



# School Tour Policy

*Of Firhouse Educate Together National School*

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## Introduction

This policy was drawn up by staff of Firhouse E.T.N.S. in consultation with and ratified by Board of Management and circulated to staff. It is also available to read on the school's website by parents / guardians of the children. The objective of educational tours should be of benefit to the intellectual, cultural and social development of the pupils. The purpose of the policy is to document current and future practice on school tours. The policy will be reviewed annually.

## Rationale

Our objectives in devising a policy on school tours include:

- To benefit the intellectual, cultural and social development of our pupils.
- Ensuring children have a variety of school tour experiences during their time in Firhouse E.T.N.S. by presenting the children with a new environment in which they can observe, investigate and relate their findings to their own environment.
- To provide school tours or trips taking into account the age and interest of the children and the curriculum being covered.
- To afford all children the opportunity to go on school tour with their peers.
- Ensuring that tours are organised to the highest possible safety standards.
- Arranging the provision of educational experiences not possible within the school setting.

## School Tour Procedures & Planning

- Members of staff must submit their request for approval to the Principal, by completing the Tour Proposal form (Appendix 2). Included in the proposal, should be the educational or other benefits that the student will derive from the tour. The request must be received two weeks before tour date. The tour shall not be deemed to have been authorised for advertising until the Principal has formally approved the tour by signing the proposal form. A copy of this form is attached to the policy. Teachers should also complete a pre-school tour form with a checklist prior to the school tour. A copy of this form is attached to the policy.
- The Board of Management/ principal must approve each tour which is arranged.
- Tours should be planned well in advance of tour dates and preferably four weeks before tour date. The full cost of the tour should be communicated to parents at least two weeks before tour date. Every effort should be made to ensure that the cost involved does not prevent any pupil or group of pupils participating in the tour.
- Letter to parents about school tour should be based on the school template (Appendix 2) and signed by the principal. A copy of this letter must be given to the secretary to upload to the school website and for filing in the office.
- Supervision on a school tour carries increased responsibility and we have agreed the following arrangement:
  - Two adults to every 10 children in Junior Classes (Junior Infants - 2nd)
  - One adult to every 10 children in Senior Classes (3rd - 6th)
  - A minimum of two children with SEN will be supervised by an SNA at any one time. Depending on the SEN of the child, the parent/ guardian may be required to accompany the child on tours.
- Teachers may request parents to come on tours as supervisors where necessary. However the **Class Teachers retain overall responsibility for the children.**
- The school's Code of Behaviour applies to School Tours and we reserve the right to preclude from a school

tour any pupil whose behaviour is such as to cause concern for his/her own or others safety.

- All accidents and incidents on tours are dealt with in line with our school's safety statement.
- We will ensure to the best of our ability that all buses are equipped with seat belts. Each child should have his/her own belt. No tour will take place unless all children are secured.
- Tours will be arranged at the discretion of the class teacher.
- School checklist for tours/outings must be completed prior to departure, with a copy given to the office before exiting the school grounds (appendix 3).

### **Policy of Inclusion:**

It will be our policy to include all children in school tours. Decisions on any exclusions rests with the class teacher in consultation with the principal. Children with special educational needs may require parental support on the class trip due to student pupil ratio.

### **Transport:**

The transport organiser of the tour will ensure that:-

- Tenders are sought for all tours
- A form of transport, appropriate to the distance and the numbers travelling will be chosen.
- The bus will be booked through the office as long as sufficient time has been given to do so.
- The bus company must agree to the following;

#### *Conditions of Hiring:*

- All transport supplied will be suitable and well-maintained.
- All transport must have seat belts for each child.
- Teachers have the right to refuse any bus they find unsuitable for their outing. If the bus proves unsuitable a replacement will be supplied or the money refunded.
- The driver will be used to dealing with children and have a thorough knowledge of and follow the itinerary and timetable for the tour.
- The driver is responsible for the safety of the children while they are travelling but teachers have the right to intervene if it is felt the safety of the children is compromised.
- The group will have access to the bus for the full day. If the weather conditions are unfavourable the group will have the use of the bus for sheltering or for eating lunch.
- The incidental consumption of food and singing on the bus - at an acceptable level - will be at the discretion of the teacher in consultation with the driver.
- Buses will be left as they were found.

### **Tour Bag:**

- Class Teachers ensure a checklist (see appendix 3) is filled out in the days prior to the school trip.
- All class teachers must bring the following on tour:
  - Mobile phone with credit where necessary
  - Contact numbers of staff on tour and parent supervisors should be shared beforehand
  - All staff should have phone numbers of the school and emergency services saved in their phones.
  - Copy of parents contact numbers for staff members only
  - Medicines as necessary for any children with allergies/medical conditions/ inhalers. First aid kit and surgical gloves.
  - Refuse bags, kitchen paper, wipes.
  - Bottled water
  - Map of area (where necessary)

### **Spending Money:**

Firhouse ETNS tries, to the best of our ability to avoid tours whereby spending money is required.

Children from Junior Infants to second class are not permitted to bring spending money with them on any tour at any time.

Children in 3rd to 6th class are only permitted to bring spending money if it is stated in their permission letter to parents. If spending money is allowed, a maximum amount will be stated in Tour Permission Letter.

Under no circumstances does the class teacher and/or school take responsibility for any monies lost or stolen on field trips.

### **Informing Parents:**

Teachers will ensure that Parents are given sufficient notice of the school tour. The initial letter to parents should contain;

- Itinerary & Timetable
- Deadline for registering and payment of deposit
- Cost
- Special clothing necessary and packed lunch (no glassware)
- Permission Slip to be signed by parent / guardian and returned to class teacher. Verbal permission is not sufficient. Children will not be permitted on any transport without written permission. In special circumstances e.g. when a child has been absent, the school will make every effort to contact parents/guardians to ask them to sign permission slip before departure. (Aladdin).
- Information regarding payment in instalments over a period of time.
- Link to school website where copy of school tour policy can be read.
- Letter should also state to parents that the organiser reserves the right to make minor changes to the itinerary.

### **Safety and Supervision:**

Teachers will be extra vigilant when taking children out of the school. Special attention will be paid to:

- Children deemed as flight risks
- Road Safety
- Behaviour on bus
- Risks posed by particular venues (e.g. adventure playgrounds etc.)
- The minimum supervision ratio
- A suitable toilet procedure should be in place before leaving
- Roll calls/head counts are taken when children return to the bus after each segment of the tour.
- A record must be kept of all incidents.
- All incidents must be recorded on Aladdin on return to school

### *Rules for children:*

***School's Code of Behaviour applies to all school related activities, including school tours.***

- Children must obey their supervisors at all times.
- Children must remain seated while the bus is in motion with seatbelts fastened.
- 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.
- Eating chewing gum is not allowed on school tours.

### **Plan for dealing with Emergencies: sick / injured children while on school trip:**

Please follow same procedures as outlined in First Aid Policy

1. Seek immediate medical attention, call an ambulance.
2. Contact the injured child's parents.
3. Phone the school contact the principal / deputy principal.
4. Teacher should accompany the child in the ambulance to hospital

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

Board of Management:

- To approve the policy
- To consider reports from the Principal on the implementation of the policy.

Principal and Deputy Principals

- To ensure that the policy is developed and evaluated from time to time.
- To establish structures and procedures for the implementation of the policy
- To monitor the implementation of the policy.

Teachers/ Organisers of the School Tour:

- To implement the policy and provide feedback to management that may assist the review process.
- To instruct students as to what is expected of them in relation to preparing for and participating on the school tour.
- To keep accurate records of the above.
- To ensure that all information given to students at meetings prior to departure is documented for parents.
- A receipt must be given to parents for all money received.
- All money received should be logged on Aladdin.
- School Outing checklist must be completed prior to departure.
- All money received should be given to the school office prior to departure.
- All incidents must be recorded on Aladdin on return to school.

Parents:

- To support the school policy in all aspects.

Students:

- To accept the policy and abide by the conditions

### **Implementation:**

- Management and all members of the school staff who are in charge of students on a tour will monitor the implementation of this policy.
- The full co-operation of students and parents/guardians is expected for all tour activities.
- Parents/ guardians must encourage their child to uphold the standards of behaviour required on all tours.

### **Success Criteria:**

- Management, teachers, parents and students are satisfied with the effectiveness of the policy.
- The planning, organisation and carrying out of tours and outings have proceeded without issues.

- Any unforeseen event, which occurred, was dealt with promptly and in line with the guidelines in this policy.
- All staff members and students returned safely, having achieved a worthwhile learning experience.

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

**This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019.**

**Date of next review: March 2020**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Francis Fullen: Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Collette Dunne: Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_