

## School Tours/Trips/Outings/Excursions Policy

### Introduction

This policy was agreed by the staff of Scoil Mhuire and circulated to the Board of Management observations, feedback and ratification. 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 and approved by the Principal.

### Rationale

In March 2019, Scoil Mhuire conducted a Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment. The need to implement a formal policy on School Tours/Trips/Outings/Excursions as part of the procedures to be put in place to address the risks of harm identified in the risk assessment became clear.

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 give direction and guidance to staff members with regard to the procedures to be followed when bringing children on School Tours/Trips/Outings/Excursions and to promote best practice with regard to same
- To reduce, as far as is reasonable and practical, children's exposure to risk of harm while on School Tours/Trips/Outings/Excursions
- To provide an enjoyable experience for all children taking part

### Scope of this Policy

A School Tour/Trip/Outing/Excursion is defined in this policy as any and all occasions that involve Pupils leaving the immediate school environs in the company of school staff members. These will henceforth be referred to as Outings in this policy. document

A non-exhaustive example of Outings will include

- Annual School Tours
- Educational Outings and Field Trips
- Attendance at and Participation in Community Based Events, Festivals, etc.
- Attendance at and Participation in Artistic, Musical, Cultural Events
- Attendance at and Participation in Sporting Events
- Attendance at and Participation in Religious Events and Ceremonies

All staff members working with Pupils in Scoil Mhuire are bound by this policy.

## Policy Content

### Organisation of Outings

#### Coordinator/Organiser

Each Class Teacher will coordinate/organise the Outing for his/her own class.

Class teachers may organise for their classes to go on an Outing together, taking joint-responsibility for coordinating/organizing.

Teachers taking responsibility for coordinating teams or groups attending or participating in events will coordinate/organise the Outing in question.

#### Preparation

The Coordinator/Organiser must secure the permission of the Principal in advance before making any arrangements for an Outing.

The Principal must be informed in advance if it is proposed that a class leave the school grounds.

The Coordinator/Organiser should ensure that the cost of the Outing is reasonable and represents value for money.

The Coordinator/Organiser should place a notice on the Staffroom Noticeboard and on Aladdin of the nature of the Outing and the day/date it is taking place.

The Coordinator/Organiser should secure the written consent of Parents/Guardians for Pupils to participate and send these to the office. If the estimated time of return to school will be after 2:30 p.m., the Parents/Guardians should indicate arrangements for their child to go home after the Outing on the consent form, e.g. will walk home, will be collected by Parent, etc.

A Bus Booking Form (Attached as Appendix 1) should be completed and sent to the office as soon as possible. The Coordinator/Organiser is responsible for booking the bus or **and/or ensuring that the bus has been booked.**

No child is to be refused participation in any proposed Outing because of inability to pay. The Principal should be consulted if there are doubts about a child's ability to pay or whether a payment request should be made. This issue is to be handled sensitively and discretely.

A School Tour Record Form (Attached as Appendix 2) should be completed by the Coordinator/Organiser and sent to the office as soon as possible.

Payment requests for sums greater than €5 will be sent to Parents/Guardians via Aladdin.

The School Secretary will set up the Aladdin Payment. In the event that a payment for a Pupil is made by cash or cheque, it is the responsibility of the Class Teacher of the Pupil in question to record the payment on Aladdin and to send the automatically generated

receipt to Parents/Guardians.

As far as possible, invoices relating to Outings will be paid via Online Banking.

All relevant invoices/receipts must be submitted to the office for accounting purposes. It is the responsibility of the Coordinator/Organiser to request invoices and secure receipts.

If a cheque or cash will be required, it must be requested of the office well in advance.

The Coordinator/Organiser must ensure that an advisory note has been sent to Parents/Guardians to provide them with all relevant information pertaining to the outing, e.g. destination, itinerary, time of departure, estimated time of return, items needed by Pupils participating (e.g. sun lotion, rain gear) The Coordinator/Organiser will decide whether school uniforms should be worn.

In the case of Pupils taking part in sporting events, they are to come to school dressed suitably to participate, i.e. togged out or wearing swimming costumes underneath their tracksuits.

The Coordinator/Organiser is responsible for identifying any Pupils who may have specific needs or health issues and ensure that these pupils are catered for. This might include ensuring that specific arrangements are put in place for the child in question, e.g. dietary requirements, disabled access, access to medicine to address a particular medical condition (asthma, nut allergy etc.) **It is the ultimate responsibility of the Coordinator/Organiser to ensure that any school-based medicines attaching to a child with a specific medical condition, e.g. anapen, epipen are brought on the Outing, readily accessible at all times for the duration and replaced to storage on return to school.**

Pupils' behaviour on tours will comply with the standard set down in the School's Code of Behaviour. 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 Coordinator/Organiser, in consultation with the Principal may refuse the child permission to travel. Parents will be advised of this in advance. The decision of the Principal in this regard will be final.

### **The Day of the Outing**

Prior to departure, the Coordinator/Organiser must ensure that:

- A First Aid Kit has been packed
- School-based medicines attaching to a child with a specific medical condition have been packed
- Any equipment needed has been packed, e.g. footballs, plastic bags, paper towel, water, etc.
- He/she has affixed a List of Pupils participating to the noticeboard outside the office
- Arrangements have been put in place, if necessary, to accommodate Pupils not

- participating
- SEN Teachers engaging with any of the Pupils participating have been notified of those pupils' absence
- Arrangements have been put in place regarding morning or yard supervision duty for Staff Members participating
- A List of Pupils participating has been brought

Before the bus departs, the Pupils should be counted and the number noted. This must be done on every occasion Pupils have left the bus and returned to it, before the bus departs.

Staff Members should ensure that all Pupils are seated with seat belts on.

Pupils who tend to suffer from motion sickness should be seated towards the front of the bus and checked intermittently.

Pupils must remain seated while the bus is in motion.

Eating on the bus is forbidden.

Parents/Guardians should be apprised via Aladdin message of any changes to the estimated time of return.

If arrangements have been agreed with Parents/Guardians to

- Collect their child en route
- For their child to be dropped off at a location other than the point of departure (school)
- That their child will not be returning on the bus with the rest of the group

Written confirmation of said arrangements should be secured from the Parents/Guardians

### **Procedures to Minimise Risk of Harm to Pupils**

As per the procedures in place to address the risks of harm to Pupils as outlined in the school's Child Protection Risk Assessment, undertaken in March 2019, the following will apply:

The school will secure the written consent of Parents/Guardians for Pupils to participate in Outings/Trips/Tours and Sporting Events.

In the case of Participation in Sporting Events least 2 Teachers will accompany each class group and a maximum Pupil-Teacher Ratio of 16:1 shall apply. At least one of the teachers shall be female.

In the case of all other types School Tours/Trips/Outings/Excursions, at least 2 Teachers will accompany each group and a maximum Pupil-Teacher Ratio of 20:1 shall apply. At least one of the teachers shall be female.

Volunteer Parents accompanying SchoolTours/Trips/Outings/Excursions will never be left unsupervised in the company of Pupils (a teacher will be present at all times)

At least 2 adults, one of whom is a Teacher, will accompany each group travelling on buses/coaches hired by the school. At least one of the adults shall be female.

The Bus Driver will never be left unsupervised in the company of Pupils

Celebrants/Instructors will never be left unsupervised in the company of those Pupils (a teacher will be present at all times)

**Success Criteria**

Positive experiences for all participants in Outings.

Pupils having safe and enjoyable experiences with Risk of Harm kept to an absolute minimum.

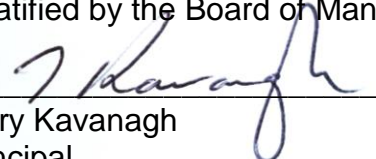
Teacher/Parent satisfaction with arrangements and procedures.

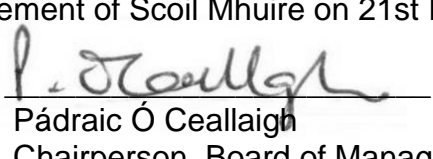
**Review**

This policy will be reviewed in the light of experience.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire on 21st May 2019.

Signed:

  
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Terry Kavanagh  
Principal

  
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Pádraic Ó Ceallaigh  
Chairperson, Board of Management