



ST. PATRICK'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

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Principal: Rachel Harper

Deputy Principal: Hannah O'Connor

Board of Management – Chairperson: Canon David Mungavin

Tours, Outings and Excursions

2026

Introduction

A comprehensive range of tours, outings and excursions is included as part of the school programme for all classes throughout the school. These activities support and complement all curricular areas and are arranged to be age and class appropriate. Tours, outings and excursions include visits to appropriate educational centres, activity centres, athletic, competitions, swimming lessons, local amenities, etc.

Rationale

Taking into account the age and interest of the children, school tours, excursions and field trips are arranged by the school to present the children with learning opportunities in which they can observe, investigate and relate their findings to their own environment.

All activities off the school campus are arranged at the discretion of the Class Teacher, and all arrangements will be made in consultation with the Principal or Deputy Principal. Teachers choose a venue and activity suitable for their own class level that is complementary to the curricular programme for that class, with the addition of swimming lessons provided for 2nd to 6th classes. Teachers will ensure that venues are suitable for ALL children regardless of need.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Within the school's Mission Statement, St Patrick's NS aims

- ☐ to recognise, encourage, and celebrate individual talents, interests and potential throughout the curriculum and beyond;
- ☐ to promote an understanding and appreciation of the moral, spiritual, religious, social and cultural values which shape our society and to foster respect for such values;
- ☐ to nurture an awareness of national and European heritage, helping the children to develop a deep sense of identity within a European and worldwide context;
- ☐ to welcome children from other cultural backgrounds, and to respect and celebrate cultural and linguistic differences;
- ☐ to actively encourage children to care for themselves, their families, their friends and their environment, placing priority on the development of a sense of personal and joint care, respect and responsibility, both within the school, family, parish and wider community.

Aims

Tours and excursions are provided to support the curriculum, through hands-on visits and learning opportunities within the community, whether through art, music, theatre, science, physical activity, in the environment and/or local/wider community contact.

Organisation - advance

The organising teacher/s will consider a number of matters as part of the advance planning process for any school excursion. General considerations include:

- timing and frequency of tours within the school year,
- level of supervision,
- interest and relevance of learning,
- tour duration,
- age and group-appropriate destinations
- cost.

All tours, outings and excursions require the approval of the Principal, who may refer proposed outings to the Board of Management before giving a final sanction.

There are a number of important matters that may relate to each specific class, and it is the responsibility of the organising teacher to ensure that all arrangements are made, though some individual tasks may be delegated.

Consent:

The teacher must ensure each child has been given permission for tours and excursions on the Aladdin platform. This consent is requested from parents at the beginning of the school year.

Purpose

All tours must be planned, considering the purpose and value of the activity as a means of promoting the school's educational programme.

Curriculum

Planning of excursions should be done in conjunction with general curricular planning and should have specific aims relating to curricular areas, whether focused on one subject (eg Science – Young Scientists' Exhibition), or including cross-curricular links (eg Visual arts, Drama, Music and English – Lambert Puppet Theatre). Details of planned excursions should be included in Class Teachers' long and short-term planning.

Venue

(Appendix 1)

It is the responsibility of the organising teacher/s to make all arrangements regarding a tour or excursion, including the selection and vetting of the venue. Usually, not more than two classes will travel together, unless venue and transport arrangements warrant otherwise. The teacher must become familiar with the venue, particularly with reference to safety, educational opportunities, inclusion and services available (eg telephone, toilets, disabled access, emergency facilities). Where no telephone/receptionist facilities exist, the teacher must bring a mobile phone.

Transport

The organising teacher/s will ensure that

- ☐ tenders are sought for all tours, as appropriate, and insurance cover is checked;
- ☐ a mode of transport appropriate to the distance and the numbers travelling will be chosen;
- ☐ the transport hire company and drivers accept the following conditions (communicate conditions to transport provider in advance):
 - a) All transport supplied will be suitable and well-maintained. Teachers have the right to refuse to accept the use of a coach that they find unsuitable for the outing and, in such a situation, it is expected that a replacement will be supplied or the money refunded.
 - b) The driver should be used to dealing with children and have knowledge of, and follows, the agreed itinerary and timetable for the tour. The driver is responsible for the safety of the children while they are travelling, embarking and disembarking, but teachers have the right to intervene if it is felt the safety of children is compromised.
 - c) Eating food on the coach is not permitted. Incidental consumption of food (small snacks, etc) and appropriate singing are at the discretion of the supervising teacher in consultation with the driver.
 - d) Coaches will be left in the same condition as they were found.

The school usually uses *Tony Doyle Coach Hire*, as their coaches comply with all our safety requirements, etc.

Cost

Organising teacher/s will ensure that the cost of the tour is reasonable and represents value for money. When communication is made to parents regarding the trip **Parents should be informed that the school can provide assistance with expenses, following confidential consultation with the Principal.** In consultation with parent representatives, teachers will inform children of rules regarding an upper limit on spending money, though spending money is usually discouraged on tours.

Insurance

Teachers must check with the Principal that their planned activities are in compliance with those permitted under the terms of the school's insurance policy, and may not extend the agreed range of activities on the day of the outing.

Notification

Having studied the logistics (times, transport, costs, safety arrangements, etc), email notification is sent to parents outlining all details of tours and excursions, this should include location, transport, supervision request, cost, curriculum links etc. Parents, as well as children, are made aware that the highest standard of behaviour by all children is expected, noting that children are acting as ambassadors of the school on such occasions.

Parental involvement

The desired level of (vetted) supervision during the entire trip is decided by the organising teacher/s. The ratio of adult supervisors (school staff and parents/guardians) to children does not fall below 1:10). During transport to destinations the minimum ratio 1:10 will not apply as it may be necessary for parent/guardians to use their own transport. The ratio of 1:8 is recommended for the infant classes. Clear guidance of roles and responsibilities is provided to all supervisors (see Appendix two). It is noted that the overall responsibility for the children rests with the teacher/s, as it would on a normal school day (ref Appendix).

Organisation – on the day

A standard schedule of arrangements for the day is adapted for each outing and is followed by all accompanying supervising adults (under a teacher's overall supervision). These arrangements include supervision and safety measures.

Inclusion of ALL children regardless of needs

The organising teacher/s will check in advance that all needs within the class can be accommodated on the selected transport and at the chosen venue. He/she will ensure that arrangements such as additional supervision, equipment, resources etc are in place (as required). Every effort is made to ensure that all children derive the maximum benefit and enjoyment from the activity.

Tour pack

Organising teachers will take a tour kit on all outings (Appendix 2 - 4). This may be supplemented by items arranged through the school office, ie

- ☐ first aid materials, (**SPECIFIC MEDICATION AS REQUIRED**)
- ☐ refuse, illness bags, and kitchen roll;
- ☐ mobile phone;
- ☐ additional funds for refreshments and/or emergency, as appropriate.

Weather conditions

Weather forecast is closely monitored. Rainwear, a change of clothes, and sun protection may be necessary, depending on the venue. Weather conditions/warnings may influence ability to safely proceed with tours, outings and excursions.

Yellow warning: “be aware” check exposure to danger, consult principle/deputy principle for written approval in writing.

Orange warning: “dangerous” may be a threat, consult principle/deputy principle for written approval.

Red warning: School closure, tour, outings and excursion cancellation.

Clothing

The school uniform is worn on day trips. Teachers, in consultation with the Principal, may make an exception (eg particular sports kit), or as a special privilege, however clothing must be appropriate for the specific trip.

Supervision

(Appendix 2 - 4)

Supervision is arranged appropriate to the venue, activities, age and ability of the children involved. All supervision is the responsibility of the teacher/s in charge and accompanying supervisors are informed of this in advance of the trip. Supervisors are advised of child to supervisor ratio and to ensure they are never alone with one child for child protection reasons. Supervisors are informed in advance of schedule details, behavioural expectation, those with medical needs, safety procedures, allocated first aid supervisor,

Conduct

Children’s behaviour on tours, outings and excursions will comply with the standards set down in the school’s *Behaviour Charter*. In certain circumstances, parents may be asked to agree to a contract on behaviour. Where it is felt that a child’s conduct would pose a safety risk or inhibit the educational benefit for him/herself or others, the Board of Management may refuse the child permission to travel. Parents will be advised of this in advance.

Communication during excursion

The organising teacher/s will have a mobile phone, to be used in case of an emergency in which he/she needs to communicate with a parent, the principal or school office during a school tour, outing or excursion, eg in the case of an accident or ill health.

Plan in case of emergency

The organising teacher/s will bring a hard copy of all parent emergency contact information, and ensure access to details regarding family doctor, allergies, permission for first aid, anaesthetic, etc. However, every effort will be made to immediately contact parents directly in the case of an emergency.

Collection of children

Parents will be given an estimated time of arrival back at the school and are asked to collect their child promptly with no delay.

Alternative arrangements for non-participants

The teacher will arrange that any child from the class who are not going on the tour, outing or excursion are placed in the care of another teacher at school, under whose supervision he/she will remain while the group is away from the school. A programme of learning will be prepared for the child and discussed

with the nominated supervising teacher.

Resources

(ref Appendix 4)

A range of resources are available to support tours, outings and excursions, these may include information on a range of locations, clip boards, etc. Teachers review resources as part of their planning, and also refer to the check-lists provided for all excursions.

Assessment

Children may follow a range of revision and reporting activities, as appropriate to the activity, as well as their age and ability. A programme of learning based on information gained and observations made by the children during their outdoor investigations influences the full learning potential of each tour, outing or excursion. This work can involve recording, analysing and interpreting the information collected and presenting the findings using a range of media. ICT can play a very useful role in analysing and presenting data, as can the drawing of maps and graphs and the construction of models. Discussing and comparing the findings of various groups can enrich the process further. Findings such as these may lead to new questions and may encourage further research, investigation and learning.

Success criteria

Teachers will review tours, outings and excursion, based on the children's experience, as well as their activities back at school. Advice and recommendations are shared with colleagues. Where serious problems arise, either with a venue or transport, teachers will report back to the transport/tour organiser as well as the principal.

Ratification and communication

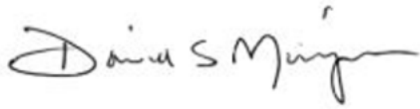
This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management in 2025. It is available to all the school's education partners on the school's website and in hard copy through the school office.

Implementation

This policy is officially implemented throughout the school, from the date of its ratification by the Board of Management.

Policy review

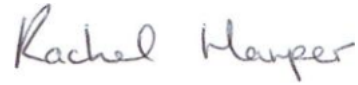
This policy is scheduled for review in September 2026, unless the Board of Management considers that a review is required at an earlier date. Co-ordination of the review is the responsibility of the SDP co-ordinator, in consultation with the principal. Those involved in review will include the Board of Management, the Principal, SDP co-ordinator, staff/ISM team, and parent representatives, and may include pupil input.



Signed: _____

Canon D Mungavin
Chairperson
Board of Management

Date: 28th April 2026



Signed: _____

R Harper
Principal

Date: 28th April 2026

Appendix 1

SUGGESTED VENUES

Infant classes

Glenroe Farm
Lambert Puppet Theatre, Monkstown
Magician (eg Civic Theatre, Tallaght)
Newbridge House (farm yard and picnic)
The Zoo

1st and 2nd Class

Airfield Trust (farm), Dundrum
Aquarium, Bray
Glendalough/Annamoe Trout Farm
National Art Gallery
National Museum, Kildare St and picnic in Merrion Square/St Stephen's Green
Natural History Museum, Merrion Square and picnic
Newbridge Farm, gardens, house and forest walk Pine
Forest Art Centre, Kilternan

3rd and 4th Class

Annamoe Fish Farm
Avondale
Castletown House, Celbridge and Butterfly Farm
Christchurch Cathedral and Dublinia
Dolls Museum
Dublin Castle
ESB House, Fitzwilliam Street
Glendalough

Greenane farm and maze

Japanese Gardens, and National Stud

Trinity College Dublin

National Art Gallery

National Museum, Kildare St and picnic in Merrion Square/St Stephen's Green

Natural History Museum, Merrion Square and picnic

Newbridge Farm, gardens, house and forest walk

Newgrange, Co Meath

Powerscourt, Enniskerry

Russborough House, Blessington

Wexford Heritage Park, Ferrycarrig

5th and 6th Class

Christchurch Cathedral and Dublinia

Croke Park

Dublin Castle

National Art Gallery

National Concert Hall

National Museum of Ireland (Collins Barracks)

National Museum of Ireland (Archaeology, Kildare St / Natural History, Merrion Street and picnic in Merrion Square/St Stephen's Green

Natural History Museum, Merrion Square and picnic

Malahide Castle and Railway Museum

Maritime Museum, Dun Laoghaire

Trinity College Dublin

Appendix 2

Organising Teachers guidelines

Introduction

Tours, outings and excursions of educational merit are regularly organised by the school. The school's ancillary staff and parents provide extra adult supervision, when required.

Organisation of supervision

The Class Teacher is responsible for the organisation of the excursion and for the designation of sub-groups of children to each accompanying supervisor. **Supervisors who accompany a school tour, outing and excursion are responsible for the safety of children assigned to their care, and children must be supervised at all times.** The supervisory ratio will vary from one trip to another depending on the nature of the trip, however the minimum ratio is 1 adult supervisor to 8 children (excluding adults allocated for SNA purposes, as this is an additional adult outside of 1:8 ratio). Small sub-groups are organised in advance by the Organising Teacher. The children allocated to each adult must remain with the designated adult, unless a change is organised/sanctioned by the Organising Teacher. ***An adult must always sit at the emergency door on the bus.**

Teachers

Teachers should refer to the following check-list before embarking on a tour, outing or excursion:

Teachers inform all attending supervisors (parents and staff) regarding:

- School's DLP and DDLP (Designated/Deputy Liaison Person)
 - Ensure supervisors are aware that they may not be 1-1 with a child at any time
 - Provide access to a copy of *Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment*, *Supervision Policy* and *Tours and Excursions Policy* via e-mail in advance of trip
- Location and transport details
- programme of activities.
- potential hazards;
- procedures in the event of accidents and emergencies.
- check lists of all children in their care;
- standard of behaviour deemed acceptable by Organising Teacher / school, and procedure to be followed in case of misbehaviour;
- supplies (as required by Organising Teacher).
- information on the latest weather if appropriate.
- a list of all participants (supervisors, excursion providers)

Teachers and attending school staff ensure equip with:

- parental consent agreement for all children
- emergency contact numbers and relevant medical information (particular attention to asthma and anaphylaxis)
- telephone numbers for local doctors, hospitals, Gardaí, rescue services and the school;
- emergency contact numbers for the principal and / or chairperson of the board of management.
- mobile phone;
- first aid kit and refuse bag.
- list of all supervisors and those children assigned to them (children/supervisors may be given common badges colours for ease of identification);
- guest lanyards will be given to all supervisors and must be worn at all times.
- a detailed programme of activities (to include agreed times for snacks, breaks and the use of toilet facilities.
- activity sheets, work guidelines and instructions; or trail booklets (as applicable);
- equipment needed for investigations, eg compasses, trundle wheel, plastic containers for samples/specimens, etc (as required);
- spare pencils and erasers, etc (if needed);
- **children's medication in accordance with the school policy** (as required, and only when sanctioned by the board of management);

Appendix 4

Teacher checklist

- ☐ information on the latest weather forecast
- ☐ a list of all participants in the fieldwork
- ☐ parental consent for each child checked on Aladdin, medical details and parental contact numbers
- ☐ telephone numbers of local doctors, hospitals, Gardaí, rescue services and your school
- ☐ on longer day trips the home telephone numbers of the principal and / or chairperson of the board of management may be useful
- ☐ access to cash and mobile phone

- ☐ first aid kit
- ☐ list of all supervisors and the groups assigned to them
- ☐ a detailed programme of activities.
- ☐ a rucksack to carry all these bits and pieces, activity sheets, work directives or trail booklets for children.
- ☐ check-lists of children's names for supervisors
- ☐ equipment needed for investigations (e.g. compasses, trundle wheel, plastic containers for specimens, spare pencils and erasers)
- ☐ suitable clothing, sun protection and strong footwear
- ☐ sacks for litter and refuse
- ☐ lunch and drink
- ☐ some children may require access to medication and, depending on the school policy, this may be held by the teacher (remember to carry sufficient medication in case of delays)

Personal:

- high-vis jackets
- warm waterproof clothing (and suitable footwear!);
- good rucksack;
- lunch and drink.
- Mobile phone

Appendix 3

Volunteer supervisors' guidelines

Introduction

Tours, outings and excursions of educational merit are regularly organised by the school. The school's ancillary staff and parents provide extra adult supervision when required

Organisation of supervision

The Class Teacher is responsible for the organisation of the excursion, including the designation of sub-groups of children to each accompanying adult supervisor and ensuring that all adult supervisor's have been Garda vetted. Supervisors who accompany a school tour, outing, or excursion are responsible for the safety of the children assigned to their care, children must be supervised at all times. The supervisory ratio will vary from one trip to another. Small sub-groups are organised in advance by the Class Teacher. The children allocated to each supervisor must remain with the designated supervisor unless a change is organised/sanctioned by the Class Teacher. Supervisors must not be in a 1-1 situation with a child at any time.

Before taking responsibility for a group of children, parents and supervisors should be thoroughly briefed on

- School's DLP and DDLP (Designated/Deputy Liaison Person)
 - Aware that they may not be 1-1 with a child at any time
 - Given a copy of *Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment, Supervision Policy* and *Tours and Excursions Policy* via e-mail in advance of trip.
- the tour location.
- have a detailed programme of activities.
- be made aware of any hazards that could be encountered, and the procedures to be adopted in the event of accidents and emergencies.
- have a checklist of all children in his/her care.
- be aware of the standard of behaviour as detailed in the *Behaviour Policy*.
- have required supplies (as supplied by Organising Teacher);
- Supervisors must ensure that the children in their care observe the following guidelines at all times:
 1. Follow all rules / safety instructions / guidelines as encountered
 2. Leave the place as clean as the group found it
 3. Be particularly cautious when crossing the street, and follow all rules of the road
 4. Exercise special caution when close to machinery.

Follow-up

Supervisors should inform the Organising Teacher of any matter regarded to be of importance in reviewing the tour, outing or excursion (positive as well as negative!), as well as for future planning.

Child checklist

- ☐ a clear understanding of the activities that they will undertake, use visuals, auditory and reading to support all children's understandings and expectations.
- ☐ a clear understanding of the group to which they are allocated and the name of its leader
- ☐ school, class or group badge to help with identification in crowded areas
- ☐ suitable clothing, sun protection, and strong footwear
- ☐ a rucksack to carry items and keep hands free for work!
- ☐ copy of work directive or trail booklet
- ☐ map
- ☐ pencils (not ballpoint pens) and eraser
- ☐ extra paper and crayons to take rubbings and make sketches
- ☐ plastic containers to collect specimens
- ☐ compass and other equipment for investigations
- ☐ lunch and drink