



Educational School Tour Policy

Coláiste Abbáin

Mission Statement

Coláiste Abbáin endeavours to provide quality education for all students in a caring, disciplined and respectful environment. We aim to prepare students for life and responsible citizenship and motivate them towards the achievement of their full potential.

Coláiste Abbáin is a school under the patronage of
Waterford Wexford Education and Training Board





Aims of this policy

Coláiste Abbáin is committed to incorporating educational tours, trips and visits into its curriculum, providing that they will enhance student's relevant understanding and experience and are seen as a valuable addition to the regular school experience. The aim of an educational school tour is to provide an educational, cultural, social and personal experience for everyone involved.

Educational tours, trips and visits provide an excellent opportunity for the personal growth and development of students. They can have a positive effect on students' self esteem and social skills. Tours also enhance the collaborative relationships between staff and students and foster positive communication across classes and year groups. Educational visits provide rich experiences that cannot be created in school and many students will cherish them for a long time to come.

Rationale

Educational Tours must be consistent with the rationale as specified by the Department of Education and Science in Circular Letter M 20/04. All reasonable efforts will be made to satisfy the criteria contained in this circular. In circular letter M20/04 the Department of Education and Science has devolved to Boards of Management the authorisation to grant approval for educational tours by school groups both inside and outside the State subject to a number of criteria.

Coláiste Abbáin exists to provide an effective and broad education to all of its students. It provides an academic education while also recognising that exposure to a variety of experiences and cultures is part of a holistic education.

Objectives

- To assist staff in the planning of educational tours so that they are aware of all necessary precautions to provide for the health and safety of staff and students.
- To ensure that educational tours are organised efficiently and that the standard of supervision is within the guidelines and standards set by the Department of Education and Science.
- To clarify expectations of behaviour and to outline the conditions whereby a student may be refused permission to be included on an educational tour.
- To involve all members of the school community in ratifying this policy.

Proposal stages

It is recommended that one teacher be nominated as Tour Leader who will be expected to ensure that it is conducted in accordance with agreed standards. The Tour Leader will approach the Principal with the educational tour proposal.

Factors involved in preliminary discussions may include:

- Relevant Travel Agency
- Destination
- Dates and Duration of Tour
- Suggested Itinerary
- Number/Age/Gender/Year of students to go on the educational trip/tour
- Medical/Disability Concerns/Issues



- Staff Availability/Interest: Selection of teachers to accompany students will be at the discretion of the Tour Leader and the Principal. The recommended ratio of teachers to students is 1:8
- Price and Overall Value for Money
- Collection of Monies
- Educational Value
- Previous Experience organising trips/tours
- Any issues / concerns re climate / language / political situation / public health issue / vaccination requirements / communications of the place being visited
- Insurance requirements
- AOB

Approving the tour

The Tour Leader will submit a Tour Proposal Form at this meeting. If the Tour is approved in principle, the Principal will bring the proposal to the Board of Management for approval. If approved, the Tour Leader must apply to Waterford Wexford Education and Training Board for permission to take a tour out of the country.

Preparation and training for staff traveling on the educational trip/tour

All staff travelling on the trip/tour must read and be familiar with this policy and the behaviour checklist for the trip/tour.

Training may be organised if required for teachers travelling on the trip/tour. Roles will be assigned and documented.

A Deputy Leader for the trip/tour must be appointed.

All communications during the planning and delivery of the trip/tour will be handled by the Leader and all instruction will come from the Leader.

Visiting foreign countries

The laws of the destination country will apply. The Leader must inform themselves of the laws.

Contingency planning and planning for emergencies

Contingency Planning will occur when the details of the educational tour/trip have been finalised. The plan will be tested to make sure that it works. The plan will be approved by the Principal and will only change if there is good reason to do so.

'Worst Case' scenarios should be given consideration eg a major accident, death, multiple participants being injured, fire, flooding or the outbreak of a virulent disease. Advice will be sought from the Travel Agency, our insurer, emergency services, public health doctor and/or other professionals are required.

Student's personal details, relevant documentation, emergency contact numbers and the local emergency contact numbers for the country being visited will be included in the plan.

Parents/Guardians will be provided with the contact details of the person who will provide them with accurate information in the event of an emergency. This person will keep them updated with any changes or progress. One person will be given the responsibility for liaising with parents/guardians in the event of an emergency.

Advertising places



A meeting will be held for the relevant students who may wish to go on the proposed educational tour/trip. A letter will be given to the students with brief details of destination/itinerary/estimated price (dependent on ultimate uptake)/payment dates etc.

Students will be given an application form to complete. Parents/Guardians will be required to give written consent for students under 18 years of age to participate in the educational trip/tour. The application form must provide information on the student's health, if applicable, any existing conditions and use of prescribed medications. Emergency contact details in case of an incident must be given.

The Tour Leader will now examine the application forms and decide which students are to be offered a position on the educational school tour. If necessary, they will consult and meet with the Principal and Year Head(s) to discuss the behavioural record of a specific student.

Payment of monies

Successful students will be informed on where and when to pay their **non-refundable** deposit (between €100 - €150). A student will not secure a place on the tour/trip until the deposit is paid. These monies must be placed in the envelope provided by the Tour Leader and the outside of the envelope must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian. The passport name of the student must be given and both the deposits and names will then be forwarded to the travel company.

Subsequent payments

Students will receive a letter from the tour/trip Leader before the next instalment is due. The money must be paid on or before the assigned date on the envelope provided.

Students can either pay in cash or cheque (payable to relevant person/company). The balance of cost is usually due 6 weeks in advance of school tour/trip.

Students will also be informed that any subsequent name change will result in fees levied by the airline, and are outside the control of the tour organiser or the travel company.

Should a student decide to withdraw from the tour they will be subject to financial penalties as per the tour operator's policy. The Tour Leader has no control over this.

Collection of monies and record-keeping procedures

All monies for the trip/tour must be paid in the envelope provided by the tour/trip Leader. This envelope serves as a record of payment and receipt of monies. All monies collected will be carefully recorded by the Leader and will be given to the Principal/Deputy Principal for lodgement.

Cheques will subsequently be paid to tour/trip operator/bus company at relevant times.

Receipts will be issued after the final payment is made. All records will be maintained for a minimum of six years.

Contact details

Mobile phone numbers of all students travelling on the trip must be given at the pre-trip/tour meeting.

Parents/Guardians will also be required to give all contact details for the duration of the trip. Students will be given a contact number for the tour/trip Leader and supervising teachers while they are away so that contact can be made in the event of an emergency.

Possible extra costs



There may be extra costs involved outside of the price given by the Tour Leader. Some of these are mentioned below. The Tour Leader, will so far as is possible, make parents / guardians and students aware of these costs before the start of the tour / trip. One of the more usual costs is a hotel deposit. Hotels reserve the right to request a deposit from school groups (usually €20 per person). This is payable by students and is refundable on checkout if their rooms pass inspection. Students are asked to report any damage in their rooms on arrival so as to avoid issues on checkout.

Insurance

Standard travel insurance is included in the tour price. All parents/guardians will be given information on the EHIC form and they must take responsibility for processing this form and ensuring that students have a valid EHIC card prior to their departure which is always requested when seeking medical care in EU countries. Parents will also be required to complete a form giving details of medical problems/medication being taken and will give authorisation to the tour leader or his/her nominee to act on their behalf in a medical emergency.

Collection of passport

The tour/trip Leader will explain to the students that it is their responsibility to have their own valid passport ready prior to the departure date. The tour/trip Leader and the Deputy Leader will collect each student's passport on the morning of departure. The passports will be distributed and collected at the airport and should be kept in the hotel safe while on the tour/trip.

Code of behaviour

A code of behaviour and set of rules has been devised for educational tours/trips. Parents/Guardians and the Student (irrespective of age) will be required to sign acceptance of the School Tour/Trip Rules.

Teachers and other designated adults supervising the tour/trip are in loco parentis and therefore have the responsibilities and rights of a prudent parent. Health and Safety, Child Protection and extracurricular policies also apply to supervision on tours/trips. Teachers give up their free time voluntarily and students should show their appreciation of this by co-operating fully with those teachers.

Students are expected to behave in a courteous, co-operative and considerate manner. They must abide by the teacher's decisions and directions in all matters. The school's code of behaviour applies on any school tour/trip in addition to the particular code of behaviour to any tour/trip. The full penalties for breaching either code will apply on the tour/trip and/or upon return to school depending on which is most applicable and practical.

For the purpose of the smooth running of the tour/trip the students will be divided into groups and a leader will be appointed to each group.

Supervision on the tour/trip

During the day – Students will be accompanied by teachers throughout the tour/trip. However, it is usual that students are allowed free time for shopping, lunch etc. These free periods cannot be predicted in advance on a general basis as each tour's components will vary. Students will only be left free in an area deemed suitable, and a prominent meeting place will be advised before the group breaks.



Students, who misbehave, deviate from the recommended area, purchase or consume alcohol, cigarettes or drugs, do so entirely at their own risk and will face full rigour of school rules/laws of the destination country.

Should a teacher suspect breach of regulations he/she has the right to ask the student to empty pockets/baggage /containers/items of clothing to ascertain if illicit articles/substances are present.

Staff may carry out an inspection of rooms or personal property with the student present if there are reasonable grounds for concern for safety or use/possession of a banned substance etc.

Students must at all times carry the number of the school mobile phone in case they get lost, need help etc. They should also carry their own (switched on and with sufficient credit) phone during free time in case teachers need to contact them.

At night – On return to the hotel each night students will go to their rooms. They will be given a specific curfew. A check will then be made to ensure that everyone is in their designated room.

A number of further checks will be made throughout the night. However students will be expected to follow tour rules and remain in their rooms.

Any breaches will be dealt with at the discretion of the tour/trip Leader. Parents/ Guardians will be contacted if necessary.

Exclusions subsequent to acceptance to go on the school tour/trip

Students who misbehave in a manner deemed serious by the school authorities may be deprived of their place on the tour/trip. This is in the interest of safety to themselves and other students/staff. In such a case, the payment of refunds, depend entirely on the conditions of the travel company and depends on the actual date of cancellation of the place. In the case of a late exclusion and subsequent cancellation, a refund will not usually apply.

The School Tour Leader will highlight this point to students and parents/guardians before a student submits an application.

Criteria for exclusion from travelling on a tour/trip

These include: persistent minor breaches of the school's code of behaviour; suspensions arising from major breaches of the school's code of behaviour; any drugs/alcohol/smoking related suspensions; students who have shown themselves to be unwilling or unable to take instruction. In all cases the frequency, seriousness and how recently breaches of the code of behaviour took place will be factors. This list is not exhaustive.

Pre-tour/trip meeting

A meeting will be held in advance of the tour/trip at which a parent/guardian of each participant must attend. Attendance at this meeting is extremely important, as the main emphasis of the meeting is health and safety. At this meeting a presentation on all aspects of the tour/trip will be made to the parents/guardians and the parents/guardians will get an opportunity to meet with the tour/trip Leader and the other teachers involved. The following issues will be examined and discussed:

Detailed Itinerary



Extra Costs
Contact Numbers
Medical Issues- full disclosure of conditions and medications
Expected Standard of Behaviour
Rooming Arrangements.
Supervision

After the tour

On return to school, the tour/trip Leader will give a written report on the tour/trip to the Principal, outlining the achievements of the tour/trip and any difficulties or problems which arose during the course of the tour/trip. A written evaluation may also have to be completed for the tour/rip operating company.

Pictures and student account of the school tour/trip will be put up on the school website.

Contact information

The tour/trip Leader must ensure that complete contract information is left available in the school during the tour/trip for use in the event of an emergency. This should include:

- Contact and Passport details for each person travelling
- The itinerary to be followed, accommodation and travelling arrangements
- Contact details for the Travel Agency, if relevant
- Emergency numbers for the destination country

Review and evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed and evaluated as necessary. The Board of Management reserves the right to amend this Policy without notice if required.

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This policy will be reviewed and amended if necessary. The Policy will be ratified by the Board of Management following any review. The Board of Management reserve the right to amend this policy at any time.

Ratification of the Policy: Date: 9th May 2018