

# School Tour Policy



**Coláiste Bríde,  
Enniscorthy,  
Co. Wexford.**

**Ratified by the Board of Management**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson,  
Board of Management**

**Review Date: 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary,  
Board of Management**

# MISSION STATEMENT

*“We are working to promote a secure and caring environment; Where Respect, Responsibility and Christian commitment grow, Drawing forth the positive of each individual”*

Coláiste Bríde is a Catholic School founded by the Mercy Order under the trusteeship of CEIST. It has a long tradition of academic excellence and is committed to the development of the whole student. It offers a curriculum designed to meet fully the needs of the student.

The school wishes to cater for the academic, spiritual, moral, aesthetic, interpersonal and physical needs of the student. The characteristics of the school are the pursuit of tolerance, compassion and a sense of justice and equality for all.

We aim to develop in each student, confidence, self-respect and respect for others.

The school and its staff value its partnership with parents in meeting the personal and educational requirements of students and staff alike.

**The core values of CEIST are:**

### ***Promoting Spiritual and Human Development***

We believe a knowledge of and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ gives meaning and purpose to our lives.

### ***Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning***

We are committed to excellence and to continually improving the quality of teaching and learning.

### ***Showing Respect for Every Person***

We respect the unique and intrinsic value of every person.

### ***Creating Community***

Our schools are faith communities of welcome and hospitality where Gospel values are lived and where there is special care for those most in need.

### ***Being Just and Responsible***

We seek to act justly and responsibly in all our relationships



## School Tour Policy

### Introduction

The Board of Management of Coláiste Bríde supports and facilitates a wide range of school tours, as a means of promoting the broad dimension of education and the holistic development of the student. Tours are organised with a view to enhancing the overall growth of the student – academically, socially, culturally, morally, physically, personally and to equip them with skills for life. School tours allow students’ learning to extend beyond the classroom and deepen and reinforce the curriculum & skills promoted in the various subject areas. Examples include language learning, historical research, cultural appreciation & physical development. This fosters the growth of the whole person in a broad and balanced way.

### Definition

In relation to this policy a School Tour is defined as, “Any group travel of students and teachers which involves at least one overnight stay or involves a visit outside the Republic of Ireland.”

### Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all students who participate in school tours in Coláiste Bríde. It applies also to all teachers, parents, members of the Senior Management Team and the Board of Management. The policy was developed in consultation with teachers, parents, the Students’ Council, the Senior Management Team and the Board of Management.

It should be read in conjunction with the DES *Circular M20/04* (See Appendix I); Coláiste Bríde – *Child Safeguarding Statement; Child Protection Procedures for Primary & Post – Primary Schools, 2017* Coláiste Bríde - *Dignity at Work Policy*; Coláiste Bríde - *Health and Safety Statement*; Coláiste Bríde - *Code of Positive Behaviour* & Coláiste Bríde – *Substance Misuse Policy* & Coláiste Bríde – *Anti-Bullying Policy*.

The following also apply to this policy;

- Children First Act, 2015
- The Education Act, 1998
- The Equality Act, 2004
- The Education Welfare Act, 2000
- The Equal Status Act, 2000
- The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004
- Teaching Council Code of Professional Conduct
- General Data Protection Regulation, 2018

## Rationale for Policy

Schools tours are a significant part of the educational experience provided in Coláiste Bríde. In light of this, it is necessary to have a policy, which addresses the following;

1. the aims of tours in the context of the school's ethos and educational philosophy
2. the broad procedures and protocols governing the safe and effective organisation of tours
3. how tours will be managed so as to maximise the educational benefits for students & to avoid any negative impact on students' learning
4. the roles and responsibilities of all partners to ensure positive outcomes from tours

## Aims of Tours

Tours in Coláiste Bríde have the following aims;

1. To strengthen and reinforce learning in the curriculum
2. To promote the self-esteem & confidence of students
3. To foster students' development in a broad and balanced way
4. To promote positive relationships in the school community and the interpersonal skills of students
5. To enrich students' lives

## Sanctioning of Tours

The Board of Management acknowledges the educational benefits of tours and supports the efforts and voluntary work of teachers who organise and participate in school tours. Board of Management approval is required for each school tour in any given year. Teachers who wish to organise school tours must first seek approval from Coláiste Bríde Board of Management, before informing parents or students and before requesting deposits.

Permission should be sought in writing and should include;

- A general outline of the tour, exact location(s) & educational benefits
- Itinerary
- Proposed travel dates
- Accommodation arrangements
- Means of transportation during the tour
- Tour Company details
- Names of teachers who will participate in the tour\*\*
- Number of students & year group(s) of students
- Details of Travel Insurance
- Total tour price & breakdown of price per student
- Payment arrangements
- Name of Tour Leader

A template for noting all of the above details is attached to this policy (Appendix II). This template should be completed and submitted to the BOM along with the proposal letter for a school tour.

\*\* As Coláiste Bríde is an all-girls school at least one female teacher should be present on all school tours.

The BOM will consider each tour on its own merits and with regard to its educational benefits and also take the following factors into account;

1. The guidelines & criteria in Circular M20/04.
2. Safety on the Tour for Students
3. The ability of the school to sustain the number of possible tours in any year given the many other activities and extra-curricular activities in Coláiste Bríde.
4. The impact on teaching and learning within the year group

Following approval from the Board of Management, teachers may advise parents and students of details relating to particular tours & request and accept deposits.

## Booking Tours

Any teacher wishing to organise a school tour abroad must do so using a licensed Tour Operator or Travel Agent to arrange the travel package including accommodation and other services. All money should be paid directly to the Tour Operator. Compliance ensures that the event is covered by the relevant bond held by the tour operator or travel agent with the Commission for Aviation Regulation as part of the annual licensing requirement, if for any reason the license holder ceases to trade. It is imperative that the Tour Operator or Travel Agent chosen to arrange the overseas trip holds a current license. The full list of all current license holders is available on [www.aviationreg.ie](http://www.aviationreg.ie).

## Accommodation, Facilities, Services

In so far as possible, Tour Leaders should take steps to determine the suitability of the location and adequacy of services and facilities that will be available to students & teachers participating in the tour. Accommodation, facilities and services should be clean, safe, fit for purpose and well managed.

## Senior Management Team

A member of the Senior Management Team will meet with students participating in school tours, prior to their departure date. The purpose of the meeting is to encourage students to focus on the educational dimension of the tour, to be mindful of personal safety, to cooperate fully with teachers and to adhere to the *Code of Positive Behaviour* and *Substance Misuse Policy*.

## Engaging with Parents

Following Board of Management approval for a tour, an initial letter will be given to parents & students which provides them with accurate and detailed information on the school tour. It should include the following;

1. The purpose of the tour
2. Year Groups involved

3. Location & accommodation
  4. Duration & proposed dates
  5. Educational benefits and any links to the curriculum
  6. A draft itinerary
  7. A deadline for registering to participate in the tour
  8. The estimated cost (dependent on uptake), the deposit (non-refundable) and the method of payment
  9. A proposed budget for spending money/additional costs students will incur (lunch etc)
  10. Request for students' name on passport (& implications of name change on passport)
  11. Passport & visa requirements if necessary
  12. Other preliminary information as necessary
  13. Safeguarding
- (A) The Tour Leader will inform parents in writing at an early stage that they have the responsibility for ensuring that all documentation necessary for travel is correct and in date. This includes passports and visas that may be necessary for some students to travel in the EU. All passports must be valid for three months after the end date of the tour.
- (B) A meeting of parents of students participating in overnight tours abroad will be held in the school in advance of the departure date. This is an opportunity for parents to acquire further information on details such as (but not limited to) the following; room arrangements, contact addresses, phone number for emergencies etc.
- (C) At the meeting with parents, teachers will outline their expectations of students in terms of mutual respect and responsibility as well as cooperation with supervision procedures to ensure safety and care for all. Teachers will provide parents with necessary documentation including consent forms for all activities and sufficient information to enable parents to give informed consent.
- (D) Parents are expected to provide in writing any necessary health/medical information concerning their daughter to teachers and to give consent for any medical advice to be followed. For students taking prescribed medication, it is the responsibility of parents to ensure their child has adequate supplies of this medication with them on tour. Parents will also inform teachers of students' dietary requirements/food allergies. Prior to

departure teachers participating in the tour will meet to discuss the health/medical needs of students and the procedures they will follow during the tour.

## Behaviour & Cooperation of Students

In advance of the tour teachers will advise students of their expectations with regard to mutual respect, safety, rules and cooperation on the tour. Students are expected to cooperate fully with teachers who are supervising them, follow teachers' instructions & abide by the rules and agreed procedures, as outlined to them by teachers.

Our *Code of Positive Behaviour; Substance Misuse Policy; Anti Bullying Policy; Suspension & Expulsion Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement; Child Protection Procedures for Primary & Post Primary Schools, 2017* apply to all students while engaging in school related activities both during school hours and outside of school hours. This includes while on school tours. Students must abide by the law of the country they are visiting. Serious breaches of the *Code of Positive Behaviour* that occur during the tour will be reported to the Principal and parents of the student(s) without delay.

## Student Return Home

A situation may arise during the tour, whereby a student may be required to return home before the end of the tour. Reasons could include a medical issue, serious behavioural problems or a sudden emergency at home. In such a situation the Tour Leader will contact the students' parents and Principal and arrangements will be made. Parents will be required to pay the costs arising from sending a student home early for a serious behavioural problem.

## Tour Leader & Accompanying Teachers

One teacher will be the Tour Leader.

The Tour Leader will provide the Principal with a hard copy of the following information before departure;

1. The full names & year group/classes of all students participating in the tour
2. The itinerary – dates, schedules, times
3. Details of accommodation – contact phone number and address(es)
4. Emergency telephone numbers – all teachers on tour, Tour Leader, Travel Agent/Tour Operator



## 5. Contact details of teachers on tour

Teachers will advise the Principal and students' parents of any problems, accidents, illness or incidents which occur on the tour, as soon as possible. Teachers should have with them;

1. A list of all students on tour on school headed paper, in the event of security checks. (Parents will be required to sign this list)
2. Contact details for the parent(s) of all students on the tour.
3. Photocopies of students' passports (Parental permission will be sought)

Following the tour, the Tour Leader will brief the Principal on the success of the tour, any problems which arose and make recommendations for changes to the tour or policy, if required.

Teachers will follow The Teaching Council *Code of Professional Conduct* while on tour.

## Supervision & Child Protection

Adequate supervision of students while on tour is essential. There should be no less than three teachers on each school tour abroad. Teachers will put in place adequate and appropriate procedures for the supervision & care of students at all times during the tour & advise students and parents of these procedures. Such procedures include protocols for the following;

- Supervising students' safety in overnight accommodation & supervision of bedrooms
- Supervision arrangements for visits to open locations where students may have free time e.g. theme parks, shopping centres, national parks, town centres
- A procedure for gathering students quickly in busy areas, crowds, or from a distance
- Supervision arrangements for an individual who may become ill while on tour
- Coláiste Bríde *Child Safeguarding Statement* applies during tours.

## Dealing with Emergencies

All students should have their European Health Insurance Card (E111) with them while travelling in the EU.

In the event of an accident, injury, assault or illness, to a student or teacher medical advice from a qualified doctor or in a hospital will be sought and followed. The Principal and

parents of the student or in the case of teacher their nominated family member/nominated person, will be informed as soon as possible. The student/teacher concerned will be reassured that their wellbeing will be looked after. All steps will be taken to provide proper care for the student or teacher.

In the event of a critical incident, such as an assault, criminal incident, missing person or death on tour the supports of suitable personnel and agencies in the country should be sought as appropriate. These may include Police, Dept. of Foreign Affairs, Irish Embassy & Consulate, local hospital or medical centre. In the immediacy of the situation, the teachers will work together to identify appropriate and essential steps to take to deal with the incident and the health & safety implications for all concerned.

In addition, the support and advice of the Principal and the Board of Management will be provided. The safety, health and wellbeing of students and teachers should be prioritised above other considerations.

An accident, illness, injury or critical incident that occurs during the tour will be reported to the Principal and parents (in the case of teachers their next of kin or nominated person) without delay.

## Insurance & Cancellation Policy

Teachers who book tours will ensure that it includes travel insurance and will acquire a copy of the Tour Operator's Travel Insurance Details and make it available to parents on request.

Parents will be advised of the cancellation policy applying to the particular tour in the initial letter outlining details of the tour, which is provided to parents prior to acceptance of deposits.

## General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

In keeping with our school's GDPR principles, all information deemed necessary for the health, safety and wellbeing of tour participants will be processed fairly and only kept for the specified duration of the tour. This data will be kept safely and securely and will not be retained for any longer than is necessary for the purposes it was collected.

## Amendments

The Board of Management of Coláiste Bríde is committed to playing an active role in the implementation of this policy and undertakes to review and revise it, considering changes to legislation, experience and other relevant developments.

## Ratification of Policy

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

## Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years. The date of next review November 2022.

## Appendix I



**Circular  
Letter M 20 /04**

### **To the Management Authorities of all Post Primary Schools**

#### **Educational Tours by School Groups (both inside and outside the State)**

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. Where a Board of Management is satisfied that a school tour meets the above criteria, such a tour may be undertaken **without seeking prior approval from the Department**. However, the template attached as appendix 1 should be completed by the Principal in the planning of a school tour and should be retained in the school for examination by a Departmental Inspector in the course of normal school inspection.

Authorisation to grant approval for educational tours by school groups both inside and outside the State is hereby devolved to the school board of management subject to the following criteria ...

- School tours should be an extension and reinforcement of classroom activities and should be designed to include the maximum number of pupils in a class. The tour should, accordingly, enhance the learning process of as many pupils as possible by providing educational experiences which the classroom alone cannot provide.
- Tours should be planned, in consultation with parents, well in advance of tour dates and preferably before the start of the school year. The full cost of the tour should be communicated to parents at the planning stage. This will have the added advantage of facilitating financial preparation with a view to allowing maximum pupil participation. Every effort should be made to ensure that the cost involved does not prevent any pupil or group of pupils from participating in the tour.

- By international standards, the school year in Ireland has long holiday periods. Educational tours of more than one days duration should be arranged to coincide with normal school holiday periods.
- Schools should ensure that adequate insurance cover is in place and that written parental approval is obtained for each pupil to take part in the tour. Such written approval must not seek to devolve any liability to the parent for any aspect of the tour. (Boards of Management of Comprehensive and Community schools should refer to appendix 2 of this circular regarding State Indemnity cover for out-of-school educational activities)
- The Board of Management must ensure that pupils who are not participating in the tour (including pupils from other classes who will be affected by their subject teachers' absence) are adequately catered for while their teachers are away on the tour. Appropriate arrangements should be made for the conduct of those teachers' classes in their absence in accordance with Circular PPT 01/03. Schools should on all occasions take into account the effect that the absence of accompanying teachers will have on the normal work in the school and numbers absent should be kept to the minimum level required.

Where school tours impinge upon the standard school year, the following guidelines are put forward as to the type of educational visit envisaged by the Department as acceptable for the purposes of regarding absence on such visits as school days:

- a) Educational visit involving an exchange of groups of students with another school.
- b) Educational visit involving attendance at a course of instruction.
- c) Educational visit involving active participation in a music or drama festival.
- d) Educational visit to a conference or exhibition of clear educational value (e.g. Young Scientist Exhibition, Higher Options Conference or Exhibition on Careers and Guidance Counselling)
- e) An educational visit should be appropriate to the age group/grade concerned (e.g. The Higher Options Conference would be more appropriate for senior cycle students than for junior cycle students)
- f) Educational visits (inside or outside the State) involving significant linguistic or cultural benefit to the maximum number of pupils.

This list is given by way of example and is not intended to be exhaustive.

This circular supersedes and replaces Circulars M87/78, M62/83, 12/79 and Circular Letter to the Boards of Comprehensive and Community schools entitled "Out of School Educational Activities within the State" and dated 19 February 1987.

Mathew Ryan

Principal Officer

## Appendix II

### Coláiste Bríde Enniscorthy



#### School Tour

#### Details of Proposed Tour

(To be submitted to the BOM)

<b>Name of Tour Leader</b>	
<b>Outline of Tour</b>	<b>Exact Location;</b>
	<b>General Purpose of Tour;</b>
	<b>Educational Benefits;</b>
<b>Itinerary</b>	
<b>Proposed Travel Dates</b>	
<b>Number of School Days Impacted</b>	

<b>Means of Transportation</b>	<b>To location;</b>
	<b>During tour;</b>
<b>Tour Company Details</b>	
<b>Names of Teachers*</b> (*At least 1 teacher should be female)	
<b>Name of Tour Leader</b>	
<b>Number of Students</b>	
<b>Year Group of Students &amp; Number going per Year</b>	
<b>Details of Travel Insurance</b>	
<b>Total Cost of Tour</b>	
<b>Total Cost per Student</b>	
<b>Accommodation Arrangements</b>	
<b>Payment Arrangements</b>	