



St Vincent's Castleknock College

Tours & Exchanges Policy

This policy was drawn up by staff of St Vincent's Castleknock College in consultation with all stakeholders. It was ratified by Board of Management and circulated to staff and parents/guardians of the students. The purpose of the policy is to document current and future practice on school tours. The policy will be reviewed annually.

1) Relationship to the Vincentian Ethos of the College

St Vincent's Castleknock College strives to provide a well ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the students are identified and addressed. The College ethos is based on respect for other people. The College cherishes all students equally and to aid them in achieving their true potential in every way.

2) Aims of Tours and Exchanges

- To benefit the intellectual, cultural and social development of our students.
- To present the students with a new environment in which they can observe, investigate and relate their findings to their own environment.
- To provide school tours or trips taking into account the age and interest of the students and the curriculum being covered.
- To afford, where possible and practicable, all students the opportunity to go on school tour with their peers.

Tours will always be arranged by teachers, sports coaches or the Administration of the College.

3) Transport:

The transport organiser of the tour will ensure that:-

- (a) Tours give good value for money
- (b) A form of transport, appropriate to the distance and the numbers travelling will be chosen.
- (c) Any bus company/suppliers and drivers accept the following conditions.





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4) 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 be used to dealing with students and have a thorough knowledge of and follow the itinerary and timetable for the tour. The driver is responsible for the safety of the students while they are travelling but teachers have the right to intervene if it is felt the safety of the students is compromised. The group will have access to the bus for the full day. If the weather conditions are unfavorable the group will have the use of the bus for sheltering or for eating lunch. The incidental consumption of snack food and singing on the bus - at an acceptable level - will be at the discretion of the teacher in consultation with the driver. Buses will be left as they were found.

5) Tour Kit:

Teachers will take tour kits on all outings. These will be available in the Staff Room.

The kit will contain:

- First aid materials, refuse and illness bags, kitchen roll
- School (or personal) mobile phone, maps of the locality, umbrella
- Enough money to buy the adults on the tour coffee while on tour or a flask of hot water, tea bags, milk and biscuits.

6) Cost of Tour/Trip:

Castleknock College recognises that tours can be expensive. For this reason, all tours should be optional. However, tours are significant experiences in the life of the college in which students learn about history, geography, sports, etc and (most importantly) deepen their friendships and learn to play their part in a group. So, the College strives to have various opportunities for students to take part in an array of tours and exchanges throughout their school life. If necessary, parents should be able to say to their sons, "No, you cannot go, as our family cannot afford to send you on this particular tour."

In view of the expense involved, it is strongly recommended that the dates and times of foreign tours and exchanges be fixed in the academic year before they happen. Permission must be sought in advance from the Board of Management for all tours and exchanges outside the jurisdiction. The application form is in the Teachers' Handbook.

The organisers of the Tour/Exchange will ensure that the cost of the tour is reasonable and represents value for money. All students will be actively encouraged to save towards the cost of the tour.

7) Spending money:

Teachers travelling together should agree and notify their group of the upper limit on spending money. This will be based on age and venue.





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8) Numbers and Emergencies

The normal ratio for adults to students on a school tour will be 1: 10. The organising teacher will be “au fait” with venue, with particular reference to educational opportunities afforded, and services available (phone, toilets, emergency facilities). The leader will have a prearranged plan to deal with emergencies.

9) Weather Conditions:

Rain and head gear may be essential for all students and a change of clothes may be necessary, depending on the venue. Tours may have to be cancelled due to snow (or other bad weather). Organisers should have contingency plans for the cancellation of a tour.

10) Tours List:

A list of suitable tours for all classes should be available at the start of the school year, with dates in the calendar. This is to allow families to plan how to meet the expenses involved. However, it may not always be possible for the college to give a year’s notice of a tour. Teachers will ensure that venues are suitable for students with special needs.

11) School Uniforms/School Tracksuit:

Teachers travelling together will decide whether uniforms should be worn depending on type of tour.

12) Behavior on Tours

Students’ behavior on tours will comply with the standard set down in the College Code of Behavior. Where it is felt that a student’s conduct would pose a safety risk or inhibit the educational benefit for self or others, the Headmaster may refuse the student permission to travel. Parents will be advised of this in advance.

It will be our policy to include all students in school tours. A decision on any exclusion rests with the Headmaster in consultation with the organising teacher and Year Head. Students must understand that if they behave inappropriately during school or on tours (or even on their way to and from school), the consequence may be that they will be excluded from any further tours or exchanges.

If there is serious misbehavior on tour or if students endanger the lives of themselves or others, the organisers of the tour may decide to send a student (or more than one) home. The cost of this will be met by the parents or guardians.

A consent form must be signed by the parent(s) or guardian(s) of each student before they go on a tour. This form

- will contain a permission for their son to take part
- will make clear when and where the tour begins and ends
- will include an emergency contact number for the tour leader





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- Will include an agreement by the parent(s) or guardian(s) to meet the cost, should their son be sent home early for seriously bad behavior.
- Will include their son's medical requirements and permission for the tour operators to administer any necessary medicines.

No student may take alcohol while on a school tour. Students may be sent home if they break this rule.

13) Safety and Supervision:

Teachers will be particularly vigilant when taking students out of the school. Special attention will be paid to:

- Road safety
- Behavior on buses, cars, trains or airplanes
- Risks posed by particular venues (e.g. Ski slopes etc.)
- Behavior towards others, especially those who might be staying in the same hotel
- Respect for other people

14) Plan for dealing with Emergencies: sick/injured students while on school trip

In the case of an emergency, the tour leader (or other person on the tour) will do the following:

1. Seek immediate medical attention, call an ambulance.
2. Contact the injured student's parents.
3. Phone the school and contact the Headmaster or Deputy Principal or designated teacher.
4. Accompany the student in the ambulance to hospital.

Although it is preferable that two adults remain with an injured student at all times, this may not be possible in an emergency and parents will have to accept this as a pre-condition to their giving consent and signing the Consent Form.

15) Informing Parents:

Teachers will ensure that parents are given sufficient notice of:

- Itinerary & Timetable
- Cost
- Special clothing necessary and food/drink needed
- Consent Form signed by parent / guardian and returned to class teacher.

Remember: No Consent Form signed means the student cannot travel on the tour





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16) School buses

The following conditions will be applied when school buses are used in transporting students to or from events:

- There should be one supervisor per 15 students: In relation to rugby this will ensure adequate supervision if a student needs to attend hospital as one of the coaches should travel to the hospital in the event of a parent not being present.
- All students should also wear seat belts.
- There should be one supervisor to take a roll call on the bus with all students seated and with seat belts buckled.
- There should be one supervisor to supervise the loading of bags and to ensure that the compartment doors are shut before departure.
- Students should not enter a bus unless there is a teacher present.
- At the end of each journey there should be one supervisor to supervise boys unloading bags and one to inspect the bus at the end when all students have alighted from the bus.

17) Code of Behavior

This Tours and Exchanges policy should be read in conjunction with the College Code of Behavior.

Last Modified 25/11/2011

