



New Cross College School Tours/ Overnight Trips Policy

Our school:

New Cross College is a co-educational voluntary secondary school in Finglas, Dublin 11. Our school is a Catholic school operating under the dual patronage of Le Chéile and the Religious Sisters of Charity. This policy has been developed in line with our Mission Statement which states that our school aims to provide a safe, inclusive, academic environment shaped by mutual respect. We respect the dignity of the individual person and are sensitive to the needs of a diverse society.

We aim to make our school a happy and caring environment which recognises the needs of each individual. We believe that education flourishes in a school where good relationships are encouraged, where people feel valued and there is tolerance, fairness and support for those in difficulty.

We believe in helping all to develop their confidence, self-esteem and talents so that they may take their place in society as responsible and mature young adults.

This is reflected in the operations of our school and in our school policies.

This school tour policy informed by the Dept. Of Education and Skills Circular Letter

M 20/04 and by the JMB's Financial Guidelines for Schools.

This policy has been developed in line with our Mission Statement.

These activities serve to significantly enrich both the academic curriculum as taught in school and the social and personal development of those students

participating in them. The organisation, particularly of school tours, requires a significant investment of staff time and energy. The purpose of the following information (rules, forms, contracts, etc.) is to assist the teacher(s)/group leader(s) when organising any trip or tour. The term trip/tour for the purposes of this document also includes and overnight stays in the school building itself e.g. Library Readathon.

Pupil/Teacher Ratio:

A pupil/teacher ratio of 12:1 is recommended, however, this can vary depending on the type and circumstance of the trip or tour. The school will endeavour to provide a pupil/teacher ratio appropriate to the activity

Procedures Prior to the Tour

1. Inform the principal of your intent to run a trip to obtain necessary permissions. The Tour Leader(s) must also obtain permission from Management or the Board of Management (BOM), where relevant to take students on a school tour. Permission should be sought from the BOM for all overnight trips.
2. Brief the students in the target group. In the case of optional trips, students will be asked to complete an "Expression of Interest Form" at this stage. Parents will also be given a basic itinerary and expression of interest form to return to the school if their son/daughter wishes to be considered for a place on the trip. In the case of foreign trips an Information Meeting of Tour Leaders and parents will take place. Here they will be supplied with an information pack which sets out the objectives, proposed itinerary and practicalities of the trip. The cancellation policy (as directed by the tour company) applying to the particular event will be made clear.
3. Participants will be selected in consultation with the principal etc. The school reserves the right to refuse any student a place on a trip.
4. The number of adults to travel will be carefully considered, considering the nature of the trip and the age of the students concerned, to ensure adequate cover from the safety point of view. It is also important to us that students are accompanied by staff with experience of school tours.
5. Hold a planning meeting of the adults travelling, to clarify all necessary details and in particular to specifically consider all health & safety aspects of the trip.

6. A meeting will be held with New Cross College Senior Management Team to outline all details of the upcoming trip. This should be done in the days leading up to the trip to ensure as much detail as possible can be outlined. Management will be supplied with an itinerary, including relevant contact information, and a pupil list.

The Board sets out below a number of general principles and rules in relation to all trips. This policy is devised in line with the Child Protection Guidelines as set out in the school's Child Protection Policy to ensure the safety of all students and in line with the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools.

- The Board encourages the organisation of school trips for the educational, artistic, sporting and social benefit of students
- All relevant school rules and policies apply on all school trips.
- The health and safety of students and staff is of paramount concern to the Board.
- Therefore, the school management reserves the right to disallow a trip or a student from participation in a school trip where, in their opinion, the health and safety of the student or other students or staff is at risk.
- The behaviour record of a student in school shall be considered in deciding whether to allow a student participate in a school trip. Consultation with teachers, tutors, year heads and management should be had before a decision is made.
- All trips are organised in as cost-effective manner as possible considering quality and value for money.
- Staff taking any trip will exercise due care and the Board of Management will rely on the professionalism, common sense and judgment of such teachers.
- The number of staff/adults accompanying a group will be influenced by a number of factors including: the number of students travelling, age of the students, students with special educational needs, location of the trip, nature of the trip, whether additional supervision will be provided at the location, division of group at venue, type of transport used, and gender balance.

- For any trip/activity parental permission should/must be sought and the parents informed by letter/email or text. A permission slip should be completed by the parents/guardians prior to the trip taking place.
 - Any student, who withdraws from a trip after a deposit or full monies have been paid, may not be entitled to a refund. A student, who is not allowed to travel for disciplinary reasons which occur following payment of a deposit or full amount, will not be entitled to a refund.
- Parents/Guardians of students who are in receipt of Special Needs support as recognised by the Department of Education and Skills needs to inform the trip organiser at the time of their application to ensure that the required supports are in place for the trip/activity.

❖ ***Procedure for 1-day trips and activities taking place during term time which involve student's absence from any timetabled class.***

- An application form for the trip/activity must be submitted to the person with responsibility for trips/activities as early as possible
- That person will check that all details are filled out and will check that there are no conflicts with other events or with notified tests/examinations.
- The person with responsibility for trips (Principal/ Deputy Principal) will give permission for the trip/activity to go ahead.
- The details of the trip/activity must be notified to staff by the organising teacher/staff member as soon as permission is granted by e-mail in order to avoid clashes with other events or important classwork.
- If class cover is required, class work should be given to the covering teachers.
- An accurate list of students must be posted by the organising teacher/staff member on the noticeboard or via email at least one day prior to the trip/activity taking place and given to the front office to be entered on VShare by the school secretary in order to facilitate accurate attendance records.
- The form containing all relevant information about the trip must be filled in and left in the front office or emailed to staff. This is extremely important as the office should be able to give accurate details to parents in relation to the trip/activity.

Procedures for school trips abroad or involving overnight trips.

- Where a school trip abroad or overnight takes place during the school term the procedures shall be as outlined in the Department of Education and Skills circular M20/04.
- Application for all trips abroad or overnight should be submitted to the Board of Management with sufficient notice. It should give details of initial itinerary, the cost per student and the proposed number of students and staff participating.
- Considering the cost of a trip every effort should be made to ensure that there is sufficient time to allow for families to budget for the trip and to make the necessary arrangements to pay the costs.
- Written parental/guardian permission will be required for all such trips. This form will outline the following:
 - The nature and duration of the trip
 - The cost of the trip
 - That all school rules and policies apply on the trip
 - That in case of an accident or emergency staff has permission to seek emergency treatment.
 - That in the case of misbehaviour the student may be sent home at the expense of his parents
 - That staff are notified of any medical issues/conditions and use of medication.
 - That any dietary concerns or preferences are notified on the form.
 - The contact details of the person in charge and destination are available.
 - The form will clearly outline the method of allocation of places. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians in conjunction with students to ensure that all documents necessary for travel abroad (e.g. passport, identity card, E111 card) are up to date and in order. The school cannot take responsibility for a student whose personal documentation is not in order and who is prevented from travelling abroad as a result.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to inform the organising teacher/staff member of any special educational needs. While teachers and management will be aware of these needs, the organising person may not.

- Parents/guardians will receive a written overview/itinerary of overnight trips and will be required to give written consent to their son/daughter taking part.
- Students will be informed, prior to going on the trip that all school rules apply. Teachers can refer to the Code of Behaviour while abroad also. A student may be sent home, at his/her own expense, if the conduct of the student is warranted. In this event, a parent/guardian will be asked to come to collect the student or they will consent to the student travelling home alone.
- The school expects that all students travelling on an extended tour will display a level of maturity commensurate with their age. Students on trips, which involve an overnight stay in Ireland or abroad, cannot be supervised on a 24 hour basis and all extended school tours will involve periods of time without direct supervision. Parents who are concerned that such a level of supervision is inadequate should not permit their son/daughter to take part in such trips.

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/ principal upon return to school. 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 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.

❖ Illness/Injury

- Should a student become ill or injured on a trip then parents will be informed and medical attention will be sought for the student if necessary. Parents should note that injury or illness to a student may require a lesser supervision of remaining students on any trip should it be necessary for a teacher to accompany a student seeking medical attention.

❖ Mobile Phone

- A school mobile phone is available for the group leader travelling on any trip or tour. The number of this phone should be given to all parents and students before the trip. The purpose of this phone is for parents or students travelling to contact the group leader in case of emergency.

❖ Practical Advice for Students

- Any student taking part on a trip should try their best to adhere to the following advice:
- 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 detailed matters like dress, punctuality, behaviour etc. prompt and good-natured compliance is essential.

❖ Other relevant school policies

- It is advisable to read this policy in conjunction with other school policies, most notably, the Code of Behaviour, Child Protection Guidelines and Anti-Bullying Policy.

❖ **Review and Development:**

- We are committed to the review and development of our school policies. As part of our ongoing review process, this policy will be examined to reflect feedback from our evaluation practices and also to ensure legal compliance and the maintenance of best practices.

Agreed on: 10.2.21

Signed: Noel Merrick (Chairperson)

Signed: Derek Lynch (Principal)