

2010



Coláiste Abbáin

# [POLICY ON EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES]

This document contains Coláiste Abbáin's Extra-curricular Activities Policy.

# **COLAISTE ABBAIN**

## **DRAFT POLICY: EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Colaiste Abbain strives to be a welcoming place, multi-denominational, inclusive in its intake, with a comprehensive curriculum. Our structures and behaviour management strategies are fair and just, and our decision making is fully consultative. We are taking positive steps to fulfil our mission in partnership with parents, staff, students and the local community.

Within this holistic approach to the provision of education, an important element in a comprehensive curriculum is the provision of a wide range of extra-curricular activities (ECA), including sporting, artistic, musical, cultural, literary, social, leisure and spiritual activities. These activities are a sine qua non for the school's objective of full development of students based on the core principles of self-respect and respect for others.

### **POLICY RATIONALE**

A formal policy on ECA must be as comprehensive as possible, positive and exact in its language and presentation and made as widely available as possible to all of the school partners.

Colaiste Abbain recognises that ECA represent a valuable aspect of the learning process and contribute to the development of a rounded individual. ECA supplement and complement in-school learning and activities and provide opportunities for students to broaden their horizons in ways that would not be possible within the confines of the school premises alone.

### **POLICY GOALS**

The ECA policy should have the following goals:

- To ensure consistent approaches to the planning and implementation of ECA in the school
- To provide the school community with a clear understanding of the role of ECA in the school
- To enable students to take full advantage of ECA with a view to achieving a rounded education
- To encourage parents to take an interest in and share responsibility for their children's overall development through support of the school's ECA
- To provide teachers and other staff members with assurance and guidelines to help them with what is effectively voluntary work for the benefit of the students and the whole school community

## **POLICY CONTENT**

The fact that ECA, by definition, take place either outside of school or the school premises, or both, means that there are certain unique issues that need to be addressed. The major issues that require attention include:

- Proposing ECA
- Parental involvement and consent
- Insurance
- Transport
- Health and safety
- Behaviour and discipline
- Supervision
- Coordinating and planning
- Overnight stays
- Community use of school facilities
- Legal issues
- Child protection

## **PROPOSING ECA**

As ECA is a dynamic programme, there will be times when teachers and others have ideas for new activities that could be added. To facilitate consideration of these in a formal manner, the ECA policy will contain an ECA proposal form, which will provide details of the following for a proposed activity:

- Proposed date, time of departure and time of return for the activity
- Proposed itinerary
- Aims and objectives of the activity
- How these aims and objectives will be met

- Possible follow-up activities
- Breakdown of the various costs associated with the activity and a total cost
- Any special funding available for the activity
- Cost to the students
- Provision for those who cannot afford the cost
- Supervision levels required for the activity

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND CONSENT**

As holistic education is dependent on a cooperative approach between parents and the school, it is vital that parents are fully aware of and committed to the success of the school's ECA and ECA policy. In addition to highlighting ECA in the school literature, the school may provide parents at the beginning of the school year with a list of proposed ECA events planned and the value their children could derive from such activities. The policy could also seek input from parents on developing or introducing new ECA, or perhaps even conducting an activity through their workplace.

In relation to individual ECA, it is important that any policy mandate the delivery of a letter or form to the parents of students that might include the following:

- A description of the activity, including date, place, time, duration and means of transport
- The purpose of the activity and how it relates to the overall curriculum
- The total cost per student and cost to parents after the school's contribution is subtracted
- A permission and release from that allows the student to participate in the activity; this form must be returned to the school before a student is allowed to participate
- Levels of adult supervision
- A medical form highlighting any illnesses a student may have or medication s/he is taking and granting authority to the school to act in an emergency medical situation in the event that a parent cannot be contacted (a separate form for the latter covering the whole year may be an alternative solution).

## **INSURANCE**

Given that ECA take place outside of school hours and/or of school premises, it is important to put in place a system of ensuring that the school's insurance coverage meets any potential liabilities that may arise

from ECA. At a minimum, adequate insurance, from the school's perspective, must include:

- Public liability insurance to protect the school if the school's actions result in bodily injury to others, including students
- Employer's liability insurance to cover the school from claims by employees who suffer bodily injury in the course of employment by the school for ECA
- Group personal accident insurance to cover the school for situations where accidents occur for which the school cannot be deemed negligent
- Travel insurance, if the activity involves overseas travel

Although the above insurance requirements are almost certainly part of the school's insurance programme, the school should ensure that they apply to all ECA. In addition to the above, the ECA policy should mandate that the school verifies that the host of a particular off-campus ECA has adequate insurance, along with any company or individual transporting groups to and from ECA.

## **TRANSPORT**

- Transport supplied must be suitable and well maintained, with teachers having the right to refuse any vehicle that they consider unsuitable for the outing in favour of a suitable replacement vehicle.
- The driver should be used to dealing with students and have a full knowledge of and follow the itinerary and timetable for the activity, subject to changes by the teachers.
- The driver is responsible for the safety of the students while travelling, but teachers have the right to intervene in cases where they feel that student safety is being compromised.
- The students should have access to the vehicle all day for such purposes as changing clothes, eating packed lunches and shelter where necessary.
- Vehicles are to be left in the same condition of tidiness as they were found.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**