



# SCHOOL TRIPS POLICY



*Presentation Secondary School,  
Milltown, Co. Kerry.*

## School Mission

*Our school is a Catholic school which aspires to the full development of all its members according to Christian Principles. Every effort is made to ensure that each student develops according to his/her talents and potential: physically, spiritually, emotionally, intellectually.*

*We aim to develop fully integrated people who are aware of their own dignity as persons, who have Christian values, who are reliable, trustworthy, honest, truthful, caring, prayerful, devoted to duty, lovers of God and of neighbour; people who are prepared to reach out to those less fortunate than themselves.*

## Rationale

It is school policy to organise trips for the benefit of students when this is deemed appropriate by the teaching staff, in consultation with the Principal. The school recognises the benefits of outings to complement normal school work, for educational or sporting purposes.

Some trips are demanded by particular curriculum subjects, such as field trips. Other trips are additional to the curriculum and are not deemed a core activity, though they deepen the student's knowledge and understanding of the cultural, social and physical aspects of the areas or countries visited.

The Board of Management of Presentation Secondary School, Milltown supports and encourages school trips in line with the Department of Education and Skills guidelines which states;

*"The objective of educational trips for schools should be that it should provide a significant benefit in the educational, intellectual, cultural and social development of the maximum number of pupils in the particular grade(s) taking part in the trip and which benefit cannot be provided by in school activities alone" (DES Circular M20/04)*

## Participation & Behaviour

The lengths of trips may vary from a short local visit to a European trip involving staying away for several days. Participation in extra-curricular activities and trips is subject to the approval of school management. Repeated misbehaviour, or incidents of serious misbehaviour, will be causes for exclusion.

School trips are a privilege reserved for students who meet minimum standards of behaviour while at school. Students who do not meet minimum standards of behaviour, as decided by the Principal, may be refused permission to participate in a school trip. The Principal reserves the right to disallow a student from participating in a school trip if, in his/her opinion, that student's previous behaviour has been in serious or persistent breach of the school's Code of Behaviour and/or that that student's behaviour poses a risk to the health and/or safety of the student, or other students or staff.

All school rules and all school policies apply while on school trips. In particular, parents and students should be aware that permission to travel on a school related activity is conditional on strict adherence to the school's Code of Behaviour. All students selected for sports teams and/or who travel as part of a class group represent Presentation Secondary School, Milltown. The highest standards of behaviour and conduct are expected as a matter of course. Students and parents/guardians shall be acquainted in advance of the trip with rules, regulations and special requirements of that trip e.g. clothing, equipment, sunscreen, mobile phones, etc.

European trips are organised on the school's own initiative. As they are not part of the curriculum, participation is always voluntary for students and, therefore, a history of misbehaviour or lack of cooperation, or a significant one-off incident, may cause the school to decline an application for a place on the trip. Submitting an application for a school trip does not guarantee any student the right to participate in that trip.

Only students currently enrolled in Presentation Secondary School, Milltown are eligible for consideration for participation in school trips.

## Procedures

### **Day Trips / School Teams / Representing The School**

Permission for day trips will be sought from the Principal. In granting approval, consideration will be given to:

- Conformity with the criteria in circular letter M20/04.
- 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 implication for the normal teaching routine of the school
- The suitability of travel arrangements.

In general, written permission is required from a parent/guardian of a student before he/she may go on a trip. Students intent on participating in a school trip must use the transport organised by the school and must return home on the aforementioned transport. On occasion, and only with prior written permission from a parent/guardian, and agreement with the organising teacher, a student may make other transport arrangements.

It is understood that students who play as part of a team representing Presentation Secondary School, Milltown have ongoing parental permission to travel to all away matches, and that TY students have permission to attend TY trips.

While every effort will be made to adhere to arranged times on trips, in particular the arrival time back at the school, the school cannot guarantee such times.

### **Overnight Trips**

The approval of any school trip must be sought and obtained from the Board of Management. In granting approval, consideration will be given to:

- Conformity with the criteria in circular letter M20/04.
- The number of other proposed events taking place during the course of the year.
- The timing of the event and its effect on other school activities.
- It's implications for the normal teaching routine of the school.
- The suitability of travel and accommodation arrangements.

Once the Board of Management has been apprised of all the details of a trip and has given its approval, then the trip leader is enabled to proceed with the trip.

### **European Trip Team**

The team, led by the trip leader, will be put in place as soon as possible. It is recognised that the organisation of, or participation in any school trip is voluntary, on the part of teachers.

The trip leader together with the Principal and/or Deputy Principal will decide on the team composition to meet the needs of the students involved. The trip leader will meet the full trip team at the outset to discuss the trip, duties and responsibilities. All members of the team will be expected to share the workload beforehand where necessary and during the trip.

## Travel Documents

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians in conjunction with students to ensure that all documents necessary for travel abroad e.g. passports, identity cards are up to date and in order by the specified dates prior to travel.

The school will not take responsibility for a student whose personal documentation is not in order, and who is prevented from travelling abroad as a result. Students on trips within the European Union shall be required to have a completed EHIC form and a valid passport.

## Costs & Accountability For Finances

Trips occur in addition to the normal academic and extra-curricular programmes of the school. There is normally an additional charge.

- Students who withdraw from a trip after a deposit, or full monies have been paid, will not be entitled to a refund. Similarly, a student who is prevented from travelling for disciplinary, or safety reasons, will not be entitled to a refund.
- The overall cost of a school trip will be agreed in advance and will take into account the ability of students and their parents to pay.
- The income and expenditure of funds associated with the trip will conform fully to the accounting practices of the school and as required by the FSSU and the Department of Education & Skills.

## Supervision of Trips

The number of staff which accompanies a group will be influenced by a number of factors including;

- The number of students travelling
- The age and maturity of the students.
- The location of the trip.
- The availability of alternative adult supervision e.g. Special Needs Assistants.
- Additional supervision which may be provided at the trip destination.
- If the group will be dividing into smaller groups, each requiring supervision.
- The type of transport used
- The activities to be engaged in.

Certain trips may facilitate shopping or recreation which may not be directly supervised. This situation will usually be indicated on the permission slip, itinerary or information letter sent to parents/guardians. The school expects that all students travelling on a trip/trip will display a level of maturity commensurate with their age.

Students on trips which involve an overnight stay in Ireland or abroad will not be supervised on a 24-hour basis, and all extended school trips will involve periods of time without direct supervision. Parents who are concerned that such a level of supervision is inappropriate should not permit their son/daughter to take part in such trips.

## Health, Safety, Medical & Additional Needs

Health and safety of students and supervisors are priorities when organising and taking a school trip. Teachers responsible for or participating in any trip will exercise due care, common sense and judgement when issues of health and safety arise.

The teacher planning the trip will ensure that the bus company being used is approved by school management.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be requested to inform the trip leader in writing of any special needs, medical needs or medication required by their son/daughter while on the trip/trip. The trip leader may request a subsequent meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s). School management reserve the right to request a fitness-to-travel certificate and clear guidelines on how to proceed in the event of an episode/seizure/reaction/incident from a medical practitioner, where a medical condition has been notified to the school.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to sign a consent form which will allow medical advice to be followed in the event of injury/illness and where it is not possible to contact them in the time available.

In case of an accident, staff will normally only apply basic first aid. Expert medical attention will be sought should this be deemed necessary and best practice will be followed.

In the unlikely instance of a serious accident occurring, staff will seek medical assistance as a first priority and contact the school to inform the office of events. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible by the trip leader, as well as the school. The Board has full confidence in staff and their decisions.

Please note that many insurance policies include the following or similar sentences:

We do not provide any cover for:

- *Psychological conditions such as stress, anxiety, depression, eating disorders or mental instability.*
- *Claims caused by an existing medical condition of a non-travelling close relative or a close business associate, or any recognised complication caused by the existing medical condition.*
- *Any circumstances that are not specified in your policies.*

For this reason, parents/guardians are asked to be mindful of their son/daughter's emotional wellbeing prior to providing consent to go on a school trip.

Where a student routinely has access to a Special Needs Assistant, the parents/guardian(s) of the student are required to make an appointment with the trip leader prior to the deposit being paid. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure that parents are clear on the activities which will be engaged in during the trip, and that the student is physically/emotionally able for same, given that the nature of any trip means that the student's daily routine, including sleep patterns, will be disrupted. At this stage, the parents may decide that their son/daughter would not be able for the trip. Where possible, the school will endeavour to facilitate the student's needs during the trip/trip. However, as participation in a school trip/trip is voluntary on the part of staff, this may not be possible as the additional staff required to support the student may not be available to travel due to family/personal commitments.

## Rules & Regulations For School Trips

Students and parents/guardians shall be acquainted in advance of the school's Code of Behaviour, trip rules, regulations and any special requirements of that trip.

Parents/guardians shall be given an outline of the purpose, itinerary, dates and costs of the trip before a deposit or payment is sought. Each student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given a form outlining the rules, regulations and special requirements and they shall be required to sign that (i) they understand the rules and (ii) they are willing to abide by them at all times.

The inclusion of particular students in a school trip shall be at the discretion of the school authorities.

The Board of Management specifically wishes to draw attention to the following:

- Students must obey members of staff/external instructors/supervisors at all times.
- Students are expected to be courteous, friendly and co-operative to any shop/restaurant/bus/museum staff and members of the general public they meet on a school trip.
- Students must stay with specified school group(s) and are expected to be punctual at all times.
- Students should be cautious when approached by strangers.
- Seat belts must be worn on all modes of transport where they are available.
- In the interest of safety students must not deviate from the set itinerary.
- In cases where students are provided with the opportunity to go shopping, or to participate in another unsupervised activity, must do so in groups of two or more.
- Staff of Presentation Secondary School, Milltown reserve the right to remove mobile phones and/or other electronic devices at any time during the trip. These may be returned to the student after a period of time or returned to parents/guardians at the end of the trip.
- Students must not purchase or use energy/sports drinks, alcohol, tobacco or non-medically prescribed drugs/products. Students should not be asked to purchase any of these items for family or friends.
- The Board of Management requires parent(s)/guardian(s) to guarantee that when their son/daughter comes to the school to assemble for the start of a school trip, he/she does so free of alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances either on his/her person or in her luggage.
- Students must bring and wear modest, weather-appropriate clothing and comfortable walking shoes. Trip leaders reserve the right to request students to change their outfits to more suitable attire.
- Students are not permitted to have piercings or tattoos applied whilst on school trips.
- Use of social media is not permitted while on school trips.
- Recording, videoing or photographing staff/students without their permission is an invasion of privacy and is strictly prohibited (as per Code of Behaviour).
- Downloading/distribution/possession of indecent or degrading material is strictly prohibited.
- Students are responsible for their own belongings for the duration of the trip/trip. The school does not take responsibility for loss/damage to travel documents, money or personal items. Therefore, students are advised to leave items of value at home, unless they are required for the student's safety, or for the purpose of the trip.
- Student are not permitted to purchase pellet guns/laser beams/bangers or other potentially dangerous devices/items while on school trips.

In the case of overnight trips:

- The 'Trip Leader' reserves the right to assign bedrooms. Bedrooms must be kept clean and tidy.
- Students must carry the accommodation details with them at all times (in a pocket on clothing, not in a wallet), but they must not give the name of the hotel, their room numbers or mobile phone number to anyone they do not know.
- Students must not enter another guest's hotel room or allow anybody into their room.
- Students must not run or make noise of an intrusive level in the hotel corridors.
- Once the group has retired at night, no student is permitted to be in another student's room, on the corridors or in any other area of the premises. Noise at night will not be tolerated.
- Students must not make requests directly to the hotel staff. They should speak with their group leader first.
- Students must not take items from the hotel or from any other venue visited.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Year European trips - mobile phones will be collected when the group retire to bed for the night.
- In addition to the Code of Behaviour and school trip rules, students must adhere to the law of the country which they visit. In the event of a breach of this, due process of law will follow.

- If there is a suspicion that contraband is present, Presentation Secondary School, Milltown reserves the right to search students' bags/rooms at any time and to remove the item(s) of concern.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians in conjunction with students, to ensure that all documents necessary for travel abroad e.g. passports, identity cards, are up to date and in order. The School will not take responsibility for a student whose personal documentation is not in order and who is prevented from travelling abroad as a result. Students on trips within the European Union shall be required to have a completed EHIC form and a valid passport.
- A student may be sent home, at her parents' expense, if the conduct of the student warrants such.

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### **Contact Information**

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Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to give details of phone numbers for contact in the event of an emergency on a twenty-four-hour basis for the duration of the trip. The trip leader must ensure that they have a copy of the complete contact information and that a copy is left available in the school during the trip for use in the event of an emergency.

This should include:

- A listing of all of those taking part together with home contact details.
- The itinerary to be followed and contact details.
- A contact telephone number for the trip leader.

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### **Insurance & Indemnity**

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The school's insurance policy covers students and teachers whilst they are participating in school approved activities; however, certain activities (as described in the policy document) are excluded from this. Parents/Guardians may request to see the list of exclusions.

All students at Presentation Secondary School, Milltown are also covered by Allianz 24 Hour Pupil Personal Accident Insurance.

When travelling to providers of physical activities, the trip leader will ensure to use only facilities/centres approved by the relevant governing bodies and which can provide their own personal injury and accident insurance.

In the case of school trips outside the island of Ireland, the Board of Management will ensure that the 'Trip Leader' is happy that appropriate travel insurance has been taken out to cover those embarking on the trip, and that the individual students and teachers involved take out their own travel insurance if necessary.

Trips to Europe with bonded trip companies have their own insurance to cover personal injury and accident.

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### **Emergency Procedures**

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In the event of a serious incident/accident, as many members of staff as is possible/practical in the circumstances will come together; agree on an outline of the details of the incident/accident and, taking into account all the facts as they are known at that time, will decide on a course of action. The details and the decision(s) taken will be put in writing as close to the event as is reasonable. The Board accepts that in cases where there is lack of consensus over the course of action, the trip leader (where available) has the final decision.

If it becomes necessary for the trip leader, or any member of staff accompanying the trip, to question a student about a potentially serious matter, he/she must ensure that there is another adult present on the occasion of the interview.

In addition to the Code of Behaviour, students must adhere to the law of the country which they visit. In the event of a breach of this, due process of law will follow.

The trip/trip leader will be in possession of a sum of money which may be used in the event of an emergency.

In the event of any difficulties arising during the course of the trip, the leader will submit an evaluation form to the Principal and the Board of Management outlining the difficulties which arose and recommendations for further trips.

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Date Ratified : 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Review Date : December 2021

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