

St Anne's Community College



School Tour Policy

Rationale

Our priority in St Anne's Community College is to ensure a safe, positive, supportive and optimal educational environment for all. Consequently, high expectations will be communicated to and required from all members of the school community. The School Tour Policy works in conjunction with our school's Code of Positive Behaviour, Acceptable Use Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement, Administration of Medicines Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy. The philosophical foundations of the school's Code of Positive Behaviour, Acceptable Use Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement, Administration of Medicines Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy are care, respect, positivity and personal responsibility (Restorative Practice). 'Guidelines for Behaviour in the School' (Education Welfare Act, Section 23), states that the Code of Positive Behaviour shall specify "the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school."

All educational tours must be consistent with the rationale as specified by the Department of Education and Skills in Circular Letter M 20/04. All reasonable efforts will be made to satisfy all of the criteria contained in this circular. This policy was drafted in the context of Circular Letter M 20/04 issued by the Department of Education and Skills which states that: taking part in the tour and which benefit cannot be provided by in-school activities alone.

The objective of an educational tour should be that it should provide a significant benefit to the educational, intellectual, cultural and social development of the students.

Mission Statement

St. Anne's Community College provides an inclusive post-primary education for students from the local and wider communities by fostering an atmosphere where students of diverse ability and backgrounds can flourish.

Personal and academic development are central to our holistic approach which encompasses physical, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

We strive towards developing a school leaver who is respected as an individual and educated to reach their full potential.

At St Anne's, we believe in inspiring minds, nurturing spirit and respecting difference.

Approval

The Tour Leader must obtain permission from the Principal and the Board of Management to take students on a school tour. This application must be made in writing and addressed to the Chairperson of the Board of Management. All the relevant details should be included for consideration by the board.

Prior to the Tour

- Members of staff, who wish to take students on an overnight or overseas trip/tour, must submit their request for approval to the Principal, by completing the Educational Outing Form in **Appendix 1**.
- All trips outside Ireland must be organised by a fully bonded travel agent.
- Full travel insurance must be in-place for all staff and students travelling.
- Before student with a medical condition is allowed to participate in a trip, the school authorities must be confident that the needs of the student can be managed without compromising the health and safety of the student in question, the other students participating, or the itinerary of the trip. Each case will be considered on an individual basis in consultation with parents/guardians/carers.
- The number of students participating varies depending on the nature of the trip and the staff/student ratio will be appropriate to the age group. The DES lists a ratio of one adult to ten group members for all trips abroad.
- The initial letter to parents/guardians/carers should contain a draft itinerary and deadline for registering and payment of a non-refundable deposit.
- Parents/Guardians/Carers must be made aware that the organiser reserves the right to make minor changes to the itinerary.
- If a passport is required, a photocopy/scanned copy of the student's passport must be included with the deposit.
- All passports must be valid for at least six months following the trip.
- Parents/guardians/carers will be required to complete and sign a Medical Information Form and this must be returned to the tour organiser by the specified date.
- 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/guardians/carers should be informed that students with non-EU passports may need visas for EU countries.
- Students must have their E111 or European Health Insurance Card for travel to countries in the EU.
- It is important to impress upon parents/guardians/carers that the onus is on them to ensure that their son/daughter has all necessary up-to-date documentation well in advance of the trip.
- Parents/guardians/carers should be informed in good time if there are any mandatory or recommended vaccinations for the destination.
- It is important that parents/guardians/carers realise that the onus is on them to make arrangements for their son/daughter to receive all necessary vaccinations.
- Students must attend all information meetings and co-operate with all requests pertaining to the trip.
- Details of accommodation, travel arrangements, any special local conditions, personal items that the student needs to bring, guidelines for spending money and money for extras such as meals and excursions will also be made available to parents/guardians/carers.

Accommodation

- The proposed sleeping arrangements for students, staff and other support personnel will be clarified well in advance of the trip/tour. This will involve ensuring that single gender dormitories/rooms are used for students.
- Students of similar age share dormitories/rooms.
- Staff members will be accommodated in separate rooms from the students.
- Health and safety issues relating to the accommodation such as emergency evacuation for upstairs rooms, accessibility of rooms and corridors for mobility of the students will be checked.

Notice to Parents/Guardians/Carers

- Once permission has been granted by the Board of Management, a letter with the relevant details can be given to the relevant students.
- Parents/Guardians/Carers will be notified, in advance, of all tours/outings and both parents/guardians/carers and student should sign the appropriate consent form. In this way parents/guardians/carers, students and teachers enter into a partnership promoting good and appropriate behaviour at all times.
- Notifications to parents/guardians/carers specifies:
 - The itinerary of the tour, dates and times of departure and return.
 - Information regarding insurance and indemnity.
 - Details of the cost of the trip, payment methods and deadlines.
 - Details of accommodation.
 - Relevant names and of accompanying staff/adults.
 - Contact email address/mobile phone number (school assigned number) of the tour leader for the duration of the trip.
 - That the School's Code of Positive Behaviour, Acceptable Use Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy is adhered to at all times.
 - A non-refundable deposit is required to secure a place.
- Parents/Guardians/Carers have a duty to inform the school of Health or Safety issues which might affect their children while on tour.
- A signed consent form is essential for the participation for a school trip.
- If a student is in violation of the school's Code of Positive Behaviour and it is deemed appropriate by the school's Senior Leadership Team, it is at the discretion of the school to remove a student's privileges which includes attendance on a school trip. The deposit paid is not refundable if this situation were to arise.

Meeting Parents/Guardians/Carers

A meeting is scheduled in the weeks leading up to departure for students to attend with their parents/guardians/carers. Also, in attendance are the staff travelling with the students. The following information is outlined:

- A detailed itinerary – dates, times, locations, hotels, addresses, contact phone numbers.
- Advice on a reasonable daily allowance, in the currency of the country to be visited, each student to bring.
- Advice as to how best students can safeguard their money when on tour.

- At this point, the school should be updated via a medical information form of details of any medical considerations for the students travelling and provide written consent for school staff to administer medication where appropriate. A member of staff travelling with the tour will be identified as taking responsibility for this.
- It is parents/guardians/carers responsibility to ensure the school is aware of the medical history, contact numbers, allergies and medication to be taken (with sufficient supply for the duration of the school trip).
- There is an understanding by parents/guardians/carers that staff on the tour act in loco parentis and signing the consent for students to partake on the trip acknowledges this.

The Tour Leader must ensure that:

- There is appropriate and adequate supervision for each activity undertaken on the tour.
- Child protection procedures are in place are in line with the DES guidelines and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's Child Protection Policy.
- All staff members have received adequate child protection training and are aware of St Anne's Community College's child protection protocol and the school's duty of care to the students.
- Consent forms from parents/guardians/carers are issued and returned signed in advance of any student taking part in a trip.
- The Tour Leader is in possession of the following information:
 - a) Details of medical conditions.
 - b) Written details of any medication required (including instructions on dosage/times) and permission from parents/guardians/carers to administer same in line with St Anne's Community College's Administration of Medicines Policy.
- The Tour Leader ensures that all relevant contact information is left with the school office to be used in the event of an emergency. The following information is essential: - Names, addresses and contact details for all members of the group - Details of the itinerary and hotel contact details - 24-hour contact for the Tour Leader.
- The school's Code of Positive Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, Acceptable Use Policy is adhered to by all students at all times during the trip and this will be reinforced by the Principal/Deputy Principal who meet with the students in advance of the trip.

During the Tour

- Mindful of the DES guidelines regarding Child Protection, Teachers will act in a responsible manner having regard to the fact that they are in the of and responsible for the care of young adults. Teachers will maintain the same standards of care as apply in a school situation.
- Mobile phone communication between teachers/supervisors and students on the tour will be necessary. A list will be made of participants' mobile phone numbers (as given on the Permission Form) and students will have the mobile phone number of the Tour Leader – to be carried with them at all times while on the tour.
- A mobile phone is available from the School, as staff members are not required to give their personal mobile phone numbers to students.
- The Tour Leader should have two emergency contact numbers for each student travelling and

the contact details for the Principal and the Deputy Principal.

- Staff should never enter a dormitory room/student bedroom without knocking first.
- In the event that staff have to enter a dormitory to check on students it is imperative that the staff is of the same gender as the students in that dormitory. A loud knock should happen in advance of entering.
- If necessary two members of staff should carry out inspections of rooms or personal property (bags, suitcases etc) with the student(s) present. This will only be done for good reasons based on reasonable grounds, such as concern for physical safety, suspected possession or use of a banned substance or other concerns.
- If a search is deemed necessary, the student should be asked to empty his/her own pockets, suitcase / bags or to search the clothing that he/she is wearing.
- Where sanctions are imposed, procedures shall be applied as per the school's Code of Positive Behaviour.
- Should a student be guilty of minor misbehaviour, the incident should be dealt with in a swift and firm manner and a verbal warning may be all that is needed. The Tour Leader may however feel that specific sanctions are required such as the student missing out on a specific activity e.g. bowling or a disco.
- If a sanction is being imposed it must be made clear to the student why it is being imposed. A student prevented from attending an activity must be supervised by a member of the Tour Team for the duration of the activity. Further sanctions may be imposed when the student returns to school e.g. the student may be prevented from involvement in future tours.
- If a student is found to be in serious breach of any of the expectations in the School Code of Positive Behaviour, the staff member in charge must contact the Principal immediately.
- Following gross misconduct, a student may be sent home at parent's/guardian's expense.
- In the case of a serious/criminal incident (shop lifting, a violent attack etc.) the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Principal will be informed immediately and the matter will be handed over to the local police authorities.
- An Accident/Incident Report Form must be completed for all accidents or incidents which have occurred. Examples of reportable incidents include: persistent lateness at the rendezvous point; not staying with the group; rudeness to teachers; and serious breach of school rules, particularly in relation to alleged or proven alcohol or substance abuse.
- If a student becomes ill he/she should, if necessary, be referred to a doctor or hospital as soon as possible and the parents/guardians/carers notified ASAP.

Expectations from Students while on tour

Students must:

- follow the instructions of staff members/Tour Leader at all times.
- not purchase or have on their person any item which could cause major security delays.
- not vacate the vicinity of the hostel/accommodation or bus at any stage without being accompanied by or with the consent of one of the teachers/supervisors.
- not wander off or break away from the party without permission.
- stay in groups of no less than three at all times and no student may wander off on his/her own. If the group has free time for shopping, they must remain together in groups of no less than three and must return to the appointed place on time.
- show respect for all staff members and other students at all times.

- participate fully in the activities of the tour.
- not take any unnecessary risks or undertake any activity that they fear.
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it.
- behave during leisure time if not under the direct supervision of teachers.
- socialise in communal areas, i.e. no boys in girls' rooms and vice versa.
- go to their rooms at the times decided by the Tour Leader, remain in their own room and switch lights off within an hour in order to ensure that students will be sufficiently rested and get maximum benefit from the visit.
- adhere to the tour dress code as set down by the Tour Leader.
- follow the rules of the hotel, hostel or other accommodation.
- behave appropriately on public and/or private transport during the tour.
- respect their accommodation and transport and keep both neat and tidy.
- at all times strictly uphold protocol and respect in regard to gender relationships.
- not be in possession of, or use or abuse tobacco, alcohol, drugs or any other illegal substances.
- respect others at all times e.g. drivers, guides, cabin crew, fellow travellers, those sharing transport and those sharing accommodation.
- have respect for and comply with local customs and laws, particularly when travelling abroad.
- be responsible for their own belongings.

The Tour Lead Team will check accommodation on arrival and note the condition in advance of students' occupancy. Vacated rooms will be checked in advance of departure.

Students must note the following:

- Money and valuables are the students' responsibility on tour.
- Expensive digital equipment, clothing/footwear should not be brought on this trip unless you are prepared to take full responsibility for its safekeeping.
- Each teacher will be responsible for a specific number of students and students must meet with their assigned teacher at the correct locations at agreed times.
- The good name and reputation of both the school and the country must be protected and promoted at all times.
- Students must bear in mind that an excursion is educational in purpose and organised and directed by St Anne's Community College. The final word and sanction on any issue relating to the trip resides with the accompanying teachers.
- Mobile phones are permissible (but must be switched off and given to the assigned teacher at night. (Phones will be returned each morning to students).
Mobile phone use is governed by the schools Acceptable Use Policy, Anti Bullying Policy and Code of Positive Behaviour. The misuse of mobile phones, camera phones for the capture or dissemination of inappropriate content will be dealt with as per these Policies/Codes. School management will respond appropriately in such cases.

Sanctions during a trip

- During the trip incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with in a swift and firm manner in line with the St Anne's Community College Code of Positive Behaviour.
- If required, the following is applicable:
 - A student misses out on a specific activity and is supervised by a staff member.
 - Further sanctions may be imposed on return to school e.g. the student may be excluded from future school trips Incidents of serious misbehaviour may result in the following consequences.
 - The Tour Leader contacts parents/guardians/carers to discuss the incident.
 - In extreme cases a student (where appropriate) may be sent home accompanied by a staff member at the expense of parents/guardians/carers.
 - Any Incidents of serious misbehaviour are be reported to the Principal/Deputy Principal.

Tour Operator Protocol

- The school will engage with a licensed tour operator or travel agent to arrange the travel package including accommodation and other services.
- All payments are made directly to the tour operator or travel agent, not to school and are in line with the LCETB's payment policy.
- 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.
- School trips to countries outside of the Republic of Ireland are booked through a bonded licensed travel agent or tour operator listed on www.aviationreg.ie
- The Tour Leader liaises with the tour operator or travel agent regarding payments. All information relating to payments is retained at the school.

The following is the information retained in the school for the duration of the school trip:

- The itinerary for the trip.
- A list of the group members and their contact details.
- Copies of the consent forms from parents/guardians/carers.
- Copies of travel documents, insurance documents and medical certificates.
- A copy of the contract with the tour company or travel agent. The school's Senior Leadership Team ensures this information is available at all times during the trip.
- Copies of information relating to payments made to the tour operator.

Prohibition

Partaking in a school tour is a privilege not a right. Students who are in breach of the Code of Positive Behaviour may forfeit the right to participate in a school tour. It is at the discretion of the Senior Leadership Team to decline a student's request to participate in a school tour. Up to the time of departure, it is the Senior Leadership Team' prerogative to refuse a student's participation in a trip. At this point, refunding payments made on the trip may not be possible. Parents/Guardians/Carers are made aware of this in advance of making an initial payment.

Medical Requirements

The following agreement should be issued to all parents/guardians/carers and must be signed prior to the tour:

We, the Tour Leaders (named below) will act on medical advice presented to us if in the event of an accident or emergency and it is not possible to contact parents/guardians/carers or next of kin either by phone or due to time considerations. Any medical expenses incurred while a student is on tour must be reimbursed by parents/guardians/carers following the tour.

Before the tour departs, parents/guardians/carers must specify in writing the person/s they wish the tour leaders to contact in the event of a parent/guardian/carer being unavailable.

In the event of an emergency parents/guardians/carers will always be contacted first.

After the Tour

Arrangements should be made for a summary report from the Tour Leader to the Principal outlining: the achievements of the tour, a financial statement, any difficulties or problems which arose during the course of the tour.

This School Tour Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 11/12/23

Signed (School Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management)

Signed (Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Date: 11/12/2023

Appendix 1: Foreign Trip/Overnight Tour Proposal Template

Details of School Tour

Name of School	Address	Roll Number

Tour Dates

From	To	Number of School Days
____ / ____ / _____	____ / ____ / _____	

Brief Outline of the Tour

Number of Students Participating	
Total Male	Total Female
If a number of students are not participating, outline the reasons why.	
Expected benefit to accrue from the tour.	
Why is the tour deemed to be necessary?	
Adults accompanying the tour	
Tour Leader	Names of other teachers

Confirmations (please circle)		
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.	Yes	No
That parental permission has been secured for each student who is to participate on the tour.	Yes	No
Signature of the Principal _____		Date _____