



School Tours/Excursions Policy

Introduction

The Board of Management of Leixlip Educate Together NS supports and encourages school tours. It concurs with Department of Education guidelines which state that:

"the objective of educational tours for schools should be that they be of benefit in the intellectual, cultural and social development of the pupils taking part in them and any activity, in connection with the tour, which is in conflict with this objective is to be avoided".

This policy was devised and written in the summer term of the 2020/2021 school. This policy was drawn up by the staff to reflect the safe practice already put in place for previous outings. It was reviewed and updated in March 2023.

Rationale

School tours are an important part of a child's education. School tours allow learning to extend beyond the walls of the classroom and as such are an integral part of a balanced educational process. School tours require good preparation and organisation to optimise the learning experience for students.

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
- To endeavour to give the children a fun, educational experience that is appropriate to their age and development levels.
- To alternate the school tours from year to year so that pupils will not experience the same tour twice

The Board of Management has previously approved venues for school outings and this list will be added to as the school grows. This list is not prescriptive and may be subject to change, depending on availability and class needs. Tours and excursions that have been successful in past year include:

Junior Classes

Leixlip Library

Leixlip Amenities Centre Playground

Trips to local venues to support the Aistear curriculum framework (Supermarket, Train Station, trip on train)

St Catherine's Park

Leixlip Fire Station

Lullymore Heritage Centre

Clonfert Pet Farm

Castletown House and Parklands

Dublin Zoo

Other places of local interest to support curricular activities (Science, History etc.)

Sports grounds and venues (Newbridge Athletics, Santry Stadium etc)

Senior Classes

Croke Park Museum

Kilmainham Gaol

Dublinia

Viking Splash

Lilliput Activity Centre

Outdoor Adventure and Activity Centres

Field trips of local interest Curricular outings (Science, History etc.)

Museums and Art Galleries

Places of worship of the major world religions

Exhibitions and shows relating to STEM and the Arts

Whole School Excursions

National Concert Hall

Pantomime

Exhibitions and shows relating to STEM and the Arts

Guidelines for teachers

The tours are structured in such a way as to provide an educational aspect in addition to an entertainment and recreational value.

No teacher is responsible for more than 20 pupils. It is school policy to assign groups of approximately 12 children to each teacher; fewer pupils may be assigned to each group if appropriate considering the age and needs of the pupils. The Special Education Teacher/EAL Teacher may accompany the class teachers on tour. Additional Needs Assistants will assist teachers in supervising the pupils, where necessary the school secretary may accompany the teachers and assist in supervising children. Where a teacher or the principal has concerns regarding the health and safety of any child attending a school tour, discussions will take place with the relevant parent/guardian outlining the concerns and permission may be refused for a child to attend.

Teachers must ensure that they have the following items:

- The school's fully-charged mobile phone (or teacher's own phone set to private)
- Contact list for parents/guardians
- First-aid bag, including necessary medication or equipment for specific children

Rules for school tours are in line with our Code of Positive Behaviour:

General Rules as stated in our Code of Positive Behaviour

- Pupils are expected to follow the school's Code of Positive Behaviour during school tours, games, extracurricular activities and all other school-linked events.
- Pupils are expected to follow the direction of the teacher and accompanying adults with regard to road safety. The highest standard of behaviour is necessary on all school outings because of the increased risk to the safety of the children, and to achieve the purpose of the outing. In individual cases where the teacher, in consultation with the principal, cannot be fully satisfied that such behaviour will be forthcoming on an outing with a particular child, the child will not be permitted to attend the outing and alternative arrangements for the child will be agreed by the principal, class teacher and parent/guardian. Particular significance will be attached to behaviour on previous outings. All staff members are proactive in communicating rules/expectations to children in all areas of the school. Positive behaviour by the children is acknowledged and praised, as a core aspect of our school ethos.

Specific Rules Relating to School Tours

Parental/Guardian permission must be given for children to go on the school tour

- Parents/Guardians must inform the school of any medicinal requirements that the child may have in accordance with our Administration of Medication Policy
- Parents/Guardians should notify teachers of any travel sickness issues.
- Parents/Guardians must give teachers the permission to seek professional medical attention for their child if deemed necessary
- Normal school rules apply on school tours.
- Mobile phones and other electronic devices are not allowed on school tours.
- Pupils are not permitted to bring spending money on school tour
- Pupils should bring a healthy packed lunch and plenty to drink. The school's Healthy Lunch Policy applies while on school tour (Policy to be Drafted)
- Pupils must wear appropriate clothing for the outing
- Pupils should arrive at the school at the appointed time when the teacher will take the class roll. ● Pupils will be partnered with another child for the tour. The decision of the teacher is final in this matter. ● Pupils must stay with their group at all times, and must notify their teacher/ group supervisor if they need to use the toilet. No fewer than two children may visit the toilet at the same time, under the supervision of a member of staff. ● Where no teacher of the same gender (male/female) is available to supervise. The supervising teacher should ensure that there are no other members of the public using the toilets and supervise from the outside.
- Rain gear and/or sunscreen (depending on the season) will be essential for all children and a change of clothes may be necessary, depending on the venue.

Transport

Bus Transport

- When a bus is used, the principal will ensure that a reputable company is used. · Pupils should board and alight the bus in an orderly manner, supervised by a teacher. · Pupils should be head-counted twice before departure. ● All pupils should remain seated and seat-belted for the duration of the tour.
- Pupils should respect the bus company regulations regarding eating and drinking on the bus.

Parental/ Guardian Transport

In order to minimise the cost of the school tour, and to maximise the number of field trips for pupils, private bus hire will not always be used. For trips or tours to local venues, parents/guardians may be asked to transport their own children to and from the venue.

Parents/guardians must inform the school who will be dropping off and collecting their child

Parents/guardians will remain responsible for their own children until such a time as the supervising teacher assumes responsibility at the agreed time and venue. Pupils should be formally handed over to their parent/guardian at collection time.

For trips or tours on public transport, parents /guardians may be asked to transport their child(ren) to and from the train station.

These times may be before or after normal school opening/closing time, depending on the school tour.

Field Trips

The Board of Management has delegated responsibility for approving local field trips to the principal.

Field Trips 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 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 field trip.

Teachers should ensure adequate supervision at all times. Where necessary, an ANA, SET or the school secretary may accompany the class teacher. Occasionally parental/guardian help may be required, however the teacher will always be responsible for the supervision of his/her class.

Sports Events

In future years, it is anticipated that our pupils may participate in sports events such as Cumann na mBunscol GAA games. These often take place either during or just before/after normal school closing time. Parents/guardians will be responsible for transporting their children to and from the venue. Pupils must be signed out of the school. If a child is not being collected by his/her own parent/guardian, the school must be notified of this fact and of the collection arrangements. Once children have been signed out, the parent/guardian assumes responsibility for the child.

Success Criteria

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

Review

This policy is based on what has been successful in the past, however further reviews will be conducted in the light of experience and of our developing school

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management in April 2023 [updated in May 2024]

Signed: *Catherine Hare* Chairperson Date: 2nd May 2023

***Mary McDowell* Principal Date: 2nd May 2023**

DECLARATION AND TOUR CHECKLIST FOR TEACHER AND OTHER STAFF

Organising Teacher / Class teacher _____ Class _____

Names of other staff _____

Date, venue and other details of tour _____

Checklist	Yes	No	N/A
Before the tour			
Principal consulted about the venue and travelling arrangements.			
Venue booked (conditional on approval of Board)			
Board of Management Approval			
Transport booked			
Individual parents/guardians consulted in relation to special arrangements for individual pupils including behaviours of concern			
Timetable / schedule organised			
Parents/guardians informed by standard letter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • itinerary • timetable • cost • lunch arrangements • clothing necessary 			
Class and group leaders and pupil groups organised and list given to the office			
Tour kit organised to include the following as necessary First aid materials, refuse sacks, illness bags, Plastic bags, absorbent paper roll etc Mobile phone [if staff unwilling to use their own phone, make suitable arrangements with the office] Water Medication/Epipens for pupils (where necessary) Money/card for any necessities that may arise [as agreed with the office in advance] Parents/guardians contact details			
Teachers speak to class about expectations while on tour Partners Behaviour on bus and at venue Safety concerns - toilet rules etc.			
Declaration: I have read and am familiar with Leixlip ETNS' Tour Policy and have put the above measures into place, including discussing the necessary arrangement and individual duties and responsibilities with all supervising staff Lead Teacher: _____			
Reminder - after the tour Report back to office Send thank you letter to those involved in organising (parents/guardians etc)			