



**Wilson's Hospital School**

**School Excursions Policy**

**1. Introduction**

It is Wilson's Hospital School policy to organise outings 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 school outings to complement normal school work, for educational or sporting purposes.

Some excursions are organised as part of the course to be followed in a subject area. Other outings and excursions are additional to the curriculum and are not deemed a core activity. Staff organise excursions on a voluntary basis.

The lengths of excursions may vary from a short local visit, to a day out to a longer excursion involving staying away for several days.

School excursions, outings and tours 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 not be permitted to participate in school outings and tours. The Principal reserves the right to disallow a student from participation in a school excursion if, in his/her opinion, the health or safety of the student or other students or teachers is at risk.

All school rules and all school policies apply while on school excursions.

All students selected for sports teams and who travel as part of a class group represent the school and the highest standards of behaviour and conduct are expected.

**2. Procedures**

In general, written permission is required from a parent/guardian of a student before they may go on an excursion. On certain excursions, parents may specify where a child may be collected or dropped off. Staff cannot be responsible for the safety of students once they have left the group under these circumstances. Drop off points will need to be agreed with the teachers involved and the bus company from a traffic safety point of view. Students must supply written permission from their parent/guardian to the teacher prior to the excursion. A parent/guardian or designated adult must be waiting at the agreed drop off point to meet the student. Students will not be left alone to wait at the drop off point. If a

parent/ guardian or designated adult is not at the drop off point we will not wait. In exceptional circumstances a student may be dropped off without prior written permission if the parent/guardian is waiting at the drop off point.

Parents/guardians of members of sports teams may be asked to give on-going permission for a student to participate in games away from school, as these excursions arise. Similarly other activities, which are organised on a regular basis, may require ongoing permission from parents/guardians.

A list of names of students involved in any excursion will be left at the school office and the staffroom notice board with an itinerary, list of teachers accompanying students and an indication of the expected time of arrival back at the school. While every effort will be made to adhere to arranged times on excursions, in particular the arrival time back at school, the school cannot guarantee such times. Where students rely on the school transport service, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians, to organise alternative transport home if this becomes necessary.

Catering staff must be informed about excursions which effect meal times. Absences from lunch or tea should be communicated to the Catering Manager. We encourage the use of packed lunches for students to avoid unnecessary costs. If a food/toilet stop is necessary Motorway Service Stations (eg Applegreen) should be used. Stopping in Shopping Centres is not advised unless in exceptional circumstances and with prior permission from the Principal/Deputy Principal.

Teachers should set work for their classes and leave a copy of their timetable with the work set in the staffroom and study area.

### **3. Supervision**

The number of staff that accompanies a group will be influenced by a number of factors including:

- The number of students travelling
- The age of the students
- The location of the excursion
- The nature of the excursion
- Whether additional supervision will be provided at the location
- If the group will be dividing into smaller groups, each requiring supervision
- The type of transport used
- Appropriate gender balance

Certain excursions will facilitate shopping or recreation which may not be directly supervised. This situation will be indicated on the permission slip or information letter sent to parents/guardians.

The school expects that all students travelling on an extended tour will display a level of maturity commensurate with their age. Students on excursions, which involve an overnight stay in Ireland or abroad, will not 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 inappropriate should not permit their son/daughter to take part in such excursions.

#### **4. School Tours Abroad/Exchanges/Overnight Excursions**

The school will follow normal Department of Education and Skills regulations for excursions abroad. The School Management Board must sanction all such in-term excursions.

Students who withdraw from an excursion after a deposit, or full monies, has 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.

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) 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. Parents are asked to supply the organising teacher with a photocopy of the student's passport prior to the excursion

Parents/guardians will receive a written overview/itinerary of overnight excursions and will be required to give written consent to their son/daughter taking part on the excursion. Students will also sign the consent form agreeing to the rules of the excursion.

Prior to the excursion, students will be informed that full school rules apply on school excursions. A student may be sent home, at his or her own expense, if the conduct of the student warrants it. In this event, a parent/guardian will come to collect the student or they will consent to the student travelling home alone.

#### **5. Health and Safety**

The health and safety of students and supervisors is a priority when organizing and taking a school excursion. Teachers taking any excursion will exercise due care and Wilson's Hospital School will rely on the common sense and judgement of such teachers.

Students who have a medical condition, or who are on medication of any kind, should notify the teacher/s in charge of this and the medication being taken.

Priority to bus companies that commit to having seatbelts on coaches.

Supervising staff may either take the Wilson's Hospital School mobile phone or their personal mobile phone for use in emergency situations.

In case of an accident, staff may apply basic first aid only. On return from, or during, any excursion staff may bring a student to the local Health Centre for check-up or may request a parent/guardian to seek medical advice, should they deem this appropriate.

Where a serious accident occurs, staff will seek medical assistance as a first priority and contact the School or Principal to inform them of events. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible and informed of events, by staff on the outing, or the School Office. School personnel will be sent to assist where necessary, especially where additional supervision is required. In some emergency situations, students on the excursion may travel back to school unaccompanied by a staff member.

Wilson's Hospital School arranges for all parents/guardians to arrange 24-hour insurance cover at the beginning of every academic year. Specific activities are excluded from this policy and parents/guardians should familiarise themselves with the details of this policy every year.

Day excursions will not normally be covered by any other insurance policy. Additional insurance for longer excursions will be organised by the school where considered appropriate.

Approved by the Board of Management on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018