

St. Aidan's CBS School Tours Policy

Our school Mission Statement

St. Aidan's C.B.S. promotes the Edmund Rice Charter through nurturing *faith*, promoting *partnership*, excelling in *teaching*, creating *community*, and inspiring *leadership*.



Our school

St. Aidan's C.B.S. is a voluntary secondary school for boys. We are located in north Dublin and we currently have an enrolment of over 700 students. Our school is a Catholic school operating under the patronage of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust (E.R.S.T.). The characteristic spirit of our school is based on the vision and values of the E.R.S.T. Charter as outlined above in our mission statement. 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.

- We are committed to fostering a sense of identity and self-worth in each of our students.
- We are committed to developing a well-rounded individual with skills, attitudes, sensibilities and personal initiative that will allow each to grow into a mature, confident adult.
- We are committed to developing the whole person - morally, intellectually, aesthetically, spiritually and physically - in a caring, innovative, multi-denominational environment.
- We are committed to striving for high academic standards and in so doing we seek to challenge each of our students to achieve the best that they can.
- We are committed to ensuring that each of our students embraces the whole world community and culture, while at the same time fostering an appreciation of Irish culture in which the school is rooted.
- We recognise that serving both the school (students, staff and parents) and the wider community is a cornerstone of our philosophy, and we are committed to developing in each student innovative capabilities to participate in a dynamic world environment.

Links to Mission Statement:

This policy has been developed in line with our Mission Statement which states that St. Aidan's aims to "promote the Edmund Rice Charter through nurturing faith, promoting partnership, excelling in teaching, creating community and inspiring leadership". 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.

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" (SAMPLE OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM FOUND AT APPENDIX 3) at this stage. Parents will also be given a basic itinerary and expression of interest form to return to the school if their son wishes to be considered for the a place on the trip. In the case of overnight trips or foreign trips, another parent briefing 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 (where relevant).
- 3.** Select participants, in consultation with the principal, year-heads, etc. The school reserves the right to refuse any student a place on a trip.
- 4.** Brief parents further in the case of overnight trips or foreign trips, by way of an information meeting.
- 5.** The number of adults to travel will be carefully considered, taking into account the nature of the trip and the age of the students concerned, to ensure adequate cover from the safety point of view. When selecting staff to accompany students on international school tours, our approach is to allow those who gave up their time to travel the previous year a right to first refusal for the current trip. It is also important to us that students are accompanied by staff with experience of school tours. Staff will be notified of available places and can then volunteer themselves. An open/transparent draw will then take place for any available places. In times of very high demand, and also with a view to including different/new staff members, we ask those teachers who have travelled annually for a number of years to consider this.
- 6.** 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.

7. A meeting will be held with St Aidan's CBS 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 organization 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 taken into account in deciding whether to allow a student participate in a school trip. Consultation with teachers, year heads and management should be had before a decision is made.
- All trips are organised in as cost effective manner as possible taking into account 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 students 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 (Deputy Principal) will give permission for the trip/activity to go ahead or will refer to Principal should any issue arise or need adjudication.
- The details of the trip/activity must be notified to staff by the organising teacher/staff member as soon as permission is granted.
- 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. This would also be entered on VShare by the organising teacher/staff member in advance of the trip.
- 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.
- Taking into account 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 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 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 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. Sanctions might include fines, loss of pass for certain activities, etc. 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, Substance Use Policy, Child Protection Guidelines and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Communication, involvement and dissemination

This policy was written by the school tours policy working group having consulted with the policy coordinator. A process of consultation was then carried out involving school management, staff, the students' council, and the parents' council.

Evaluation

We are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of all of our school policies. Specifically important to this policy are:

- Pupil feedback
- Staff feedback
- Parental feedback

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 19th June 2019.

Review and Development

We are also 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.

Appendix 1
SCHOOL TRIP PARENT CONSENT FORM

Student Name:	
Class:	
Location of Trip:	
Organising Teacher:	

I/We understand that the St Aidan's CBS trip will take place on the following dates:-

Outbound Date:		Time:	:	hrs
Inbound Date:		Time:	:	hrs

to/from Dublin Airport (in the event that the plane is delayed, the tour ends no later than 15 mins after arrival at Airport)

- v I/we understand that it is my/our responsibility to ensure that my/our son is at the airport on time and collected from the airport on time.
- v Should my/our son infringe on any of the rules of this tour which have been explained by the teachers and which he/she and I/we fully understand and accept, whether this infringement be of a minor or more serious nature, I accept whatever punishment may be imposed, including being sent home early and, should this situation arise, I/we will cover the cost of the ticket and any other transport necessary.
- v I understand the staff/supervisors from St Aidan's CBS will be acting in *loco parentis* throughout this tour and that my son will obey their instructions at all times. I/we understand that my son's behaviour in school in the lead up to the trip may have a bearing on their participation on the trip. I also understand that my son may be given some 'free time' at some stage on the trip and that during this time my son must obey all rules as explained to them.

Signature of Parent/Guardian:	
Signature of Parent/Guardian:	
Date:	

[Please return this completed form to the Trip Organiser]

Appendix 2
SCHOOL TRIP STUDENT CONTRACT

Please complete the details below and return your signed contract to the Trip Organiser:-

Student Name:		Class:
Date of Birth:		
Location of Trip:		
Organising Teacher:		

Agreement:

- v I agree to participate in and to make a commitment to the entire St Aidan's CBS trip.
- v I have read the document, supplied by the leaders of the trip, listing the rules regarding the trip and agree to all of the rules included in that list.
- v I accept that any failure on my part to behave responsibly at all times to the teachers/ supervisors/instructors/tour guides, may lead to appropriate sanctions.
- v I am also aware that a possible sanction for what is deemed unacceptable behaviour could result in my being sent home from the trip after my parents/guardians have been informed.
- v I understand that failure to behave appropriately may have a bearing on my selection for future trips.

Student Signature:	
Date:	

[Please return this completed form to the Trip Organiser]

Appendix 3

SAMPLE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM

15th May 2017

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

I am writing to you to inform you that the school has decided to run a foreign trip during the next academic school year 18/19. The trip will take place around the Easter holidays, which runs from the middle to the end of April 2018. The dates have yet to be confirmed by the travel company.

Our destination is Italy, visiting the country's capital city of Rome and moving on to Sorrento. We will spend a total of 5 days and 4 nights abroad, spending two days in Rome, taking in the attractions with guided tours. Students will get to visit The Colosseum, The Vatican and many more of the city's wonders. The students will have the chance to spend the day in a theme park before moving onto the Sorrento area, where they will visit Mt. Vesuvius and the town of Pompeii among other things during our remaining 2 days. A detailed itinerary will be given to you and your son(s) at a later date.

St Aidan's feels that the students will benefit greatly from the experience of visiting another country. The tour will be culturally enriching, educational and will leave our students with very fond memories of their time in St Aidan's. We estimate that the price of the trip will cost between €720 and €750, depending on flight prices, and will be paid in instalments.

We are opening the trip up to next year's TY and 5th year pupils and your son's acceptance into the travelling group will be determined by the staff of St Aidan's and myself. I will approach the principal, his teachers and his year head to discuss his behaviour record and his suitability. After I have viewed each candidate's record I will then make an informed decision on whether he will be offered a place.

The school would appreciate if you discussed the possibility of going to Italy with your son over the coming days and return his application by Monday 18th of May. A deposit of €150 will also have to be paid by Thursday 24th May.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Brown

Trip Application - Please detach and return to Mr. Brown

Name of student: _____

Class: _____

I wish for my son to be considered for the trip

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) signature _____