

Gorey Community School

Policy on school tours and out of school visits.

School tours are an integral part of school life. In many subject areas the pursuits of the curriculum demand such visits. School tours provide opportunities to learn through experience and enjoyment outside the confines of the classroom. Furthermore they facilitate the personal and social development of the student. The purpose of the policy is to provide students with an enhanced experience of school life through school outings and trips and to ensure that the school complies with Health and Safety regulations.

Policy Content:

Students:

1. Prior to the school tour students are required to get their Parents/Guardians signature on a permission slip and the permission slip must be given to the organiser on or before a specific date.
2. Assess the suitability of the students involved and determine whether their behaviour could jeopardise the safety of others in the group.
3. Students must ensure that any letters and forms relating to the visit are safely delivered from school to home and vice versa.
4. Students going on out of school visits are required to comply with all school Policies, code of behaviour, school rules and health and Safety Regulations. In particular students must:
 - Show respect towards one another, towards staff, and towards all others that they meet in the course of the tour.
 - Comply with staff instructions, with the instructions of transport personnel, and those in authority in the locations and residences visited.
 - Take responsibility for personal belongings including money.
 - Wear the school uniform if the trip is a day visit unless otherwise specified.
 - Inform the staff of any necessary medical or dietary requirements.
 - Inform staff of any incidents that might threaten their personal safety or the safety of others while on tour.
 - Ensure that while on tour they are never isolated from the group.
5. Failure to comply with the rules as outlined will result in rigorous enforcement of the Code of Behaviour. The use of alcohol or the misuse of legal or illegal drugs while on tour threatens the safety of the entire tour party and will be dealt with severely. Students may be returned early to the school. The expense for the early return and the costs of the accompanying teacher will be passed on to the parents/guardians of the student. All serious breaches of the rules will result in parents being phoned immediately and further sanction may follow on return to the school.
6. Students in breach of the rules may be denied permission to go on any further school tours.

Staff:

Prior to out of school visits (e.g. curricular and extra-curricular trips, field work, foreign trips etc.) in the interest of Health and Safety, the school tour organisers must:

1. Inform the Board of management and obtain approval.
2. Obtain parental consent in writing.
3. Inform the insurance company in the case of extended tours and/or adventure sports. Ensure that the appropriate insurance arrangements are in place. In the case of foreign visits, inform parents in writing of those responsibilities which the school accepts and make copies of the insurance arrangements available to parents.
4. Write to Parents/Guardians outlining arrangements, arrival and departure times, and any other student requirements for the tour in time.
5. Determine the level of supervision required in line with DES guidelines.
6. Obtain all relevant information relating to the destination.
7. Check the qualifications of the instructors and all relevant information.
8. Ensure that the students comply with the Code of behaviour and any other rules relevant to the tour.
9. Seek medical advice from qualified personnel for any student or staff member who may require same.
10. Have a 24hr contact available for parents, students, and school authorities.
11. Make regular head counts while on tour.
12. Assess the objectives of the trip – safety is the prime objective and should never be compromised in order to meet educational or other objectives.
13. Ensure that the tour leader carries a first aid kit.
14. Ensure that the students use any equipment provided for their personal safety during the activity.
15. Make an incident/accident report if necessary.
16. Report all incidents of breach of Code of Behaviour to the relevant year head or Principal/Deputy Principal on completion of the tour. Always record and report incident/accident.
17. In the case of serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour, Parents and the school Authorities are to be informed as soon as possible.
18. If necessary arrange for and accompany any student back to the school or home.