

Educational Outings and Out of School Trips Policy

Scope of this policy

This policy applies to any member of staff of St. Louis Community School who take students off site. It is applicable to the students participating in the particular activity and also to their parents/guardians. The code of behaviour of St. Louis Community School applies to all students in the school and also applies to all school activities during and outside normal school hours whether or not this involves an overnight stay. It applies both on and off the school grounds and anywhere where students are clearly identifiable as students of our school.

Outings and Trips

- Before a student is allowed to go on an out of school trip, his or her previous behaviour may be taken into consideration.
- Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of all trips and both parents and students will be requested to sign the appropriate consent form. In this way parents/students and their teachers enter into a partnership which promotes good and appropriate behaviour at all times.
- In relation to sports team representing the School, consent to travel to games will be requested at the beginning of the academic year and will subsequently cover all games for that academic year.

Rationale for school trips/outings

- St. Louis Community School strives to provide a high standard of education for all its students and is committed in education in the broadest sense of the word for all students. In addition to providing an academic education the School aims to expose the students to a variety of experiences and cultures as part of its holistic education.
- The curriculum content of some subjects may require studies/trips/outings/recreational activities which have to take place off the school grounds.
- Trips and outings provide teachers with an opportunity to get to know their students in a non-classroom environment. Such activities play a vital part in promoting teacher pupil relationships.

- The school should provide a balanced programme of trips and outings in any academic year that does not over burden parents financially and that also minimises the loss of class contact for students and teachers. Educational outings and trips must be consistent as specified by circular letter M20/04 from the Department of Education and Skills. All reasonable efforts will be made to satisfy all of the criteria contained in this circular.
- To assist staff in planning trips and outings so that they are aware of the necessary precautions that must be observed in order to provide for the health and safety of staff and students. It also ensures that trips and outings take place efficiently and run smoothly and that the standard of supervision is firmly within guidelines and standards.
- To clarify expectations of behaviour for all trips and to highlight the conditions whereby a student may be refused permission to be included on a trip/outing.

Objectives

- That the health, safety and welfare of our students is safeguarded by ensuring that reasonable care has been taken in relation to the nature of the trip chosen, the level of supervision provided, the venue, the means of transportation, the demands on the physical capabilities of the students having due regard for their age and the dangers to which they may be exposed.
- That students gain maximum educational benefit and enjoyment from all trips/outings.
- That supervising teachers understand that the degree of care required of them is that of a careful parent and that they understand that this would vary with the circumstances and the age of the student.

Day Trips within Ireland and Northern Ireland

- Day trips may take place during the school day or may extend beyond normal school hours.
- Day trips must have the approval of the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Members of staff who wish to take students on a day trip must put their request in writing to the Principal by completing the trip proposal form.
- At least one weeks notice must be given. Included in the proposal should be the educational or other benefits which will derive from trip. Specific parental permission is required for a day trip that;

Is expected to extend beyond normal school hours

Includes an activity which requires supervision by trained professionals e.g. Ice skating, outdoor education etc.

- Students who have a history of inappropriate behaviour may be excluded from day trips
- Once the Principal has approved a trip the organiser should forward brief details of the trip to the parent
- Inform the Deputy Principal and office staff for inclusion in the schools diary of events
- Place a list of students participating in the trip on the staff noticeboard

- On all day trips there must be an appropriate ratio between the number of students and members of staff travelling. This ratio will vary depending on the nature of the trip and the age of the students travelling. Students in 1st year require most supervision.
- On private coaches there should be at least two members of staff in addition to the driver.
- Day trips may involve a financial contribution by each student to subsidise the cost of transportation.

- The school will be provided with mobile contact numbers of the coach company and of the staff involved in case of delays, emergencies or any other occurrences.
- On occasion it may be suitable for senior students to travel independently to and or from an event in such circumstances the parents must confirm this in writing prior to the event.
- For trips that extent beyond normal school hours it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure that their son/daughter arrives on time for departure and that their son/daughter is collected upon return.
- A member of staff should only travel alone with a student when parental permission has been obtained.
- An accident/incident report form must be completed for all accidents or incidents that occur on a school trip or outing.

Overnight trips inside or outside the Republic of Ireland

- Staff members who wish to take students on an overnight trip must submit a request to the Principal.
- If the Principal approves the trip, approval must then be sought using the standard form.
- The number of students travelling may vary depending on the nature of the trip and the teacher pupil ratio as recommended by the travel agency.

- Staff in charge reserves the right to refuse any student they deem unsuitable for the trip. Generally speaking these would include students who have a poor discipline record and/or students who have previously misbehaved on trips.
- A letter is sent to parents containing a draft itinerary, the deadline for payments, details with regard to non refundable deposits, emergency contact numbers and measures to be taken in the event that any student misbehaves and has to be returned home early.
- Parents should be advised that the organiser reserves the right to make minor changes to the itinerary.
- If a passport is required it must be valid for at least six months following the trip.
- Students must have their E111 form or European Health Insurance Card when travelling to countries within the European Union.
- Students have an obligation to attend any information briefings and co-operate fully with any requests pertaining to a trip.
- Phone details of at least two contact numbers in addition to the students personal number must be furnished to the tour leader prior to departure. Parents will also be given contact details of the tour organiser in the event that they wish to make contact while on the trip.
- Students travelling will be given a contact number for the tour leader in the event that they get displaced from their friends and/or supervising teachers. This number should be carried with them at all times while on the trip.
- The trip organiser will also have the contact numbers for the Principal and Deputy Principal in the event of any emergency.
- If necessary 2 members of staff will conduct inspections of students rooms, bags, suitcases etc. This will only be done for good reason and based on reasonable grounds such as concern for physical safety, suspected possession or use of a banned substance, or other such concerns. Should such a search be deemed necessary the student himself/herself will be asked to empty their bags, pockets etc.
- If a student is found to seriously breach the schools Code of Behaviour then the school Principal will be contacted immediately.
- An Accident/Incident report must be completed for all accidents or incidents that occur while on a foreign trip. Examples that demand the completion of an incident report include persistent lateness at the rendezvous point, rudeness to teachers and/or others, not staying with the group, failure to comply with teacher's instructions, smoking and or consuming alcohol or other illegal substances, breaches of school rules etc.

It is important for parents to realise that the onus is on them to ensure that students understand what is required of them before departing and while on a foreign trip. Students must understand what is required of them and come equipped with their passport if required, the specified clothing, medication if applicable, contact details, departure and arrival times, details of their accommodation, appropriate spending money, contact number for the tour leader etc. It is essential that parents talk to their children with regard to the behaviour expected of them while abroad and also in relation to the procedures to be implemented in the event that a student has to be sent home early due to their misbehaviour.

General Guidelines for the PE Programme

- Each coach travelling to a match will be equipped with a properly equipped first aid kit.
- Minor accidents will be treated where they occur. In the case of a more serious accident professional medical attention will be sent for i.e. Doctor/Ambulance.
- Any accident deemed to be of a serious nature is recorded on an accident report form. A copy of this form is submitted to the school Principal upon return to school.
- The PE teacher will organise transport to and from all matches using a recognised bus company.
- When an away match is organised during school hours the number of staff travelling will be dependant upon the staffing requirements of standard school activities. Generally one teacher will travel with a team. The needs of the students in school must take priority when organising such matches.

Policy Monitoring and Review.

As part of the Development Planning process of St. Louis Community School, this policy will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure legal compliance and the maintenance of best practice.

Reviewed and Adopted at Board of Management meeting on 9th Feb 2016