Trips and Tours Policy

1 Mission and Vision

To provide students with the opportunity to enhance their personal and educational growth through trips and tours that build on learning within the school environment. To provide an inclusive and stimulating opportunity for students of all ability levels to maximise their individual potential through involvement in trips and tours.

2 Scope of the Policy

2.1 This Policy is drafted in the context of the Health and Safety at Work Acts 1989 and 2005, Circular Letter M20/04 issued by the Department of Education and Skills, JMB Guidelines, Financial Support Services Unit (FSSU) advice on School Tours and Trips and Child Safeguarding and Risk Assessment as per the DES Guidelines on Child Protection.

2.2 This Policy should be read in its totality, as there may be some overlap in the requirements for planning specific trips and/or activities. For example, when planning a trip abroad the section on Residential Trips will also be important.

2.3 Educational tours of more than one day’s duration should be arranged to coincide with normal school holidays as set out in CL M20/04.

2.4 If an educational tour/field trip is an integral part of a school programme the Board of Management of the school may grant permission for the tour/field trip to be held during term time and as per the requirements of CL M20/04.
2.5 The Board of Management must ensure that students who are not participating in an educational tour/field trip are adequately catered for while their teachers are away on school tours/trips. Appropriate arrangements must be made for the conduct of all classes in accordance with Circular PPT01/03. In the planning of the tour/trip cognisance must be taken of the impact the tour/trip will have on the normal work of the school and the numbers of absent teachers should be kept to a minimum.

3 Rationale
To provide teachers with a policy that will give them a structured written format to follow when planning, completing and reviewing school tours which will:

- maximise the safety of all students and staff attending school trips/tours by providing a safe ratio of teachers to students.
- encourage awareness of the wellbeing of all group members.
- promote an organised and structured format for school trips/tours.
- provide staff and students with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- promote best practise policies and procedure for all school trips/tours.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

The Teacher acting as tour leader is responsible for:

I. Booking the trip and organising dates. The school calendar on the notice board in the staff room must be consulted before organising a trip. Priority will be given to the trip that is on the notice board first. No trips should be booked in the month of May, to avoid class and exam study disruption. Exceptions may be made if a relevant exam related trip occurs at this time, and weather permitting trips.

II. Liaising with the tour company

III. All correspondence to the parents and tour company

IV. Budgeting for the trip i.e. projecting the cost to the parents

V. Organising the itinerary will be at the discretion of the tour leader subject to the approval of the Principal.

VI. Presenting the information night for parents and students in advance of the trip

VII. Organising teachers to accompany students on the trip. The choice of staff to travel is at the discretion of the tour leader subject to agreement of the Principal.

VIII. Managing the budget while abroad

IX. Communicating with parents and school while abroad

The school will provide the following support for the leader:

I. The office will administer the incoming money and keep account of balances

II. The school will afford the tour leader discretion with regard to destination, staff travelling, and itinerary subject to agreement by the principal

III. The school will provide the teacher with a secure method of travelling with money
IV. The school will not hold the teacher accountable in the event of any lost property or money
V. In the event of an insurance claim, the office will take care of any administration of the claim
VI. The school will support the teachers and tour leaders in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour and Discipline.

5 School Transport
The operating tour company for trips abroad, should ensure that the Bus Operator and driver are fully compliant with the law for example:

In planning of day to day trips, the bus operator is responsible for the following:

- Does the driver have a current Certificate of Professional Competence
- Does the Bus have a certificate of road worthiness?
- Is the bus fitted with three point seatbelts?
- Does the driver adhere to EY drivers hours regulations?
- Has the operator got a PSV licence for the vehicle?

6 Success Criteria
- Feedback from staff and students.
- Feedback from tour operators, hotel management, transportation providers etc.
- Surveys which will allow staff gain a more complete review of the trips/ tours.

7 Monitoring Procedures
- Feedback to management, from staff members completing tours and trips, to ensure all aspects of the policy were sufficient to meet the needs of their individual and unique trip/ tour.
- All staff members completing a tour/ trip should ensure they are familiar with this policy.

8 Review Procedures
- Surveys which will allow staff gain a more complete review of the trips/ tours.
- Policy reviews to ensure all best practises are updated and incorporated into the policy.
- The opportunity for continual reviews of the policy with management if concerns with particular content, within the policy, are highlighted by staff members.
- Coordination with management to ensure any Department of Education and Science directives relevant to the policy are incorporated into the policy.

9 Timeframe
- To be reviewed as relevant
This policy should be read in conjunction with Stratford College Child Protection Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Statement.
PLANNING SCHOOL TOURS AND FIELD TRIPS

Please note that all trips must be organised with reference to our school’s Child Protection Policy and Risk Assessment.

Outline the proposal to the Principal/BOM, seeking approval in principle. Approval is delegated to the Principal on an annual basis by the BOM and minuted to the BOM meetings.

Proposals should include:
- Objectives of the activity
- Likely date, duration and venue
- Student group, age profile and supervision requirements
- Resources required and estimate of costs
- How the activity will be funded

Planning
- Contact reputable tour operator/service provider
- Contact venue. Is it suitable for the group?
- What are the transport options?
- Who will lead the group and who will supervise it and the level of supervision that will pertain
- Who will pay for the activity?
- Risk assessment
- Adequate cover arrangements for teachers involved will make any proposed trip possible.
- Sufficient advance notice is given of any proposed change to a class schedule by way of on-line diary entries. The Principal should pre approve any proposed trips.

Substantive proposal to Principal/BOM – Complete Forms
Details of dates, risk assessment, emergency procedures, transport, insurance, costs, funding, composition of group, supervision, Residential - Abroad

Obtain approval from Principal/BOM to prepare the visit subject to satisfactory preparation

Shorter Trips
- Notify parents about parental consent for trips involving students up to age 18 in and outside school hours by way of annual August letter. Brief students
- Engage in activity, monitoring risks at all times

Final Preparation
- Information to and from parents
• Briefing meeting with parents and students
• Secure full payment of costs
• Obtain final approval from Principal/BOM and signed parental consents
• Go on trip, monitoring the risks at all times
• Obtain final approval from Principal/BOM and signed parental consents
• Apply to BOM for Leave of Absence per normal arrangements

Financial Details

• Trips and Tours abroad should only use an authorised Travel Agent. Cheques should be made payable to tour company only.
• Only receipted, prior approved expenses will be repaid.
• A Tour Reconciliation Form must be completed on return.
• The Tour Leader should be set up as a beneficiary for ease of emergency funds should this be necessary.
• Students should bring their ATM cards with them so that parents can transfer emergency funds should they be necessary.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Teachers and others in charge of students during a school trip have a duty of care to ensure that the students are safe and healthy. They also have a duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent.

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a school trip.

3. If an accident/incident happens, the priorities are to:
   • Assess the situation.
   • Safeguard the uninjured members of the group.
   • Attend to the casualty.
   • Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know about the incident.

4. The group leader should take charge in an emergency and ensure that back up cover is arranged. All those involved in the school trip should be informed of the proposed arrangements in advance.

5. There should be a named school contact with all the necessary information about the trip. This person is the school’s link with the group, the parents and CMETB (where appropriate), and to provide assistance as necessary.
1. If an emergency occurs on a school trip, the main factors to consider include:

   • Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible.
   • Ensure that the group is safe and looked after.
   • Establish the identity of any casualties and get immediate medical attention for them.
   • Ensure that parents are informed and in cases of minor injury adequate arrangements should be made, where appropriate, to get the student home, to liaise with the parents and to ensure that the injury is monitored.
   • Ensure that all members who need to know are aware of the incident, and that all group members are following the emergency procedures.
   • Ensure that teaching personnel accompany casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together.
   • Notify the police if necessary.
   • Notify the Irish Embassy/Consulate, if abroad and if appropriate.
   • Inform the school contact.
   • The following details should be passed on to the school via the school contact:
     • Nature of incident
     • Date and time of the incident
     • Location of the incident
     • Names of casualties and nature of injuries
     • Names of others involved so that parents can be reassured
     • Names of witnesses
     • Action taken so far
     • Action yet to be taken and by whom
   • Notify insurers, especially if medical attention is required. This may be done by the school contact.
   • Notify the Travel Agent or transport operator. This may be done by the school contact.
   • Ascertain telephone numbers for future calls. Landlines should be used, where practicable, to ensure quality of communication.
   • Write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details, and preserve vital evidence.
   • Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident.
   • Complete The Board’s accident report form as soon as possible. Copies should be brought on residential and foreign trips.
   • No one in the group should speak to the media. Names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to families. Media enquiries should be referred to a designated media contact in the home area.
   • No one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties.
   • In the event of an emergency at home parents should contact the group leader/school contact, who will then liaise with the student.
   • In the event of an emergency on the trip, students should not contact home directly, before the group leader/school contact has done so, and only as directed by the group leader.
   • Students should be advised not to use social media e.g. Facebook, Twitter as this may be picked up by Media and there is may be a risk that family and friends become aware of the incident before being officially informed by the school.
• Appropriate first aid equipment should be brought on all trips, as well as a person who is competent to use the contents of the first aid box.

It is not always possible to assess whether group members not injured or directly involved in the incident have been traumatised or whether other students or staff in the school have been affected. In some cases reactions do not surface immediately. It is advisable for schools to contact local community support services and to seek professional advice on how to help individuals and the school as a whole to cope with the effects of a particular incident.
10 Appendices

1. General Consent form for school trips and other off-site activities

2. APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF EDUCATIONAL TOURS / FIELD TRIPS BY THE PRINCIPAL / BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

3. PRECAUTIONS FOR DIFFERENT KINDS OF TRIPS

4. LETTER OF APPROVAL TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

5. RESIDENTIAL / FOREIGN TOUR RISK ASSESSMENT

6. SAMPLE LETTER AND ITINERARY TEMPLATE

7. CONTRACT OF BEHAVIOUR

8. LIST OF STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS ON EDUCATIONAL TOUR / FIELD TRIP. EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

9. TOUR AUTHORISATION FORM

10. EVALUATION OF AN EDUCATIONAL TOUR / FIELD TRIP BY GROUP LEADER

11. TOUR RECONCILIATION FORM (AVAILABLE FROM ADMIN OFFICE)
Annual notification of General Consent form for school trips and other off-site activities

Please sign and date the form below if you are happy for your child

(please insert name here): _____________________________ Class: _______

to:

a) To take part in school trips and other activities that take place off school premises; and

b) To be given first aid or urgent medical treatment during any school trip or activity.

Please note the following important information before signing this form:

- The trips and activities covered by this consent include;
  - adventure activities during a day trip
  - off-site activities for Transition Year, not involving an overnight
- The school will make information available about each trip or activity before it takes place.
- You can, if you wish, tell the school that you do not want your child to take part in any particular school trip or activity.

Written parental consent will not now be requested from you for the majority of off-site activities offered – for example, year-group visits to local amenities – as such activities are part of the school’s curriculum and usually take place during the normal school day. If the activity is involving an extra cost, separate permission will always be sought. The Outdoor Pursuits week is not covered by this permission form.

School field-trips and activities offer valuable opportunities for pupils and staff. The success of such events depends, to a large extent, on responsible behaviour, co-operation and a willingness to join in positively. Normal school rules and procedures will apply and pupils are expected to support the policies outlined in the Code of Behaviour. We anticipate the full co-operation of your son/daughter at all times.

Please complete the medical information section below (if applicable) and sign and date this form if you agree to the above.
Medical information

Details of any medical condition that my child suffers from and any medication my child should take during off-site visits:

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Signed: __________________________________________________________

Print name: ________________________________________________________

Dated: _____________________________________________________________
APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF EDUCATIONAL TOURS / FIELD TRIPS BY THE PRINCIPAL / BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Note: Not all Sections will be relevant to every proposed trip:

PLEASE COMPLETE IN CAPITALS

School: __________________________________________________________________
Group: ___________________________________________________________________
Group Leader: ________________________________________

The group leader should complete this form as soon as possible once the preparations are complete. Approval in principle should already have been received and the Principal should have received regular updates on the progress of preparations. Parental consent should also be sought.

When approval is given, one copy should be retained by the Principal and another by the group leader. The Principal should be informed of any subsequent changes in planning, organisation, staffing and he/she should inform the Board of Management of any such changes.

Purpose of the trip and specific educational benefits:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Destination and places to be visited:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Dates and Times:
Date of departure: __________________________ Time: __________________________
Date of return: _____________________________ Time: __________________________

Transport Arrangements:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Organising tour company / agency:
Name and address: __________________________________________________________________
Contact Name: _______________________________________________________________

Telephone Number: ___________________________________________________________

Proposed cost and financial arrangements:
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Insurance arrangements for all members of the proposed party, including voluntary helpers:

Name of insurance company: _________________________________________________

Address: _________________________________________________________________

Telephone: _______________________________________________________________

Insurance cover: ___________________________________________________________

Policy number: ____________________________________________________________

Accommodation to be used:
A. Name: _________________________________________________________________
   Address: ________________________________________________________________
   Telephone: ______________________________________________________________

B. Name: _________________________________________________________________
   Address: ________________________________________________________________
   Telephone: ______________________________________________________________

Programme of Activities:

Day 1: ___________________________________________________________________
Day 2: ___________________________________________________________________
Day 3: ___________________________________________________________________
Day 4: ___________________________________________________________________
Day 5: ___________________________________________________________________
Day 6: ___________________________________________________________________
Day 7: ___________________________________________________________________

Details of any hazardous activity and associated planning, organisation and staffing
____________________________________________________________________________
Names, relevant experience, qualifications and specific responsibilities of staff accompanying the group:

1. ________________________________________________________________
2. ________________________________________________________________
3. ________________________________________________________________
4. ________________________________________________________________
5. ________________________________________________________________
6. ________________________________________________________________
7. ________________________________________________________________
8. ________________________________________________________________

Name, address and telephone number of the contact person in the home area who holds all information about the trip in case of an emergency:

________________________________________________________________________

Name, address and telephone number of Media Contact Person in the home area (in the event of an emergency):

________________________________________________________________________

Existing knowledge of places to be visited:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Size and composition of the Group:

Age range: _______________  Number of boys: _______________
Number of girls: _______________  Adult to student ratio: _______________
Gender ratio (adult to student)  Boys: _______________  Girls: _______________

Information on whether the group leader has received all consent forms duly completed and signed:

________________________________________________________________________

Number of outstanding consents: _____________________________________________

Will these consents be forthcoming: _________________________________________

Please attach copy of information sheet sent to parents, and the parental consent form.

Names of students with special needs in the context of the trip:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Signed: _________________________  Dated: _____________________________
A. ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

The Group Leader:

- The group leader should check and agree the provider’s arrangements for supervision and recreation during the evenings and between adventure activities. The group leader should also provide any relevant information to the provider such as the group’s age-range, competence, accompanying adults, etc.
- The group leader/teachers retain responsibility for students during adventure activities, even when the group is under instruction by a member of the provider’s staff. This also applies to some residential and day trips. The provider is responsible for the safe running of the activity. Everyone, including the students, should have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the school staff and the provider’s staff.
- The group leader/teachers should have sufficient information on what each activity involves before it takes place. They should approach the instructor at an appropriate safe interval if they are concerned that the students may be at unnecessary risk. Assurances may be sought that the provider has:
  2. Checked the suitability of staff/temporary workers to work with young people.
  3. Clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of its staff.
  4. The appropriate security arrangements.
  5. Appropriate Public Liability Insurance - €9.5 million is recommended.

The Board of Management should satisfy itself that:

1. The group leader and other supervisors are competent to act as leaders and/or instructors of students in a given activity. Competences should be demonstrated by holding the relevant certification, where it exists.
2. The group leader is competent in safety procedures and the planning of adventure/activities/trips.
3. An appropriate risk assessment has been carried out.
4. The supervision will be appropriate.
5. There is adequate first aid provision, expertise and equipment within the group.
6. The emergency procedures include activity-specific measures and supervisors/providers are competent to carry them out.
7. The equipment is appropriate, safe and in good condition.
8. Every student is suited to the activity and is properly briefed, prepared and equipped.

Some adventure activities, such as those under the Gaisce Awards, may require students to work without direct supervision. Particular attention should be given to the information and training provided to students before supervision can be withdrawn. Specific parental consent must be sought.
- Appropriately qualified personnel should provide the information and training. The project leader should be satisfied that the students have the necessary experience, confidence, physical ability, judgment and skills to be left without direct supervision.
The withdrawal of direct supervision should be a gradual four-stage process.

- Accompanying the group.
- Shadowing the group.
- Checking regularly at agreed location
- Checking occasionally at agreed locations.
- Students should be familiar with all equipment used or taken without direct supervision,

and

- in addition to training, an initial element of adult supervision in the use of equipment may be required. The condition and suitability of any equipment, particularly safety equipment, taken or used during these activities should be assessed separately.

B. COASTAL VISITS AND WATER

There are dangers on the coast quite apart from those incurred in swimming.

The group leader should bear the following points in mind when assessing the risks of a coastal activity:

- Tides, currents, weeds and sandbanks are potential hazards. Timings and exit routes should be checked.
- Ensure group members are aware of warning signs and flags.
- Establish a base on the beach to which members of the group may return, if separated.
- Look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire, sewage outflows, etc.
- Some of the group’s time on the beach may be recreational. Group leaders should consider which areas of the terrain and sea are out of bounds.
- Cliff tops/caves can be highly dangerous even during daylight hours. The group should keep to a path at all times.
- Swimming in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities. They should only be allowed as formal or supervised activities preferably in recognized bathing areas, which have official surveillance i.e. qualified lifeguard cover. Students should always be in sight of their supervisors. One supervisor should always stay out of the water for better surveillance. Where groups are using boats or other watercraft, lifejackets should be worn at all times.
- The group leader, or another designated teacher in the group, should preferably hold a relevant current life-saving award, especially where lifeguard cover may not be available.
- The group leader should:
  - Be aware that many children who drown are strong swimmers.
  - Ascertain for themselves the level of the students’ swimming ability.
  - Be aware of the local conditions – such as currents, weeds, a shelving, uneven or unstable bottom.
• Designate a safe area of water for use by the group.
• Be aware of the dangerous effects of sudden immersion in cold water.
• Ensure that students have not eaten (at least 30 minutes) before swimming.
• Ensure that the activity is safe for students, especially any with disabilities.
• Adopt and explain the signals of distress and recall.
• Ensure that the students behave appropriately in and out of the water.
• Ensure that proper changing facilities are available and that propriety is observed regarding gender separation. In mixed groups there should be at least one male and one female supervisor.

C. FARM VISITS

Farms can be dangerous, even for people who work on them. Taking young people to a farm should be carefully planned. The risks to be assessed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with Ecoli D157 food poisoning and other infections.

The group leader should check that the farm is well managed, that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare and that it maintains good hygiene standards.

Students should be reminded:

• Not to place their faces against the animals
• Not to eat until they have washed their hands
• Not to drink from farm taps
• Not to ride on tractors or other machines
• Not to interfere with farm machinery.
• To stay away from hazardous areas such as slurry tanks etc.
• Not to wander away from the main group.

D. FIELD STUDIES

Field Studies associated with a range of subjects including geography, biology, history, CSPE etc. may take students to industrial sites and urban areas as well as into the countryside and to the coast. The scope of field studies means that the group leaders, who will usually be subject specialists, should also be competent to lead and instruct their students within urban and non-urban environments at minimal risk.

E. RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

Issues for the group leader to consider include:

• The group should ideally have adjoining rooms with teachers’ quarters next to the pupils. The group leader should obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the group’s use in advance.
• There should be a reasonable pro-rata gender balance of teachers for mixed gender groups.
• Ideally each room should have en-suite facilities, but as a minimum requirement there should be separate male and female bathroom facilities for students and for adults.
• The immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the groups use.
• There should be safe heating and ventilation.
• The entire group should be aware of the layout of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations and routine.
• Where the reception area in a particular building is not staffed 24 hours per day, appropriate security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors.
• The manager of the accommodation should be asked, through the tour operator, for assurances that the staff including temporary workers have been checked as suitable for work with young people.
• Locks on doors should be operable in all rooms, but appropriate access should be available to teachers at all times.
• There should be adequate space for storing clothes, luggage, equipment etc. and for the safe keeping of valuables.
• There should be adequate lighting at all entrances, corridors and rooms.

There should be provision for students with disabilities as appropriate.

• Balconies should be stable, windows secure and electrical connections safe.
• Where possible students should not be lodged in ground floor rooms.
• The fire alarm and smoke alarms should be in certified working order throughout the building.
• There should be recreational accommodation/facilities for the group.
• The hotel/hostel management should undertake not to supply or sell alcohol or tobacco to students.
• There should be an appropriate number of group supervisors on standby every night.
• A curfew time of not later than 12 midnight should be set for students.
• The easy accessibility of medical personnel/facilities should be assured.
• The availability of a safety deposit box.

The group leader should confirm prior to departure that the hotel/hostel has proper and accessible fire exits and that it meets local regulations. After arrival fire evacuation procedures should be checked by the group leader and outlined to the students.

The group leader should also confirm prior to departure that the hotel/hostel meets all local hygiene regulations.

F. TRIPS ABROAD

1. Travelling abroad can be hugely rewarding for students, but it is important that careful and detailed preparation takes place.
2. All trips abroad, with the exception of school exchanges, should be booked through a reputable travel agency with experience in the organisation of trips for schools and young people.

3. It is good practice to make an exploratory visit to the location. If this is not possible, the group leader should gather as much information as possible on the area to be visited from:
   - The tour operator
   - The provider of facilities at the location
   - The Department of Foreign Affairs
   - Embassy/Consulate
   - Other schools who have been to the area/used the facilities
   - The Local Authority and/or schools in the area
   - The Internet, books and magazines

4. A safe supervision ratio of teacher to students should apply. There should be enough teachers/supervisors in the group to cover an emergency.

5. **Factors to consider for trips abroad include:**
   1. Language – particularly common phrases
   2. Culture e.g. body language, rules and regulations of behaviour, dress codes, local customs, attitudes to gender etc.
   3. Airline and ferry regulations
   4. Drugs, alcohol usage
   5. Food and drink
   6. Money – how to carry currency, money and valuables discreetly
   7. How to use phones abroad and the code for phoning home
   8. What to do in an emergency
   9. It is particularly important that parents are given the opportunity to meet teachers and others who will be taking the students overseas.
   10. The group leaders must ensure that the group has comprehensive travel insurance.
   11. It is desirable that one of the adults with the group should be able to speak and read the language of the visited country.
   12. The group leader should ensure that all members of the group have **valid passports and visas** (if appropriate) in the early stages of planning the trip.
   13. A photocopy of each individual passport should be taken for emergency use.
14. If a group includes students whose national or immigration status or entitlement to an Irish passport is in doubt, it is advisable to make early enquires to the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Justice and Law Reform and the Passport Office.

15. Students other than EU nationals may require a separate passport and/or visa and may need to use separate passport control channels from the rest of the group.

16. If a student is subject to a care order, foster parents will need to ensure that Social Services consent to any proposed trip. If a student is a Ward of Court, the principal should seek advice from the Court in relation to trips abroad well in advance.

17. Emergency medical facilities are available through reciprocal health care arrangements in EU countries to EU nationals. The European Health Insurance Card from the local Health Service Executive is the means of entitlement and must be carried by the group leader.

18. It is advisable for the group leader to take a contingency fund in case treatment has to be paid for in advance and money has to be claimed back later.

19. The group leader should ensure that he/she obtains and takes with him/her:

- Travel tickets, passports, visas, accident reports forms and other essential documentation. It is advisable to carry a separate list of the numbers of any travel documentation/passports and photocopies of the group’s documents in a sealed waterproof bag.
- A copy of the contract with the Travel Agency and/or centre/hotel, if appropriate.
- Medical documentation e.g. European Health Insurance Cards and significant medical histories. The group leader should carry these at all times.
- Parental consent forms and permission for the group leader to authorise emergency treatment on parental behalf.
- The phone numbers and addresses, at home and in school, of the Principal and/or of the school contact.
- The names and addresses of parents and telephone numbers (home and work) where they can be contacted.
- Copies of a list of group members and their details.
- Details of insurance arrangements and the company’s telephone number.
- The name, address and telephone number (including emergency number) of the Travel Agency.
- The name, address and telephone number of the group’s accommodation.
- Details of local hospital/medical and emergency services.

20. Full details of the trip must be retained by a designated person in the school while the trip is in progress. This should include:

- The itinerary and contact telephone numbers/addresses of the group.
- A list of group members and their details.
- Contact names, addresses, telephone numbers of the parents and next of kin.
- Copies of parental consent forms.
- Copies of travel documents, insurance documents, medical papers, etc.
- A copy of the contract with the Travel Agency, centre/hotel etc., if appropriate.
21. It is the principal’s responsibility to ensure that this information is available at all times. This is particularly important if the trip takes place when the school is closed.

22. The group leader must ensure that each student knows what action to take if there is an emergency or a problem.

23. The group leader and supervisors should know where the nearest Irish Embassy or Consulate is located and the telephone number.

24. The group leader needs to be aware that some diseases are more prevalent in some countries than in others and should know what action to take should a member of the group become infected, and what actions to take to prevent infections.

25. Many of the health problems of pupils on longer trips are caused by lack of food, liquid or sleep. The group leader should plan to minimize these risks.

26. Group leaders should be aware that legal drinking ages may differ from country to country, to ensure avoidance of doubt students should be instructed to follow Irish law.

27. Residential trips abroad afford an opportunity for a more informal, relaxed atmosphere between teachers and students. Staff and students must ensure that appropriate boundaries are maintained.

28. In general students should be made aware that all school rules and policies apply equally when abroad e.g. Code of Behaviour, Anti-bullying, Substance Abuse, Social Media Policies.

29. The group leader should carry a contingency fund to cover the eventuality of a student running out of funds. This contingency fund should be used solely for the purpose of providing food and drinks for the student.

30. If appropriate, parents should be asked to provide suitably factored sun protection creams and sun hats/glasses and students should be advised about the dangers of over exposure to sunshine.

31. It is advisable, if appropriate, to check that the ship/aircraft or coach being used by the Travel Agency has a wheelchair service and lifting facility.

32. The group leader should resist any attempts to split the group while travelling. If this has to be done then each group should have a separate group leader.

33. The group leader should ensure that all supervisors are aware of their duties and responsibilities during the trip.
LETTER OF APPROVAL TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

To the Group Leader: ____________________________________________________________

Your application dated: ________________ has been put before the Board of Management/or delegated to the Principal and the Board/Principal is satisfied with all aspects including the planning, organisation and staffing of the trip. Approval is granted.

Please ensure that I have all relevant information including a final list of group members, final details on parental consent and a detailed itinerary at least 14 days before you are due to depart.

Your report and evaluation of the trip including details of any incidents should be with me as soon as possible but no later than 28 days after your return.

Signed: _____________________________ Dated: _____________________________
Secretary BOM

A copy of the completed application form and details of any subsequent changes should be retained by the Principal. A copy should also be available for inspection by the Chief Executive of _________________ or the designated representative of the Chief Executive.
## RESIDENTIAL / FOREIGN TOUR RISK ASSESSMENT

Complete this form for all Residential / Foreign Tours with students and submit to Principal along with Educational Tours application form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALL RESIDENTIAL VISITS</th>
<th>Y/N</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have the school’s safeguarding statement on Child Protection been observed in all the arrangements that have been made.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Has the status of the tour operator / activity centre provider been checked?</strong> <em>i.e. insurance cover, training, safeguarding and garda vetting?</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does the Tour Operator /activity centre provider specialise in the organisation of the relevant tour activity?</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have you checked out background information on the area and the hotel / centre for suitability <em>e.g. hotel is not situated in areas renowned for violence / muggins / prostitution etc.</em>?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have you checked that student rooms have individual locks to ensure personal safety?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Is the ratio of supervisors to students adequate for the trip and complying with the conditions set out in the Educational Tours Policy of _____?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have you drawn up an itinerary, including details of activities and any free time allowed?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have you made clear arrangements for the supervision of free time including contact arrangements (i.e. checklist of names and intended destinations of students, agreed curfew times, safety of money, keeping in groups)?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Is any of the party qualified in First Aid? If not who is the appointed person taking responsibility for First Aid Box?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have arrangements been made for special needs including access during travel and accommodation (e.g. disability / diet / medical etc.)?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If additional hazardous activities are included in the schedule have specific risk assessments been done to cover the activities (e.g. skiing / sailing / swimming / mountain walking / theme parks etc.)?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have you provided a written briefing to both the students and their parents to cover the above, and provided them with appropriate contact numbers?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have you checked the safety / suitability of any equipment to be used?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have you obtained Parental Consent?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Has planning for inclement weather / protection from the sun been accounted for? | 
Have you organised adequate insurance cover? | 

**Additional risk controls for Foreign Tours**

- Have students been briefed about local customs and behavioural, dress codes etc.?
- If vaccinations are necessary, have arrangements been made?
- Are supervisors clear on how to contact any Emergency Services and Irish Embassy in the country of visit?
- Have the Students obtained a European Health Insurance Card (available from the HSE) to ensure sufficient medical cover?
- Have you verified that all passports are valid?

---

**Telephone number of Irish Embassy / Consulate in country to be visited:**

____________________________

Signed: ______________________ Date: ____________________

Group Leader
Sample Letter

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Stratford College is organising a trip to COUNTRY for NUMBER OF PUPILS AND YEAR students. The trip will take place from DATE TO DATE

The total cost of the trip is approximately AMOUNT OF EURO (to be confirmed and depends on student uptake). The Tour includes:-

• Emergency service while abroad
• List extras as appropriate

A deposit of AMOUNT is required along with a photocopy of an up to date Passport. Deposits are non-refundable. All cheques must be made payable to and reach the school by DATE

CONSENT

I would like to reserve a place for _____________________________ to travel to NAME OF COUNTRY AND DATES and I enclose a deposit of EURO (A crossed cheque made payable to

SIGNED: ___________________________ DATE: _______________________

Parent/Guardian
A willingness to experience and learn about the wealth of historical and cultural features that will be available on the trip is a must. Students should acquaint themselves with their itineraries before the departure.

- **Flight Details**
  
  - Depart Dublin | Time | Date
  - Arrive
  - Meet at Dublin Airport | TIME | Sharp on | DATE | students must make their own way to the airport. The same will apply in relation to arrival on the DATE. Please ensure students are collected promptly, or arrange a suitable alternative in advance.
  - Baggage allowance: **20 kg (see info attached)** Weigh your luggage at home. All new requirements re, carry-on luggage must be adhered to.
  - There will be no opportunities for purchases of cigarettes or alcohol at the airport or their purchase at any time during the trip.

We will be staying at **the (NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER OF THE HOTEL)**

- The mobile number when away will be **(SCHOOL MOBILE INSERT HERE)** and should be used only in case of emergency.
- **TRAVEL AGENT** contact number is **(INSERT HERE)**

- Stratford College recommend that students should not take valuable jewellery or electronic equipment with them. The school will not be held responsible for loss or damage to any personal items.
- Room allocations will be sorted out in advance and, where possible, student preferences will be met.
- **Travel insurance** details are enclosed. **Parents/Guardians must ensure that they inform teachers and the insurance company of any medical problems or insurance will be void.** There is a number on the insurance details. If prescribed medicines are required please ensure teachers have an emergency supply. Insurance is void if students are under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal substances.
- Payment covers flights, transfers, accommodation, breakfast, dinner, insurance, ski hire, ski passes and 1 lesson per day. All students have opted for the extra lessons in the afternoon.
- Students need only bring sufficient money to cover lunches and snacks/drinks (approx. €15 per day). The currency in **COUNTRY** is the Euro. Pocket money is at parent’s discretion. However in the event of
an emergency students should have their ATM cards with them to facilitate accessing additional funds.

- I would advise students to bring plenty of healthy snacks such as muesli bars etc as skiing is a physically demanding sport.
  Round two-pin plugs are in use. Adapters suitable for this will be needed.
- Parents must supervise all packing. Bring enough warm, casual clothing for a week.

**STUDENTS SHOULD PACK THE FOLLOWING:**

- This is an activity-based trip and students must remember to **eat** and **sleep** properly to get the most from their lessons and allow teachers to do the same.

**Contract of Behavior and Consent**

Being part of a group creates its own demands. Apart from observing the rules students must be disciplined and watch out for their own safety. Students must be courteous and well behaved at all times with their teachers, on buses etc. Rooms and personal belongings must be kept tidy. A willingness to experience and learn about the wealth of historical and cultural features that will be available on the trip is a must. Students should acquaint themselves with their itineraries before the departure.

We encourage students not to be over-fastidious and to experiment with food: students with dietary requirements must make these known before the Tour.

The following rules and sanctions have been drawn up to ensure that students enjoy a safe and rewarding ski trip.

- No alcohol, cigarettes or non-prescription drugs. The purchase or consumption of alcohol or illicit drugs is strictly forbidden. We see this as particularly offensive and dangerous to the health and well-being of students and the severest of penalties will be imposed.
- Students must make their whereabouts known to teachers at all time.
- Socialising in the hotel should take place in the communal areas before ‘Lights out’ only.
- Under no circumstances should boys’ be in girls’ rooms or vice versa.
- Students must observe “Lights out” at night. A good night’s sleep is a must for a tour of this kind and is a right which all students and teachers are entitled to. A deliberate or persistent disregard of this will be viewed as a serious breach of the code of behavior.
- Instructions given by teachers and ski instructors will be followed promptly and courteously.
- All students must behave in a considerate manner in relation to each other, teachers and others.
- Students must remain in their assigned airplane seats and must not behave in a way that disturbs their fellow passengers in any way.
- Students will only ski in groups organised by instructors and teachers
- Students must never ski alone or on runs where their instructor has not taken them.
- Students must not leave their hotel at any time unless a teacher is with them.
- Students may not use motorized snow equipment at any time.
- Students must not leave their Hostel at any time unless a teacher is with them.
- Students must make their whereabouts known to teachers at all times.
• Socialising in the hotel should take place in the communal areas before ‘lights out’ only.

Sanctions

Sanctions are within the remit and at the discretion of the accompanying teachers and can include the following:

• Withdrawal of ski pass for a period at the discretion of the teachers.
• Withdrawal of permission to attend Après ski events.
• The full range of school sanctions remain available upon return as this is a school tour.

Declaration

I accept that, while every reasonable care will be taken for the safety and well-being of my son/daughter, that teachers cannot be held responsible for accidents or illnesses that may occur. I have spoken with my son/daughter regarding the behavior expected of them and his/her obligations.

In signing below we agree to the above code of behavior and sanctions.

We also authorise teachers, in consultation with a doctor, to allow administration of a general anesthetic and any surgical procedures deemed necessary. We have notified the teachers of any medical condition which requires special care or treatment.

Please return signed to NAME OF TEACHER after reading and discussing these regulations with your son/daughter by DATE

Does your child have any relevant health issues, allergies or are they on medication?
No? __________ Yes? __________
If yes please give details __________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Student’s name (please print): _____________________________________________________

Parent’s /Guardian signature:
____________________________________________________________

Parent contact number: _____________________________________________________

Student’s signature: _____________________________________________________________
PARENTAL CONSENT FOR EDUCATIONAL TOUR / FIELD TRIP
(To be distributed with an information sheet giving full details of the Trip)

PART A
School / Group: ____________________________________________________________

Details of visit to: ___________________________________________________________

From: ___________ Date / Time: _______________

To: ___________ Date / Time: _______________

I agree to ____________________________________________ date of birth: _______________

Taking part in this tour / trip and have read the information document.

I agree to ____________________________________________ ’s participation in the activities described.

I acknowledge the need for __________________ to behave responsibly and in accordance with the Behaviour Policy of the school. I accept that any student who uses, supplies or is found to be in possession of drugs, alcohol, solvents, inhalants or other dangerous substances and/or who engaged in behaviour or actions that are deemed to be a risk to the safety of any member of the group will result in the offender being sent home immediately and we the parents will bear the resultant costs.

PART B
Medical information about your child

(a) Any conditions requiring medical treatment, including travel sickness, and medication required? Y/N

If YES, please give brief details: ___________________________________________________

(b) Please outline any special dietary requirements (resulting from a medical condition) of your child and the type of pain or cold / flu relief medication your child may be given if necessary:

______________________________________________________________________________

Students may not bring non-prescribed medication with them. The school will supply this type of medication as per the information supplied (checked with GP)

(c) Does your child suffer from any condition requiring prescribed medication? Y/N

If YES please give FULL DETAILS of illness and/or medication(s):

(d) To the best of your knowledge, has your son / daughter been in contact with any contagious or infection diseases or suffered from anything in the last four weeks that may be contagious or infectious? Y/N

If YES please give FULL DETAILS of illness and/or medication(s):
(e) Is your son/daughter allergic to any medication including non-prescription medications? Y/N?

If YES, please specify: ____________________________________________________________

(f) Has your son / daughter had a tetanus injection in the last four years? Y/N

I will inform the Group Leader / Principal as soon as possible of any changes in the medical or other circumstances of my son / daughter between now and the commencement of the journey.

Declaration:

I/we agree to my/our son/daughter receiving medication as instructed and any emergency dental, medical or surgical treating, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present. I understand the extent and limitations of the insurance cover provided. I further agree that supervisors, under the direction of the group leader, may administer non-prescriptive medications in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.

Ability to Swim

Give details of your child’s ability to swim: __________________________________________

Other relevant information: _______________________________________________________

PART C

Contact telephone numbers:
Work: __________________ Home: __________________
Home address: ________________________________________________________________

Alternative emergency contact:
Name: __________________ Number: __________________
Home address: ________________________________________________________________
Name of family doctor: _________________________________________________________
Telephone: __________________
Address: _________________________________________________________________

Signed: ___________________________ (Parent 1)

_______________________________ (Parent 2)

Date: ____________________________

I have read and understand the meaning and implications regarding all aspects of this form.

Signed: ____________________________ (Student)

Date: ____________________________
Full name (capitals) _____________________________

A COPY OF THIS FORM MUST BE TAKEN BY THE GROUP LEADER ON THE TOUR / TRIP. THE ORIGINAL SHOULD BE RETAINED BY THE SCHOOL CONTACT.
EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

To be completed before the trip. Copies to be held by the group leader and school contact.

School / group: ___________________________________________________________

Name of group leader: ________________________ Home phone No.: ______________________

Name of deputy group leader: __________________ Home phone No.: ______________________

Visit departure date: __________________________

Return information: Date: _______ Time: _______ Location: ________________

Group: Total Number: _______ Adults: _______ Group Members: _______

Do you have an emergency contact list for everyone in the Group? Y/N
(If no, obtain one. If yes, attach it to this sheet.)

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:

During school hours:
Principal: ________________________ Tel: ________________________

Deputy / other: _________________ Tel: ________________________

Out of school hours:
Principal: ________________________ Tel: ________________________

Travel Company: _________________ Tel: ________________________

Name / Address: _________________ Tel: ________________________

Company Travel Rep Name: _______________ Tel: ________________________

Insurance / Emergency Assistance __________ Tel: ________________________

Accommodation:
Hotel: _______________________________________________________

Address: _______________________________________________________

_________________________________ Tel: ________________________

Other Emergency Numbers: __________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________
STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS ON EDUCATIONAL TOUR / FIELD TRIP

(Continue on a separate sheet, if required)

Date of Visit: _____________ Destination: ____________ Team Leader: ____________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>Initials</th>
<th>European Health Insurance Card</th>
<th>Passport No.</th>
<th>Expiry Date</th>
<th>Parental Consent</th>
<th>Emergency Contact Numbers</th>
<th>Student’s Mobile Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

ON DEPARTURE, LEAVE A COPY OF THIS LIST WITH THE SCHOOL CONTACT AND TAKE A COPY OF IT ON THE VISIT. ENSURE THAT YOU ALSO HAVE A NOTE OF ANY SPECIAL MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS / HISTORY RELATING TO INDIVIDUALS.
EVALUATION OF AN EDUCATIONAL TOUR / FIELD TRIP BY GROUP LEADER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School / Group:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Leader:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number in Group:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys:</td>
<td>Girls:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date(s) of Trip:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose(s) of Trip:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Organisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating out of 10</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Pre-visit organisation by external agency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Travel arrangements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Educational benefits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Equipment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Suitability of environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Accommodation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Food</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Evening activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Student behaviour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Supervision</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Incidents / close-calls etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signed: _______________________________  Date: _______________________________

Group Leader

To be forwarded to the Principal with financial balancing statement no later than 28 days after the group’s return.
# TOUR AUTHORISATION FORM

## DETAILS OF SCHOOL TOUR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Roll No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stratford College</td>
<td>1 Zion Road</td>
<td>610201A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rathgar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dublin 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tour Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Number of School Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Brief Outline of Tour (enclose details)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Students Participating</th>
<th>Total number of students in relevant grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Enclosed**

**Please tick**

The Following is attached:

2. Travel Insurance Certificate *(forwarded to School Administrator)*

3. General Consent form for school trips and other off-site activities
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DETAILS OF SCHOOL TOUR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expected benefits to accrue from the tour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Why is the tour deemed to be necessary**

- **4.** APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF EDUCATIONAL TOURS / FIELD TRIPS BY THE PRINCIPAL / BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
- **5.** PRECAUTIONS FOR DIFFERENT KINDS OF TRIPS
- **6.** LETTER OF APPROVAL TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
- **7.** RESIDENTIAL / FOREIGN TOUR RISK ASSESSMENT
- **8.** SAMPLE LETTER AND ITINERARY TEMPLATE
- **9.** CONTRACT OF BEHAVIOUR
- **10.** LIST OF STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS ON EDUCATIONAL TOUR / FIELD TRIP. EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION
- **11.** TOUR AUTHORISATION FORM
- **12.** EVALUATION OF AN EDUCATIONAL TOUR / FIELD TRIP BY GROUP LEADER
- **13.** TOUR RECONCILIATION FORM (AVAILABLE FROM ADMIN OFFICE)
## DETAILS OF SCHOOL TOUR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adults accompanying the students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Teacher</th>
<th>No. of other Teachers</th>
<th>No. of other Adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Confirmations

- That appropriate arrangements are made in accordance with circular PPT 01/03 for those classes whose teachers are absent with the tour
  - Yes: [ ]  No: [ ]

- That adequate insurance is in place to cover all risks while on tour (please attach)
  - Yes: [ ]  No: [ ]

- Parental permission has been secured for each Student who is to participate on the tour
  - Yes: [ ]  No: [ ]

## Students and Supervisors on Educational Tour

- Medical Conditions and emergency contact numbers forms are attached
  - Yes: [ ]  No: [ ]
## DETAILS OF SCHOOL TOUR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Risk Assessment for this trip is attached (including Code of Behaviour)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The BOM has approved this trip and all the arrangements</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itinerary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Educational Tour/Trip</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NB</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The needs (religious observance, food etc.) of Jewish students will be met. Please list students concerned and detail arrangements.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature of Principal:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Educational Tours by School Groups

Introduction

This guideline has been prepared following a number of requests from schools as to best practice around the financial aspects of school tours. In preparing the guideline it was necessary to frame it in the context of the Department of Education and Science Circular M20/04 which is attached as an appendix.

Based on our experience of visiting schools, it is evident that the number of school tours being organised has increased significantly in recent years. From observation it would appear that some Boards of Management are not aware of their responsibility to formally sanction all such tours and to ensure that Department of Education and Science requirements are met. This guideline is an attempt to outline such responsibility and to give schools some direction as to the financial controls required for such activities.

Types of School Tours

Educational tours organised by schools take place both inside and outside the State. The nature and type of school tour organised include the following:

- Educational day trips for school groups within the State
- Educational visits involving student exchange
- Educational visits and trips involving instruction
- Educational trips involving cultural, religious or linguistic benefit to students
- Trips and exchanges of a sporting nature organised with schools abroad
- Ski trips
- Tours to holiday resorts
- Trips and tours of various types for transition year students
Department of Education and Science Regulations

Regulations governing organized tours by school groups both inside and outside the State are outlined in Circular M20/04. This circular supersedes all previous circulars.

The circular makes the assumption that all tours organized for school groups are educational in nature. The circular states that “the objective of an educational tour should be that it should provide a significant benefit in the educational, intellectual, cultural and social development of the maximum number of pupils in the particular grade(s) taking part in the tour and which benefit cannot be provided by in-school activities alone.”

A school tour should only take place if it meets this objective and is formally sanctioned by the school Board of Management.

Prior to the issue of Circular M20/04, schools were supposed to seek formal authorisation from the Department of Education and Science before a school tour could take place. Since the publication of the circular, the authorisation to grant approval for school tours has been devolved to the Board of Management. It is now a requirement on the Board to ensure that a Tour Authorisation Form similar to the template attached to the circular is filled out and retained in the school for possible examination in the course of a school inspection.

Other criteria which should be satisfied before authorisation for a school tour is granted by the Board include the following:

- A school tour should enhance the learning process for students by providing educational experiences which the classroom cannot provide.

- The full cost of the tour should be communicated to parents at the earliest opportunity.

- A school tour should be arranged to coincide with normal school holiday periods. Exceptions to this requirement are single day tours and activities listed in the circular such as student exchanges or attendance at a music or drama festival.

- Proper insurance cover must be in place and written parental approval received for each student participating in the tour. Students not participating in a tour taking place during school time must be adequately catered for while teachers are away.

- Appropriate arrangements must be made for the classes of any absent teachers in line with Circular PPT 01/03 (Supervision and Substitution Scheme). The absence of accompanying teachers during school time must be kept to an absolute minimum.
Legal Requirements for using Licensed Tour Operators

The Commission for Aviation Regulation was set up under the Aviation Regulation Act 2001 and is now the licensing authority for Travel Agents and Tour Operators in Ireland. In addition, it has the power to prosecute illegal travel agents or tour operators selling travel to destinations outside Ireland in its own name in the District Court.

It is an offence to sell or buy on behalf of another holiday packages involving travel abroad. Similarly, it is illegal to organise for sale to another holiday packages or trips abroad without a licence.

The primary purpose of the legislation requirement to have a licence is to protect consumers. Accordingly, licensed traders have a bond in place equal to a percentage of their annual turnover. This money is then available to the Commission to refund or reimburse consumers in the event of a Tour Operator or Travel Agent collapsing. This protection is not available to persons dealing with illegal operators.

Given the above and as already outlined in the JMB Bulletins 04 / 2005 and 08 / 2007 it is obligatory under this legislation for schools to use the services of a licensed tour operator or travel agent when bringing any group of students or adults outside the State.

Responsibilities of School Management

School tours and educational trips both inside and outside the State involve the collection, processing and spending of significant amounts of money. For this reason it is important that the Board of Management recognises its responsibility for any money collected or spent in the name of the school and the need to:

- Formally sanction each tour
- Ensure accountability for all money collected
- Safeguard the interests and good name of the school
- Provide a framework for the protection of all concerned.

The Board of Management, Principal and staff should carefully consider

- The appropriateness of the proposed tour in terms of the Department of Education and Science Circular M 2004.
- The legal requirements around the organisation of school tours going outside the State.
- The staffing arrangements for the tour and for the school.
- The financial controls in place for the tour and the need for accountability.

For each school tour, the Board of Management and Principal should ensure that an Authorisation Form (along the lines of the template in the appendix) is filled out and retained in the school for possible inspect.
Financial Guidelines for School Tour Activity

1. At least two teachers should be involved in the financial administration of a school tour. This is an important protection for all concerned where money is collected from students.

2. Separate financial records should be maintained for each school tour. A detailed record of all participating students and the amounts paid should be retained.

3. Parents should be informed as early as possible of the full cost associated with the tour. Written permission should be received from the parents of all tour participants and a receipt for all money paid should be issued.

4. Proper and full insurance cover must be in place for all school tours.

5. All money collected for a school tour should be lodged as soon as possible in the main school bank account. Where money for a tour is being retained for a month or more it should be transferred to a school deposit account to avoid distortion of day to day school funds.

6. We do not encourage the opening of a special bank account for school tours. If for some reason the Board wants to operate a separate bank account for school tours, then the Principal must be one of two signatories nominated by the Board. This account should be in the school’s name. Under no circumstances should such an account be under the sole control of a teacher or teachers in the school.

7. All financial transactions relating to the tour should be recorded in the school’s accounts using the tour codes on TAS 2. Invoices and receipts should be retained to support all payments. Where this is not possible or practical, a written record showing details of the payment or receipt should be retained.

8. Any deficit or borrowing to support a school tour must be avoided at all costs. All tours should be self-financing and exposing the school to any liability associated with the tour must be avoided.

9. Accounts and records for the tour should be reconciled at regular intervals and a report given to the Principal. A financial report on the tour should be presented to the Board of Management at least twice during the school year and a final report when all transactions relating to the tour have been completed. The financial report on the tour should be incorporated into the annual school accounts.

Fergus Dunne, Director,

Financial Support Services Unit

March 10, 2008.
Circular Letter M
20/04

To the Management Authorities of all Post Primary Schools

Educational Tours by School Groups
(both inside and outside the State)

The objective of an educational tour should be that it should provide a significant benefit in the educational, intellectual, cultural and social development of the maximum number of pupils in the particular grade(s) taking part in the tour and which benefit cannot be provided by in-school activities alone. Where a Board of Management is satisfied that a school tour meets the above criteria, such a tour may be undertaken without seeking prior approval from the Department. However, the template attached as appendix 1 should be completed by the Principal in the planning of a school tour and should be retained in the school for examination by a Departmental Inspector in the course of normal school inspection.

Authorisation to grant approval for educational tours by school groups both inside and outside the State is hereby devolved to the school board of management subject to the following criteria …

- School tours should be an extension and reinforcement of classroom activities and should be designed to include the maximum number of pupils in a class. The tour should, accordingly, enhance the learning process of as many pupils as possible by providing educational experiences which the classroom alone cannot provide.

- Tours should be planned, in consultation with parents, well in advance of tour dates and preferably before the start of the school year. The full cost of the tour should be communicated to parents at the planning stage. This will have the added advantage of facilitating financial preparation with a view to allowing maximum pupil participation. Every effort should be made to ensure that the cost involved does not prevent any pupil or group of pupils from participating in the tour.

- By international standards, the school year in Ireland has long holiday periods. Educational tours of more than one day’s duration should be arranged to coincide with normal school holiday periods.

- Schools should ensure that adequate insurance cover is in place and that written parental approval is obtained for each pupil to take part in the tour. Such written approval must not seek to devolve any liability to the parent for any aspect of the tour. (Boards of Management of Comprehensive and Community schools should refer to appendix 2 of this circular regarding State Indemnity cover for out-of-school educational activities).
The Board of Management must ensure that pupils who are not participating in the tour (including pupils from other classes who will be affected by their subject teachers absence) are adequately catered for while their teachers are away on the tour. Appropriate arrangements should be made for the conduct of those teachers' classes in their absence in accordance with Circular PPT 01/03. Schools should on all occasions take into account the effect that the absence of accompanying teachers will have on the normal work in the school and numbers absent should be kept to the minimum level required.

Where school tours impinge upon the standard school year, the following guidelines are put forward as to the type of educational visit envisaged by the Department as acceptable for the purposes of regarding absence on such visits as school days:

(a) Educational visit involving an exchange of groups of students with another school
(b) Educational visit involving attendance at a course of instruction.
(c) Educational visit involving active participation in a music or drama festival.
(d) Educational visit to a conference or exhibition of clear educational value (e.g. Young Scientist Exhibition, Higher Options Conference or Exhibition on Careers and Guidance Counselling)
(e) An educational visit should be appropriate to the age group/grade concerned (e.g. The Higher Options Conference would be more appropriate for senior cycle students than for junior cycle students)
(f) Educational visits (inside or outside the State) involving significant linguistic or cultural benefit to the maximum number of pupils.

This list is given by way of example and is not intended to be exhaustive.

School Tours – Booking & Collection of Payments

1. Introduction

This guideline is to provide information to school management and school personnel involved in the organisation of school tours outside of the Republic of Ireland.

Below is an extract from communication received from the Aviation Regulator regarding schools tours:

This letter is being issued to assist schools in ensuring that pupils and staff who are travelling on foreign school trips are aware that the protection under the legislation in repatriating passengers and providing refunds to those prevented from travelling abroad only comes into operation where bookings are made directly with licensed travel agents and/or tour operators.

The legislation provides that it is a requirement that any person or legal entity that sells travel out of Ireland must hold an appropriate license to do so. Under the provisions of the Transport (Tour Operators and Travel Agents) Act 1982 a travel agent is defined as:

“a person other than a carrier who as agent sells or offers to sell to, or purchases or offers to purchase on behalf of, any person, accommodation on air, sea or land transport commencing in the State to destinations outside the State or Northern Ireland or who holds himself out by advertising or otherwise as one who may make available such accommodation, either solely or in association with other accommodation facilities or services”

Under the Act a tour operator is defined as:

“a person other than a carrier who arranges for the purpose of selling or offering for sale to any person, accommodation for travel by air, sea or land transport commencing in the State to destinations outside the State or Northern Ireland or who holds himself out by advertising or otherwise as one who may make available such accommodation, either solely or in association with other accommodation facilities or other services”

Any school wishing to organise a school tour abroad must do so using a licensed tour operator or travel agent to arrange the travel package including accommodation and other services. All monies must be paid directly to the tour operator or travel agent, not to school staff or event coordinator.
Compliance ensures that the event is covered by the relevant bond held by the tour operator or travel agent with the Commission for Aviation Regulation as part of the annual licensing requirement. If for any reason the license holder ceases to trade.

It is imperative that the tour operator or travel agent chosen to arrange the overseas trip holds a current license. The full list of all current license holders is available on www.aviationreg.ie.

2. Procedure

In order to ensure that schools are compliant with this legislation, we advise the following:

1. All school tours travelling outside of the Republic of Ireland must be booked through a bonded licensed travel agent or tour operator from the approved list on www.aviationreg.ie and Payments from students should be made directly to the travel agent or tour operator and not collected through the school. Where it is not possible for payments to be made directly to the travel agent the Aviation Regulator has confirmed that a school is in compliance with relevant legislation where cheques made out to the bonded travel operator are collected by the school. These cheques can be forwarded to the bonded tour operator by the school. It is important to note that these cheques must be made payable to the bonded tour operator, not to the school.

2. Many tour operators and travel agents can accept payments electronically or by cheque and cash. We advise schools to work closely with the tour operators in establishing procedures to ensure the school retains full control of the tour.

3. We do not recommended use of any particular tour company. Schools are free to select any of the bonded tour operators from the approved list on www.aviationreg.ie


Further information or clarification on any of the issues raised in this Guideline can be obtained from the FSSU.

Louise McNamara
Director, FSSU
17th September, 2015