



# Caragh N.S. School Tours/Excursions Guidelines.

## Introduction

These guidelines were 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 these guidelines 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

## Content

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 the policy of the school over the years to organise separate tour dates and destinations for each class grouping/year.

As always the class teacher is responsible for his/her class.

However, it is school policy to ensure that there is sufficient supervision to cater for the number of children involved. This may vary due to the age and needs within a class. Allowance is also made for an adult to accompany an injured child to hospital while leaving at least 2 adults with the remainder of the tour group.

## Tour Kit

Leaders should take a tour kit on all outings. These will be available from the office.

- The kit will contain first aid materials,
- Any additional medication needed by an individual child (according to our policy on the Administration of Medicine)
- A phone to contact the school/hospital in case of accident

## Venue

Tours will be booked as early as possible in the term to give adequate notice to parents. The teacher will be "au fait" with venue, with particular reference to educational opportunities afforded, and services available (phone, toilets, emergency facilities). Where no phone facilities exist, the leader will have a pre-arranged plan to deal with emergencies.

## **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. No child shall be excluded from the tour due to an inability to pay.

## **Weather Conditions**

Parents should be aware of changing weather conditions depending on the time of the year and a change of clothes may be necessary, depending on the venue. This will have been discussed with the class/parents beforehand

## **Uniforms**

Teachers travelling together will decide whether uniforms/tracksuits/other clothing should be worn.

## **Reports**

Where problems arise either with venue or transport, teachers will report back to the transport/tour organiser who will in turn discuss it with the Principal.

## **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:

- The group will have access to the bus for the full day if required.
- If the weather conditions are unfavourable the group will have the use of the bus for sheltering or for eating lunch.
- Buses will be left as they were found.

## **Conduct on Tours**

Pupils' behaviour on tours will comply with the standard set down in the School's Code of Discipline. 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 teacher may refuse the child permission to travel. Parents will be advised of this in advance.

## School Rules for tours & excursions

- Children must obey their supervisors & teachers at all times
- Children must remain seated with buckled seatbelt while the bus is in motion
- Children are not allowed to eat/drink on the bus nor are they allowed to bring electronic devices with them
- Children should not bring money with them (unless by prior agreement)
- 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
- Children should never attend a bathroom alone.
- Roll calls/head counts are taken when children return to the bus or centre after each segment of the tour.

## Safety and Supervision

Teachers 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, areas of water etc.). Teachers must accompany their class throughout the tour. Shared supervision will allow for teachers' lunches and toilet breaks.

In cases of accident or emergency, a teacher will accompany an injured child to hospital, while the remaining teachers, SNAs & volunteers shall remain with the rest of the children. All procedures under our Health & Safety, Critical Incident and Child Protection policies will be adhered to.

## Overnight Stays:

On trips that involve an **Overnight Stay** the tour leader shall have a contact number for all parents. The parents will also be given a contact number. Updates by group messaging may be sent to parents to keep them informed of events.

Where supervision of the pupils may be carried out by outside staff, the school shall obtain reassurance/proof in writing that such staff have been garda vetted and are suitably qualified for the job.

## Success Criteria

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

## Implementation / Review

These guidelines will become effective once ratified by the Board of Management.

However, they shall be revised as necessary on an on-going basis taking cognisance of changing information or new recommendations issued.

Signed:  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed:  
(Principal)

Date

Ratified – March, 2018