



Loreto College St. Stephen's Green

School Tour Policy

The Educational Outings and Tours Policy of Loreto St Stephen's Green should be read in conjunction with the school's Code of Behaviour¹. The school's Code of Behaviour applies to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours, i.e. when on school related activities/outings/tours etc. where students are identified or identifiable as students of Loreto, St. Stephen's Green.

Rationale for having an educational outings/tours policy

- School trips/outings are 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.
- All educational tours must be consistent with the rationale as specified by the Department of Education and Science in Circular Letter M 20/04 particularly that school tours should be an extension and reinforcement of classroom activities.² All reasonable efforts will be made to satisfy all of the criteria in this circular.
- A relevant policy is needed to assist staff in the planning of tours/outings and to lay out the necessary precautions which need to be observed in order to provide for the health and safety of staff and students.
- A relevant policy is also needed to ensure that there is a balanced programme of tours/outings that does not overburden the school timetable or prove too costly to parents.

Links to Mission Statement

This policy has been developed in line with our Mission Statement which states that Loreto College aims to “provide a rich and diverse curriculum catering for the needs of each individual student. We provide a holistic education wherein we strive for excellence in the pursuit of knowledge. Social concerns and spiritual values are central to our educational philosophy, while sporting and cultural endeavours are encouraged”.

¹ See Appendix 1 for School Code of Behaviour which states explicitly that “Students of Loreto College, St Stephen's Green are expected to observe the Code of Behaviour at all times while on the school property, while travelling to or from school and while participating in any school related activity”.

² See Appendix 2 for Circular M20/04

Objectives:

- That the safety, health and welfare of students is taken into account by ensuring that care be taken in the nature of the trip arranged, the chosen venue, the level of supervision provided, the means of transportation etc.
- That staff are aware that they are acting in *loco parentis* while accompanying students on tours/outings.
- That students gain the maximum educational benefit and enjoyment from all outings and tours.
- That students understand that the school's Code of Behaviour applies when on all school related activities.

General Procedures for Day Tours/Outings

Day tours/outings are always organised on a voluntary basis, in accordance with DES guidelines, and are determined by the availability of teaching staff. The following general procedures apply to day tours/outings:

1. Day tours/outings may take place during the school day or may extend beyond normal school hours.
2. Day tours/outings must have the approval of the Principal/Deputy Principal.
3. Once the Principal/Deputy Principal has approved a tour/outing the organiser should:
 - a) enter the details on the school calendar in the staffroom
 - b) obtain parental permission
 - c) on leaving the school include the list of names of travelling students at reception
4. On all day tours there must be an appropriate ratio between the number of students and number of staff travelling. The ratio will depend on the nature of the trip and the age of the students travelling. On a private coach there should be at least one member of staff in addition to the driver. On public transport there should be at least one member of staff for every ten students in years 1-4.
5. Students who have a history of inappropriate behaviour may be excluded from day tours/outings
6. School authorities should have the contact numbers of the coach company or staff in case of delays or any other occurrences. The tour coordinator should have contact numbers for the school and parents in case of delays or emergencies.
7. For trips that extend beyond normal hours, it is the responsibility of the guardian(s)/parent(s) to ensure that arrangements are in place for their

daughter's journey to/from the school. The tour organiser must be informed in advance of these arrangements.

8. On occasion, at the discretion of the principal, it may be suitable for Senior Cycle students to travel independently of the school to or from an event.
9. Staff should not travel alone with a student – or should only travel alone with a student when parental permission has been obtained.
10. An Accident/Incident Report must be completed on appropriate forms in Staffroom and related to Principal/Deputy Principal should anything of such nature occur in the course of the tour/outings.

General Procedures for Overnight Tours/ Foreign Tours

Overnight tours/Foreign Tours are always organised on a voluntary basis, in accordance with DES guidelines, and are determined by the availability of teaching staff. The following general procedures apply to Overnight Tours/Foreign Tours:

1. The Tour Co-ordinator will seek the approval of the Principal and The Board of Management submitting a tour plan which will cover:
 - a) A draft itinerary
 - b) Timing and Duration
 - c) Year group/ approximate numbers
 - d) Approximate costs
 - e) Educational benefit
2. The request for a foreign tour must be submitted to the Board of Management before the end of May for inclusion in the following year's academic programme/calendar.
3. Tours will take place during mid- term breaks or holidays with a maximum of 1 day of term subject to the approval of the Board of Management.
4. A foreign tour must be organised through a bonded travel agency.
5. The Tour Coordinator will select an assistant if desired. A notice will be put up in staffroom inviting staff to accompany the group. A lottery will be held if there is an excess of applicants. In the case of specialised tours or subject specific tours staff from the relevant departments or staff with the relevant skills will have priority over other staff members.
6. If a student requires their SNA to be on a school tour this may be as part or ex quota at the discretion of the principal.³

³ See Appendix 3 for school SEN policy, which outlines the role and duties of the SNA.

- 7.** The Principal will sanction what they deem to be an appropriate ratio of male to female members willing to accompany any overnight trip or foreign tours from the available staff.
- 8.** The size of the group will depend on the number of students the Tour Coordinator is able to take.
- 9.** The ratio for students to teachers on a foreign tour will be one to eight.
- 10.** The Tour Coordinator/ and Year Head will organise a lottery (if necessary) for the student places.
- 11.** A student may be excluded from a tour group if it is felt, based on previous misbehaviour, that bringing the student would be a liability or that the teachers would be unable to accept responsibility for the possible consequences of her behaviour.
- 12.** Students will be issued with deadlines for the submission of application form/deposit and payment of others monies and relevant documentation. If a passport is required, a photocopy of the student's passport must be included with the deposit. In certain cases passports must be valid for at least six months following the trip.
- 13.** Students must have their European Health Insurance Card for travel to countries in the EU.
- 14.** For travel outside the EU students and staff must have adequate travel/health insurance cover as advised by the travel agent.
- 15.** Students must attend all information meetings and co-operate with all requests pertaining to the tour.
- 16.** Participants and parents will be issued with the following written communication covering the following areas:
 - a)** an itinerary
 - b)** accommodation
 - c)** recommended clothing
 - d)** recommended pocket money
 - e)** personal items that a student may need to bring
 - f)** a Consent Form to be signed by students and parents/guardians saying that school staff may act in loco parentis (and/or covering all aspects of student behaviour)
 - g)** a Medical Form outlining any medical condition/ medication that staff need to be aware of, and consent for the administration of medical intercession in the case of a medical emergency
 - h)** a Contact Details Form with details of guardians/parents contact numbers

- 17.** Failure to comply with deadlines given in relation to deposit/passport details/letters of consent/ medical forms/ contact details etc. may result in a student forfeiting her place on a tour and her deposit.
- 18.** On the tour mobile phone communication may be necessary between staff and students. The tour coordinator should have a list of the mobile phone numbers of students travelling. A mobile phone is available from reception for the Tour Coordinator as staff members are not required to give their personal phone numbers to students.
- 19.** One of the staff members on the tour should be responsible for carrying a First Aid Kit.
- 20.** In the case where an inspection of a student's room or personal property has been deemed necessary, a male member of staff must always be accompanied by a female member of staff. This would only occur if there were concern for a student's physical safety/ suspicion of being in possession of a banned substance or other serious concerns.
- 21.** In the case of a family hosting a student, the tour coordinator must ensure that the student is given proper female adult supervision by a parent /guardian and appropriate accommodation (her own bed in a single room or in a room shared with another girl)
- 22.** The Tour Coordinator should be able to contact the Principal/ Deputy Principal or designated person in case of emergency during the trip
- 23.** If a student is found to be in serious breach of any of the rules of the Code of Behaviour, the staff in charge must contact the Principal/Deputy Principal immediately, where an appropriate sanction will be advised which may include authorisation for the student to be sent home at the parents/guardians expense. In this event the student may have to travel home unaccompanied
- 21.** An Accident/Incident Report must be handed in, completed on appropriate form, returning from an overnight stay or foreign tour.