

## **Guidelines for planning and travelling on school trips.**

### **Approval of proposals**

- (1) Tour leader and/or Deputy Tour leader must obtain permission from the Board of Management, Principal and Deputy Principal to take students on a school trip. In order to plan for such extra curricular activities during the academic year this permission should be sought at the September meeting of that year or earlier if possible.
- (2) All trips should conform to the criteria in circular letter M20/04
- (2) Tour leader and deputy tour leader plan dates of trip with Deputy Principal. In planning these dates, cognisance should be given to other proposed activities /events to take place during the course of the year and the effects of and implications on the normal teaching routine of the school year.

### **Group Supervision/Team**

- (1) A mixed trip requires a ratio of male and female staff members. The ratio will vary depending on the age and maturity of students traveling and the activities to be engaged in.
- (2) A team of persons who wish to travel should be established early on. A reserve list is advisable should an adult be unable to travel.
- (3) Group leader and deputy leader to meet persons going on trip as early as possible to discuss duties, so each one knows their involvement and costs that may be incurred, if any.
- (4) Tour team should meet with the principal and deputy principal to discuss the tour in detail. Each adult travelling should be regarded as a team member.

Adults travelling on the tour may come from different departments and areas within the school structure. If a sufficient number of adults is not available within the school, then adults wishing to travel may come from outside the school. Team members may include.

- (a) Current teaching staff
- (b) Secretarial staff.
- (c) Caretaking staff.
- (d) Parents.
- (e) Members of the Board of Management.
- (f) Staff Partners.
- (g) Friends of staff

It is not recommended that personnel other than teaching staff are engaged in chaperoning or in the supervision of students. Sometimes the necessity may arise. **In this regard, personnel other than teachers must receive garda clearance before the trip takes place. This is in accordance with ACCS guidelines. Please note that forms are available from Madeline in the main office and take a number of weeks to process through ACCS.**

Each adult travelling should be treated equally and bear equal cost.

Guidelines adopted and ratified by BOM on February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2006

Responsibilities in relation to supervision and the imposing of sanctions should be the responsibility of the Tour leader and Deputy Leader or joint tour leaders. The level of responsibility regarding supervision of students undertaken by non-teaching staff should be decided upon at this meeting. Each trip merits separate and specific discussion on supervision and the imposing of sanctions.

### **Supervision of students**

The following are suggestions for supervising students on school trips:

- (1) Assign each teacher a small number of students. The teacher can call his/her small group together at specific times in busy areas and when getting on and off buses, trains, boats, planes etc. This saves time counting a large number of students and minimizes the possibility of leaving a student behind.
- (2) Count students every time they get on/off a bus, train, boat or plane.
- (3) Arrange specific meeting points to meet students when on a day tour, at various times throughout the day i.e. Entrance to Disney-world, specific shop in shopping mall, or the end of ski slope at the end of a days skiing.

### **Teacher Corridor duty**

- (1) Decide on a Rota for corridor duty (night time).
- (2) Decide on a Rota for calling students in the morning
- (2) Teachers to preferably work in mixed pairs.
- (3) Ideally teachers on duty should do so until 2 am.
- (4) Students should be aware that there are teachers on the corridor.

### **Conduct of students**

- (1) Students to be addressed by principal or deputy principal before departure.
- (2) Students must adhere to the school rules at all times, where they are applicable.
- (3) Students must follow the rules of the hotel or hostel where they are staying.
- (4) Students must be well behaved on public or private transport while on the trip.
- (5) Students are responsible for leaving their seats on buses, trains, boats and planes tidy.
- (6) Students are responsible for leaving their hotel or hostel room tidy.
- (7) Tour leader, Deputy Leader, and traveling, teachers to check all rooms and fittings before, allowing student's access to the rooms. This precaution is taken in the event of breakage or damage to property in the room prior to students entering the rooms and a note taken of any area of concern.

### **Rules of Behaviour during the School Tour.**

The code of behaviour to be observed by pupils during the course of the school tour are agreed and made known to pupils, parents and teachers in advance. Every effort is made to ensure that the rules of behaviour are positive and consistent with the objectives of the school tour and with the age and level of maturity of the participating students.

Guidelines adopted and ratified by BOM on February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2006

### **Sanctions.**

Should a student misbehave, the imposing of sanctions on the tour is at the discretion of the teachers travelling. These sanctions may take the form of

- (1) A verbal warning
- (2) The student missing a half day's activities. A student should not miss a lesson on grounds of health and safety due to this sanction being imposed.
- (3) The student not taking part in a leisure activity such as bowling.
- (4) The student not being allowed to attend a disco.

Should a sanction be imposed on a student, the student must be supervised by a teacher

**Serious misbehaviour** may result in more than one of the above sanctions being applied.

- (1) A phone call home.
- (2) Sanction may be imposed on return to school.
- (3) In prolonged and extreme cases of dangerous and gross misbehaviour a student may be sent home. Should this situation arise, the parents must be informed and a teacher if necessary should travel home with the student. The decision to send a teacher home with a student rests with the Tour Leader/s.

Serious misbehaviour should be reported to the Principal and Deputy Principal upon return.

The following list constitutes serious misbehaviour,

- (a) Use/Possession of alcohol.
- (b) Use/Possession of illegal substances (drugs etc)
- (c) Misuse of legal substances, (tippex etc)
- (d) Use/possession of cigarettes
- (e) Female students, in out of bounds areas at night.
- (f) Male students, in out of bounds areas at night.
- (g) Disruptive behaviour, on plane, boat, coach or in the hotel.
- (h) Lack of respect for rules of hotel or hostel,
- (i) Lack of respect towards supervising adults,
- (j) Theft or criminal damage to property of others.

The above list is not final and other behaviour/incidences may constitute unacceptable or serious misbehaviour.

Should situations of misbehaviour occur, they should be dealt with immediately in a quiet and firm manner. If a sanction is being imposed the student must be told why it is being imposed. A written report detailing a serious misbehaviour should be prepared for the Principal and Deputy Principal. The imposing of sanctions should be discussed with: parents at the meeting before commencement of the school trip.

In the case of a **serious/criminal incident** arising, parents will be contacted immediately. The matter will then be handed over to the local authorities.

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### **Areas of Responsibility**

- (1) Select a tour company.
- (2) Obtain a copy of the company's travel insurance documents. Ensure that it provides adequate cover.
- (3) Set the tour price. It is important at this stage to include extra expenses, such as meals, après-ski activities or admission to various institutions, which are not included in the tour price. Make provision for a contingency fund. (Approximately 10% of overall cost price)
- (4) Ideally, all adults travelling should be involved in organising the trip. The following duties commence as soon as the type of trip and destination is decided upon.
  - (a) One person to oversee the collection of money. From 2004 this process will be by direct debit. (Tour Leader and/or Deputy Tour Leader)
  - (b) One person to organise the group passport. (Tour Leader and/or Deputy Tour Leader) (if availing of a group passport) Due to privacy considerations, students in Ashbourne Community School obtain their own passports.
  - (c) One person to organise the E 111' s (Volunteer from team) if applicable
  - (d) One person to organise cultural passes and internal tours. (Volunteer from team)
  - (e) Remaining members of team may help out with the above or organise other details specific to the tour, i.e. video camera, school camera, first aid box, special medical needs of students, names and addresses of hospitals and doctors in the immediate area where the tour will take place.

### **Notice to Parents.**

Provision should be made to ensure that parents of pupils who might participate in a tour are given adequate notice outlining:

- The objectives of the tour
- The itinerary and duration of the tour.
- The costs involved and method of payment.
- The rules of behaviour to be observed.
- Information regarding insurance and indemnity.

Parents should be made aware of their duty to inform the school of any relevant Health or Safety issues which might affect their children.

The signed permission of parents must be an essential pre-requisite for the participation of their children in any school tour.

### **Meeting parents**

Two to three weeks before departure a meeting of parents of all students travelling should be held. At this meeting the parents can be given the itinerary along with the address/s and contact phone numbers of hotels and hostels. The itinerary can be discussed in detail and questions taken. Where possible all students and staff traveling, should attend. Staff traveling, on the tour should be aware of this meeting early on and a date

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decided upon to suit both staff and parents. Ideally, and subject to availability, a representative from the tour company may address parents.

### **Money matters/Finance Issues**

The overall cost of a school tour should be agreed in advance and should be such as to take into account the ability of pupils and their parents to pay. The income and expenditure of funds associated with the tour should conform fully to the accounting practices of the school. (See pt 1 below) A full account of income and expenditure should be reported to the Principal and to the Board of Management. In the event that a separate Bank account has been opened for the purpose of the Tour, it should be closed immediately on completion.

- (1) The money should be collected in installments by direct debit with specific dates for payment. See Marion in the main office to discuss setting up the necessary account/documentation. Cash and cheques are no longer acceptable in payment for school trips by order of the Board of Management.
- (2) Set up a specific account for trip generally to include destination and year of travel, i.e. USA 2004, Norway 2005, etc.
- (3) Pay deposit, interim payments and final payment to tour company by due dates.
- (4) Convert approximately 20% of the balance into currency of country/s being visited. The remainder may be traveller cheques or a specific school trip credit card may be used.
- (5) When on trip keep receipts of all money spent.
- (6) If there is money left over, refund to students when they return to school. Students must sign for this refund and receipt of same from parents/guardians.

### **Passport**

#### **Group passport (If applicable)**

- (1) Send for details of the group passport as soon as possible. The phone number of the passport office is (01)-6711633 and the fax number is (01) - 6711092.
- (2) A student with his or her own passport need not apply for inclusion in the group passport.
- (3) The form for the group passport must be filled out by both parents and witnessed.
- (4) The group passport form can be witnessed by the tour leader or other persons listed at the back of the form.
- (5) If a parent is deceased the following documents must accompany the group passport form:
  - (a) A long birth certificate (original).
  - (b) An affidavit signed by a commissioner of oaths.
  - (c) Death cert (original).
- (6) If the case of a single parent family the following documents must accompany the group passport form:
  - (a) A long birth certificate (original).
  - (b) An affidavit signed by a commissioner of oaths.
- (7) If a parent is unavailable, the following documents must accompany the group passport form;
  - (a) A long birth certificate (original).

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- (b) A court order must be obtained from the children's court. The children's court is located at, Dolphins house, Essex street, Dublin. Phone (01) – 8725555
- (8) If a student is adopted, then both adopted parents sign the parents consent form. If one of the adopted parents has died since the adoption then the procedure for the remaining adopted parent is the same as (5) above.
- (9) It is very important that all forms are filled out correctly.
- (10) Send the completed forms to the passport office approximately 4 to 5 weeks before departure. If possible visit the passport office with the completed forms, as small problems can be immediately identified and rectified in a shorter period of time.
- (11) The tour leader should keep the group passport and only hand to students if required to do so by relevant authorities. The group passport should be collected from students and only given out on a permanent basis at the end of the tour.
- (12) If students are travelling on their own passport, the tour leader collects the passports before the trip commences for safe keeping and for ease of passage during the trip.
- (13) Collect passports 3 to 4 weeks prior to departure.
- (14) **The passports remain the responsibility of the Tour Leader and Deputy Leader or Joint Tour Leaders for the duration of the tour.** They are only given out when needed. They are immediately collected and held by Tour Leader/s or preferably in a hotel safe.

### **E III Cards (If applicable)**

The E 111 form provides medical insurance for students and staff from E C countries while travelling in other E C countries. In the event of an accident or illness the student may be taken to a local doctor or hospital. A list of doctors and hospitals in the locations where the tour visits should be drawn up before the tour leaves. Should an accident or illness occur on route to a tour centre, then a local doctor may be sent for or a local hospital visited. The responsibility for finding a doctor or hospital when travelling between centers lies with the Tour Leader/s.

- (1) The E 111 Cards are available from each health board.
- (2) Each health board has its own form and students with different county addresses must fill in the form relevant to their county.
- (3) Send in these forms 4 to 5 weeks before departure.
- Information to parents

Keep parents informed of any changes that may occur. A frequent question asked by parents is *how much money my son/daughter should bring with them*. Bear in mind extra costs that the students may incur. Work out a reasonable daily allowance, i.e. twenty-five to thirty euros/pounds/dollars per day. Listed below are a number of guidelines to follow for minding money:

- (a) Divide the money into equal amounts.
- (b) Place the money in small plastic bags or small envelopes.
- (c) Buy a money belt, which can be worn inside a tee shirt. Keep the money and nothing else in the money belt. Do not open the money belt in busy areas.
- (d) When travelling to and from tour destination, have a small amount

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- of money available in a safe place.
- (g) Keep as much money as possible for shopping trips.

### **Student medical history**

Some students may suffer from an illness, which requires constant/or regular medication. **When contacting parents about other aspects of the trip, it is imperative that Tour Leader asks to be informed about any illnesses that a student may have.** (See form details below)) Leave the school phone number and an invitation to ring the school to make an appointment. At a private meeting the parent/s can inform the Tour Leader/s about the illness and the administering of medication. **Each parent must fill in a form which includes medical history, contact numbers, allergies and medication to be taken.** Establish if a non-medical person is able to administer medication.

### **Dental Treatment**

In emergency cases, students will receive dental treatment if advised by a medical practitioner. (See medical emergencies)

### **Medical Emergencies**

**The following agreement is issued to all guardians/parents and must be signed before the trip takes place.**

*We, the tour leaders ..... will act on medical advice presented to us if in the event of an accident or emergency where it is not possible to contact parents, guardians or next of kin, either by phone or due to time considerations. Before the tour leaves, parents must specify in writing the person/s they wish for us to contact in the event of parents themselves not being available. The parents/guardians will always be contacted first in the event of an emergency.*

**School mobile Phone** available for trips- See Marion/Deputy Principal.

### **Contact Information**

The Tour leader must ensure that complete contact information is left available in the school during the tour for use in the event of an emergency. This should include:

- A listing of all of those taking part together with home contact details.
- The itinerary to be followed and contact details.
- A contact telephone number for the Tour Director.

### **Insurance and Indemnity ACCS Guidelines**

School tours within Ireland (including Northern Ireland) by pupils and teachers from C & C schools are normally covered by the State Indemnity provided the Board of Management properly approves the tour.

Where, however, the tour is involved in an activity of a specialist nature, such as an outdoor Education Centre that requires supervision by trained professionals, the Board of Management may not rely entirely on the State Indemnity for insurance purposes.

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In considering applications/requests from teachers to bring students on an outdoor activities type tour e.g. Transition Year Group for orienteering, canoeing, hill walking etc. activities the Board should ensure:

Written applications giving full details of the proposed tour are submitted to the Board of Management.

The school receives a copy of the Outdoor Activity/Pursuits Centre Public Liability insurance certificate and notes any limitations stated in the policy.

The school receives details of the professional qualifications/training of the Outdoor Activity/Pursuits Centre staff who will be leading/guiding the students in the specialist outdoor activities.

Parents/guardians should be encouraged to effect Personal Accident Insurance cover for their students. The insurance company should also be contacted to ensure the students are covered for these specialist outdoor activities under the Personal Accident policy.

The State Indemnity still applies to the teachers who accompany the students to the Outdoor Activity/Pursuits Centre in the performance of their normal supervisory and pastoral role

Where doubts remain then the Board of Management/School Management should seek and acquire appropriate insurance protection for the Board of Management, teachers and for students.

Boards of Management/School Management should not approve the release of teachers to supervise and or the attendance of students on these specialist tours to Outdoor Activity/Pursuits Centres unless all aspects of supervision, training and insurance are clarified with all interests and noted.

In the case of school tours outside the island of Ireland the Board of Management should not rely on the State Indemnity for insurance purposes. Appropriate travel insurance should be taken out to cover those embarking on the tour.

### **Reporting back to Principal and Board of Management.**

Arrangements should be made for a summary report from the Tour leader to the Principal and the Board of Management outlining:

- The achievements of the tour.
- A financial statement.
- Any difficulties or problems which arose during the course of the tour.