



**Loreto Secondary School, Bray**

## **School Tours Policy**

## **1. General Policy**

The Board of Management of Loreto Secondary School, Bray 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".

School tours are categorised under two headings: those which are demanded by the particular curriculum subject, such as field trips and those which deepen the student's knowledge and understanding of the cultural, social and physical aspects of the areas or countries visited. Student tours to develop linguistic skills are a good example of the latter.

To reflect a world which is developing and changing, current educational philosophy recommends that students have first-hand experience wherever possible. 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.

The Board would hope that all school trips and tours would have a beneficial effect on pupils, enhancing both their academic prowess and their social skills.

Students and parents/guardians shall be acquainted in advance of the tour with rules, regulations and special requirements of that tour.

## **2. Procedures for Tours**

- 1.** The approval of any school tour must be sought and obtained from the Principal.
- 2.** Board approval shall be required for each tour.
- 3.** It is for the Principal to decide which teachers will organize the tour and accompany the pupils. Prior to departure, one teacher/teachers shall be appointed as tour leader(s). It is recognised that the organisation of or participation in any school tour is voluntary on the part of teachers.
- 4.** Once the Board of Management has been appraised of all the details of a tour and has given its approval, then the tour leader(s) is/are fully empowered to proceed with the tour.
- 5.** Adequate arrangements for supervision of all students should be arranged as well as appropriate insurance. The recommended ratio of members of staff to students shall be one to ten for overnight trips/tours. This ratio may be altered at the discretion of the Principal. (while at all times adhering to Health & Safety guidelines and Insurance requirements)
- 6.** Students and parents/guardians shall be acquainted in advance of the tour with rules, regulations and any special requirements of that particular tour. Parents/guardians shall be given an outline of the purpose, itinerary, dates and costs of the tour before a deposit is sought. Each student and her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given a form outlining the rules,

regulations and any requirements particular to that tour and they shall be required to sign that (i) they understand the rules etc and (ii) they are willing to abide by them at all times.

**7.** A list of all students intending to travel must be submitted to the Principal prior to booking. The inclusion or exclusion of particular students in a school tour shall be at the discretion of the school authorities.

**8.** Students and parent(s)/guardian(s) shall acquaint themselves with the school's Code of Discipline and agree to abide by it. Each student and her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given a form outlining any additional rules and regulations and shall be required to sign this.

The Board of Management specifically wishes to draw attention to the following:

(i) students must obey members of staff at all times.

(ii) students must stay with the tour group. A student may not go off by herself or wander off anywhere alone: students must stay in groups at all times.

(iii) students must not purchase alcohol or tobacco products for any purpose at any stage of the tour.

(iv) the use of alcohol or other non-medically prescribed drugs by students on a tour is absolutely forbidden.

(v) the Board of Management requires parent(s)/guardian(s) to guarantee that when their daughter comes to the school to assemble for the start of a school tour, she does so free of illegal substances either on her person or in her luggage.

(vi) Where a student is guilty of 'serious misbehaviour' the Tour Leader may decide to phone the student's parents/guardians to provide them with details of the incident/s. In on-going and extreme cases of dangerous and/or gross misbehaviour a student may be sent home. In the event of this happening, the parents/guardians will be informed and if necessary arrangements made for the offending student to travel home in line with Child Protection Guidelines at the expense of the parent/guardian.

**9.** Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students will be required to attend the Tour Meeting prior to the tour where specific details of the tour & tour rules will be explained.

**10.** Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be required to sign a consent form which will allow medical advice to be followed in the event of injury/illness and where it is not possible to contact them in the time available. In the event of accident or injury, medical opinion will be sought immediately and best practice will be followed. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted as soon as is practically possible. The Board has full confidence in the staff and their decisions.

**11.** Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be required to give details of phone numbers for contact in the event of an emergency on a twenty-four hour basis for the duration of the tour. A Mobile telephone number will be supplied to parent(s)/guardian(s) and students prior to departure for use only in case of emergency.

**12.** Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be requested to inform the tour leader in writing of any special needs, medical conditions or medication required by their daughter while on the tour.

**13.** Students on tours within the European Union shall be required to have a completed E111 form and a valid passport (and an appropriate visa if the student does not hold an EU passport)

### **3. Emergency Procedures**

13. In the event of a serious incident/accident as many members of staff as is possible/practical in the circumstances shall come together; they shall agree on an outline of the details of the incident/accident and taking into account all the facts as they are known at that time, shall decide on a course of action. The details and the decision(s) taken shall be put in writing as close to the event as is reasonable. The Board accepts that in cases where there is lack of consensus over the course of action, the tour leader (where available) has the final decision.

14. Tour leaders and all members of staff accompanying the tour must ensure that, if it becomes necessary to question a student about a potentially serious matter, another adult be present. In addition to the Code of Discipline, students must adhere to the law of the country which they visit. In the event of a breach of this, due process of law will follow.

15. The tour leader shall be given a sum of money (amount to be decided by the Board) which may be used in the event of an emergency.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017

Signed: Michael Denny

*Chairperson of Board of Management*

Signed: Emma Raughter

*Principal*

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017