***SCHOOL TOURS AND OUTINGS POLICY***

School Tours and outings will be arranged by the class teacher during the school year for a variety of educational reasons. These reasons may include the following:

* To explore new environments or habitats that will reinforce work already completed in classroom.
* To avail of opportunities to develop pupils’ aesthetic and creative senses.
* To assist the pupil to generalise skills learnt in school in a variety of new social contexts.
* To transfer road safety skills or similar lessons to real life situations.
* To develop competence in Individual Education Plan goals following an incremental series of steps in a community based environment.

**Health & Safety Considerations:**

All pupils leaving the school premises on a school outing or on a school tour will have to have written permission provided by their parents / guardians prior to them leaving the premises. Written permission is generally given when a pupil commences attendance in Scoil Triest.

Approval should be sought from Principal / Deputy Principal before the tour is organised.

All staff are required to sign out when they are leaving the school campus. They must list all staff and pupils who are leaving with them. They must sign in again on return.

If any pupil is in receipt of medication, copies of the protocol with regard to the administration of the medication and the appropriately qualified staff to administer the medication must accompany the child.

**The teacher must carry a mobile phone and the phone numbers and contact details of all the children and the school mobile number and office number. Please ensure that the secretary or a teacher in the school building has the number(s) of any mobiles which are being used so the school can contact the group during the trip.**

**Hiring of Transport:**

Tendering of transport for school outings and community access will take place every 2 years. Generally speaking the contract will be awarded to the cheapest provider. If transport needs to be hired for the tour / outing, all reasonable efforts will be made to secure a transport provider who is accustomed to our pupils.

Buses can be booked through the secretary’s office, giving pick up and collection times and numbers travelling (children and staff).

**Conditions of Hiring**

* All transport supplied will be suitable, equipped with working seat belts and well-maintained. The teachers have the right to refuse any bus / taxi they find unsuitable for their outing.
* The driver will be used to dealing with children and have a thorough knowledge of and follow the itinerary and timetable for the tour. The driver is responsible for the safety of the children while they are travelling but teachers have the right to intervene if it is felt that the safety of the children is compromised.

**Tour Kit**

The following are suggested items that might be useful:

1. Plasters & Wipes
2. Refuse and illness bags
3. Wet weather gear or change of clothes
4. Kitchen roll/ toilet roll
5. Tissues
6. Cameras
7. Gluten free food or special lunches where required
8. Thermometer

**Cost**

Class tours will incur some expense by parents – a standard subscription is agreed at the beginning of each year and teachers will ensure that the cost of a tour is reasonable and represents value for money. The school will endeavour to ensure that no child is unable to access beneficial educational tours due to lack of funds.

Community access programmes are funded from home. Students are encouraged to bring their money in a wallet from home. Buses are paid by school Board of Management.

**Venue**

In advance of any tour, the teacher will make himself / herself familiar with the venue, with particular reference to educational opportunities afforded, and services available particularly with reference to pupils with special educational needs such as parking bays, toilet area and emergency facilities. Teachers will take account of the particular needs of their students when organising the school tour, particularly in relation to sensory needs and overstimulating environments.

**Weather Conditions**

Appropriate coats or jackets will be necessary for all the children and hats and gloves may be required on winter outings. Umbrellas may be necessary under some conditions and should only be used by staff to minimise risk of injury. Sun creams and hats are essential for hot weather conditions.

**Uniforms**

Teachers travelling together will decide whether uniforms should be worn.

**Planning and Reporting Procedures**

As all educational outings and tours are conducted during school time they will be planned for the appropriate subject area of the curriculum in the fortnightly planning template in advance of the tour. Pupils who are engaging in outings as part of their I.E.P. goals will have their progress continuously monitored and evaluated on a written template.

A report on the outcome of the tour will be included in the Comments Section of fortnightly plan completed following the tour. Where problems arise either with venue or transport teachers will report back to the Principal.

**Conduct on Tours**

Pupil’s behaviour on tours will comply with the standard set down in the School’s Code of Discipline.

Where it is felt that a child’s conduct would pose a safety risk or inhibit the educational benefit for self or others, the teachers may decide that it would be unsafe for a particular pupil to travel. Parents will be advised of this in advance. Every effort will be made to ensure that all students experience at least one school outing per year as appropriate.

**Risk Assessment**

In consultation with Special Needs Assistants, teachers will undertake a risk assessment of the proposed venue with regard to possible health and safety hazards that might present themselves, see Appendix 1.

Particular attention should be given to

* Appropriate levels of supervision for the group of pupils in question. The minimum level of supervision for a group of 6 pupils is one teacher and 3 S.N.A.s. The minimum level of supervision for a group of 5 is one teacher and 1 S.N.A.’s. Levels of supervision should be determined by the class teacher taking account of potential risks re. behaviour, care needs, medical needs etc.
* Traffic conditions at or on the way to the venue
* Parking – are there roadways to cross?
* Alighting from and boarding the bus at the venue
* Crowds and confusion –
  + What will be the impact on the pupils in question?
  + How can they be prepared for this?
  + If they get anxious or distressed what plan is to be put in place to deal with it?
  + Is there a likelihood of a pupil getting lost and what is the plan in case this happens?
* Are there any possible dangers from water, streams, rivers etc. nearby?
* Are there pupils on the tour with special requirements such as medical, dietary etc? If medications are being carried – where will they be stored during the tour?

**Safety and Supervision**

Class teacher must accompany any student who leaves the Lota Campus for any reason.

Teachers will be extra vigilant when taking children out of the school. If a teacher is not happy with the levels of safety and supervision, he / she should leave the venue.

Each class group of 6 students should be accompanied by class teacher and 3 SNA’s, as is In-Class ratio for supervision.

Sufficient staff will need to accompany the group to ensure pupil safety at all times. If available staff numbers are insufficient consideration should be given to conducting the tour or outing with smaller groups on a rotation basis or combining with another class. If the permanent / temporary / long term substitute staff who are familiar with the pupils are absent on the day of the tour, the tour should be postponed until these staff are available rather than conducting the tour with substitute or unfamiliar staff. The class teacher must always be present.

***MISSING CHILD POLICY***

1. Stay calm and note time.
2. Ensure safety and supervision of other pupils.
3. Delegate staff members and / or volunteers on the tour to look for lost child and report back within given time frame, depending on the circumstances.
4. If child is not found, alert Principal or Secretary of the school who will contact parents and Gardaí.
5. If for any reason the school cannot be contacted, alert parents and Gardaí.
6. Continue to look for the missing child, ensuring the safety of other pupils.
7. Maintain contact with the school.
8. Formal investigation should take place after the event with recommendations for changes in procedure for future tours.
9. A phone call should be made to parents to inform them of the incident.
10. If parents request a formal meeting should be arranged with them after the event.
11. A full report is sent to the Board of Management.

**Child Protection**

Strict adherence to the school’s Child Protection Policies must be adhered to particularly in relation to supervision requirements. Plan for supervision of toilet arrangements should be agreed before leaving school. Disabled toilets must be used for boys when there are no male staff available to accompany them to male toilets.

**Informing parents**

Teachers will insure that Parents are given sufficient notice of:

1. Itinerary & Timetable
2. Cost
3. Request for special clothing necessary and packed lunch if required.

Parents will need to sign the permission form for their child / children to participate on the tour / outing.

***APPENDIX 1***

***TOUR AND OUTING RISK ASSESSMENT***

Please take the following into account if applicable to your class / outing.

* How many pupils are on the outing?
* How many teachers are supervising?
* How many staff members are available?
* How many students on work experience are assisting? Will they be adequately supervised by staff?
* Have the following possible risks been considered?
  + - Traffic conditions
    - Parking
    - Alighting from and boarding the bus
    - Crowds and confusion
    - Dangers from nearby water, streams, rivers etc.
* Are the administration of medicines notices for those pupils that require them with the leader of the group and the staff member accompanying that child?
* If Medications are being carried – where are they to be stored during the tour?
* Does the school secretary / Principal have contact numbers if required?
* Have you the phone number of the students parents / school numbers?
* Is there a First Aid Kit on the bus / with the teacher?
* Are Child Protection measures in place regarding supervision and toileting?