

1. Introduction

Coláiste Chiaráin considers school trips to be an integral part of school life. They enhance classroom learning and add to the personal and social development of the student. The curricular content of many subjects requires field studies/tours/outings/games/recreational activities, which take place off campus. Coláiste Chiaráin has a duty of care to all its students and to school personnel. We seek to safeguard the welfare of students while on overnight school tours and also to support school personnel who accompany students.

All educational tours must be consistent with the rationale as specified by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in Circular Letter M20/04 (*particularly that school tours should be an extension and reinforcement of classroom activities.*)

This policy is applicable to all members of staff in the planning of such trips and to the students - and their parents/guardians - in order to provide for the health and safety of staff and students.

2. Approval

The Tour Leader must obtain permission from the Principal and the Board of Management to take students on a school tour. All the relevant details should be included for consideration.

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 and as recommended by the travel agency.

Staff will be informed of planned expeditions and invited to indicate to the teacher-in-charge if they are interested in being a member of the staff team that will accompany the students. All members of staff will be expected to share the workload beforehand, where necessary and during the trip. Decisions about which members of staff join a trip will depend on such factors as the size of the group, the gender balance, requirements specific to the particular trip e.g. Irish teachers on a trip to the Gaeltacht, teachers with Outdoor qualifications on adventure trips and so on. Cover for students remaining in school and protection of class contact time will also be considered when deciding what staff can be released.

2.1 Oversubscription

In cases where the trip is oversubscribed, the students who study that particular subject will be given first priority. The names of other applicants are drawn by lottery. A record will be kept of the order in which the names are drawn. Two lists are prepared - a list of the successful applicants and a list of those on the waiting list.

In the event of a student withdrawing from the trip, the place is offered to the first person on the waiting list. This procedure is followed in the event of further withdrawals. Students who withdraw from a trip after a deposit or full monies has been paid, may not be entitled to a refund. Similarly, a student who is prevented from travelling for disciplinary or safety reasons may not be entitled to a refund.

2.2 The Tour Leader must ensure that:

- Every reasonable step is taken to ensure the safety of all tour members. A risk assessment is to be carried out in advance of the trip.
- There is appropriate and adequate supervision for each activity undertaken on the tour.
- Child protection procedures are in place according to DES guidelines and Coláiste Chiaráin's Child Protection Policy.
- Consent forms from parents/carers are issued and returned signed in advance of any student taking part in a trip.
- Students present an up to date EHIC card and a valid passport to the Tour Leader and arrange payment of the first instalment for the trip.
- Suitable arrangements are made for the medical needs of all pupils.
- The Tour Leader is in possession of the following information:
 - a) Details of medical conditions along with emergency contact details.
 - b) The student's GP's name, address and telephone number.
 - c) Written details of any medication required (including instructions on dosage/times) and permission from parents/carers to administer the same.
 - d) Dietary requirements.
 - e) Students mobile phone numbers. Mobile phone communication between staff and students on the trip may be necessary. A list of students' mobile phone numbers should be compiled and carried by the lead teacher at all times during the trip. Students should also have the mobile phone number of the trip leader - to be carried with them at all times while on the trip. A mobile phone will be made available from the School, as staff members are not required to give their personal mobile phone numbers to students.

f) Collect and hold student passports - to avoid any passports being lost passports will be held by the tour leader

- Parents/Carers have the following information:
 - Dates and times of departure and return
 - Details of accommodation
 - Details of insurance
 - Details of the cost of the trip, payment methods, payment deadlines and refund details

2.3 Notice to Parents:

- Once permission has been granted by the Board of Management, a letter with the relevant details can be given to the relevant students.
- The letter specifies:
 - The itinerary and duration of the tour.
 - The full costs involved and the method of payment (deadlines etc.).
 - Information regarding insurance.
 - The code of behaviour is adhered to at all times.
 - A deposit is required to secure a place.
- Parents/Carers have a duty to inform the school of Health or Safety issues which might affect their children while on tour.
- Parents/carers have a duty to complete the medical, emergency contact and dietary requirements forms.
- A signed consent form is essential for participation on a school trip.
- The deposit is non-refundable.

2.4 Right to refuse:

The BOM reserves the right to refuse any student permission to attend the trip. This may apply to students who have broken the Code of Behaviour on trips in the past or whose behaviour has posed a threat to the health and safety of themselves or others. The deposit paid is not refundable if this situation were to arise.

If a student is found to be in serious breach of any of the rules in the school's Code of Behaviour, the staff in charge must contact the Principal immediately and the Principal will then contact the parents/guardians. This may result in the student being returned home at the parents' expense.

3. Meeting Parents:

A meeting is scheduled in the weeks leading up to departure for students to attend with their parents/carers. All parents/guardians must attend this meeting. 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 number
- 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 will be identified as taking responsibility for this.
- It is parents/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/carers that staff on the tour act in loco parentis and signing the consent form for students to partake on the trip acknowledges this.

4. Contact Information:

- A school emergency contact is nominated and the Tour Leader and Senior Leadership Team have these details.
- The Tour Leader ensures that accompanying staff have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures and names and emergency contact details for all the members of the group.
- 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

5. Code of Behaviour:

The Code of Behaviour is adhered to by all students at all times during the trip and this will be reinforced by the The Principal/Deputy Principals who meet with the students in advance of the trip.

In addition to this, the Team Leader makes students aware of the following:

- Students should follow the instructions of staff at all times.
- Students are not allowed to leave their accommodation at night, nor are they allowed to venture into other students' rooms/students from other schools' rooms.
- Students are not allowed to be under the influence of any substances such as alcohol, drugs, cigarettes/e-cigs etc.
- Students must follow the rules of the hotel, hostel or other accommodation.
- Students behave appropriately on public and/or private transport during the tour.
- Students respect their accommodation and transport and keep both neat and tidy.

The Tour Team checks accommodation on arrival and note the condition in advance of students occupancy. Vacated rooms are also checked in advance of departure. Please note that any damage to rooms including lost keys etc. will need to be paid by the student(s).

If necessary, two members of staff should carry out inspection of rooms or personal property (bags, suitcases etc) with the student 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 an injury/accident was to occur it must be reported to staff on the trip. An Accident/Incident Report Form must be completed for **all** accidents or incidents which have occurred.

6. Sanctions during a trip:

During the trip incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with in a swift and firm manner in line with the Code of 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

Incidents of serious misbehaviour may result in the following consequences

- The Tour Leader contacts parents/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/carers.

Incidents of serious misbehaviour are be reported to the Principal/Deputy Principals.

7. Payment

- The school uses 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 their 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.
- The Tour Leader liaises with the tour operator or travel agent regarding payments.

8. Information retained at the school.

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

- The itinerary for the trips
- A list of the group members and their contact details
- Copies of the consent forms from parents/carers
- Copies of travel documents, insurance documents and medical certificates
- A copy of the contract with the tour company or travel agent

The Senior Leadership Team ensures this information is available at all times during the trip. Once the students return all copies of personal data (passport copies, insurance cards, mobile phone numbers etc.) are shredded.

9. Prudence Code for Foreign Tours

9.1 Students on their own

A member of staff on his/her own should not be with an individual student on his own unless there is a window to the corridor or to a public place, others enter the room often or if it is a public room (e.g. a classroom or staff room).

If visiting students in rooms on their own, staff should leave the door open. It is wise for members of staff on their own to avoid being in cars or on expeditions with students on their own unless another member of staff has been informed about it (e.g. visits to hospital).

9.2 Groups of students

Staff should not feel that lavatories, changing rooms, dormitories etc. are off limits but they should avoid being there with an individual student and they should exercise caution and sensitivity in these areas particularly.

10. Conclusion

An online form will be sent to parents/guardians before the trip departs asking for the following to be information to be confirmed/re-confirmed:

- a) Updated medical information including the statement below
- b) Emergency contact information
- c) Dietary requirements
- d) Agreement for the student to abide by the overnight trips policy and acceptance of the code of behaviour

We, the staff on X trip 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 or next of kin either by phone or due to time considerations.

Before the tour leaves parents/guardians must specify in writing the person/s they wish the Tour Leaders to contact in the event of parents/guardians being unavailable. In the event of an emergency parents/guardians will always be contacted first. Please complete the online form below indicating up to date medical information, emergency contact details, dietary requirements along with agreeing to overnight trips policy and code of behaviour of Coláiste Chiaráin

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting of

_____ (date)

Signed _____ Chairperson of BOM

Signed _____ Principal/Secretary to BOM