

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL TOUR POLICY

DONABATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE



This International School Tour Policy is to be reviewed by the Board of Management every two years.

This International School Tour Policy was agreed on 9/10/2018

Signature Claire Ní Mharcaigh

(acting Chair Person to the Board of Management)

Principal Anthony Creevey

Date for Review 8/10/2020

Donabate Community College

Donabate Community College is a post primary school which opened in August 2008 under the Patronage of County Dublin VEC. The college is co-educational and aspires towards excellence in a caring and supportive environment.

As Donabate Community College will be catering in the foreseeable future to an ever-increasing population growth within its catchment area, the Board of Management will review the Enrolment Policy on a yearly basis.

The Board of Management is committed to the successful implementation of recent legislation, in particular the Education Act (1998), the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) and the Equal Status Act (2000). The Board fully subscribes to the principles of partnership, accountability, transparency, inclusion and respect for diversity, parental choice and equality.

School Mission

The Board of Management will promote Excellence. Our aim will be to create, with the assistance of parents/guardians, responsible citizens with pride in their community. The development of the whole person will be based on personal responsibility, inter dependence, respect for people and respect for property. Our school will seek to instil integrity, value discipline and punctuality and facilitate the best in academic and non-academic areas. We will value our culture, our tradition, be inclusive of religious beliefs and will seek to be a caring and compassionate community where justice and truth will be the central elements.

International School Tour Policy - Donabate Community College

1. Introductory Statement

It is the policy of the Board of Management/Principal/Deputy Principal to encourage, where appropriate, extra-curricular and/or co-curricular activities which further the broader educational development of students.

2. Scope

A School Tour is defined as any group travel involving at least one international overnight stay or a day trip.

3. Rationale

- ◆ The need for this policy has been high-lighted by staff, students and parents.
- ◆ It is necessary for Child Protection purposes
- ◆ It Is necessary for health and safety for students on a tour.
- ◆ It is necessary for the school to function effectively as a school community and as part of the wider society.
- ◆ It will assist teachers a management in the planning and organization of tours.

4. Goals/Objectives

In our school we strive to teach students both curriculum and life skills. School tours both enhance students' learning of curriculum topics and life skills.

5. Policy Content

This section is in six parts.

Part i. Approval:

- a) The Tour Leader(s) must obtain permission from the Board of Management (BOM) to take students on a school tour. A general outline of the tour, including travel dates, tour company details, travel insurance, the total tour price and the general tour itinerary, should accompany the request for permission.
- b) Prior to seeking permission, the Tour Leader(s) must enter into discussions with the Principal/Deputy Principal to ensure that the proposed tour dates do not impinge upon the normal teaching routine of the school year and. A School Tour should be arranged to coincide with normal school holiday periods.
- c) All school tours must conform to the criteria as set down in the Department of Education and Science circular M20/04 relating to Educational Tours by School Groups (inside and outside of the State). See Appendix 1
- d) All tours must be organised using a licensed tour operator or travel agent. A list of these can be found on the Commission for Aviation Regulation Website: www.aviationreg.ie.
- e) Proper insurance cover must be in place.
- f) Permission must be sought from the CEO of the DDLETB.

Part ii. Tour Team:

- a) A Tour Team, led by the Tour Leader(s) should be put in place as soon as possible. A reserve list is advisable in case a member of the team should subsequently be unable to travel.
- b) The Tour Team may come from different departments within the school structure. If a sufficient number of Team members are not available within the school, other adults wishing to travel may come from outside the school. Tour Team members may include: (a) Principal (b) Deputy Principal (c) Teaching Staff (d) Special Needs Assistants (e) Parents (f) Members of BOM
Proper vetting procedures should be followed at all times.
- c) The Tour Leader(s) should meet the full Tour Team at the outset so as to discuss individual duties. Ideally all members of the Tour Team should be involved in organising the tour, taking up duties in one of the following areas.
-Tour Finances – (must be collected by outside Tour Agency)

- Passports
- European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or travel Insurance
- The Tour Itinerary – cultural passes, internal tours
- General needs – medical kit, home contact numbers, medical services' contacts in area to be toured etc.

Part iii. Tour Finances:

All income and expenditure related to the Tour should conform fully to the accounting practices of the school and DDLETB Guidelines. A full account of income and expenditure should, at reasonable notice, be available to the Principal and the BOM.

The Tour Leader is responsible for the following Financial Procedures:

- a) All monies for the tour must be paid directly to the tour operator or travel agent. Parents should be informed as early as possible of the full cost associated with the tour.
- b) Pay the deposit, other interim payments and the final payment to the tour company, by the various due dates.
- c) When on tour the Tour Leader should keep receipts of all money spent. On completion of the Tour and all associated financial transactions, the Tour Leader must provide the Principal and the BOM with a complete Financial Statement showing outgoings.
- d) Any deficit or borrowing to support a school tour must be avoided at all costs.

Part iv. Notice to Parents:

- a) Once permission has been granted by the CEO the parents/guardians of the selected group/year/class should receive a letter including a schedule outlining the general nature of the proposed tour. In as far as possible all the students in the target group should receive a letter and schedule on the same day.
- b) The letter and schedule should specify:
 - ◆ The objectives of the tour.
 - ◆ The itinerary and duration of the tour.
 - ◆ The full costs involved and the method of payment (deadlines etc.).
 - ◆ Information regarding insurance and indemnity.
 - ◆ The general rules of behaviour to be observed.
 - ◆ If the numbers are limited and if a deposit is required to secure a place.
- c) Parents should also be made aware, through the circular, of their duty to inform the school of any relevant Health or Safety issues which might affect their children while on tour.

- d) The signed consent/permission of parents/guardians is an essential pre-requisite for the participation of any student on the tour.

Parents:

It is advisable in the week before departure, a meeting of the parents of all students going on the Tour should be held. Where possible all students and staff travelling should attend this meeting as well. The following information should be given to parents at this meeting:

- a) A detailed itinerary – dates, times, locations, hotels, addresses, contact phone numbers etc.
- b) Advice on a reasonable daily allowance, in the currency of the country to be visited, for each student to bring.
- c) Advice to students, in the presence of parents, as to how best students can safeguard their money when on Tour.
- d) Reminder that the students must respect the school Code of Positive Behaviour at all times during the trip.

Parents and Students with Medical issues:

- a) Parents should provide the Tour Leader with written information on the form provided about the student/s medical background as soon as they decide to take a place on the tour, or as early as possible for new medical issues.
- b) Where a student requires constant or regular medication specific written details must be given to the Tour Leader.
- c) Parents/guardians may request a private meeting at another time to inform the Tour Leader about the illness and the manner in which the medication should be administered.
- d) In the event of a medical emergency/dental emergency while on Tour it may be necessary for a member of the Tour Team to act in loco parentis. The following agreement should be issued to all parents/guardians and must be signed prior to the tour.

“We, the tour leaders will act on medical advice presented to us if in the event of an accident or emergency where 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 emergency parents/guardians will always be contacted first.

Part v. While on Tour

Contact Information:

The Tour Leader must ensure that complete contact information is left on file in the Office, available for use in the event of an emergency. The list should include:

- a) Names, addresses and home contact numbers of all those going on the Tour.
- b) Full details of the itinerary, hotel addresses, phone numbers etc.
- c) A contact number, day or night, for the Tour Leader(s).

On Tour Supervision:

Prior to leaving each teacher should be assigned a small number of students and be known to the students as their Group Leader. If possible these groups should remain unchanged throughout the tour. It is the responsibility of each Group Leader to:

- a) Have roll of his / her students within his / her group
- b) Be aware of any medical issues of students within his/her group and ensure they have access to medicines if required
- c) Call his/her group together at specific times in busy areas and take roll call (bus depots, airports etc.)
- d) Take frequent head counts and or roll calls of the group members on and off planes, ships, trains, buses etc.
- e) Arrange specific meeting points and times to meet students when on day tours (city landmarks, cafes, etc.)

Overnight Supervision :

The Tour Leader should place teachers on a Supervision Rota for use in the various types of overnight accommodation used. Students should be made aware that corridors are being supervised. The Tour Leader should:

- a) Draw up a rota for nightly corridor supervision.
- b) Draw up a rota for calling students each morning.
- c) Ensure teachers are on corridor duty throughout the evening as required.

It is not recommended that personnel other than current school staff are engaged in chaperoning or supervising students in their overnight accommodation although in certain instances this may be necessary. If there are plans to use anyone other than staff personnel in this capacity, the Tour Team member will require Garda clearance to do so before the tour takes place.

All supervision of students must meet Child Protection Guidelines.

Student Code of Behaviour:

The Code of Behaviour is to be observed by all students. The Code itself should be positive and consistent with the objectives of the Tour and with the age and level of maturity of the students involved.

- a) The Principal/Deputy Principal will meet with the students prior to departure and outline the Code of Behaviour as follows:
- b) Students must adhere to the school rules at all times where they are applicable.
- c) Students must adhere to the Tour dress code as set down by the Tour Leader.
- d) Students must follow the rules of the hotel, hostel or other type of accommodation where they are staying.
- e) Students must be well behaved on public and/or private transport while on tour.
- f) Students are responsible for leaving seats on all forms of transport in a tidy condition.
- g) Students are responsible for leaving their bedrooms tidy.

The Tour Team should check all rooms before students have access to them and make a note of any damage done prior to their arrival. Vacated rooms should also be checked for damage.

Sanctions on Tour:

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:

- a) The student missing a half-day's activities (not however an activity related to health and safety).
- b) The student missing out on a specific activity e.g. bowling.
- c) The student missing an evening activity e.g. movie

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 at least 2 members 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 banned from involvement in future Tours.

Serious Misbehaviour

Where a student is guilty of 'serious misbehaviour' the Tour Leader may decide to phone the student's parents/guardians to provide them with details of the incident/s. In on-going and extreme cases of dangerous and/or gross misbehaviour a student may be sent home.

In the event of this happening, the parents/guardians will be informed and if necessary arrangements made for the offending student to travel home in line with Child Protection Guidelines at the expense of the parent.

In the case of a serious/criminal incident (shop lifting, a violent attack etc.) the parents/guardians will be informed immediately and the matter will be handed over to the local police authorities.

Incidents of serious misbehaviour must be reported to the Principal/Deputy Principal on return to school.

Examples of 'serious misbehaviour' include:

- a) Use/possession of alcohol.
- b) Use/possession of illegal substances (drugs etc.)
- c) Use/possession of cigarettes.
- d) Misuse of legal substances (lighter fluid, tippex etc.)
- e) Disruptive behaviour on coach, plane, boat or in the hotel/hostel.
- f) Lack of respect for accommodation rules.
- g) Lack of respect for Tour Team or any other supervising adults.
- h) Theft or criminal damage to property of others.
- i) This list is for examples only and is not exhaustive

Part vi) Post Tour Responsibilities

Reporting Back to BOM/Principal:

Within two weeks of the Tour party's return, the Tour Leader should provide the BOM/Principal with a general, written report outlining:

- The achievements/success of the Tour.
- A completed Financial Statement.
- Details of any incidents which required the imposition of sanctions while on Tour.
- An assessment of the School Tour Policy and suggestions for ways to improve or strengthen it prior to future School Tours.

6. Selection Criteria for Participation in School Tours

Students may be refused the option to participate in an International School Tour, if their behavioural records is in contravention of the schools code of Positive Behaviour. Students who have paid an initial deposit, or for the trip in full, and subsequently commit a serious breach of the school Code of Positive Behaviour will lose their place on the International School tour with no refunds offered.

In the event that the school cannot met the Health and Safety needs of a student this may also result in a refusal to participate in an International School tour.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

All members of staff will be responsible for the implementation of the policy.

8. Links with other school policies

This policy must be read in conjunction with the school's current policies and any other policies as they are developed. This policy is particularly related to Child Protection Guidelines and the Code of Positive Behaviour.

9. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

Under the direction of the Principal the policy will be monitored by the committee which drew it up. This policy will be reviewed after two years or sooner if necessitated by legislation or requested by Staff Council or the Board of Management.

10. Ratification and Communication

- a) This policy will be ratified by the Board of Management.
- b) It will be made available to parents.
- c) It will be placed on the documents section of VShare for Staff to access
- d) It will be published on the school's website.

Appendix 1

Definition:

Parent - In this policy where parent is mentioned, it refers to parent(s), guardian(s), foster parent(s), or the primary carer for a student, as applicable.