

# De La Salle College School Tours and Trips Policy

## Section 1: Rationale

De la Salle College aims to help each student achieve his full potential, academically, spiritually, physically, emotionally and socially in a happy secure environment.

De La Salle College has a holistic approach to education and as part of that we recognise that school tours and trips allow learning to extend beyond the walls of the classroom and as such are an integral part of student's educational and personal development.

We recognise that exposure to a variety of experiences and cultures is part of that holistic education and we endeavour to provide these experiences in a safe manner.

School tours and trips require good preparation and organisation to optimise the learning experience for students. The Board of Management of De La Salle College supports and encourages school tours and concurs with Department of Education guidelines which state that

*“the objective of an educational tour should be that it should provide a significant benefit in the educational, intellectual, cultural and social development of the maximum number of pupils in the particular grade(s) taking part in the tour and which benefit cannot be provided by in-school activities alone.... any activity, in connection with the tour, which is in conflict with this objective is to be avoided”*

It is school policy to organise outings for the benefit of students when this is deemed appropriate by the teaching staff, in consultation with the Principal. The school recognises the benefits of outings to complement normal school work, for educational or sporting purposes. A school tour should only take place if it meets this objective and is formally sanctioned by the school Board of Management.

## Section2: Scope: Types of School Trips and Tours

This policy covers educational tours organised by the school both inside and outside the State. The nature and type of school trips and tours includes the following:

- Sporting events – rugby, basketball, badminton etc...
- Trips and tours of various types for Transition Year students
- Educational day trips for school groups within the State
- Educational visits involving student exchange
- Educational visits and trips involving instruction
- Educational trips involving cultural, religious or linguistic benefit to students
- Trips and exchanges of a sporting nature organised with schools abroad
- Ski trips
- Tours to holiday resorts

The lengths of trips may vary from a short local visit to a foreign tour involving staying away for several days.

School trips, outings and tours are a privilege reserved for students who meet acceptable standards of behaviour while at school. Students who do not meet minimum standards of behaviour, as decided by the Principal, may be refused permission to participate in a school outing. The Principal reserves the right to disallow a student from participation in a school trip if, in her opinion, the health or safety of the student or other students or teachers is at risk.

All school rules and all relevant school policies apply while on school trips and tours. In particular, parents and students should be aware that permission to travel on a school related activity is conditional on strict adherence to the Code of Behaviour. All students selected for sports teams and who travel as part of a class group represent De La Salle College. The highest standards of behaviour and conduct are expected as a matter of course. Students and parents/guardians shall be acquainted in advance of the tour with rules, regulations and special requirements of that tour.

### **Section 3: Procedures - Day Trips**

1. Permission for day trips must be sought from the Principal. Teaching staff are asked to allow adequate time between making a submission of a proposal and the date of the proposed trip. Insofar as possible a full schedule of events should be known and approved at the beginning of the school year in which they are to take place. In granting approval for a school trip consideration will be given to:
  - Conformity with the criteria in circular letter M20/04.( See Appendix)
  - The number of other proposed events to take place during the course of the year.
  - The timing of the event and its effect on other school activities
  - Its implication for the normal teaching routine of the school
  - The suitability of travel arrangements.
2. In general written permission is required from a parent/guardian of a student before they may go on a trip. Day Trip Permission Forms (See Appendix) will be given to students by the organising teacher to be sent home and returned with parents/guardians permission. Students who have not returned permission forms may not participate in the trip.
3. At the start of the school year parents of Transition Year students and students involved with sports teams will be asked to give advance permission for all tours and matches that have the approval of the school Principal and fall within the normal school day or training schedule. It is therefore understood that students who play as part of a team representing De La Salle College will have on-going parental permission to travel to all away matches.
4. The organising teacher must keep a careful note of monies paid and issue receipts for same.
5. As a courtesy to colleagues, full details, including date, time and names of participating students should be posted on the staff room notice board by the organising teacher at least 2 days before the event.
6. Taking all relevant factors into account adequate supervision must be provided.
7. Teachers must ensure that they are contactable (where practicable) at all times during the day and provide the school secretary with a contact number.
8. While every effort will be made to adhere to arranged times on trips, in particular the arrival time back at the school, the school cannot guarantee such times, for example where circumstances arise which are outside the control of staff involved.
9. Students intent on participating in a school trip must use the transport organised by the school and must return home on the aforementioned transport. On occasion and only with prior written permission from a parent/guardian and agreement with the organising teacher a student may make other transport arrangements.
10. In the event of a serious incident the schools Critical Incident Policy will be initiated.

11. A written report on the tour must be submitted to the Principal as soon as possible after the tour.

### **Section 4: Procedures - Overnight Tours**

The approval of any school tour must be sought and obtained from the Principal and the Board of Management. It is now a requirement on the Board to ensure that a Tour Authorisation Form (See Appendix) is filled out by the organising teacher (Tour Leader) and retained in the school for possible examination in the course of a school inspection. In granting approval the Board must ensure that there is conformity with the criteria outlined in the circular letter M20/04 (Appendix1) which includes the following:

- A school tour should enhance the learning process for students by providing educational experiences which the classroom cannot provide.
- The full cost of the tour should be communicated to parents at the earliest opportunity.
- A school tour should be arranged to coincide with normal school holiday periods. Exceptions to this requirement are single day tours and activities listed in the circular such as student exchanges or attendance at a music or drama festival.
- Proper insurance cover must be in place and written parental approval received for each student participating in the tour.
- Students not participating in a tour taking place during school time must be adequately catered for while teachers are away.
- Appropriate arrangements must be made for the classes of any absent teachers in line with Circular PPT 01/03 (Supervision and Substitution Scheme). The absence of accompanying teachers during school time must be kept to an absolute minimum.

Consideration will also be given to:

- The number of other proposed events to take place during the course of the year.
- The timing of the event and its effect on other school activities.
- Its' implications for the normal teaching routine of the school.
- The suitability of travel and accommodation arrangements.

Once the Board of Management has been informed of all the details of a tour and has given its approval, then the tour leader(s) is/are fully empowered to proceed with the tour.

### **Tour Teams (For School Tours only)**

An initial proposal of intended foreign trip should be presented by the Tour Leader to the Principal with all the relevant details, the proposed itinerary, cost of tour and list of travelling students and staff well in advance. In the case of foreign trips this should be done during the previous academic year. It is preferable that all trips involving more than a two night stay are planned a reasonable period of time in advance to give all students the opportunity to budget for the trip

A risk assessment analysis regarding the tour will be undertaken by the organising tour company. This assessment must include analysis of the area to be visited, suggested accommodation, issues of health and safety and the students travelling. Details of each tour should be put in writing and submitted to the Principal.

The Principal must inform the Board of Management about all proposed foreign tours and ensure that the Tour Authorisation Form is completed and submitted to the Board for approval.

A tour team, led by the tour leader will be put in place as soon as possible. Teaching staff will be informed of the planned tour and invited to indicate to the tour leader if they are interested in being a member of the tour team that will accompany the students. The Principal should be consulted on the list of staff wanting to travel, prior to places being offered by the tour leader. Ultimately, the final decision is at the discretion of the Principal. The Tour Team will complete all the planning

All members of the team will be expected to share the work load beforehand where necessary and during the trip. The tour leader together with the Principal and /or Deputy Principal will decide on the team composition to meet the needs of the students involved. The tour leader will meet the full Tour Team at the outset so as to discuss the tour, duties and responsibilities. Travelling teachers will also meet with the Principal and Deputy Principal prior to the trip to discuss Health and Safety issues. It is recognised that the organisation of or participation in any school tour is voluntary on the part of teachers.

If the tour is approved by the Board, the trip should be offered to all the relevant students and an introductory letter and itinerary must be sent to parents/guardians well in advance of the date of departure. This letter should clearly state the educational benefits of the trip.

Students should be informed of the procedure for selection of students in the event of over subscription. A student's disciplinary record can be taken into consideration. If the school considers that it cannot take responsibility for some students for reasons of behaviour, safety or health the school reserves the right to decide that those students may not participate in the trip. Decisions will be made by the Principal, Deputy Principal and any other relevant staff if necessary. A raffle for places will be held where the application of places is in excess of the number of places offered. A waiting list will then come into effect for students not offered a place.

Students should be required to pay an initial deposit followed by the remainder of the money within a stated period of time. Payments should be by means of cheques, money order or bank drafts made payable to the school not to an individual teacher. The organising teacher/Tour Leader will adhere to the financial guidelines as outlined in this policy.

The Principal should be furnished with a full itinerary of the trip and all contact details prior to departure.

### **Legal Requirements for using Licensed Tour Operators**

It is obligatory for schools to use the services of a licensed tour operator or travel agent when bringing any group of students or adults outside the State as outlined in JMB Bulletin 08/2007 ( See Appendix).

### **Financial Guidelines for School Tour Activity**

School tours and educational trips both inside and outside the State involve the collection, processing and spending of significant amounts of money. For this reason the Board of Management recognises its responsibility for any money collected or spent in the name of the school and the need to have financial controls in place that ensure accountability for all money collected.

1. At least two teachers (the Tour Leader and one other) should be involved in the financial administration of a school tour. This is an important protection for all concerned where money is collected from students.
2. Separate financial records should be maintained for each school tour. A detailed record of all participating students and the amounts paid should be retained.
3. Parents/guardians should be informed as early as possible of the full cost associated with the tour. Written permission should be received from the parents/guardians of all tour participants and a receipt for all money paid should be issued.
4. Proper and full insurance cover must be in place for all school tours.
5. All money collected for a school tour should be lodged as soon as possible in the main school bank account. Where money for a tour is being retained for a month or more it should be transferred to a school deposit account to avoid distortion of day to day school funds.
6. It is not recommended that a teacher opens a special bank account for school tours. If for some reason the Board decides to operate a separate bank account for school tours, then the Principal must be one of two signatories nominated by the Board. This account should be in the school's name. Under no circumstances should such an account be under the sole control of a teacher or teachers in the school.
7. All financial transactions relating to the tour should be recorded in the school's accounts using the tour codes on TAS 2. Invoices and receipts should be retained to support all payments. Where this is not possible or practical, a written record showing details of the payment or receipt should be retained.
8. Any deficit or borrowing to support a school tour must be avoided at all costs. All tours should be self-financing and exposing the school to any liability associated with the tour must be avoided.
9. Students who withdraw from a tour/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 will not be entitled to a refund.
10. The overall cost of a school tour/trip will be agreed in advance and will take into account the ability of students and their parents to pay.
11. Accounts and records for the tour should be reconciled at regular intervals and a report given to the Principal. A financial report on the tour should be presented to the Board of Management at least twice during the school year and a final report when all transactions relating to the tour have been completed.
12. The financial report on the tour should be incorporated into the annual school accounts.

## **Supervision of Tours and Trips**

Any trip that is sanctioned by the Board of Management to take place on a school day(s) should generally be in line with the teacher to student ratio place system operated by the travel company. (As a guide, most travel agents offer a ratio of 1:8, with the exception of ski trips which offer a ratio of 1:10). This is to minimise disruption to the school in the absence of the teachers travelling. . "The numbers of teachers absent should be kept to the minimum level required." DES Circular M20/04. However, the final decision will be at the discretion of the Principal.

The number of staff which accompanies a group will also be influenced by a number of factors including;

- The number of students travelling
- The age and maturity of the students.
- The location of the trip.
- The availability of alternative adult supervision e.g. Special Needs Assistants.
- Additional supervision which may be provided at the trip destination.
- If the group will be dividing into smaller groups, each requiring supervision.
- The type of transport used

- The activities to be engaged in.

Certain tours/trips may facilitate shopping or recreation which may not be directly supervised. This situation will usually be indicated on the permission slip, itinerary or information letter sent to parents/guardian. The school expects that all students travelling on a tour/trip will display a level of maturity commensurate with their age.

Students on tours which involve an overnight stay in Ireland or abroad will not be supervised on a 24 hour basis and all extended school tours will involve periods of time without direct supervision. Parents who are concerned that such a level of supervision is inappropriate should not permit their son to take part in such trips. . The Principal should be furnished with a full itinerary of the trip and all contact details prior to departure.

## **Supervision of Students**

**The following are some suggestions for supervising on school trips.**

1. Each teacher in the Tour Team is assigned a small number of students. The teacher can call his/her group together at specific times in busy areas and when getting on and off buses, trains, boats, aeroplanes etc. This saves time and minimises the possibility of leaving a student behind.
2. Students can be counted every time they get on/off a bus, train, boat or plane.
3. Specific meeting points and times can be arranged and explained in advance to students. On the day of the tour, students will meet and check in with their assigned teacher at various times throughout the day.
4. Prior to departure all students should put the school mobile number into their phone contact list.
5. Junior students, especially First Years, should not be left alone for any length or period of time while in big cities. They should be assigned to a teacher to stay with at all times unless they are in a very confined space.
6. In the unlikely event of separation from the group, all students will be given instructions on what to do specific to each tour/location.

## **Teacher Corridor Duty**

1. The Tour Team will decide on a rota for corridor duty (night time).
2. The Tour Team will decide on a rota for calling students in the morning.
3. It is preferable for teachers to work in pairs.
4. Ideally, teachers on night duty should do so until an agreed time. (This must be flexible and situation specific).
5. Students should be aware that there are teachers in the corridor.
6. Students should have teacher room numbers in case of emergency during the night.
7. Staff members should not enter any student bedrooms alone, unless in case of emergency.

## **Rules and Regulations for School Tours & Trips**

Students and parents/guardians shall be acquainted in advance of the school's Code of Behaviour, tour/trip rules, regulations and any special requirements of that tour. Parents/guardians shall be given an outline of the purpose, itinerary, dates and the cost of the tour/trip before a deposit is sought. Each student and his parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given a form outlining the rules, regulations and special requirements and they shall be required to sign that (i) they understand the rules and (ii) they are willing to abide by them at all times.

The Board of Management specifically wishes to draw attention to the following:

- Students must obey members of staff at all times and be courteous, friendly and co-operative.
- Students must stay with the tour group. A student may not go off by himself or wander off anywhere alone, unless it is a structured supervised activity e.g. Orienteering.
- Students must stay in groups at all times and are expected to be punctual.
- Students must not purchase alcohol or tobacco products for any purpose at any stage of the tour.
- Students are not permitted to have piercings or tattoos applied whilst on tours or trips.
- The use of alcohol, tobacco or other non-medically prescribed drugs by students on a tour is absolutely forbidden.
- The Board of Management requires parent(s)/guardian(s) to guarantee that when their son comes to the school to assemble for the start of a school tour, he does so free of alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances either on his person or in her luggage.
- A student may be sent home, at their parents' expense, if in the opinion of the leader, the conduct of the student warrants it.
- In the case of overnight trips
  - i. Students must not give the name of the hotel, their room numbers or mobile phone number to anyone.
  - ii. Students must not enter another guest's hotel room or allow anybody into their room.
  - iii. Once the group has retired at night, no student has permission to be in another student's room, on the corridors or in any other area of the premises.
  - iv. In addition to the Code of Behaviour and school tour/trip rules, students must adhere to the law of the country which they visit. In the event of a breach of this, due process of law will follow.

## **Sanctions**

1. Any student found to be in breach of the rules of the trip/school will be subject to disciplinary action while on the trip and upon return to school.
2. The sanctions on a school trip can be imposed at the discretion of the tour leader and may not follow the sanction system in place in the formal school setting. E.g. Students who misbehave on a ski trip may be withdrawn from a ski lesson. Students who are late for something may be asked to assist with the morning wake up call.

## **Serious breaches of discipline**

Serious breaches of discipline may result in a student being sent home and parents will have to cover the expense.

The following is a list of what constitutes serious misbehaviour:

1. Use or Possession of alcohol/illegal substances.
2. Misuse of legal substances (Tippex, solvents etc).
3. Students in out of bounds areas at night.
4. Disruptive behaviour on plane, boat, coach or in the hotel/hostel.
5. Theft/criminal damage to property of others.

**The above list is not exhaustive and other behaviour/incidences may constitute unacceptable or serious misbehaviour.**

## **Health and Safety**

Health and safety of students and supervisors is a priority when organising and taking a school trip/tour. Teachers taking any tour/trip will exercise due care, common sense and judgement when issues of health and safety arise.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be requested to inform the tour/trip leader in writing of any special needs, medical needs or medication required by their son while on the tour/trip.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be required to sign a consent form which will allow medical advice to be followed in the event of injury/illness and where it is not possible to contact them in the time available.

In case of an accident, staff will normally apply basic first aid only. Expert medical attention will be sought should this be thought necessary and best practice will be followed. Where a serious accident occurs, staff will seek medical assistance as a first priority and contact the school to inform the office of events. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible by the Tour Leader as well as the school. The Board has full confidence in the staff and their decisions.

## **Contact Information**

Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be required to give details of phone numbers for contact in the event of an emergency on a twenty-four hour basis for the duration of the tour.

A mobile telephone will be supplied to the tour leader for school tours. The number of the phone will be given to parent(s)/guardian(s) and students prior to departure for use only in case of emergency.

The tour leader must ensure to have a copy of the complete contact information and ensure that a copy is left available in the school during the tour for use in the event of an emergency. This should include:

- a listing of all of those taking part together with home contact details.
- the itinerary to be followed and contact details.
- a contact telephone number for the tour leader.

## **Insurance and Indemnity**

The school's insurance policy covers students and teachers whilst they are participating in school approved activities however certain activities (as described in the policy document) are excluded from this. Parents/Guardians may request to see the list of exclusions.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to purchase Personal Accident Insurance cover for their sons. This is facilitated in the school at the start of each academic year.

When travelling to providers of physical activities the tour leader will ensure to only use facilities/centres approved by the relevant governing bodies and which can provide their own personal injury and accident insurance.

In the case of school tours outside the island of Ireland the Board of Management will ensure that the leader of the tour ensures that appropriate travel insurance has been taken out to cover those embarking on the tour and that the individual students and teachers involved take out their own travel insurance if necessary.

Tours to Europe with Bonded tour companies have their own insurance to cover personal injury and accident.



## **E.H.I.C.**

- The E.H.I.C. form provides medical insurance for students and staff from European Countries while travelling in other E.U. countries. In the event of an accident or illness the student may be taken to a local doctor or hospital. The responsibility for finding a doctor or hospital when travelling between centres lies with the Tour Leader and Team..
- E.H.I.C. cards are available from local H.S.E. offices. Each HSE region has its own form and students with different county addresses must fill in the form relevant to their county students can apply for these forms no later than six weeks prior to departure.
- Students must give the tour leader a photocopy of their card prior to departure. The card should be handed in with the passports and be retained at all times by the tour leader/staff members.

## **Student Medical History**

Some students may suffer from an illness which requires constant medication. A medical history should be given by parents on a student information form handed in with the deposit. This form should include contact numbers, allergies and medication to be taken. The Tour Leader should be informed by parents of specific details regarding their son nearer the time of departure.

Underlying medical conditions (e.g. Asthma, Cancer) need to be notified to the insurance company as supplementary payments may be needed to obtain full insurance. It is the responsibility of the Tour Leader to communicate with the parents on matters of insurance eligibility. Subsequently, it is the responsibility of the parents to establish if the insurance will cover pre-existing conditions.

The Tour Leader must negotiate all claims with the insurance agency. Leaders are legally responsible for all claims up until the student turns 21 years. It is vitally important that all records/details etc of accidents or medical treatment be kept on record until such time that the student reaches 21 years.

## **Dental Treatment**

Students will receive dental treatment if advised by a medical practitioner.

## **Medical Emergencies**

In the event of an emergency, the parents/guardians will always be contacted first. Tour leaders will act on medical advice presented in the event of an accident or emergency where it is not possible to contact parents, guardians or next of kin, either by telephone or due to time considerations. Details of emergency contacts are to be included in the student's information form (see Student Medical History.)

Any/all medical costs (including transportation and prescription charges) paid by the tour leader are to be repaid by parents within a period of three weeks after the return of the trip. While such expenses may be eligible for an insurance claim it is unreasonable to expect the school to cover such costs pending an insurance claim.

## **Emergency Procedures**

In the event of a serious incident/accident as many members of staff as is possible/practical in the circumstances shall come together; they shall agree on an outline of the details of the incident/accident and taking into account all the facts as they are known at that time, shall decide on a course of action. The details and the decision(s) taken shall be put in writing as soon as is practicable. The Board accepts that in cases where there is lack of consensus over the course of action, the Tour Leader (where available) has the final decision.

Tour Leader and Tour Team must ensure that, if it becomes necessary to question a student about a potentially serious matter, another adult be present. In addition to the Code of Behaviour, students must adhere to the law of the country which they visit. In the event of a breach of this, due process of law will follow.

The Tour Leader may be given a sum of money (amount to be decided by the Board) which may be used in the event of an emergency.

## **Travel Documents**

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians in conjunction with students to ensure that all documents necessary for travel abroad e.g. passport, identity card are up to date and in order. The School will not take responsibility for a student whose personal documentation is not in order and who is prevented from travelling abroad as a result. Students on tours within the European Union shall be required to have a completed E111 form and a valid passport.

The staff should collect the passports before the trip commences for safe keeping and for ease of passage during the trip.

Passports remain the responsibility of the tour leader and team members for the duration of the tour. They are only given out when needed. After use they should be immediately collected and held by the tour leader or preferably in a hotel safe.

## **Communication with Parents**

Parents of students eligible to participate in a tour/trip should be given adequate notice outlining:

- The objectives of the tour/trip.
- The itinerary and duration of the tour/trip.
- The costs involved and method of payment.
- The Code of Positive Behaviour applies to the tour/trip.

Parents are made aware of their duty to inform the school of any relevant Health or Safety issues which might affect their son. The signed permission of parents is an essential pre-requisite for the participation of their son in any school tour/trip.

Two to three weeks prior to departure a meeting of the students and their parents should be held. At this meeting the parents should be given the itinerary, along with addresses and contact telephone numbers of accommodation. They should also be given the number of the school mobile to contact in an emergency. Teachers should not give their personal numbers to parents/students. All students

travelling must attend this meeting and sign in at the door. The trip rules should be signed by students and parents at this meeting.

The date for this meeting should be set well in advance to accommodate forward planning for all expected to attend. All staff travelling should attend this meeting. Parental attendance is compulsory and any parent unavailable must make alternative arrangements to meet the tour leader/or a teacher who is travelling. Other documents to be issued at the meeting

- ✓ Parental consent form/Contact Details (See Appendix)
- ✓ Behavioural contracts (See Appendix)
- ✓ Medical consent form (See Appendix)

### **Provision for Students with Special Needs**

Students with special needs, who have S.N.A.s, should not be excluded from trips. All reasonable efforts should be made to include/facilitate these students. It is necessary for a student with a S.N.A. for his S.N.A. (or another suitable person, usually a parent) to travel with her. The cost of this is to be borne by the parents.

Some trips are simply not suitable for a student with special needs to participate in. The ultimate decision rests with the Principal and the Board of Management after consultation with the Tour Leader and relevant teachers.

### **Reporting back to Principal and Board of Management**

The Tour Leader of any overnight school tour must submit a summary report from the school tour to the Principal and the Board of Management outlining:

- The achievements of the tour.
- A financial statement.
- Any difficulties or problems which arose during the course of the tour.

The Leader of a day trip may submit a summary report from the school trip to the Principal if any difficulties or problems arose during the course of the trip.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Board of Management**

- To ensure that the policy is developed and evaluated from time to time.
- To approve the policy.
- To consider reports from the Principal on the implementation of the policy.

#### **Principal and Deputy Principal**

- To establish structures and procedures for the implementation of the policy.
- To monitor the implementation of the policy.

#### **Teachers/Organisers of the School Tour**

- To implement the policy and to provide feedback to management that may assist the review process.
- To instruct students and parents/guardians as to what is expected of them in relation to

preparing and participating in the tour.

- To keep accurate records of the above.

**Parents**

- To support the policy in all of its aspects.

**Students**

- To accept the policy and abide by the conditions.

**This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on:**

## **Section 5 Appendix**

### **Documents**

- DES Circular M20/04
- JMB Bulletin 08/2007

### **Day Trip/Educational Outing**

- Request for School Outing
- Day Trip Permission Form
- Transition Year Day Trip Permission Form
- Sporting Events and Matches Permission Form

### **Foreign/Overnight**

- Tour Authorisation Form
- Parental Consent Form
- Medical Consent Form/Emergency Contact Details
- Behavioural Contract

