

Ardfinnan National School,
Clonmel,
Co. Tipperary.



Tours/Excursions Policy

Introduction

This policy was drawn up by the staff and circulated to the Board of Management and Parents Association for observations and feedback.

Rationale

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 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 make available a suggested list of age-appropriate tour venues.

Policy Content

It has been the policy of the school over the years to organise our School tours on a single date in the third term, where possible. Destinations are chosen carefully by the class teacher, taking into account previous tours, class numbers, class profiles, value for money and other relevant factors. Individual classes may also arrange further excursions at other times during the year, at the discretion of the teacher and in consultation with the Principal.

The tours are structured in such a way as to provide an educational aspect in addition to an entertainment and recreational value. If shopping is included on the itinerary, it should be properly supervised at all times and limited in nature.

It is our policy to keep groups as small as possible. No staff member is responsible for more than 20 pupils.

S.N.A.'s, Learning Support and Special Class Teachers, as well as other assigned staff accompany mainstream classes.

Pupils from the Autistic Unit go on tour with their linked mainstream class when appropriate/possible.

Venue

Tours will be booked early in the 1st or 2nd term for a date early in the 3rd term. Teachers will be conscious of the likely 'busier' days. Not more than two classes will travel together, unless venue and transport arrangements warrant otherwise. Where more than one class travels, one teacher will accept the role of 'leader'. 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. Lists of family contact numbers will be taken by the tour leader.

Conduct on Tours

Pupil's 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 school may refuse the child permission to travel. This possibility will be discussed well in advance with parents/guardians and their co-operation/support sought. If required

Tours list

A list of suitable tours for all classes will be available. Classes may choose a venue suitable for their own level. Teachers will be mindful of the suitability of venues/activities for pupils in their classes who have special needs. Advance communication with the venues re: the attendance of any pupils with special needs is to be done by the class teacher at the time of booking.

Uniforms

School P.E. gear or Summer Uniform will be worn by the pupils. Spare clothes and/or rain gear may be brought depending on the itinerary, general weather forecasts etc.

Reports

Where problems arise either with the venue or transport teachers/staff will report back to the transport/tour organiser who will in turn subsequently report it to the Principal. Accident forms from venues at which accidents to pupils have happened will be filled in and copies retained as appropriate.

Informing Parents

Teachers will ensure that parents are given sufficient notice of:

- Itinerary & timetable
- Cost... deposit etc. (non-refundable, except in exceptional situations)
- Special clothing necessary and packed lunch (no glassware)

Cancellation of Tours

If a tour has to be cancelled at short notice for any reason, then parents/guardians will be informed via the Text-a-Parent service. The class teacher and Principal will consult before making the final decision to cancel. In such cases the tour or an alternative tour will be arranged for another date, if possible.

Success Criteria

- Positive experiences for all
- Children having a safe, enjoyable, educational outing
- Teacher/Parent satisfaction.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually after the school tours in the third term.

22-11-11

Tony Keen