




# OUT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES POLICY

**Ní neart go cur le chéile.**

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<b>Signature of Chairperson:</b>	
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## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all of our students while on all school related activities and is underpinned by the school's Code of Behaviour.

## **RATIONALE AND CONTEXT**

### **School Ethos Statement**

In fulfilling its mission, the school nurtures and affirms the uniqueness and full development of each individual. It promotes the personal and emotional development of students, staff and management in a caring and respectful environment.

Heywood Community School recognises the importance of cultural and extra-curricular activities for all. This incorporates respect for our national language, our heritage, our sporting, artistic and musical interests, and our sense of national community and school pride. A cultural and extra-curricular programme is offered, and all students are encouraged to participate.

This happens within the school itself and through various out-of-school activities. The school positively promotes and encourages students to participate in school trips. As per the DES Circular M20/04, "the objective of an educational tour should be that it should provide significant benefit in educational, intellectual, cultural and social development of the maximum number of pupils in the particular grade(s) taking part in the tour and which cannot be provided by in-school activities alone" (see appendix).

For the purpose of this document the term 'School Tour' refers to all excursions during school hours, outside school hours and over-night(s).

### **General Information:**

All school tours will endeavour to take place in accordance with the Department of Education and Skills Circular Letter M 20/04 (copy appended).

At any given time, all school tours are conducted in line with public health and safety guidelines and information to hand at the time of a proposed trip.

All staff members have received adequate Child Protection training and are aware of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and what the school's duty of care is to the students

The school's Code of Behaviour, applies to all school tours.

The school will endeavour to have at least two staff members present on all excursions but in extreme circumstances this may not be possible

Parents/Guardians will be notified, in advance, of all tours pertaining to their sons/daughters. Before a student is accepted on a tour parents/guardians must sign the appropriate consent form or consent digitally. At the beginning of the academic year, Parents/Guardians of

Transition Year students sign consent for scheduled out of school activities as per TY calendar, excluding overnight trip(s), which will have individual consent requirements.

The Board of Management of Heywood Community School is the authority body in a community school and has delegated authority to the Principal. The school will endeavour that all students attend school trips/events however a school may refuse a student permission to participate in out of school activities if they have serious breaches of the school code of behaviour. In granting approval for a school-trip, 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.
- The availability of qualified substitute teacher and SNA cover

### **Students with Additional Needs**

Students with Additional Educational Needs are included on school tours and are offered the opportunity to take part. The school will put every effort into ensuring students with additional education needs can fully participate. Adequate arrangements for supervision of all students are arranged as appropriate depending on the nature and duration of the tour. The organising teacher should liaise with the Learning Support Department/Ryan Centre to identify these specific needs. Students may be accompanied by an SNA (Special Needs Assistants) if appropriate.

Where a school tour takes place over a number of days involving travel out of the country the supervision ratio may need to vary to cater for the needs of some students.

Applications from students with more complex care needs will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and advice from professionals will be sought if needed. If it is felt that the care needs of a student cannot be adequately catered for on a school tour the application to be included in the tour may have to be refused.

### **Procedures for different types of tours:**

#### **a) Day Tours**

Day Trips Day Trips may take place during the school day and may extend beyond normal school hours. Some examples of day trips are:

- Sports events during and outside the school day
- Attendance at school sporting event in a supporting capacity
- Fieldwork associated with specific subjects such as Biology/Geography.
- Subject specific trips

- Cultural trips which may include: Visits to Art Galleries, Exhibitions, Museums, Theatre visits, etc.
- Careers exhibitions and University Open Days
- Debates
- Concerts
- Religious Retreats
- Events in connection with programmes in the school (Transition Year/LCVP)

1. Day tours may take place during the school day or may extend beyond normal school hours.

2. Any teacher (Tour Organiser) planning to organise a school tour must first inform the Principal or a Deputy Principal of the intended date and nature of the activity, its educational or other benefits that the students will derive from the tour.

3. Date, time and names of participating students will be posted on VShare as a School Activity (SCH) by the organising teacher.

4. The organising teacher takes the responsibility to give each student a letter to take home giving full details of the tour and a Consent Form to be signed by parents/guardians and students or communicate with parents in a digital format on school management information system.

5. All students going on any tour during normal school hours must return the permission slip signed by parents/guardians, by the specified date, to the teacher in charge before the outing takes place if permission is via a hard copy rather than a digital version.

6. On all day tours there must be an appropriate ratio between the number of students and the number of staff travelling. This ratio will vary depending on the nature of the tour and the age of the students travelling. On a private coach there should be at least one member of staff in addition to the driver.

7. Day tours may involve a financial cost to the student.

8. The school will always have the mobile/contact details numbers of the Coach Company or staff involved in case of delays or any other occurrences.

9. For tours which extend beyond normal school hours, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that arrangements are in place for their daughter/son's journey to/from the school or venue.

10. An Accident/Incident Report Form must be completed for all accidents or incidents which may occur. Examples of reportable incidents include: persistent lateness at the rendezvous point; not staying with the group; rudeness to teachers; and serious breach of school rules, particularly in relation to alleged or proven alcohol or substance abuse.

## **b) Overnight Tours**

Any member of staff who is considering taking students on an overnight tour must first discuss the proposal with the Principal as secretary to the Board of Management to be

sanctioned by the Board of Management. Unless the trip is specific to a group (e.g. a language class, specific text, specific project) it should be open to all students in principle, within the year group. The proposal must include a full itinerary and educational benefits of the trip.

Once consent has been received from the Board of Management the organiser may proceed as follows:

1) Information is sent to parents/guardians outlining the educational value of the tour, a draft itinerary and deadline for registering and payment of non-refundable deposit. Permission Letter and Consent Form is also sent to parents/guardians. Parents/guardians must advise the tour leader of any medical conditions including for example allergies and phobias (fear for example of confined spaces) and any relevant medical conditions that are likely to/may arise due to known specific needs of a student. Parents/guardians are also required to list their child's medications, allergies or dietary requirements. Parent/guardians must give permission for tour leader to administer standard painkillers, should the need arise. It therefore the duty of parents/guardians to inform the school of any relevant health and safety issues which might affect their children. All sections must be completed and the form returned to the organiser by a specified date

2) The Principal has the right, to refuse a pupil permission to take part in a school tour. This will follow consideration of the pupil's record of compliance with the school code of behaviour and whether the pupil might prove to be a liability to him/herself or to others on health, safety or disciplinary grounds while on the trip. Such a decision will be made by the Principal/Deputy Principals, in consultation with parents/guardians, the teacher in charge of the tour, the Year Head and relevant staff. In some cases, numbers of students taking part in tours may be limited by logistics of travel. A decision regarding the allocation of these places will be made on a case by case basis. The decision of the school management is final.

3) If a passport is required, a photocopy of the student's passport must be included with the deposit or in good time. Passports may be scanned to the tour organiser and stored on Microsoft to be deleted after the event.

4) Students must have their European Health Insurance Card for travel to countries within the EU.

5) The onus is on parents/guardians to ensure that their sons/daughters have all the necessary up-to date documentation well in advance of the tour.

6) Parents/guardians should be informed in good time if there are any mandatory or recommended inoculations for the destination. It is important that parents/guardians realise that the onus is on them to make arrangements for their sons/daughters to receive all necessary inoculations.

7) Students must attend all information meetings and co-operate with all requests pertaining to the trip.

8) Permission from parents/guardians must be sought, allowing students to participate in certain high risk activities.

9) Parents/guardians must be aware that the organiser reserves the right to make minor changes to the itinerary.

10) Mobile phone communication between teachers/supervisors and students on the tour may be necessary. A list should be made of participants' mobile numbers and students must have the mobile phone number of the school mobile in possession of the trip leader – to be carried with them at all times while on the trip. A mobile phone is available from the School and this number may be used by parents if they need to contact the tour organiser, as staff members are not required to give their personal mobile numbers to students.

11) The tour organiser should have at least two emergency contact numbers; usually this will be the Principal/Deputy Principals or a member of the Board of Management.

12) On overnight stays, members of staff may carry out inspection of rooms and students bags, with the room occupants/luggage owners present. This will only be done for good reasons based on reasonable grounds, such as concern for physical safety, suspected possession or use of a banned substance or other concerns.

13) If it is deemed necessary, the student may be asked to empty their pockets, suitcase/bags.

14) If a student is found to be in serious breach of any of the rules in the School Code of Behaviour, the organising teacher will contact a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) for direction.

15) An Accident/Incident Report Form will be completed for all accidents or incidents which have occurred. Examples of reportable incidents include: persistent lateness at the rendezvous point; not staying with the group, rudeness to teachers and serious breach of school rules, particularly in relation to alleged or proven alcohol or substance abuse.

16) For school trips abroad it is recommended that at least 3 staff members travel for supervision reasons and in the event of student illness.

## **Tour Organising Team**

### **Tour Leader**

When the proposal is sanctioned by the Principal/Board of Management the tour organiser will inform the pupils and parents concerned.

### **Tour Team:**

#### Organising and Planning

- The decision on the selection of staff members to form the tour team will be made by the Principal and Deputy Principals following consultation with tour leader. Following the consultation with the Principal the staff members on the tour team will be informed. A reserve list is advisable in case a member of the team should subsequently be unable to travel.
- The tour leader(s) should meet the full tour team at the outset to discuss duties involved in organising and planning the trip. For example: tour finances, passports, European health insurance cards, itinerary, medical kit, contact numbers, etc.

- Prior to leaving each teacher should be assigned a small number of students and be known to the students as their Group Leader. If possible, these groups should remain unchanged throughout the tour.
- Where room allocation has to be made prior to departure this shall be arranged by organising teacher in consultation with Principal. These allocations are made in good faith and the school's decision will be final.
- During the course of a tour/trip, a tour leader may have to make decisions or actions in their position of "loco parentis"

### **Professional Responsibilities of the Tour Team**

Mindful of the DES guidelines regarding Child Protection, the following must be observed:

- Teachers will act in a responsible manner and will maintain the same standards of care as apply in a school situation.
- The organising teacher must ensure that adequate travel and school insurance is in place.
- Arrangements should be made for a brief written summary report from the tour leader to the Principal and the Board of Management upon return.
- The achievements of the tour.
- A financial statement.
- Any difficulties or problems, which arose during the course of the tour.

### **Students**

- Students must obey, where appropriate, the school's Code of Behaviour and any rules laid down by the tour leader and teachers while away:
- Pupils must adhere to the appropriate school rules at all times.
- Pupils may be required to wear official school uniform on trips unless otherwise decided by school management.
- Respect for all staff members and other students at all times.
- Respect others at all times e.g. drivers, guides, cabin crew, fellow travellers, those sharing transport and those sharing accommodation.
- Students must not wander off or break away from the group without permission.
- The use of tobacco/vapes, alcohol, drugs or any other illegal substance is forbidden.
- Pupils must adhere to the tour dress code as set down by the tour leader.
- Pupils will participate fully in the activities of the tour.
- Pupils will behave appropriately during leisure time, if not under direct supervision of teachers.
- Pupils must follow the rules of the hotel, hostel or other type of accommodation where they are staying.
- Pupils are responsible for ensuring that all forms of transport are left litter free and are not damaged by them in any way.
- When on overnight tours pupils are responsible for leaving their accommodation tidy.

- Pupils must have respect for and comply with local customs and laws, particularly when travelling abroad. Students will be informed in advance of traveling of these expectations prior to traveling by staff members.
- Pupils are responsible for their own belongings.
- In their use of mobile communication pupils are expected to show respect for self and others (In line with the Acceptable Use Policy)
- Interactions of an intimate nature upon trips are contrary to the school's code of behaviour.

### **Sanctions for Misbehaviour**

Students must be made aware that there are sanctions for misbehaviour on a school tour.

Breaches of the school's code of behaviour on tour will be addressed in a timely and fair manner in accordance with the school code of behaviour where possible. If the tour leader feels that a specific sanction is required such as the student missing an activity he/she will impose that sanction in serious situations.

If a sanction is being imposed, it must be made clear to the student why it is being imposed. A student prevented from attending an activity must be supervised by a teaching member of the tour team for the duration of the activity.

When a student is guilty of 'serious misbehaviour' the tour leader will phone a member of the school's SMT for direction. Sanctions may be imposed at source following Principal's guidance and the student may face additional sanctions on return to school up to and including suspension.

Examples of 'serious misbehaviour' include:

- Use/possession of alcohol.
- Use/possession of illegal substances.
- Disruptive behaviour on transport, coach, plane, boat or in the hotel/hostel.
- Lack of respect for tour team or any other supervising adults.
- Theft or criminal damage to property of others

(This list is not exhaustive)

In ongoing and extreme cases of dangerous and/or gross misbehaviour a student may be sent home (paid by their parents/guardians). In the event of this happening, the parents/guardians will be informed and if necessary a teacher will travel home with the offending student. The tour leader will decide which teacher accompanies the student home.

In the case of a criminal incident the parents/guardians will be informed immediately and the matter will be reported to the relevant local authority.

### **c) Sporting Events**



1. Students who are participating in sporting activities which take place in other locations outside of the school are not required to obtain written permission from parents/guardians as on enrolment parents/guardians sign their consent for such occasions.
2. Each sports coach is responsible for taking a properly equipped first-aid kit to the match.
3. If a minor accident occurs the coach will treat it on the spot. In the event of a serious accident the coach will inform the parents/guardians and ring an ambulance/or other mode of transport directly and then inform the school principal. (Please note: School staff are not medical professionals.)
4. All injuries/accidents are recorded.
5. Staff organise transport to and from all matches. In case of local venues, parents may be asked to provide transport.
6. In the event of supporters attending matches a letter giving full details and an attached permission slip must be given to each student who wishes to attend. Preference will be given to students who represent the school in the event/sport.

#### 7. School Sports Uniform

Students who have not returned their slips will not be allowed to attend the event.

In relation to gear taken to matches for sporting events:

- The coach must take the set of jerseys that correspond to their team and sport. Where this is not possible, the coach should consult with the appropriate coaches of the team/sport from which the set of jerseys is being borrowed.
- Jerseys must be counted before being taken. If any jersey is missing, a note must be made of the number of the jersey that is missing.
- A record must be kept of the jersey each student wore for the event.
- After games, while still at the venue where the game is, the jerseys must be re-counted. Jerseys are the responsibility of students who wore them for the event and must be handed back to the staff member in charge.
- If jerseys remain missing and are not re-produced, an itemised report to Deputy Principal and/or Sports Coordinator should be produced, which details what jersey(s) are missing, who was assigned to the jersey, the full panel, if jerseys were left in dressing room, who are match helpers were, and any other relevant information.
- Theft of jerseys is to be treated as such in the School Code of Behaviour.
- Under no circumstances are jerseys allowed to be taken home by students. Likewise, jerseys are not to be awarded to students after finals etc. This includes if jerseys are from an 'out of date' set.
- If dressing rooms are unlocked, the jersey bag and unused jerseys should be brought out to pitch side/courtside by the coach.

· The washing of jerseys should be done by the coach or delegated to a game helper. Jerseys should be counted before and after this

### **Financial Guidelines for School Tour Activity**

All funds collected for activities must be administered through the school's financial secretary.

Payments may be made electronically through the school's Management Information System

Students whose book rental and/or TY charges are outstanding may not be considered for events in excess of TY contribution.

Tour organisers must collate collect and prepare a statement of funds for the secretary, including students' names and an account of monies received and dates of receipt of monies

A receipt for all monies paid will be issued or payment acknowledged through VShare.

Proper and full insurance cover must be in place for all school tours abroad through a fully bonded tour company.

### **Communication of this Policy**

This policy will be listed and publicised on our school website and discussed at Staff, Student and Parent Meetings.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management on a periodic basis or as the need arises.

**Date Ratified by BOM:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Review Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Appendix***

- Department of Education Circular Letter M 20/04: Educational Tours by School Groups (both inside and outside the State)