

Scoil Mhuire gan Smál,
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School Tour /Fieldtrip Policy

1. General Policy

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal supports and encourages school tours. It concurs with Department of Education guidelines which state that

"the objective of educational tours for schools should be that they be of benefit in the intellectual, cultural and social development of the pupils taking part in them and any activity, in connection with the tour, which is in conflict with this objective is to be avoided".

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.

To reflect a world which is developing and changing, current educational philosophy recommends that students have first-hand experience wherever possible. School tours allow learning to extend beyond the walls of the classroom and as such are an integral part of a balanced educational process. School tours require good preparation and organisation to optimise the learning experience for students.

The Board would hope that all school trips and tours would have a beneficial effect on pupils, enhancing both their academic prowess and their social skills.

Students and parents/guardians shall be acquainted in advance of the tour with rules, regulations and special requirements of that tour.

2. Procedures for Tours/Trips

1. The approval of any school tour/trip 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/trip and

accompany the pupils. Prior to departure, one teacher/teachers shall be appointed as tour leader(s). It is recognised that the organisation of or participation in any school tour/trip is voluntary on the part of teachers.

4. Once the Board of Management has been appraised of all the details of a tour/trip and has given its approval, then the tour/trip leader(s) is/are fully empowered to proceed with the tour/trip.

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. This ratio may be increased at the discretion of the Principal.

6. Students and parents/guardians shall be acquainted in advance of the tour/trip with rules, regulations and special requirements of that tour. Parents/guardians shall be given an outline of the purpose, itinerary, dates and a cost of the tour before a deposit is sought. Each student and her 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 etc. and (ii) they are willing to abide by them at all times.

7. A list of all students intending to travel must be submitted to the Principal prior to booking the inclusion of particular students in a school tour/trip shall be at the discretion of the school authorities. **If students are in breach of the Discipline Policy of the school a decision will be made whether that student place will be forfeited on the tour/trip and his /her place allocated to another person. A refund will be allowed based on the money that will be returned by the Tour Co and at the discretion of management.**

8. 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 her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given a form outlining any additional rules, regulations and special requirements and shall be required to sign this.

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

(i) Students must obey members of staff at all times.

(ii) Students must stay with the tour/trip group. A student may not go off by herself or wander off anywhere alone students must stay in groups at all times.

(iii) Students must not purchase alcohol or tobacco products for any purpose at any stage of the tour.

(iv) The use of alcohol or other non-medically prescribed drugs by students on a tour is absolutely forbidden.

(v) The Board of Management requires parent(s)/guardian(s) to guarantee that when their son/daughter comes to the school to assemble for the start of a school tour/trip, she does so free of illegal substances either on her person or in her luggage.

(vi) Mobile Phones will be allowed on School tours/trips under the supervision of the Tour Leader(s). Student's phones may be confiscated for a period during the day / night for health & safety reasons. Students may be asked to turn off or silent their phones at particular periods. All phones will be switched off or usage discontinued at a time each night decided by the tour trip Leader

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be requested to inform the tour/trip leader in writing of any special medical needs or medication required by their son/daughter while on the tour.

12. Students on tours within the European Union shall be required to have a completed E111 form and a valid passport.

3. Emergency Procedures

13. In the event of a serious incident/accident as many members of staff as is possible/practical in the circumstances shall come together; they shall agree on an outline of the details of the incident/accident and taking into account all the facts as they are known at that time, shall 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/trip leader (where available) has the final decision.

14. Tour/trip leaders and all members of staff accompanying the tour/trip 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.

15. The tour/trip 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.

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 13/04/2018.

This Policy was ratified and amended by the Board of Management on _____.

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Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management/Manager

Date: _____