



School Trips Policy

INTRODUCTION

It is school policy to organise outings at appropriate and opportune times to enhance the educational and personal development of students. Old Bawn Community School recognizes the benefits of outings to complement normal school work and to create invaluable experiences in the lives of students.

This policy applies to all members of the staff of Old Bawn Community School who take students on school trips, to students participating in the activity and is one which parents must accept and adhere to.

The Code of Behaviour of Old Bawn Community School applies to all students of Old Bawn and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours; it applies both on and off the school grounds and anywhere students are clearly identified or identifiable as students of the School. Exceptions to the Code of Behaviour such as in relation to uniform and mobile phones will be communicated and agreed upon prior to any trip.

RATIONALE FOR HAVING TRIPS/OUTINGS AND THE NEED FOR A RELEVANT POLICY

- Old Bawn Community School strives to provide an effective education for all its students and is committed to the education, in the broadest sense of the word, of all students who attend the School. Old Bawn Community School provides an academic education, which also recognises that exposure to a variety of experiences and cultures, is part of a holistic education.
- The curriculum content of some subjects requires field studies/trips/outings/recreational activities, which take place off school grounds.
- Trips assist in bonding between students, as well as providing teachers with an opportunity to get to know students in a non-classroom environment.
- There should be a balanced programme of outings and trips for the school year that does not prove too costly to parents and does not overburden the school timetable.
- All educational trips must be consistent with the rationale as specified by the Department of Education and Science in Circular Letter M 20/04. All reasonable efforts will be made to satisfy all of the criteria contained in this circular.
- These guidelines are designed to assist staff in the planning of trips and outings, so that they are aware of all necessary precautions which must be observed to provide for the health and safety of staff and students. It also ensures that trips and outings take place efficiently and smoothly and that the standard of supervision is firmly within guidelines and standards.
- Where possible, gender balance will be represented among the leadership of any travelling group. Where this is not possible, it will be discussed with the parents and their permission will be obtained for their child to participate in the trip. These guidelines are to clarify expectations of behaviour for all trips and to outline the conditions whereby a student may be refused permission to be included on a trip.

CONDUCT OF PUPILS

- Is addressed by the Principal or Deputy Principal before departure
- Must follow the rules of the hotel/hostel where they are staying

- Must be well behaved on public/private transport
- Are responsible for leaving their seats on buses, trains, boats and planes tidy
- Are responsible for leaving their hotel/hostel room tidy
- Tour leader/teachers to check all rooms and fittings before allowing pupils access to the rooms. This precaution is taken in the event of breakage or damage to property in the room prior to entering and a note must be taken of any area of concern.

The Code of Behaviour also applies to all outings and to trips, whether or not they involve an overnight stay.

- Before a student is accepted for a trip, his/her previous behaviour may be taken into consideration.
- Parents/guardians will be notified, in advance, of all trips and both parents and student should sign the appropriate consent form. In this way parents, students and teachers enter into a partnership promoting good and appropriate behaviour at all times. Sports trips are excluded unless there is an overnight element.
- All school rules, and in particular the Policy on Alcohol and Drugs, applies with the exception of uniform/phone policy.
- Being in the possession of or consumption of alcohol or any other behaviour altering substances in any form will be considered a serious violation of the rules and immediate action will follow.
- The excessive consumption of any behaviour affecting drinks/isotonic/sports drinks such as red bull, espresso coffees or other drinks with enhanced caffeine or other substance is prohibited.
- Smoking/vaping or being in the possession of vaping paraphernalia is prohibited as under the school rules.
- Students are expected to attend all set meals unless permission given by a teacher.
- Students are to remain with the group with the group during the day and evening unless authorised by the teachers.
- Hotel rooms/apartments are to be kept clean and tidy at all times. Failure to do so may result in sanctions.
- Students are expected to comply with set bed times and lights out times.
- It is forbidden for male students to enter the rooms of female students and for the female students to enter the rooms of male students unless given permission to do so by a teacher. All sexual activity is forbidden between students of any gender.
- Students are expected to treat teachers/supervisors/instructors/tour guides with respect at all times.
- Two members of staff, gender appropriate, may carry out inspection of rooms or personal property (bags, suitcases, etc.) with the student present. This will only be done when based on reasonable grounds i.e. concern for physical safety, suspected possession or use of a banned substance or other concerns. Students and parents will be made aware of this prior to application to participate on a trip.
- All students are expected to turn up on time for all roll calls.
- Foul language is not acceptable from any student on the trip at any time.
- FREE TIME – during trips it is common for students to be given some free time. During such time students should always travel in groups. Under no circumstance should any student walk on their own. During this time students are expected to treat their surroundings with the utmost respect and are also expected to adhere to all the school rules applicable above.
- In the event of a serious breach of the school's Code of Behaviour the staff in charge must contact the school management immediately.
- The participation by the pupils in all of the activities of the tour/trip is expected.
- Pupils are permitted to bring digital entertainment items including a camera phone on school trips. The taking or sharing of images considered inappropriate is not permitted. Unauthorised recording of staff or pupils, transfer of images of staff or pupils, or using the phone to harass others will be considered a serious breach of discipline.

- The Board will respond appropriately in the case of inappropriate camera use and will have the full range of sanctions, including expulsion, open to them.
- The school management charge reserves the right to refuse any student they deem unsuitable for the tour. Those considered unsuitable would include: 1. pupils who in the past have proved unruly or undisciplined on tours 2. pupils who have a poor discipline record in the school

SUPERVISION

- Health and safety of students and supervisors is always a priority when organizing and taking a school trip or tour. Teachers taking any trip will exercise due care, common sense and judgement when issues of health and safety arise.
- The staff are aware that in general the degree of care required of them should be that of a “careful parent” which would vary with the circumstances and the age of the student.
- When it is necessary to enter bedrooms teachers/leaders should only enter bedrooms of students in pairs.
- Pupils leaving on a day activity must have their attendance recorded on the Roll prior to departure.
- On trips which involve an overnight stay in Ireland or abroad, pupils will not be directly supervised on a 24-hour basis and all extended school tours will involve periods of time without direct supervision. Parents who are concerned that such a level of supervision is inappropriate or insufficient should not permit their son/daughter to take part in such trips
- Certain trips may facilitate shopping or recreation which may not be directly supervised. This situation will usually arise for senior pupils and will be indicated on the permission slip, itinerary or information letter sent to parents/guardians.
- Good practice will include: Counting students on/off buses. Having designated meeting times and places. Pupils carrying identification and contact/itinerary details. Pupils always remaining in pairs/groups. One teacher assigned to each small group.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- In case of an accident, expert medical attention will be sought should it be deemed necessary.
- On return from, or during any trip, staff may advise a parent/guardian to seek medical advice.
- Where a serious accident occurs, staff will seek medical assistance as a first priority and contact the school to inform the school management of events. Parents will be contacted by the school.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

- Pupils who withdraw from a trip after a deposit or full cost has been paid, may not be entitled to a refund
- Any pupil who is prevented from travelling for disciplinary reasons will not be entitled to a refund.

INSURANCE AND INDEMNITY

- School tours within the island of Ireland by pupils and teachers from Community and Comprehensive schools are normally covered by State Indemnity.

- Where the tour is involved in an activity of a specialist nature, requiring supervision by trained professionals, the Board of Management may not rely entirely on the State Indemnity for insurance purposes.

- In the case of school tours outside of Ireland, the Board of Management should not rely on the State Indemnity for insurance purposes. Appropriate travel insurance must be taken out to cover those embarking on the tour

In considering applications/requests from teachers to bring students on an outdoor activities type tour e.g. Transition Year Group for orienteering, canoeing, and hill walking etc. activities the Board should ensure:

- Written applications giving full details of the proposed tour are submitted to the Board of Management.
- The school receives a copy of the Outdoor Activity/Pursuits Centre Public Liability insurance certificate and notes any limitations stated in the policy.
- The school receives details of the professional qualifications/training of the Outdoor Activity/Pursuits Centre staff who will be leading/guiding the students in the specialist outdoor activities.

UNIFORM AND DRESS CODE

- Pupils will be required to wear the official school uniform on all trips unless otherwise decided in advance by school Management. This includes the school jacket.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED FOR SCHOOL OUTINGS/TRIPS:

- In the interest of co-ordination, proposed trips should be discussed with the Deputy Principal in charge of trips and the Year Head prior to any discussion with students.
- The School Outing Request Form must be agreed by Principal and Teacher.
- Adequate notice to be given to school management and parents (10 days).

PAYMENT

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. Payments from students should be made directly to the travel agent or tour operator and not collected through the school.
2. The Tour Organiser should make arrangements for all fees to be paid directly to the travel agent. Any money that may be needed as cash to pay for entrance fees or other items should be added to the cost of the trip and paid to the travel agent. The travel agent will then reimburse these monies.

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

1. List of students, by class, of those participating. (Addresses and phone numbers for overnight stays only) should be displayed on Staff Room Notice Board and a copy lodged in the General Office if the trip is happening on a Friday.
2. Permission/Consent Forms signed by organising teacher/Principal and filed safely until after trip. These forms are available to all staff members in a Google Drive folder.
3. A copy of the itinerary and the rules for outings/trips must accompany the Consent Form to parents.
4. Brief Principal re Outing/Trip on return.

5. Students on tour should each have, on her/his person, a card containing details of her/his name, home address and telephone number. This could be of vital importance if a student becomes detached from her/his party, especially if s/he is not fluent in the language of the country.
6. The ratio of teachers to pupils should reflect the level of risk of the activity and should be increased as the degree of difficulty or danger increases
7. Parents/Guardians will be informed in writing of any off-site activity or tour.
The content of the consent form will vary according to the type and duration of the trip. When pupils travel abroad parents/guardians and the student travelling will be invited into the school to attend a briefing meeting where details, oral and written, of the proposed trip will be provided
8. Pupils must attend all information meetings in school and co-operate with all requests pertaining to the tour.
9. To apply for a place on the trip, a non-refundable deposit will be paid. The parents/guardians will also receive a letter asking them to complete a parental consent form. This should be completed for each pupil in the group. Included in this form should be the following:
 - Any medication the pupil is taking
 - Any recent illness suffered by the pupil
 - Any special medical or dietary requirements
 - The pupil's ability to swim.
 - Any other information the parent deems relevant
 - The parent/guardian's mobile and home phone numbers and address
 - An alternative contact phone number and address
 - The student phone number
 - Any special requirements relating to students with disabilities or special needs as related to the trip
10. Medical consent will form part of the parental consent form for foreign and residential trips. Parents/guardians will be asked to agree in writing to the pupil receiving emergency treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion as considered necessary by the medical authorities. If the parents/guardians do not agree to this, the pupil will not be permitted on the trip – given the additional responsibility this would entail for the school. Doctors in another country may be reluctant to operate on a student unless assured of parental authorisation for such treatment. In the event of a serious illness, parents must be available/have visa to travel to the country should the need arise.
11. If a passport is required, a photocopy of the pupil's passport must be included with the consent form. All passports must be valid for at least one month following the trip. Visas may be necessary for the destination and some countries require them to be processed together. There may be an additional cost to secure a visa. Parents should be informed that pupils with non-EU passports may need visas for EU countries.
12. Pupils must have a current European Health Insurance Card for travel to EU countries and supply a copy of this to the tour leader prior to travel. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that their child has all necessary up-to-date documentation well in advance of the tour.
13. Parents should be aware that they are responsible for funding the immediate return of a pupil whose conduct gives rise for serious concern on a trip. Parents and pupils are advised that deadlines for booking a place on a tour may have to be adjusted if demand exceeds places. Pupils should always assume that places will be allocated on a first come first served basis (provided all conditions are satisfied)
14. Overnight trips may involve a Behaviour Bond. This is a sum of money decided on by the organising teachers that will be given by the parents/guardians to the group leaders and returned on an agreed

date if the student has obeyed all rules and instructions. This will be collected generally on the night of the meeting.

REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

A post-trip report should be written to include:

- A review of the educational benefit to students
- A financial statement
- Achievements and highlights
- Any difficulties/problems encountered during the tour

SANCTIONS

Failure to comply with the rules of the trip will lead to sanctions which will be decided by the teachers/supervisors on the trip. Sanctions might include fines, loss of pass for certain activities, etc.

More serious breaches of rules will result in phone calls to parent/guardians with possible follow up action in the school after the trip. Where necessary disciplinary meetings will be convened by the staff.

In the event of very serious and uncontrollable incidents students may be required to return home. The costs in such an event will be charged to the parents/guardian. This will be done after full communication with the parents/guardians. The teachers accompanying the group reserve the right to amend any rule during the trip as necessary. Clear notice will be given of any such changes, to the students.

This policy is in keeping with the Child Protection Procedures as adopted by the Board of Management.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 10th May 2023

Signed: Martina Genockey

Signed: Ursula McCabe

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal

Date: 10th May 2023

Date of next review:

