



School Trips Policy

1. Scope of the School Trips Policy

- a) The term 'school trip' covers all expeditions off the school premises. This policy is applicable to all members of staff who organise such trips and to the students and their parents/guardians who are participating in these activities.
- b) The Code of Behaviour of Ballymakenny College applies to all students of Ballymakenny College School, and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours. It applies both on and off the school grounds. The Code of Behaviour, therefore, in all its detail applies to all outings and trips, whether or not they involve an overnight stay.
- c) This policy has been developed in collaboration with staff, students, and parents.

2. Rationale for School Trips and relevant Policy

- a) Ballymakenny College School, recognises that exposure to a variety of experiences and cultures is part of a holistic education.
- b) The curriculum content of some subjects requires field studies/trips/recreational activities, which take place off school grounds.
- c) Trips assist in bonding between students, as well as providing teachers with an opportunity to get to know students in a non-school environment.
- d) There should be a balanced programme of outings and trips for the school year that does not prove too costly to parents and does not overburden the school timetable.
- e) The school when organising school trips will endeavour to satisfy all the criteria as specified by the DES in Circular Letter M20/04 [Educational Tours by School Groups (both inside and outside the State)]. See www.education.ie

- f) This policy will assist staff in ensuring that proper standards of financial management and health & safety are implemented on all school trips. (See section 7.2 for the former and section 4 for the latter).
- g) There is a need to clarify expectations of behaviour for all trips and to outline the conditions whereby a student may be refused permission to be included on a trip.

The Principal reserves the right to refuse any student he/she deem unsuitable for the trip, specifically taking note of behaviour, attendance and punctuality. Those considered unsuitable would include:

- Students who in the informed opinion of the Principal, have proved unruly or undisciplined on previous trips and
- Students who in the informed opinion of the Principal have a poor discipline, punctuality and attendance record.

3. Procedures to be followed by all Staff Organising School Trips

School trips have considerable educational value. However, they must be planned , coordinated and organised in a way that causes the least disruption to the day-to-day school routine.

Any teacher planning to organise a day trip or any nonsporting outing during class time must:

- a) First inform the Principal and/or Deputy Principal of the intended date, at least two weeks where possible in advance of the proposed date. The trip must be approved by the Principal/Deputy Principal.

The following details should be provided with every request:

- Location of trip/tour
- The educational purpose of the trip
- Timeframe
- Who the trip is intended for, i.e. students, teachers, and/or other parties.

Note: If any non- staff members of Ballymakenny College are participating in the school trip, parents and staff should be notified. Non – staff members as with all members of the school community will need to comply with all Garda vetting requirements.

- b) As a courtesy to colleagues, full details, including date, time and names of participating students must be sent by email to all staff by the organising teacher at

their earliest convenience. Any changes to this list will need to be communicated to staff in advance of the proposed trip.

- c) Sporting activities that are scheduled during class times must be agreed with the Principal/Deputy Principal and details of the students involved sent by email to all staff by the organising teacher in advance of the event.
- d) Students who have a history of inappropriate behaviour or a series of demerits may be excluded from day/sports trips. This will be at the discretion of the House Leader/Deputy Principal/Principal.
- e) Students with Special Educational Needs i.e.: Dyspraxia, Autism etc. need additional consideration on all trips and if necessary the organising teacher should liaise with the Learning Support Department to identify these specific needs.
- f) On all trips, the question of the degree of supervision required in each case would be a matter for reasonable consideration and determination by the Board having regard to all the surrounding circumstances such as the nature of the trip and the age of the students travelling.
- g) The school will endeavour to send a minimum of two teachers on all trips including sporting events.
- h) All students of Ballymakenny College going on any trip during normal class hours **must** have permission notes signed by parents/guardians to the teacher-in-charge, before the outing takes place. Students who have not returned permission forms or have not had their school journals signed **may not** participate in the trip.
- i) The school office is a cash free zone. All payments for trips must be done via the relevant payment portal. Receipts of payment are issued electronically. Staff are asked to ensure costings cover the entire cost of the proposed trip.
- j) For trips that extend beyond normal school hours, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that arrangements are in place for their son's/daughter's journey to/from the school.
- k) An accident report form must be completed for all accidents or incidents which may have occurred on the trip ([Accident report form](#))
- l) In the event of a critical incident on a school trip or when abroad, all participating staff should be familiar with and consult the school's Critical Incident Policy.
- m) The school will insist that transportation suppliers hired by the school accept certain conditions of hiring. Such conditions will include:

- that the vehicle supplied must be suitable and well maintained, with the teacher having the right to refuse any vehicle that they deem unsuitable for the outing in favour of a more suitable replacement vehicle or a refund.
 - that the driver is responsible for the safety of the students while travelling, but teachers have the right to intervene in cases where they feel that a student's safety is being compromised.
- n) There is an expectation that all staff participating in school trips, whether at home or abroad behave appropriately in accordance with the Teachers Code of Professional Conduct.

4. Health & Safety

For any school, the well-being of the students in its care is a top priority.

Out-of school activities create unique situations in which the health and safety issues that are part of the everyday education process take on added significance due to such factors as location and the type of activity in question.

It is clear that bumps, bruises and even injuries are inevitable in some physical activities. It should be noted that approaches to health and safety are not intended to “*wrap students in cotton wool*” but rather to minimise the risks of serious harm befalling a student.

The following necessary procedures must be adhered to and understood for school tours to run effectively, with safety in mind and to maximise the experience for everyone involved.

- a) Parents/guardians will be asked to complete a medical screening form (Appendix 1) in the case of overnight stays;
- b) Students who are deemed a flight risk or who are not capable of independent living and may not have access to the required resources may be inhibited from participating in school trips - this will be dealt with by the school on a case-by-case basis;
- c) Any student who is allocated a Special Needs Assistant will, where possible, be accompanied by that assistant or by a member of the student's family if they are leaving the school premises for an outside activity. The School will ensure that family members are Garda vetted in line with Child Protection Guidelines through the ACCS;

- d) Basic First Aid boxes will be available to deal with minor injuries at all games involving the school;
- e) Teachers taking students out of school will have a reliable mobile phone. A school mobile phone will be available from the school secretary.
- f) There will be closer supervision of students who are known to be at a higher health risk (i.e. asthmatics or epileptics), for example by providing additional teachers (where possible) and assigning to the students in question;
- g) Before booking any outside location such as an Adventure Centre the school authorities may request the companies insurance certificate to check the adequacy of the services they are providing;
- h) If a student is injured on a trip, a teacher will accompany the student to a medical facility. The principal and the parents/guardian will be notified ASAP;
- i) Details of any accidents/injuries will be uploaded via the Accident Report log. ([Accident report form](#))
- j) In the event of a critical incident on a school trip or when abroad, all participating staff should be familiar with and consult the school's Critical Incident Policy;
- k) In the event of a natural disaster and/or a terrorist attack in the country of the intended tour, the School will seek advice from the Department of Foreign Affairs as to whether it is safe to travel to that destination.
- l) Parents/guardians are expected, in line with Department of Justice regulations, to complete a Letter of Authority for any student travelling outside of Ireland. (Appendix 2)

5. Code of Behaviour

The school's Code of Behaviour will govern student behaviour during all out-of-school activities. This includes the journey to and from the venue. Certain behavioural issues will be highlighted for the students.

- a) No smoking/vaping or alcohol/drug consumption is allowed.
- b) No student may leave the student group without permission from a teacher. Students must obey all instructions from outside supervisors, bus drivers etc. including those related to safety and health issues.
- c) Students must not be late for arranged meeting times.

- d) Students must remain in assigned accommodation and rooms during overnight or longer trips and must on no account, either on their own or with others, leave the hotel or hostel without clear permission from a teacher.
- e) Students on buses must not act in a manner that distracts the driver and thereby compromises the safety of other passengers and road users.
- f) The utmost respect must be shown to the general public, to the authorities and to students of other schools, to outside providers of facilities and their employees and to the property of others.
- g) In the event of damages and/or theft to property, full reparation will be expected from students/parents/guardians.
- h) All students will be made aware in advance of what to do if they accidentally become separated from the group (i.e. remain at a particular location or contact a fellow student by text or telephone). They will also be provided with the address and phone number of the hotel/hostel where the group is staying, if appropriate.
- i) Students must not purchase pornographic, illegal or dangerous material when on a school trip.
- j) Students representing the school in, for example, sporting fixtures may be asked to make a nominal contribution to the cost of hiring a bus.

If necessary, two members of staff may reserve the right to carry out an inspection of rooms or personal property (bags, suitcases) with the student present. This will only be carried out in situations where there are concerns for physical safety, suspected possession or use of a banned substance or other concerns.

Staff should not have any physical contact with a student's clothing if worn by the student at that time. If a search is deemed necessary, the student will be asked to empty his/her own pockets and to search the clothing that he/she is wearing.

If a student is found to be in serious breach of any of the rules in the School Code of Behaviour, the staff in charge must contact the principal ASAP.

An Accident/Incident Report form must be completed for all accidents or incidents which have occurred. ([Accident report form](#)) Examples of reportable incidents include persistent lateness at the specific rendezvous point, not staying with the group, rudeness to teachers and

serious breach of school rules, particularly in relation to alleged or proven alcohol or substance abuse.

The disciplinary procedures in the Code of Behaviour and the sanctions outlined therein may be applied to any student who disregards any of the rules outlined above or indeed any other school rule while on an out-of-school activity.

It should be noted that one option that may be exercised by the school authorities is exclusion from future out-of-school activities. This might have to be considered in cases where a student has been found, upon investigation, to be overly disruptive, to have constituted a danger to himself/herself or others, or to have brought the good name of the school into disrepute by his/her activities.

In very serious cases, such as involvement with drugs or alcohol or anything the school deems as a Level 3 misdemeanour i.e. a very serious misdemeanour, the student may have to be sent home from the school tour. In any such case the parents of the students may be asked to:

- (a) come to collect him/her and take him/her home; or
- (b) agree to have him/her flown home unaccompanied but in the care of the airline staff and to then meet him/her on arrival in Ireland.

In the case of overnight stays in Ireland the parents of an offending student may be asked to:

- (a) come to collect him/her and take him/her home; or
- (b) agree to have him/her brought home by a teacher in a taxi.

As part of the school's trip terms and conditions, parents/guardians will be expected to sign a consent form agreeing to these arrangements if such a need arises. All expenses in such cases will be borne by the student and his/her parents/guardians and it will be a condition of being accepted on any such tour that this sanction is accepted by the parents/guardians of the student in advance of travelling.

6. Types of Trips

6.1 Day Trips

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

Some examples of day trips are:

- Field work associated with specific subjects such as Science, Geography
- History trips
- Visits to Art Galleries, Exhibitions, Museums, Theatre visits
- Careers exhibitions and University Open Days
- Debates
- Concerts
- Events in connection with Transition Year

6.2 Overnight Expeditions or Trips Abroad.

Other trips may be over-night expeditions or of longer duration. Only students/parents/guardians who have paid their full school registration or who have made arrangements with the school to pay in instalments will be eligible for these trips. These may be co-curricular activities organised by subject departments, or trips arranged for Year Groups, or ones that are part of the Outdoor Education Programme. Some examples are:

- Irish trips - e.g. Donegal, Mayo
- Exchange programmes involving a group of students and teacher(s)
- European Trip - e.g. Spain, Germany, France,
- Delphi Outdoor Education Centre
- Carlingford Outdoor Education Centre
- Class trips
- Senior trip – e.g. USA

Members of staff, who wish to take students on an overseas trip must submit their request for approval to the School Principal. Included in the proposal, should be the educational or other benefits that the students will derive from the trip. The School Principal will consider the following when reaching its decision

- The appropriateness of the proposed trip in terms of DES Circular M20/04.
- The staffing arrangements for the trip and for the school
- The financial controls in place for the trip

The school will only use the services of licensed tour operators/travel agents when organising trips outside the state, as per the Aviation Regulation Act 2001.

The number of students participating varies depending on the nature of the trip and the staff/student ratio will be appropriate to the age group and as recommended by the travel agency.

Staff will be informed of planned expeditions and invited to indicate to the teacher-in-charge if they are interested in being a member of the staff team that will accompany the students. In advance of each trip, teachers will be made aware of and have a clear idea of their roles and responsibilities. Decisions about which members of staff join a trip will depend on such factors as the size of the group, the gender balance, requirements specific to the particular trip e.g. Irish teachers on a trip to the Gaeltacht, Spanish and/or French teachers on a trip to Europe, teachers with Outdoor qualifications on adventure trips, House Leaders with House Trips, Tutors with classes on hikes etc.

7. General School Tour Guidelines:

7.1 Tour Information

- a) Students/parents/guardians must attend all information meetings and co-operate with all requests pertaining to the trip.
- b) Parents must sign all relevant forms specific to the trip for students who intend on going on the trip. Failure to complete required forms by the specified deadline may lead to the student being denied permission to participate in the trip, and any non-refundable payments made cannot be reimbursed.

7.2 General financial guidelines

- a) At least two staff members should be involved in the financial administration
- b) Separate financial records should be maintained for each school trip.
- c) A detailed record of all participating students and the amounts paid should be retained.
- d) Parents should be informed as early as possible of the full cost associated with the trip.
- e) Full transparency of costs involved should be available to parents/guardians on request.

- f) Written permission, either in the school journal or on a separate form should be received from the parents of all trip participants.
- g) Proper and full insurance cover must be in place for all school trips.
- h) All online payments via the schools administrative portal are lodged weekly to the main school bank account.
- i) Students/parents/guardians should be required to pay an initial deposit followed by the remainder of the money within a stated period of time. This deposit will be non-refundable in the event of the student pulling out of the tour or in the event of the student being prohibited from going on the tour due to prolonged poor behaviour or illness.

7.3 In the case of trips being oversubscribed:

- a) Priority is given to those students who are studying the appropriate subject.
- b) If the tour is not subject specific and the students behaviour is not in question, the school can operate a waiting list system in the event that a place becomes available.
- c) The Principal reserves the right to refuse any student he/she deem unsuitable for the trip, specifically taking note of demerits, points, lunchtime interventions and suspensions.
- d) Those considered unsuitable would include:
 - Students who in the informed opinion of the Principal, have proved unruly or undisciplined on previous trips and
 - Students who in the informed opinion of the Principal have a poor discipline record.

7.4 Additional Documentation & Inoculation Information:

- a) The initial letter to parents/students should contain a draft itinerary and deadline for registering and payment of non-refundable deposit. Parents/students must be made aware that the organiser reserves the right to make minor changes to the itinerary.
- b) If a passport is required, a photocopy of the student's passport must be provided in a timely manner when requested by the trip leader. All passports must be valid for at least six months following the trip.

- c) Visas/ESTA's may be necessary for the destination and some countries require them to be processed together. There may be an additional cost to secure a visa/ESTA, this cost is at the expense of parents/guardians and is separate to the school trip cost.
- d) Parents should be informed that students with non-EU passports may need visas for EU countries. Responsibility of any cost involved is borne solely by the parents/guardians and is separate to the school trip cost.
- e) Students must have their E111 or European Health Insurance Card for travel to countries in the EU.
- f) It is important to impress upon parents that the onus is on them to ensure that their son/daughter has all necessary up-to-date documentation well in advance of the trip.
- g) Parents should be informed in good time if there are any mandatory or recommended inoculations for the destination. It is important that parents realise that the onus is on them to make arrangements for their son/daughter to receive all necessary inoculations. Responsibility of any cost involved is borne solely by the parents/guardians and is separate to the school trip cost.

7.5 School Tour Communications:

- a) Notification to parents should include details of proposed itinerary, dates, the cost of travel, insurance, food and accommodation. Guidelines for spending money and money for extras such as meals and excursions will also be communicated to parents.
- b) Some possible communication methods for information regarding school trips include text messages to parents, the school website and MS Teams. Trip leaders can use whichever method of communication works best for their relevant trip.
- c) Mobile phone communication between teachers/supervisors and students on the trip may be necessary. A list should be made of participants' mobile phone numbers (as given on the permission form) and students should have the designated school mobile phone number of the trip leader. This phone will be charged and carried by the trip leader at all times while on the trip.
- d) A mobile phone is available from the School, as staff members are not required to give their personal mobile phone numbers to students.
- e) If students need to make contact with the trip leader while on the tour, they must make a call to the trip leader and not send a text message.

- f) The trip organiser should have two emergency contact numbers; usually this will be the Principal and a Deputy Principal.

8. General Guidelines for Inter-School Sport Competitions

- a) Each coach is responsible for taking a properly equipped first-aid kit to his/her match/event.
- b) If a minor accident occurs the team coach will treat it on the spot. In the event of a serious accident the coach will ring an ambulance directly.
- c) Any accident deemed to be of a serious nature is recorded on an accident report form as soon as possible ([Accident report form](#)). The school staff involved with the sports trip will appraise students of the necessary safety equipment/precautions for each respective sport.
- d) The staff and/or team coaches, organise transport to and from all matches/events, using a recognised coach company. Students representing the school in competitions may be required to pay for buses.
- e) When an away match is organised during school hours, the number of staff traveling must be dependent upon the staffing requirements of the activities in school. Generally two teachers will travel with a team. The needs of the students in school must receive priority when organising such matches.
- f) It is school policy that all students are encouraged to participate in team competitions. However, the school recognises that it is the parents/guardians prerogative how often their child shall be involved in such competitions.
- g) Members of staff taking students on trips which involve travel in coaches should note and apply the procedures as set out in section 9 below.

9. Coach Trips

Full details of bus bookings must be entered in the book in the Main Office before the trip.

Members of staff taking students away in coaches should note and apply the following:

- a) All coaches used by the school must have an up to date PSV License and Certificate.
- b) Before setting off, the emergency exits must be pointed out to students.
- c) Central aisles and access to exits must be kept clear at all times

- d) Students must be advised to remain seated facing forward and not to have unnecessary movement during the journey. Seatbelts must be worn at all times.
- e) Smoking/drinking alcohol is not permitted on board coaches.
- f) In the event of any emergency, students should leave the coach by the nearest exit as quickly as possible and re-assemble at a given area where a head-count can be quickly made by the teacher in charge.
- g) Students should not go back to the coach for any reason until the all clear is given.
- h) If the teacher in charge considers that there was anything the matter with the coach, or that the behaviour of students was not appropriate, a full report must be given to the Principal as soon as possible after returning to the school.
- i) A list of persons on the coach must be emailed to all staff before the departure of the coach.
- j) In the event of a delay for any reason in the time of returning to school, the teacher in charge must telephone the school.
- k) In the event of damage to the buses, reparation of damages will be expected in line with the schools code of behaviour.

10. Success Criteria & Monitoring

The School Trips Policy was devised in consultation with the students, parents, staff, management and Board of Management of Ballymakenny College.

It will be reviewed regularly as part of the normal Whole School Development Planning review cycle. If necessary, it may be reviewed at any time considering changing circumstances and/or changing legislation. Any amendments which need to be made will be in keeping with the general philosophy of the school. Any suggested amendments/improvements will be communicated to the Principal or Deputy Principals who will consult with all partners.

Approved by the BOM of Ballymakenny College on 21st February 2024

Signed by Chairperson: *Máire Ní Bhroíthe*

Appendix 1:



NAME AND DATE OF TRIP

Medical Screening Form

Student Personal Information:

Name:	
Address:	
Date of Birth:	
Age (At <i>date of trip</i>)	

Contact Information: (Please provide two contacts)

	Emergency Contact	Emergency Contact
Name:		
Relation:		
Contact No:		

Medical Information:

Please read all of the questions carefully and answer giving additional information as required:

Do you have any of the following medical conditions?	Yes	No
Asthma		
Diabetes		

Epilepsy		
High/Low Blood Pressure		
Do you have any muscle or joint problems that are aggravated by physical activity?		
Do you have any heart or lung conditions that you are aware of?		
Are you currently on any type of medication? If so, what type and why:		
Have you had any type of surgery in the past 6 months? If so, please explain:		
Do you have any allergies? If yes, please explain:		
Do you have any specific dietary requirements? If so, please explain:		

The following question comes directly from the insurance company

Have you have been prescribed medication (including repeat prescriptions), received treatment or attended a G.P. or hospital as an outpatient or inpatient in the last 2 years?

Important information relating to medical conditions: This policy cannot provide cover relating directly or indirectly to any medical condition where you are on a waiting list or awaiting the results of any tests or investigations. If you have been diagnosed as having a terminal illness, this policy is NOT suitable for you and we cannot offer you cover.

NOTE: If you answer **YES** to this question, you must contact Medical Screening with the relevant details in order for your son/daughter to be fully covered by the policy:

Failure to contact the assistance company could result in your claim being limited to €650 / £500

Declaration:

In the event of my child being taken ill or injured during the school trip from **DATE OF TRIP, I/We hereby authorise and direct and appoint any one of the supervising teachers**

as my/our attorney for the purpose of giving consent to all and any forms of surgical or medical treatment (including anaesthetics) as they in their absolute direction see fit. I/We hereby direct all hospitals and medical institutions to recognise the authority hereby granted. I/We further authorise the supervising teachers to sign, on my/our behalf, any written form of consent required for such medical or surgical treatment in the event of not being able to contact me/us within a reasonable time.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

I confirm that all the above details are correct and I consent to the school having these details for the duration of the school tour.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2:

Letter of Authority
NAME AND DATE OF TRIP

To whom it my concern,

I _____ give the leaders of the BALLYMAKENNY
COLLEGE TOUR GROUP permission to travel with my son/daughter
_____ to ***DESTINATION*** from the ***TOUR DATES***.

The lead teacher on this tour is ***NAME OF TRIP LEADER***.

Signed,

(Parent/Guardian)

Name (Block Capitals): _____

Contact Information: _____

(Passport control coming back into Dublin will expect group leaders to have a letter of authority for each child signed by a parent or guardian giving permission for their child to travel on the school trip. It should include the Name of Child, Name of Parent, School, Dates of the tour, destination visited and parental contact information.)

