

St. Endas N.S. Policy on School Tours and Outings

Introduction

Taking into account the age and interests of the children and the curriculum being covered, school tours will be arranged by the school to present the children with a new environment in which they can observe, investigate and relate their findings to their own environment. Tours will be arranged at the discretion of the class teacher.

This draft policy was drawn up in consultation with the staff and circulated to the Board of Management (BoM) and Parents Association for observations and feedback.

Rationale

The need for this policy arises due to children being exposed to a wide variety of different experiences while on school outings, and the necessity to have a framework for good practice in place to cover all eventualities.

Aims

- To ensure all practical possibilities are covered in reducing the exposure of children to risk on outings
- To provide an enjoyable educational experience for all children

Policy Content

As always the class teacher is responsible for his/her class. However it is school policy to ensure a number of assistants accompany a teacher on trip and assign individual groups of 10 children approximately to individual teachers or SNAs. This number varies on the age and needs within a class. No matter what size a class is, there will always be a minimum of 3 adults on each tour. This allows for an adult to accompany an injured child to hospital while leaving 2 adults with the rest of the class. A teacher will not travel alone on any trips. Should there be no adult available to travel with the teacher, a trip may be cancelled. This condition applies to all trips/tours/outings.

In certain circumstances if a child has exceptional special medical needs a parent (or adult nominated by the family) may be asked to accompany this child.

Tour Kit

Leaders will take a tour kit on all outings. These will be available from the office. The kit will contain;

- First aid materials, refuse and illness bags, water, kitchen roll
- Own mobile phone, umbrella
- List of all children attending tour and phone numbers of parents.
- Any additional medication needed by an individual child (according to our Policy on the Administration of Medicine)

Cost

The teachers will ensure that the cost of the tour is reasonable and represents value for money.

Venue

The teacher will be familiar with venue, with particular reference to educational opportunities afforded, and services available (toilets, emergency facilities).

Weather Conditions

Parents should be aware of changing weather conditions depending on the time of year. Waterproof clothing may be essential for all children and a change of clothes may be necessary, depending on the venue. Likewise sun cream should be applied by parent before children depart on tour in hotter weather.

Equality of Access

Classes may choose a venue suitable for their own level or lower but not from levels above. Teachers will ensure that venues are suitable for pupils with special needs, physical disabilities or other individual considerations. Teachers should consult with Principal about choice of venue if there are any queries of accessibility for individual children.

Uniforms

Teachers travelling together will decide whether uniforms or tracksuits should be worn by all. Children should never wear name badges in public under Child Protection guidelines.

Reports

Where problems arise either with venue or transport teachers will report back to the Principal.

Conduct on Tours

Pupils' behaviour on tours will comply with the standard set down in the School's Code of Behaviour. In certain circumstances parents may be asked to agree to a contract on behaviour. Where it is felt that a child's conduct would pose a safety risk or inhibit the educational benefit for self or others, the teacher may refuse the child permission to travel. Parents will be advised of this in advance.

School Rules for tours & excursions

- Specify that the **School's Code of Behaviour applies fully** while on tour
- Children must obey their supervisors & teachers at all times
- Children must remain seated with buckled seatbelt while the bus is in motion
- Children are not allowed to eat/drink on the bus nor are they allowed to bring electronic devices with them
- Children should not bring money with them, unless specified.
- Children must remain with their allocated grouping and supervisor at all times
- Children will line up in their individual groups on disembarking from the bus
- Children should never attend a bathroom alone.
- Roll calls/head counts are taken when children return to the bus or centre after each segment of the tour

- Eating chewing gum is not allowed on school tours. While one treat is allowed, this should be at the parent's discretion.
- The school's Mobile Phone Policy applies fully to all school tours and outings. Pupils are **not permitted** to bring mobile phones, smartwatches, or other recording devices on the tour. Exceptions will only be granted by the Lead Teacher for documented essential medical reasons

Safety and Supervision

Teachers will be extra vigilant when taking children out of the school. Special attention will be paid to – Road Safety, Behaviour on bus, Risks posed by particular venues (e.g. adventure playgrounds, areas of water etc.). Teachers must accompany their class throughout the tour. Shared supervision will allow for teacher's lunch and toilet breaks. Roll calls/head counts are taken when children return to the bus after each segment of the tour. In cases of accident or emergency, a teacher will accompany an injured child to hospital, while the remaining teachers and SNA's shall remain with the rest of the children. All procedures under our Health & Safety and Critical Incident policies will be adhered too.

Informing Parents

Teachers will ensure that Parents are given sufficient notice of;

- Itinerary & Timetable
- Cost
- Special clothing necessary and packed lunch (no glassware)

Each school tour will require a **signed parental consent form** separate from the initial enrolment form.

Success Criteria

- Positive experiences for all
- Children having a safe enjoyable learning experience
- Teacher/Parent Satisfaction

APPENDIX 1

TOURS CHECKLIST

Before the tour

- Venue booked
- Transport booked
- Individual parents informed of travelling embargo on disruptive pupils
- Timetable organised
- Parents informed by standard letter
 - itinerary
 - timetable
 - cost
 - lunch arrangements
 - clothing necessary

Agreement on

- Leader
- Acceptable behaviour on bus & in venue
- Departure and return times
- Supervision

Day of Tour

- Tour kits are available for each bus
- Cheques for venues
- List of children attending tour and phone numbers for parents/guardians.

After Tour

- Report back to office
- Supervise children until all are collected, 2 adults will remain on school grounds while children are being collected.

check tour kits contain

- *First aid materials, refuse sacks, illness bags, water*
- *Toilet roll/kitchen roll/baby wipes*
- *Umbrella per teacher, directions, correspondance*