



Mercy Secondary School, Inchicore Policy on School Tours

This policy applies to all members of the teaching staff taking students from the school premises and is applicable to students participating in such activities.

The Code of Behaviour of Mercy Secondary School applies to all students when engaging in activities organised by the school both during and outside of normal school hours and applies anywhere that students are identified as students of the school/representing the school.

The organisation of school tours and activities out of the classroom is an integral part of a holistic education. Such activities are seen as an extension and reinforcement of classroom activities and serve to significantly enrich both the academic curriculum as taught in the school and the social and personal development of those students participating in them.

The Department of Education and Science (Circular Letter M 20/04) has devolved to the Board of Management the authorisation to grant approval for educational tours by school groups both inside and outside the State subject to certain criteria. Permission for such tours is a matter for the Board of Management, subject to the recommendation of the Principal. In granting approval, consideration will be given to:

- Conformity with the criteria in Circular Letter M20/04. Please see Appendix (1).
- 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.
- Financial implications for the school, students and family.

Where permission is granted by the Board of Management for tours outside of the State, the template (Appendix 2) should be completed and retained by the Principal for examination by a Department Inspector in the course of a normal school inspection.

Day Tours/Activities with Ireland

Day Tours may take place during the school day or may extend beyond normal school hours.

Staff wishing to take groups on a tour must complete the tour proposal form (Appendix 3) in the School Tour Policy located in the electronic folder in google apps. and forward it to the Principal at least two weeks, where possible, before the proposed date.

When approval has been given, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should be informed, in writing, of the details of the tour/activity and must sign a consent slip which will be retained by the organiser. In Transition Year, parents have signed a general permission slip in September for routine outings for such subjects as Sports/Environment Education/Tourism.

A Notice giving preliminary details of the tour should be placed by the organiser on the Notice Board in the Staff Room. A form for this purpose is available in the School Tour Policy in the google apps folder (Appendix 4). The organising teacher should write the tour/trip into the school electronic diary and identify teachers involved. The Organiser should check with the Year Head/Tutor for any medical issues concerning the participants.

The student/teacher ratio may be expected to vary depending on the age and maturity of the students involved, the length of the tour/activity and the activity to be engaged in.

The school will always have the mobile phone number of The staff involved in case of emergencies.

It may be necessary for Senior Cycle students to travel Independently to and from events. Parents will be advised by the organising teacher in advance. Junior Cycle students may never travel independently.

On occasion, staff may drive students to/from an event, but should never travel alone with a student. The teachers insurance must be of acceptable cover to do this (e.g. teacher union insurance covers such a journey while other insurance does not cover it as it is seen for personal use not work use). Otherwise they may not drive a student.

On completion of the tour, a participant should be encouraged to write a short account for social media and the website.

An Accident Report form must be completed for any accidents which occur. Such report forms are available in the Staff Room and should be returned to the Office on completion.

Students who have a history of inappropriate behaviour may be excluded from such tours.

Tours Outside of Ireland

- 5.1** Staff wishing to take students on a tour abroad must complete the Tour Proposal Form available in the Staff Room and forward it to the Principal. The request must be received before the end of May in any school year.
- 5.2** A tour overseas must be organised through a bonded Travel agency.
- 5.3** The number of students participating may vary depending on the nature of the tour and the staff/student ratio recommended by the Travel Agency.
- 5.4** If a tour is oversubscribed, priority is given to students who are studying the appropriate subject.
- 5.5** Students who have a history of indiscipline may be excluded from tours.
- 5.6** The initial letter to parents should contain a draft itinerary and a deadline for registering and payment of a non refundable deposit. All monies collected will be receipted. Money collected will be lodged in a general school account by the school.

- 5.7** The organiser will factor into the budget an extra amount to cover the extras not accounted for in the basic cost. Surplus funds will be credited to the relevant school account.
- 5.8** Parents will be advised of deadlines for the payment of the remainder of the tour fee. It is important that these deadlines are met.
- 5.9** Parents are requested to sign a consent form (See Appendix 5) and a Medical History Form (See Appendix 6)
- 5.10** Details of accommodation, travel arrangements, personal items that the student need bring and guidelines for spending money will be sent to parents.
- 5.11** The tour organiser reserves the right to alter the itinerary if necessary.
- 5.12** Where a tour involves a Sunday, every effort should be made for the group to attend Mass.
- 5.13** All passports must be valid/within date for the duration of the trip
- 5.14** Parents should be informed that students with non-EU passports may need visas for EU countries.
- 5.15** Students must have their European Health Insurance Card for travel to countries in the EU.
- 5.16** Parents have the responsibility to ensure that all documentation is correct.

- 5.17** Each teacher should have responsibility for a group of students. The teacher should have a list of the mobile 'phone numbers of the group and students should have the school phone number in their contacts.
- 5.18** If a student(s) is/are found in serious breach of the Code of Behaviour, the Principal should be contacted immediately.
- 5.19** On completion of the tour, a participant should be encouraged to write an account for the newsletter.
- 5.20** An Accident Report form must be completed for any accidents that occur. Such forms are available in the Staff Room and should be returned to the Staff Room on completion.
- 5.21** A financial statement should be furnished to the Principal within two weeks of the completion of the tour.

6. Contact Information

- 6.1** The organiser will have the phone numbers of the Principal and Deputy Principal.
- 6.2** The following information will be forwarded to the Principal prior to departure:
- A list of all students and staff participating
 - The itinerary to be followed with contact details of Hotels.
 - The emergency telephone number of the Tour Agent.

- The mobile numbers of staff on tour.

7. Professional Responsibilities of the Staff

Staff must exercise an appropriate duty of care to all Students. Our Child Protection Guidelines are central to this approach.

8. Review and Evaluation of the Policy

The policy will be reviewed after three years and amendments will be proposed to the Board, if necessary.

Adopted by the Board:.....

Signed:.....Chairperson

Please leave one copy on the Notice Board in the Staff Room and a copy in the office for the rolls.

APPENDIX 1

<p>The Criteria for School Tours: Circular Letter M20.04</p>

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 day's duration should be arranged to coincide with normal school holiday periods if possible but with due regard to finance also.

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.

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 PPT01/03. 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.

APPENDIX 2

DETAILS OF SCHOOL TOUR

Name of School	Address	Roll No.
Mercy Secondary School	Inchicore, Dublin 8	60872A
	Tour Dates	
From	To	No. of School Days

Brief Outline of Tour

No. of Students Participating	Total No. of Students in relevant grade

If some students are not participating, outline the reason why:

Expected benefit to accrue from the tour:

Adults accompanying the students

Class Teacher	Number of other Teachers	Number of other Adults

Confirmations

That appropriate arrangements are made in accordance with Circular PPT 01/03 for those classes whose teachers are absent with the tour.	
That adequate insurance is in place to cover all risks while on tour.	
That parental permission has been secured for each student who is to participate on the tour.	

Signature of Principal: Date:
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APPENDIX 3

SCHOOL TOUR/ACTIVITY PROPOSAL FORM

Date:	
Time:	
Class(es):	
No. of Students:	
Name(s) of teachers involved	
Destination	
Subject Area:	
How does the tour/activity link with the aims /objectives of the syllabus?	

Please forward to the Principal, two weeks (where possible), before the proposed date.

Approved

Not Approved

Signed: _____ (Principal)

Date: _____

APPENDIX 4

SCHOOL TOUR – NOTIFICATION TO GENERAL STAFF

Dates:	
Class(es):	
No. of Students:	
Name(s) of teachers involved	
Destination	

Names of Students: See List Attached

Please leave one copy on the Notice Board in the Staff Room and a copy in the office for the rolls.

SCHOOL TRIP STUDENT CONTRACT

Please complete the details below and return your signed contract to the Trip Organiser:-

Student Name:		Class:
Date of Birth:		
Location of Trip:		
Organising Teacher:		

Agreement:

- v I agree to participate in and to make a commitment to the entire Mercy Secondary School, Inchicore School trip.

- v I have read the document, supplied by the leaders of the trip, listing the rules regarding the trip and agree to all of the rules included in that list.

- v I accept that any failure on my part to behave responsibly at all times to the teachers/ supervisors/instructors/tour guides, may lead to appropriate sanctions.

- v I am also aware that a possible sanction for what is deemed unacceptable behaviour could result in my being sent home from the trip after my parents/guardians have been informed. The extra costs in such an event will be charged to my parent/guardian.

- v I understand that failure to behave appropriately may have a bearing on my selection for future trips/school activities.

Student Signature:	
Date:	

[Please return this completed form to the Trip Organiser]

RULES FOR MERCY SECONDARY SCHOOL OVERNIGHT TRIPS/TOUR

The purpose of the rules set out below is to ensure that the enjoyment of the trip is not hindered for any student or teacher.

RULES

1. All school rules, and in particular the Policy on Alcohol and Drugs, apply.
2. Being in the possession of or consumption of alcohol or any other behaviour altering substances in any form will be considered a serious violation of the rules and immediate action will follow.
3. The excessive consumption of behaviour affecting drinks such as red bull, espresso coffees or other drinks with enhanced caffeine is prohibited.
4. Smoking is prohibited as under the school rules.
5. Students are expected to attend all set meals unless permission given by teachers.
6. Students are to remain with the group during the day and evening unless authorised by the teachers.
7. Hotel rooms/apartments are to be kept clean and tidy at all times. Failure to do so may result in sanctions.
8. Students are expected to comply with set bedtimes and lights out times.
9. Students are expected to treat teachers/supervisors/instructors/tour guides/coach drivers with respect at all times.
10. Teachers reserve the right to search students' bags/rooms at any time if they suspect contraband is present.
11. All students are expected to turn up on time for all roll calls.
12. Foul language is not acceptable from any student on the trip at any time.
13. FREE TIME – during trips it is common for students to be given some 'free time'. During such time students should always travel in groups (minimum of 3). Under no circumstance should any student walk on their own. During this time students are expected to treat their surroundings with the utmost respect and are also expected to adhere to all the school rules applicable above.

Sanctions

Failure to comply with the rules of the trip will lead to sanctions which will be decided by the teachers/supervisors on the trip. Sanctions might include fines, loss of pass for certain activities, etc. More serious breaches of rules will result in phone calls to parents/guardians with possible follow up action in the school after the trip. Where necessary, disciplinary meetings will be convened by the accompanying staff. In the event of very serious and uncontrollable incidents students may be required to return home. The costs in such an event will be charged to the parents/guardians. This will be done after full communication with the parents/guardians.

The teachers accompanying the group reserve the right to amend any rule during the trip as necessary. Clear notice will be given of any such changes to the students.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Any student taking part on a trip should try their best to adhere to the following advice while on the trip:

- Try to find out as much as you can about your destination before you go.
- Do your best to help fellow students and teachers at all times.
- Do your best to ensure that all students are included in group activities at all times
- During foreign trips, try to speak the language of your host country if known.
- Refrain from using bad language at all times on the trip
- Do your best to be considerate of others at all times.

During the trip, students may be given necessary and reasonable instructions about matters like dress, punctuality, behaviour etc. Prompt and good natured compliance is essential for the benefit of all, and the smooth running of the trip.

Medical History Information

The information provided will be treated as confidential by all staff.

If you have any queries please feel free to contact us.

Name of Student:	
Home Address	
Nationality:	
Date of Birth:	
Home Tel:	
Parent Name & Mobile Tel:	
Second Contact Name & Tel:	

Does your daughter suffer from any of the following? Please tick where appropriate:

Illness	YES	NO
Allergies		
Eczema		
Bronchial Asthma		
Congenital Heart Disease		
Diabetes Mellitus		
Epilepsy/Seizures		
Gastric Problems		
Frequent Headaches		
Hearing Problems		
Vision Problems/Glasses		
Other Illnesses YES/NO	Please specify:	

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Consent in case of emergency treatment

----- will have a current European Health Insurance Card with them
when travelling.

I consent to my son/daughter being taken to a doctor/hospital in the event of a medical emergency.

Name of Parent (please print in BLOCK CAPITALS): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____