

St Brigid's B.N.S

Supervision Policy for School Tours and Excursions

Introduction

This policy was drawn up by the staff and ratified by the Board of Management of St. Brigid's B.N.S. Taking into account the age and interests of the children and the curriculum being covered, school tours will be arranged by the school to present the children with a new environment in which they can observe, investigate and relate their findings to their own environment. **Tours will be arranged at the discretion of the class teacher in consultation with the principal.**

Rationale

The need for this policy arises due to children being exposed to a wide variety of different experiences while on school outings, and the necessity to have a framework for good practice in place to cover all eventualities.

Aims

- To ensure all practical possibilities are covered in reducing the exposure of children to risk on outings
- To provide an enjoyable educational experience for all children

Policy Content

As always the class teacher is responsible for his/her class. However it is school policy to ensure a number of assistants accompany a teacher on school trips to provide additional supervision. These assistants include special needs assistants, work experience students and parents /guardians. **All parents / guardians who accompany teachers on any trips or provide lifts to any events (carrying children outside of their own family unit) outlined below must be Garda vetted through St. Brigid's BNS.** The supervision ratio for trips in St. Brigid's B.N.S. varies depending on the trip in question.

The following are the ratios we adhere to in circumstances where the children leave the school premises:

Local Events:

- St Brigid's Park: the class teacher accompanies their class to Brigid's Park. Children from all classes may attend St. Brigid's Park for activities. SNAs accompany the class should a child require SNA support. In classes where a shared teacher is present the shared teacher should attend. In the infant classes a minimum of two adults must always be present. Athletics occurs in Brigid's Park at lunchtime for the boys from 3rd – 6th class. As per guidelines for class teachers the supervision ratio is minimum 1:34. **Teachers must inform the office if they are going to St. Brigid's park for PE on departure and**

ensure that they have a mobile phone with them.

- Cornelscourt GAA pitch: Minimum supervision ratio of 1:15
- St. Brigid's Church: Minimum supervision ratio: 6th class 1:15, 2nd class 1:8
- GAA, soccer and hurling matches at away venues: The general supervision ratio is 1:4 as parents drive children to these matches. In a circumstance where a bus is availed of the minimum supervision ratio will be 1:10.
- Meadowvale and Cabinteely Park: Supervision ratio of 1:10 for 3rd – 6th class and 1:8 for Junior Infants – 2nd class (this applies for matches, nature walks etc.)
- Athletics (away events e.g. Santry): The general supervision ratio is 1:4 as parents drive children to these events. In a circumstance where a bus is availed of the minimum supervision ratio will be 1:10.
- Swimming: 5 or 6 adults accompany the two classes on the bus to swimming, the two class teachers, two parents and one or two SNAs depending on the needs of the children in the classes. While in the water 6 pool staff are employed to supervise the children in the water.

Official trips and tours:

For all other school tours and school trips the ratios will be as follows:

- 8:1 (Junior Infants – 2nd class)
- 10:1 (3rd – 6th class)

No matter what size a class is, there will always be a minimum of 3 adults on each official trip/tour. This allows for an adult to accompany an injured child to hospital in an ambulance or in the child's parent's car, while leaving 2 adults with the rest of the class. It is school policy for class teacher to assign individual groups of 8 / 10 children to individual teachers or parent volunteers.

Safety and Supervision

Teachers will be extra vigilant when taking children out of the school. Special attention will be paid to - Road Safety, Behaviour on bus, Risks posed by particular venues (e.g. adventure playgrounds etc.).

SNAs will accompany children with SEN on school tours. An SNA cannot be counted in the general supervision for a class where the SNA is assigned to more than one child in that class or where the child with SEN requires individual supervision for their own safety, due to the extent of their care needs. The class teacher and SNA in consultation with the Principal will determine if the SNA can be responsible for supervising a group of children.

Parents, at the discretion of the class teacher, will be invited to assist with supervision on school trips. Support teachers may assist on certain school trips.

Staff must not leave the tour venue unless in case of emergency (bringing a child to hospital etc. Supervisors must accompany their class throughout the tour. Shared supervision will allow for supervisors lunch and toilet breaks. Teachers, SNAs and volunteers must delegate their supervision duties before leaving the group. Only one adult should leave each class group at any one time.

In cases of an accident or emergency, a teacher will accompany an injured child to hospital, while the remaining teachers, SNAs & volunteers shall remain with the rest of the children. In the case where there is only one teacher with accompanying parent volunteers, a parent will accompany the injured child to hospital while the teacher remains with his/her class in loco parentis.

Conduct on Tours

Pupils' behaviour on tours will comply with the standard set down in the School's Code of Behaviour. In certain circumstances parents may be asked to agree to a contract on behaviour. Where it is felt that a child's conduct would pose a safety risk or inhibit the educational benefit for self or others, the teacher following consultation with the principal may refuse the child permission to travel. Parents will be advised of this in advance.

School Rules for Tours and Excursions

- Children must adhere to the rules stipulated by their supervisors & teachers at all times
- Children must remain seated with buckled seatbelt while the bus is in motion
- Children are not allowed to eat/drink on the bus
- Mobile phones must remain switched off and in the pupil's bag for the duration of the tour as per the school's mobile phone policy.
- Children must remain with their allocated grouping and supervisor at all times
- Children will line up in their individual groups on disembarking from the bus
- Children will go to the bathroom in pairs (supervisors should never enter the bathroom alone with a child)
- Roll calls/head counts are taken when children return to the bus or centre after each segment of the tour

Transport

The school secretary will be responsible for booking the transport for excursions. The transport organiser of the tour will ensure that:

- A form of transport, appropriate to the distance and the numbers travelling will be chosen
- The bus company/suppliers and drivers accept the following conditions listed below

Conditions of Hiring: All transport supplied, will be suitable and well-maintained. Teachers have the right to refuse any bus they find unsuitable for their outing. If the bus proves unsuitable a replacement will be supplied or the money refunded

The driver will have a thorough knowledge of and follow the itinerary and timetable for the tour. The driver is responsible for the safety of the children while they are travelling, but teachers have the right to intervene if it is felt the the safety of the children is compromised.

Tour Kit

Teachers will take a tour kit on all outings. The kit will contain:

- First aid materials, refuse and illness bags, wipes (available from staff room)
- Their mobile phone with the Aladdin Connect App downloaded or a hard copy of their class list with contact details.

Note: Parents are responsible for ensuring any emergency medication needed by their child is in their child's schoolbag as per the school's Chronic Health Conditions Policy.

Cost

The teachers will ensure that the cost of the tour is reasonable and represents value for money. All children will be actively encouraged to save towards the cost of the tour.

Spending money: In general spending money will not be permitted on school tours. However, if a particular tour warrants spending money an upper limit will be agreed by the class teachers.

Venue

Tours will be booked early to ensure suitable dates are secured. Teachers will be conscious of the likely "busier" days. Not more than two classes will travel together, unless venue and transport arrangements warrant otherwise. The Pantomime in December is one such exception where multiple classes attend on the same day. Where more than one class travels, one teacher will accept the role of "leader" on the day and will liaise with the venue with regard to organisation of the day, payment and any issues which may arise.

Equality of Access

Classes may choose a venue suitable for their age group. Teachers will ensure that venues are suitable for pupils with special needs, physical disabilities or other individual considerations. Teachers should consult with Principal about choice of venue if there are any queries of accessibility for individual children.

Weather Conditions

Rain gear, suncream etc. will be essential for all children and a change of clothes may be necessary, depending on the venue. Parents will be advised if a change of clothes is necessary e.g. for tours where water sport activities take place. In the case of such tours, changing facilities will be available at the venue.

Tours list

A list of suitable tours for all classes is available in the staffroom.

Uniforms

School uniform or school tracksuit must be worn on all trips. The class teachers will decide which is most suitable for the venue and inform the parents of this.

Reports

Where problems arise either with venue or transport teachers will report back to the transport/tour organiser and Principal. Teacher will inform the venue while on location if a child is injured while on tour.

Informing Parents

Teachers will ensure that Parents are given sufficient notice of:

- Itinerary & Timetable
- Cost
- Special clothing necessary and packed lunch
- Expected return time

Fieldtrips

Fieldtrips which relate to a particular curricular area are encouraged. These trips can range from simple walks around the school to organised trips to relevant places of interest in the locality.

The principal must be informed in advance if it is proposed that a class leave the school grounds.

Teachers are encouraged to plan and prepare children in advance of the trip and to carry out some follow up work in the classroom following the fieldtrip.

Teachers should ensure adequate supervision at all times. Where necessary, an SNA or a parent / guardian should accompany the class on the trip.

Children should be appropriately dressed for the fieldtrip e.g. raingear, suitable footwear etc.

No child is to be refused participation in any proposed activity because of inability of family to pay. The class teacher will inform Principal or Deputy Principal if they are concerned about a child in their class. Parents can approach the Principal or class teacher directly regarding this matter if they wish. All concerns raised will be dealt with in a discrete manner.

Buses booked for fieldtrips must be fitted with individual seatbelts and these should be worn by all children.

TOURS CHECKLIST

Before the tour

- Venue booked
- Transport booked
- If for any reason the school is not permitting a child to attend a trip this will be discussed with the parents in advance.
- Timetable organised
- Parents informed by permission on Aladdin
 - Venue and itinerary
 - cost
 - lunch arrangements
 - clothing necessary
 - expected return time
- Class list / Aladdin App on mobile phone
- Medication for individual pupils (provided by parents)
- Principal provided with a list of supervisors

Agreement on

- Leader
- Spending money (if any)
- Acceptable behaviour on bus
- Extra supervisors (8:1 JI – 2nd class) (10:1 3rd – 6th class)

Day of Tour

Tour leader will ensure they have:

- Tour kit
- Payment for venues and buses

After Tour

Report back to office

Ratification and Communication

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Brigid's BNS at its meeting on March 20th 2017. It was reviewed and updated by school staff and the Board of Management on 27th April 2020.

Appendix: Schedule for Catholic Schools

A Roman Catholic school (which is established in connection with the Minister) aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Catholic school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic Faith.