



St.Patrick's Comprehensive School

Shannon, Co.Clare

School Tour Policy

Introduction

St. Patrick's Comprehensive School has a duty of care to its students and to school personnel. It is our aim to safeguard the welfare of students and staff while on school trips and to support school personnel who accompany students. A school trip/tour is defined as any group travel involving at least one overnight stay or day trip.

The School Tour Policy of St. Patrick's Comprehensive School should be read in conjunction with the school's Code of Good Behaviour & School Values. The school's Code of Good Behaviour & School Values applies to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours.

1. Approval

The Tour Leader must obtain permission from the Principal and the Board of Management to take students on a school trip/tour. An outline of the trip, including travel dates, tour company details, travel insurance, the total tour price, and the general tour itinerary, must accompany the request for permission of the Board of Management.

The Trip Leader must ensure that:

1. Every reasonable step is taken to ensure the safety of all trip/tour members. Students must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk.
2. Appropriate and adequate supervision be provided for each activity undertaken on the trip. Supervision is at the discretion of the Trip Leader.
3. A non-refundable deposit is paid once the details of the trip have been approved. Unacceptable or unsafe behaviour of any student in the interval before the trip takes place may lead to the school withdrawing a place on the trip for that student. In such cases the deposit is non-refundable.
4. Students and parents complete the appropriate documentation. The onus is on parents to return all completed documentation and failure to do so may mean that a student may not be permitted to go.
5. The ratio of adults to students is appropriate.
6. Child protection procedures are in place in line with DES guidelines and the relevant child safeguarding procedures put in place by St. Patrick's Comprehensive School.

7. Suitable arrangements have been made for the medical needs of students, if required.

8. The Trip/Tour Leader is in possession of the following information:

- Details of any medical conditions or allergies.
- Written details of any medication required (including dosage/times) and parental permission to administer same.
- Contact details of the student's G.P.

9. First Aid provision is available. The medical kit should always include the medical conditions of all participants, the information being acquired from the Parents/Guardians.

10. Parents / Guardians are given the following information: -

- Dates and times of departure and return. It is the responsibility of the parents / guardians to bring their child to the departure point and to meet their child on return.
- Details of accommodation such as hotel/hotel or exchange family name, address, and telephone number.
- Names of school personnel accompanying students on the trip.
- Standards of behaviour expected of students while on the school trip.
- Insurance details taken out for the group, and whether parents/guardians need to arrange additional cover.
- Details of the cost of the trip, any additional costs payable, methods and deadlines of payment.

All payments are to be considered non-refundable including the final payment.

2. Tour Team

1. A Tour Team, led by the Tour Leader(s) should be put in place as soon as possible. A reserve list is advisable in case a member of the team should subsequently be unable to travel.
2. The Tour Team may come from different departments within the school structure. If a sufficient number of Team members are not available within the school, other adults wishing to travel may come from outside the school. Tour Team members may include: (a) Teaching Staff (b) Special Needs Assistants (c) Secretarial Staff (d) Caretaking Staff (e) Parents (f) Members of BOM (g) Staff Partners. Proper vetting procedures should be followed at all times.
3. The Tour Leader(s) should meet the full Tour Team at the outset to discuss individual duties. Ideally all members of the Tour Team should be involved in organising the tour, taking up duties in one of the following areas.
 1. Tour Finances – the Tour Leader or Deputy Leader
 2. Passport
 3. European Health Insurance card (EHIC)
 4. General needs – medical kit, home contact numbers, medical services' contacts in area to be toured
 5. Bring the school mobile phone on the tour

3. Notice to Parents

Once permission has been granted by the Board of Management the parents/guardians of the selected group/year/class/students should receive a circular outlining the general nature of the proposed trip/tour.

The circular should specify:

- The full itinerary and duration of the tour/trip.
- The full costs involved, deadlines for payment and the method of payment.
- Information regarding insurance and indemnity.
- The general rules of behaviour to be followed.
- If the numbers are limited and a deposit is required to secure a place.

Parents should also be made aware through the circular, of their duty to inform the school of any relevant Health or Safety issues which might affect their children while on tour.

The signed Parental Consent Form (see Appendix 1) is an essential pre-requisite for the participation of any student on the trip/tour.

Parents pay a non-refundable deposit. It is made clear to parents that this deposit is non-refundable and that students will not be taken if their behaviour is unacceptable or unsafe in the interval before the tour/trip takes place to the date of the departure.

Partaking in school tours/trips is a privilege not a right. Students whose behaviour is in breach of normal school rules while in school or on a tour/trip may be refused participating in this and future school tours/trips/outings.

4. Meeting parents

Preferably a couple of weeks before departure, a meeting of the parents of all students going on the tour/trip should be held. Where possible, all students and staff travelling should attend this meeting as well.

The following information should be given to parents at this meeting:

1. A detailed itinerary – dates, times, locations, hotels, addresses, contact numbers etc.
2. Advice on a reasonable daily allowance, in the currency of the country to be visited, for each student to bring.
3. Advice on how students can safeguard their money on tour.
4. The expectations of students in relation to their behaviour while on the tour/trip.
5. Parents should also use the meeting to provide the Tour Leader with written information on the Student Information Form provided about the student(s) medical background (see Appendix 2)

Where a student requires constant or regular medication specific written details must be given to the Tour Leader. Parents/guardians may request a private meeting at another time to inform the Tour Leader about the illness and the manner in which medication should be administered.

The Tour Leader should establish if a non-medical person can administer the medication.

Each parent/guardian must fill in the Student Information Form which includes medical history, contact numbers, allergies, and medication to be taken. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that a student has medication sufficient to last the entire tour/trip.

In the event of a medical emergency/dental emergency while on tour, it may be necessary for a member of the Tour Team to act in loco parentis. The following agreement should be issued to all parents/guardians and must be signed prior to the tour/trip (see Appendix 3):

We, the tour leaders (named below) will act on medical advice presented to us if in the event of an accident or emergency and it is not possible to contact parents, guardians or next of kin either by phone or due to time considerations.

5. Contact information

The Tour Leader must ensure that complete contact information is left on file in the school office, available for use in the event of an emergency. The list should include:

1. Names, addresses and home contact numbers of all those going on the tour.
2. Full details of the itinerary, hotel/hostel addresses, phone numbers etc.
3. A contact number, day and night, for the Tour Leader.

A school emergency contact has been nominated. The Tour Leader and the Principal have these details. The Tour Leader should also ensure that all those accompanying the trip/tour and school Contact Person have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures and the names of all members of the group, with emergency contact details of parents/guardians or next of kin.

6. Student Behaviour

Students are expected to be of excellent behaviour and to always adhere to the school's Code of Good Behaviour & School Values while on a school trip. The School Trip Contract of Behaviour (see Appendix 4) must be signed by the students prior to the tour/trip. The Principal/Deputy Principal will meet with the students prior to departure and outline the following:

1. Students must always adhere to the school's Code of Good Behaviour & School Values.
2. Students must adhere to the tour/trip dress code as set down by the Tour Leader.
3. Students must follow the rules of the hotel, hostel, or other type of accommodation where they are staying.
4. Students must be well behaved on public and/or private transport while on tour.
5. Students must always show respect and courtesy towards tour guides, bus drivers, hostel/hotel staff and other hostel/hotel and restaurant guests.
6. Students are responsible for leaving seats on all forms of transport in a tidy condition.
7. Students are responsible for leaving their bedroom tidy.
8. Students must obey the instructions of school personnel who accompany the students on the school trip.
9. Students may bring mobile phones on a school trip. However, students may not post photos of a school trip on any social networking site.

The Tour Leader will check all rooms before students have access to them and make a note of damage done prior to their arrival, if applicable. Vacated rooms will be checked for damage.

7. Sanctions on Tour/Trip

Should a student be guilty of minor misbehaviour, the incident should be dealt with in a swift and firm manner and a verbal warning may be all that is needed. The Tour Leader may, however, feel that specific sanctions are required such as:

1. The student missing a half-day's activities (not, however, an activity related to health and safety)
2. The student missing a specific activity e.g. bowling
3. The student missing an evening activity e.g. cinema/disco

If a sanction is being imposed, it must be made clear to the student why it is being imposed. A student prevented from attending an activity must be supervised by a teaching member of the Tour Team for the duration of the activity. Further sanctions may be imposed when the student returns to school e.g. the student may be banned from involvement in future tours.

Examples of 'serious misbehaviour' include:

- Use/possession of alcohol, cigarettes, vaping devices, illegal substances.
- Disruptive behaviour on coach, aeroplane, boat, public transport or in the hostel/hotel.
- Lack of respect for accommodation rules.
- Lack of respect for Tour Team or any other supervising adults.
- Theft or criminal damage to property of others etc.

Where a student is guilty of 'serious misbehaviour' the Tour Leader may decide to phone the students' parents/guardians to provide them with details of the incident(s). In on-going and extreme cases of dangerous and/or gross misbehaviour a student may be sent home at the expense of their parents/guardian.

In the event of this happening the parents/guardian will be informed and if necessary, a teacher will travel home with the offending student at the expense of the student's parent/guardian. The Tour Leader will decide which teacher accompanies the student home.

In the case of a serious/criminal incident (shop lifting, a violent attack etc) the parents/guardians will be informed immediately, and the matter will be handed over to the local police authorities. Incidents of serious misbehaviour must be reported to the Principal/Deputy Principal on return to school.

8. Payment

In the case of local trips, all monies will be paid through the school's VS Ware payment system. In the case of trips abroad, the school will use a licensed tour operator or travel agent to arrange the travel package including accommodation and other services.

Compliance ensures that the event is covered by the relevant bond held by the tour operator or travel agent with the Commission for Aviation Regulation as part of the annual licensing requirement. If for any reason the license holder ceases to trade, it is imperative that the tour operator or travel agent chosen to arrange the overseas trip holds a current license. The full list of all current license holders is available on www.aviationreg.ie

All school tours travelling outside of the Republic of Ireland must be booked through a bonded licensed travel agent or tour operator from the approved list on www.aviationreg.ie

All monies will be paid to the tour operator or travel agent and not to the school. The tour leader will work closely with the tour operators in establishing procedures to ensure the school retains full control of the tour.

9. Information retained in the school

Full details of the trip/tour/outing should be retained at the school while the trip/tour/outing is in progress. This should include:

- a) The itinerary and contact phone number/address of the group.
- b) A list of group members and their details.
- c) Contact names, addresses and phone numbers of the parents/guardians.
- d) Copies of parental consent forms.
- e) Copies of travel documents, insurance documents, medical papers.
- f) A copy of the contract with the tour company/hotel etc.

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure that this information is always available, particularly if the tour/trip takes place when the school is closed.

10. Prohibition

Going on a school tour/trip is a privilege and not a right. Students whose behaviour in class or school is not deemed acceptable by teachers and management forfeit the right to participate in the school tour/trip. It is at the discretion of the teachers going on the tour/trip to decline a student's request to participate in a school tour/trip.

Up to the time of departure it shall remain the prerogative of the Tour Leader in consultation with the teachers going on the tour and the principal, to refuse a student's participation on the tour without a refund should the student's behaviour give cause for concern.

11. On Tour Supervision

Prior to leaving each participating teacher should be assigned a small number of students and be known to the students as their Group Leader. If possible, these groups should remain unchanged throughout the tour. It is the responsibility of each Group Leader to:

- Call his/her group together at specific times in busy areas (bus depots, airports etc.)
- Count the group members on and off planes, ships, trains, buses etc.
- Arrange specific meeting points and times to meet students when on day tours (city landmarks, cafes, ski slopes etc.)

The Tour Leader should place teachers on a Supervision Rota for use in the various types of overnight accommodation used. Students should be made aware that corridors are being supervised. The Tour Leader should:

- Draw up a rota for nightly corridor supervision.
- Draw up a rota for calling students each morning.
- Ensure teachers are on corridor duty until an agreed time.

It is not recommended that personnel other than current school staff are engaged in chaperoning or supervising students in their overnight accommodation although in certain instances this may be necessary. If there are plans to use anyone other than staff personnel in this capacity, the Tour Team member will require Garda clearance to do so before the tour takes place.

All supervision of students must meet Child Protection Guidelines.

12. Prudence Code for overnight trips/tour

Students on their own

A member of staff on his/her own should not be with an individual student on his own unless there is a window to the corridor or to a public place, others enter the room often or if it is a public room or they have told another member of staff that they need a private conversation there.

If visiting students in rooms on their own, staff should leave the door open or tell another member of staff that they need to speak to the students.

It is wise for members of staff on their own to avoid being in cars or on expeditions with students on their own unless another member of staff has been informed about it (e.g. visit to hospital)

Groups of students

Staff should not feel that the toilets, changing rooms, dormitories, bathrooms, and showers are off limits but they should avoid being there with an individual student and they should exercise caution and sensitivity in these areas.

Rooming Arrangements

Students will be roomed on a same sex basis only.

Parents of students who are transitioning or identify as gender fluid must contact the tour leader in advance of applying to travel with the tour. Single room options may be explored however there will be an additional payment required.

Appendix 1

Parental Consent Form

School Tour to: _____

Dates: _____

I/We the parent(s) / guardian(s) of _____

a student of St.Patrick's Comprehensive School, agree that my / our child may go on a school trip with _____ (tour leader) to _____.

I/We accept that -

- Students are expected to be of excellent behaviour and to always adhere to the school's Code of Good Behaviour & School Values while on a school trip.
- Respect and courtesy are always expected towards tour guides, bus drivers, hotel staff and other hotel and restaurant guests.
- Students must obey the instructions of school personnel who accompany the students on the school trip.
- The consumption of alcohol, cigarettes and other banned substances is forbidden at all times.
- Students who do not adhere to the school's Code of Good Behaviour & School Values, who refuse to comply with the instructions of school personnel or who partake in the consumption of alcohol, cigarettes or other banned substances will not be allowed to continue on the school trip and will be sent home.
- I/we will be contacted in the event of any serious misbehaviour, and it will be my/our responsibility to make appropriate arrangements for my/our child at my/our own cost.
- Students may bring mobile phones on a school trip. If I/we need to contact my child urgently I/we may do so through the school.
- My/our child may not post photos of a school trip on any social networking site. Any breach of this will lead to sanctions up to and including expulsion on return to school.
- Up to the date of departure a student may be refused permission to travel on the trip (without a refund) if the behaviour of the student is of concern to school staff.

I/we also give permission to the Trip Leader to make any necessary decisions for the medical treatment of my/our child.

We, the tour leaders (insert names)

will act on medical advice presented to us if in the event of an accident or emergency and it is not possible to contact parents, guardians or next of kin either by phone or due to time considerations.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2

Student Information Form

Name of Student: _____ DOB: _____

Passport No: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Telephone No.: _____

Parent / Guardian Contact No.: _____

Parent / Guardian Contact No.: _____

Student's Mobile No.: _____

EHIC No.: _____

Private Health Insurance Details (if applicable):

Medical Card Details (if applicable):

G.P.'s Name & Address:

G.P.'s Contact No.: _____

Details of Allergies / Injury/Dietary requirements:

Details of Current Medication:

Appendix 3

In Loco Parentis/Medical details Form

Name of Student: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Details of Parent/Gurdian to Contact in Case of Emergency:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Phone (h): _____ Phone (w): _____

Phone (m): _____

Details of another person to contact if parents/guardians are unobtainable:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Phone (h): _____ Phone (w): _____

Phone (m): _____

Medical Information:

Doctor's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Surgery Address:

Illness/Allergies/Injury/Dietary info: _____

Please list any medication taken: _____

We, the tour leaders (named below) will act on medical advice presented to us if in the event of an accident or emergency and it is not possible to contact parents, guardians or next of kin either by phone or due to time considerations.

Name of Tour Leaders:

Signature of parent(s)/guardian(s):

Name: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 4

School Trip Contract of Behaviour

I, _____,

a student of St.Patrick's Comprehensive School, agree that, while on the school trip to _____ on (date) _____

will be of excellent behaviour and will adhere to the school's Code of Good Behaviour & School Values at all times while on the school trip.

I will show respect and courtesy at all times towards tour guides, bus drivers, hotel/hostel staff and other hotel/hostel and restaurant guests.

I will follow the rules of the hotel, hostel or other type of accommodation where I am staying.

I will be well behaved on public and/or private transport while on tour.

I will obey the instructions of school personnel who accompany the students on the school trip.

I will be responsible for leaving seats on all forms of transport in a tidy condition.

I will adhere to the tour/trip dress code as set down by the Tour Leader.

I will not partake in the consumption of alcohol, cigarettes, and other banned substances -

I will be responsible for leaving my bedroom tidy.

I understand that if I do not adhere to the school's Code of Good Behaviour & School Values, refuse to comply with the instructions of school personnel or partake in the consumption of alcohol, cigarettes or other banned substances I will not be allowed to continue on the school trip and will be sent home.

I may bring my mobile phone on the school trip, but I may not post photos of the school trip on any internet social networking site.

Up to the date of departure I may be refused permission to travel on the trip (without a refund) if my behaviour is of concern to school staff.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

This policy was ratified by our school's Board of Management on 26th September 2022.

Chairperson: Sean T Ruane*_

****Actual signed version is available in the Principal's Office***

Date:26/9/22