office. Classes may choose a venue suitable for their own level. Teachers will ensure that venues are suitable for pupils with special needs.

### **Uniforms**

Teachers/Principal will decide whether uniforms should be worn.

### **Reports**

Where problems arise either with venue or transport teachers will report back to the transport/tour organiser who will in turn will discuss it with the Principal.

All pupil injuries must also be reported and an accident report sheet must be filled out and kept on file in the school's office.

### **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.

In the event that a child's behaviour on a school trip doesn't comply with the school's Code of Behaviour, the teacher will immediately contact the Principal and parents to advise them of this. If feasible, the parents will be asked to collect the child. If this is not feasible, the child will be required to remain with the teacher in charge for the remainder of the trip and will not be allowed to participate in activities that might endanger himself/herself or others.

### **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).

Since April 2016 new legislation regarding vetting has come into effect. In line with statutory requirements it is necessary for parents who volunteer to help with tours and outings to be Garda vetted. Parents must complete a vetting form every three years. Forms will be available in the school office.

A minimum of two Garda vetted adults are required for supervision purposes on all school tours. This applies even when the supervision ratio is within the minimum 15:1.

- 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

### **Informing Parents**

Parents will be given sufficient notice of the school trip. When arranging a school trip a signed form will be obtained from parents or guardians indicating their consent to the pupil going on the trips outside the school's locality. The form will also contain the following information:

- Destination, itinerary & timetable
- Cost
- Special clothing necessary
- Packed lunch requirements as necessary

### **Field trips**

Field trips 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 field trip.

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 field trip e.g. raingear, suitable footwear etc.

No child is to be refused participation in any proposed activity because of family inability to pay.

### **Success Criteria**

- Positive experiences for all

- Children having a safe enjoyable experience
- Teacher/Parent Satisfaction

This policy was ratified by the Board Of Management on .....

Signed..... Chairperson B.O.M.