

SCOIL RUÁIN SCHOOL TRIPS POLICY

The term “school trip” refers to all expeditions off the school premises. This policy is applicable to (a) all members of staff who organise such trips, (b) the students who are participating in these activities and (c) the parents/guardians of the participating students.

RATIONALE FOR SCHOOL TRIPS:

- The curriculum content of some subjects requires field studies/ trips/ recreational activities/visits which take place off the school grounds. These trips are a course requirement.
- Scoil Ruain is committed to providing quality learning for all students. In order to achieve this, it is recognised that exposure to a variety of experiences and cultures is part of a holistic education.
- Trips assist in bonding between students and provide teachers with an opportunity to get to know students in a non-school environment.

TYPES OF SCHOOL TRIPS:

The nature and type of school trips include:

- Educational visits and trips involving instruction e.g. Field trips
- Sports trips
- Educational day/overnight trips for school groups within the country and abroad, involving cultural, social, religious or linguistic benefit to students.

CRITERIA FOR ALL SCHOOL TRIPS:

- All educational trips must be consistent with the rationale and guidelines as specified by the DES in Circular Letter M20/04.
- Teachers organising trips must inform the Principal and Deputy Principal of the intended trip, its nature and the proposed date. The trip must be approved by the Principal.
- As a courtesy to colleagues, full details of trips including date, time and names of participating students must be posted on the staff room notice board by the trip organiser prior to the event.

- Teachers who are away from school on a trip of any kind must leave work for their classes with the Principal/Deputy Principal.
- The Code of Behaviour of Scoil Ruain applies to all outings and trips. Expectations of behaviour of students should be clarified before each trip.
- Students who have a history of inappropriate behaviour may be excluded from participating in trips.
- Permission forms covering trips must be completed and signed by parent/guardian. Students who have not completed forms may not participate in trips.
- In the case of Sports trips to matches, athletics, games etc. a permission form for each match/outing is not necessary. Parents must sign a permission form at the beginning of the academic year giving permission for their son/daughter to participate in games/matches as required throughout the school year.
- Students with Special Educational Needs require additional consideration on all trips. The trip organiser(s) should liaise with the Learning Support department and the parent/guardian to identify these specific needs.
- Students with medical conditions require additional consideration. Trip organisers should be aware of students with medical conditions and liaise with parents/guardians prior to the trip in order to familiarize themselves with these students' particular medication requirements.
- Teachers organising the trip are responsible for taking a properly equipped first-aid kit on the trip. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their son/daughter brings any medication required with him/her on the trip. .
- Regarding some trips, especially overnight trips and trips abroad, it may be necessary to refuse students who have particular additional needs and health issues that may impact on the ability of the organisers to ensure the health and safety of the student in question as well as all students in the group.
- On all trips there must be an appropriate ratio between the number of students and the number of staff traveling. This ratio will vary depending on the nature of the trip, the age of the students traveling, Special Educational Needs and safety requirements.
- Child Protection guidelines and procedures must be followed at all times on all school trips.

- An Accident/Incident Report Form must be completed for all accidents or incidents which have occurred on the trip.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY ALL STAFF ORGANISING SCHOOL TRIPS

1. DAY TRIPS/OVERNIGHT TRIPS WITHIN THE COUNTRY

The CRITERIA FOR ALL SCHOOL TRIPS (above) apply to all day trips and overnight trips.

- The organising teacher must keep a careful note of any money paid by students for the trip. All money should be put into an envelope, marked with the amount and what the money is for and handed in to the Principal/Deputy Principal/ Secretary. All money received must be receipted.
- Members of staff are required to ensure costings cover the entire cost of the proposed trip. (an approximate costing/guideline should be given for various entry fees and food while on the trip if these are not included in the tour fee)
- For trips that extend beyond normal school hours, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that arrangements are in place for their sons/daughters journey to/from the school. Parents/guardians must ensure that they are on time to collect their son/daughter on return to the school.
- In the interests of health and safety, mobile phone communication between teachers and students may be necessary. In the case of overnight trips a list of students mobile phones should be compiled and carried by the teachers at all times. When it is deemed necessary and subject to agreement of the teachers, students should have a copy of the mobile number of the organising teacher(s). This should be carried at all times during the trip. Students should be strongly advised of the sensitive use of this personal number.
- The Tour Leader should have the school mobile phone with him/her at

all times and all students and parents should be given this number.

- On overnight trips the organising teachers will collect students' mobile phones/iPads/etc. each evening and return them in the morning. This is to ensure that the privacy of all students is safeguarded. The taking of unposed, invasive or otherwise inappropriate photographs while on a trip is forbidden and is regarded as a serious breach of discipline.
- In the case of overnight trips, teachers should also carry a list of contact details of parents/guardians for use in case of emergency. This information will be guarded safely. Teachers should carry the phone numbers of the Principal and/or Deputy Principal as well as the Emergency Number provided by the Travel Company (if applicable).
- In the case of inspection of students' personal property, this should only be carried out for good reasons based on reasonable grounds such as concern for physical safety, suspected possession of or use of a banned substance or other concerns. This should only be carried out with the student present. Staff should not have any physical contact with a student or the clothing worn by the student. If a search is deemed necessary, the student should be asked to empty his/her own pockets or to search the clothes that he/she is wearing.
- If a student is found to be in serious breach of any of the rules outlined in the Contract for the trip or the School Code of Behaviour, the teacher(s) in charge must contact the Principal and the parents/guardians of the student involved.

2. TRIPS ABROAD

The CRITERIA FOR ALL SCHOOL TRIPS (above) apply to all trips abroad.

- Members of staff who wish to take students on an overseas trip, must submit a request for approval to the Principal who will consider the following when reaching his/her decision.
 - The appropriateness of the proposed trip in terms of DES

Circular M20/04.

- The staffing requirements for the trip and for the school.
 - Due regard for health and safety of the students on the trip.
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- The school will only use the services of licensed tour operators/travel agents when organising trips outside the state, as per the Aviation Regulation Act 2001. Proper and full insurance must be in place for the trip.
 - Selection of students: Designated students (e.g. 2nd years) will be informed of the date, cost and details of the proposed trip. They will be invited to apply for a place on the trip by making the required deposit. **This deposit is non-refundable** as it is used by the Travel Agency to book flights, reserve hotel rooms and provide travel insurance.
 - In cases where the trip is oversubscribed, names of applicants are drawn by lottery on a designated date, overseen by management. A full record is kept of the order in which all the names are drawn. Two lists are prepared; a list of the successful applicants and a list of those who were not selected (the reserve list), both in the order in which they were drawn.
 - In the event of a student withdrawing from the trip, the place is offered to the first person on the reserve list. This procedure is followed in the event of further withdrawals. Some airlines charge a fee to change a name on a booking. This cost is borne by the student taking the place of the withdrawn student.
 - Students who drop out of the tour for reasons covered by the travel insurance must apply to the insurance company to recover their costs. In other circumstances Scoil Ruain will NOT be in a position to refund money paid if it has already been forwarded to the travel agency responsible for booking the tour. In all circumstances the initial deposit is non-refundable as stated above.
 - Management reserves the right to refuse any student deemed

unsuitable for the trip. Those considered unsuitable may include:

- Students who have proved unruly or undisciplined on trips in the past
 - Students who have a poor discipline record in school.
 - It may be necessary to refuse students who have particular additional needs and health issues that may impact on the ability of the organisers to ensure the health and safety of the student in question as well as all students in the group.
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- The staff/student ratio will be decided taking into account :
 - the age group travelling
 - the nature of the trip
 - any Special Educational Needs and safety requirements
 - the recommendation of the tour operator.
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- Payments: Students and parents will be advised of a schedule of payments and the approximate due dates. Notice will be given to students in the week leading up to the payment due dates. A detailed record of all participating students and the amounts paid will be kept. Cheques should be made payable to the school.
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- When passport details are required, a photocopy of the students'/teachers' passport will be requested by the organising teachers. Students are advised to acquire a European Health Insurance Card. The appropriate HSE forms required to apply for same will be distributed to students.
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- A meeting of both the students travelling and their parents will be convened approximately 2/3 weeks before departure at which the following will be distributed/outlined:
 - A detailed itinerary.
 - A medical form to be completed by parents/guardians. A contract form outlining the rules, to be signed by both student and parent/guardian.
 - Final details of the tour will be outlined.

- All aspects of expected student behaviour and safety procedures will be covered in detail.

Parents will have an opportunity to raise questions or concerns.

Students must attend all information meetings and co-operate with all requests pertaining to the trip.

- While on tour students will be divided into groups (size depending on the overall number and the number of accompanying teachers) and assigned to a supervising teacher. In the interests of health and safety, any necessary information about students is given to each teacher, e.g. details of medication/health issues. This information is kept confidential. During the week before departure, a meeting will be held at which the supervising teachers will meet their groups and final information will be distributed.
- In the interests of health and safety, mobile phone communication between teachers and students may be necessary. A list of students' mobile phones should be compiled and carried by the supervising teachers at all times. Students should have a copy of the mobile number of the organising teacher(s). This should be carried at all times during the trip. Students should be strongly advised of the sensitive use of this personal number.
- Organising teachers will collect students' mobile phones/iPads/etc. each evening and return them in the morning. This is to ensure that the privacy of all students is safeguarded. The taking of unposed, invasive or inappropriate photographs while on the trip is forbidden and is regarded as a serious breach of discipline.
- Teachers should also carry a list of contact details of parents/guardians at all times for use in the case of emergency. This information will be guarded safely. Teachers should carry the phone numbers of the Principal and/or Deputy Principal as well as the Emergency Number provided by the Travel Company. The Tour Leader should have the school mobile phone with him/her at all times and all students and parents should be given this number.

- In the case of inspection of student personal property, this should only be carried out for good reasons based on reasonable grounds such as concern for physical safety, suspected possession or use of a banned substance or other concerns. This should only be carried out with the student present. Staff should not have any physical contact with the student or the clothing worn by the student. If a search is deemed necessary, the student should be asked to empty his/her own pockets or to search the clothes that he/she is wearing.
- If a student is found to be in serious breach of any of the rules outlined in the Contract for the trip or the School Code of Behaviour, the teacher(s) in charge must contact the Principal and the parents/guardians of the student involved.
- An Accident/Incident Report Form must be completed for all accidents or incidents that (may) occur during the trip.

3. SPORTS TRIPS

The CRITERIA FOR ALL SCHOOL TRIPS apply to sport trips.

- Each sports coach is responsible for taking a properly equipped first-aid kit on the outing. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their son/daughter has any medication required with him/her.
- If a minor accident occurs the coach will treat it on the spot. In the event of a serious accident the coach will ring an ambulance directly.
- Any accident deemed to be of a serious nature is recorded on an accident report form, a copy of which is submitted to the Principal. Coaches/PE staff will inform students of the necessary safety equipment for each respective sport.
- Child Protection procedures must be followed at all times and particularly in regard to the use and supervision of dressing rooms.
- It is school policy that all students are encouraged to participate in team competitions. However, the school recognizes that it is the

parents/guardians prerogative how often their child shall be involved in such competitions.

GUIDELINES FOR USE OF COACHES ON ALL TRIPS

Members of staff taking students away in coaches should take note and apply the following:

- All coaches used by the school must have an up to date PSV License and Cert
- Before setting off, the emergency exits must be pointed out to students.
- Central aisles and access to exits must be kept clear at all times.
- Students must be advised to remain seated facing forward and not to have unnecessary movement during the journey.

- Teachers must check that students are wearing seat belts at all times.
- In the event of any emergency, students should leave the coach by the nearest exit as quickly as possible and re-assemble at a given area where a head-count can be quickly made. Students should not go back to the coach for any reason until the all clear is given
- If the teacher in charge considers that there was anything the matter with the coach, or that the behaviour of students was not appropriate, a full report must be given to the Principal as soon as possible after returning to the school
- In the event of a delay in the time of returning to school, the teacher should advise students to contact parents by text, informing them of the revised time of arrival.
- It is advisable to obtain a mobile telephone number from the coach driver (with his/her agreement) in order to be able to liaise regarding meeting times, change of meeting point or emergency situations.

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting
on _____ (date)

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Review date: _____