

St Daigh's N S

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

Policy Content

It has been the policy of the school over the years to organise separate tour dates and destinations for all classes:

The tours are structured in such a way as to provide an educational aspect in addition to an entertainment and recreational value. It has been recent school policy to limit shopping in shopping centres due to the unnecessary dangers children can be exposed to and the difficulty in providing adequate supervision.

As per St Daigh's N S Supervision Policy the level of supervision is usually one adult per 15 children with individual teachers, SNAs or other staff in charge of specific groups. This ratio may vary depending on the age of children and the type of activity.

This becomes possible as support and special class teachers may accompany mainstream classes on school outings. (Supervision in special education classes varies with SNA allocations).

Children must obey their supervisors at all times

Children must remain seated with seatbelts securely fastened 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

Eating crisps/popcorn/chewing gum is discouraged on school tours.

Success Criteria

- Positive experiences for all
- Children having a safe enjoyable experience
- Teacher/Parent/Guardian Satisfaction

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. 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

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 travelling, but teachers have the right to intervene if it is felt the the safety of the children is compromised:

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 and the policy of the coach company.

Many coach companies have a no eating or drinking policy on board the bus.

Buses will be left as they were found

Tour Kit

Leaders will take a tour kit on all outings. These will be available from the office or leader/teachers may bring their own. The kit will contain:

First Aid materials, refuse and illness bags, newspapers, kitchen roll

Mobile Phone/s

List of phone numbers of all parents/guardians whose children are travelling

Special attention will be given to children who have chronic illnesses such as diabetes, epilepsy, severe allergies etc. The SNA in consultation with the tour leader/class teacher will make sure all necessary medications for their condition, accompany the child.

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. Sixth Class will be encouraged to subsidise their tour with money received as gifts at Confirmation.

Spending money Teachers travelling together will agree and notify their group of the upper limit on spending money. This will be based on age and venue.

Venue

Ideally, tours will be booked early in the 1st or 2nd term for a date as early as possible in the 3rd term. Teachers will be conscious of the likely "busier" days. Where more than one class travels, one teacher will accept the role of "leader". The teacher will be "au fait" with venue, with particular reference to educational opportunities afforded, and services available (phone, toilets, emergency facilities). The leader will bring a mobile phone and a class list of contact numbers in the event of emergency.

Weather Conditions

Rain and head gear will be essential for all children and a change of clothes may be necessary, depending on the venue.

Uniforms

Teachers travelling together will decide whether uniforms/track suit uniforms should be worn. Children may be expected to wear Hi-Vis garments depending on type of or location of tour. St Daigh's N S has a large supply of Hi-Vis jackets upstairs in the school store.

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.

Conduct on Tours

Pupils' behaviour on tours will comply with the standard set down in the School's Code of Behaviour. In certain circumstances parents/guardians 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/Principal may refuse the child permission to travel. Parents/guardians will be advised of this in advance.

Safety and Supervision

Teachers and school staff 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.). As per St Daigh's N S Supervision Policy, the recommended supervision ratio will be 15:1 (adult). As already mentioned above, Hi-Vis jackets may be worn. The Supervision ratio may change depending on the needs of the participating children.

Informing Parents

Teachers will ensure that Parents/Guardians are given sufficient notice (via Aladdin mostly) of:

Permissions:

Itinerary & Timetable

Cost

Special clothing necessary and packed lunch (no glassware) etc.

Fieldtrips

Fieldtrips 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 and SNAs 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 fieldtrip.

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 fieldtrip e.g. raingear, suitable footwear etc.

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

Buses booked for fieldtrips must be fitted with individual seatbelts and these should be worn by all children.

Overnight/Foreign Trips

Overnight/Foreign trips will be subject to the same conditions as set out above.

Teachers/Leaders/Staff will not share the same room as the students but will be allocated rooms in close proximity to those of the students for supervision purposes.

Student will be expected to be on best behaviour at all times.

See also *First Aid Policy*.

Implementation

This policy is effective from March 2023.

Review Timetable

This policy will be reviewed in 2 years' time or earlier if necessary and amended as required by means of a whole school collaborative process.

Ratification & Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 8th March 2023.

Parents will be made aware in the next school communication that the policy is available for viewing by appointment in school or alternatively on the school website.


Chairperson Board of Management


Principal

Date: 8th March 2023

Appendix A

Aide Memoire

Educational Tours/Outings Checklists

Proposed date

Proposed departure and return time

Proposed itinerary

Content

1. What are the Aims/Objectives of the outing?
2. What are the long/short term activities planned to achieve these aims/objectives?
3. What activities are planned for the centre(s) visited:
4. What follow-up activities are planned?

Cost

1. What is the cost involved:

Transport €...

Visits

Spending €...€...

TOTAL €...

2. Has a Special Saving Scheme been started in class or are all children involved in existing scheme?
3. What provision has been made for those who can't afford the cost?

Supervision

1. What ratio of supervision is necessary?: (minimum 15/1) May depend on individual needs of participating children.
2. Have additional supervisors been approached?: Who?
3. What arrangements have been made for disabled children (if any in class)?
4. What alternative arrangements been made in the event of inclement weather?

Organiser _____

Before the tour

Venue booked

Transport booked

Individual parents informed of travelling embargo on disruptive pupils

Timetable organised

Parents/guardians informed by standard letter/messgae via Aladdin platform or in hard copy.

Itinerary

Timetable

Cost

Lunch arrangements

Clothing necessary

Agreement on

Leader

Spending money

Acceptable behaviour on bus

Extra supervisors (minimum 15:1)

Children bringing mobile phones and use of same (photographs/Informing Parents/Guardians of expected time of arrival back at school or other venue, etc)

Day of Tour

Tour leader will ensure;

*Tour kits are available for each bus

Cheques for venues/Bank details

Cheques for bus/Bank details

Money for coffee

Tip for drivers

After Tour

Report back to office

Send thank you cards to parents etc

ORGANISER.....

**check tour kits contain*

First aid materials, refuse sacks, illness bags

Newspaper/kitchen rolls

Phone cards, umbrella per teacher, map of locality

Flask - (tea/coffee/milk/biscuits) or money for coffee

Appendix B

Some Tour Locations

Infant Tours

Newgrange Farm
Farm in the Naul
The Zoo
Magician in the school
Newbridge House (farm yard and picnic)
Lambert's Puppet Theatre.

1st/2nd Class Tours

Cavan Crystal Maze
Newbridge Farm, gardens, House and Forest Walk
Places of interest in town - Museum, Gallery, picnic in St. Stephen's Green.

3rd & 4th Class Tours

Dublin Trinity College Dublin Castle Christchurch
Newbridge House - Gardens & Farm
- Beach (weather permitting)
- Forest Walk
Glendalough - Fish Farm, Powerscourt
Russborough House & Avondale
Newgrange – Tomb
Japanese Gardens
Castletown House - Celbridge, Butterfly farm
Drogheda - St Oliver Plunkett's Head, Millmount Museum
Sonairte
ESB House - Fitzwilliam Street, Dolls Museum
Wexford Heritage Park.

5th & 6th Class Tour

Aquarium Portaferry, Armagh, Tara
Belfast/Ulster Folk Park
Sonairte & Laytown Beach
Dublin Castle & Christchurch
National Concert Hall

Kilkenny
Croke Park
Malahide Castle & Railway Museum
Maritime Museum
Newbridge House
National Gallery
Hill Walk
Coca-Cola
Marble Arch Caves/UlsterAmerican Folk Park
Carlingford Adventure Centre.