# Educational Trips, (Day/Overnight) and Sporting Events Policy

## Purpose

To set out a policy for people with responsibilities for organising and managing educational visits. Educational visits provide a valuable opportunity for students where they can encounter experiences which are not available to them in the centre. It is essential that all such visits are carried out with the highest regard for the health and safety of those taking part. DDLETB is the employer of staff in all Youthreach centres and, as such, must formally require staff in these establishments to abide by the requirements set out in this policy,

## Scope

This policy applies to all members of the staff of Youthreach centres, trip leaders, guardians who accompany any students and any helpers who take students off site. It is also applicable to the students participating in the activity (trip/tour or outing/sporting event).

The Code of Behaviour Policy, centre rules and all relevant legislation in relation to the protection and safeguarding of children, apply on all trips, to all centre activities both during and outside of normal centre hours; it applies both on and off site and anywhere students are clearly identified or identifiable as students of a Youthreach centre, whether or not they involve an overnight stay.

Before a student is accepted for an activity, his/her previous behaviour may be taken into consideration. Parents/guardians will be notified in advance, of all activities and both parents and students should sign the appropriate consent forms.

D.E.S. circular M20/04 states ‘The objective of an educational tour should be that it should provide a significant benefit in the educational, intellectual, cultural and social development of the maximum number of pupils.’ The template attached as appendix 1 on this circular, should be completed by the Coordinator in the planning of a centre tour and should be retained in the centre for examination by a Departmental Inspector in the course of normal centre inspection.

‘Educational tours of more than one-day duration should be arranged to coincide with normal school holiday periods.’ Deviation from this can only be sanctioned by DDLETB senior management. Any trip that is sanctioned to take place on a centre day(s) should generally be in line with the teacher to student ratio place system operated by a travel company. (As a guide, most travel agents offer a ratio of 1:8).

Where centre tours impinge upon the standard academic year, the following **guidelines** are put forward as to the type of educational visit envisaged by the Department as acceptable for the purposes of regarding absence on such visits as centre days:

(a) Educational visit involving an exchange of groups of students.

(b) Educational visit involving attendance at a course of instruction.

(c) Educational visit involving active participation in a music or drama festival.

(d) Educational visit to a conference or exhibition of clear educational value (e.g. Young Scientist Exhibition, Higher Options Conference or Exhibition on Careers and Guidance Counselling).

This list is given by way of example and is not intended to be exhaustive.

### **Approval of DDLETB**

Before any overnight trips are organised, approval MUST be sought and received from the DDLETB Regional Manager. Two months’ notice for a trip abroad and one month’s notice for overnight trips within Ireland. Included in the proposal requesting permission should be the educational or other benefits that the students will derive from the trip. The centre will only use the services of licensed tour operators/travel agents when organising trips.

### This policy will outline procedures for

1. Overnight Tours/Trips
2. Day Tours/Trips
3. General Guidelines for the Extra/Co-Curricular sporting activities.

## Roles & Responsibilities

### Board of Management

1. To ensure that the policy is developed and evaluated regularly
2. To approve the policy

### Coordinators

1. To establish structures and procedures for the implementation of the policy
2. To monitor and support the implementation of the policy
3. To promote and foster centre tours/trips
4. Ensure that all educational visits have a clear and appropriate educational purpose, and are properly authorised by DDLETB before any trip takes place.

### Professional Responsibilities of the Staff

Staff must exercise an appropriate duty of care to all students. The Child Protection Guidelines are central to this approach.

## Overnight Tours/Trips

### Tour Leader

1. It is recommended that one teacher be nominated as the Tour Leader/Director of the tour who will be expected to ensure that it is conducted in accordance with the agreed established structures and procedures developed by the Coordinator in conjunction with the staff of the centre.
2. When the tour is sanctioned by DDLETB the centre tour organiser will inform the students and parents concerned. When numbers are confirmed she/ he will invite staff members to join the team.

### Tour Team organisation and planning

1. Tour Team and Reserve List: A Tour Team, led by the Tour Leader should be put in place as soon as possible. A reserve list is advisable in case a member of the team should subsequently be unable to travel.
2. Organising Roles: The Tour Leader should meet the full Tour Team at the outset so as to discuss individual duties and nominate a Deputy Tour Leader. Ideally all members of the Tour Team should be involved in organising the tour, taking up duties in one of the following areas.
   1. Tour Finances – the Tour Leader or Deputy Leader
   2. Group Passport – the Tour Leader or Deputy Leader – for reasons of privacy some students may obtain their own passports.
   3. E111 forms and insurance – any member of the Tour Team
   4. The Tour Itinerary – cultural passes, internal tours – any member of the Tour Team
   5. General needs – medical kit, home contact numbers, medical services’ contacts in area to be toured etc. – any member of Tour Team.
3. Planning Tour Supervision: 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.
4. Planning Tour Supervision Rota: The Tour Leader should place teachers on a Supervision Rota for use in the various types of overnight accommodation used.

### Professional Responsibilities of the Tour Team

Mindful of the DES guidelines regarding Child Protection, Youthreach Safeguarding Statement and all relevant legislation the following must be observed:

1. Teachers will act in a responsible manner (including the consumption of alcohol) having regard to the fact that they are in the company of and responsible for the care of students. Teachers will maintain the same standards of care as apply in a centre situation.
2. It is important that the rules created by the centre and agreed by teachers and parents and signed by students before the trip are enforced by all teachers while away with students, especially with regard to the consumption of alcohol by students.
3. The organising teacher must ensure that adequate travel and centre insurance is in place.
4. The teacher requesting the trip must inform the Coordinator of his/her intention and proposed itinerary before informing students, other staff members or parents. (Keeping in mind the required notice to DDLETB for approval for overnight trips and trips abroad).
5. The proposed itinerary, dates of departure and return, age-group of students and estimated cost of the trip should be discussed with the Coordinator.
6. Written permission from the DDLETB at least 2 months in advance must be sought. (One month for overnight stays in Ireland).
7. Parents should be consulted 2 months prior to departure for foreign trips. Any overnight trip will require one months’ notice.
8. Provide information re: cost of trip, pocket money and any additional costs which may arise.
9. Discuss discipline code with students and parents.
10. Organise insurance/ passport/ E111/ Point of contact.
11. Centre trips that are not deemed to have an educational benefit must take place within centre holiday period as per DES circular.
12. Inform teachers of the purpose of the trip to promote cross curricular learning in the class before and after the class.
13. Arrangements should be made for a summary report from the Centre tour leader to the Coordinator outlining: the achievements of the tour, a financial statement, any difficulties or problems which arose during the course of the tour.
14. 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 trip leader (centre mobile) – to be carried with them at all times while on the trip. A mobile business phone should be available from the centre and this number may be used by parents if they need to contact the tour organiser, as staff members should **not give their personal mobile numbers to students.**
15. If necessary two members of staff will carry out inspection of rooms, with the room occupants 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.
16. If it is deemed necessary, the student may be asked to empty his/her pockets, suitcase/bags.

### Parents/Guardians

1. Sign consent form giving permission to their son/daughter to go on the tour.
2. Parents should be made aware of

* The purpose of the trip.
* The itinerary and duration of the trip.
* The costs involved and method of payment.
* The rules of behaviour to be observed.
* Information regarding insurance and indemnity.
* The documentation required.
* Attend any scheduled meetings and sign centre rules and procedures and Code of Behaviour Policy supporting the rules that the centre has in place.
* Inform the Tour Leader of any medical condition(s) of which the leader should be aware of to ensure the health and safety of all students while in the teachers’ care.
* Parents should be made aware of their duty to inform the Tour leader of any relevant Health or Safety issues which might affect their children.
* Organise all relevant documentation for their child.

**The signed permission of parents must be an essential pre-requisite for the participation of their children in any centre tour if under 18 years. Students over 18 can sign their own agreements.**

## **Day** **Trips** (within Ireland)

Day trips may take place during the centre day and/or may extend beyond normal centre hours.

1. Day trips must have the approval of the Coordinator.
2. Members of staff who wish to take students on a day trip must put their request in writing to the Coordinator. Included in the proposal should be a brief summary of the educational or other benefits that the students will derive from the trip.
3. Once the Coordinator has approved a trip, the organiser should:
   1. In order to inform parents/guardians, forward brief details of the trip to the Resource Manager and prepare a letter home to be co-signed by the Coordinator and the teacher.
   2. Organise the relevant bus/transport.
   3. Collect student contribution to the cost of the activity.
   4. The staff member should include it in the monthly calendar and/or on staff notice board.
   5. Provide the admin staff with a list of students participating in the trip.
   6. On all day trips there must be an appropriate ratio between the number of students and the number of adults traveling. This ratio will vary depending on the nature of the trip and the age of the students traveling. On a private coach there should be at least one member of staff in addition to the driver.
   7. Sufficient adults, assistants and care workers must accompany students at all times.  Students with special needs must be accompanied by the appropriate Care Assistant.
   8. Day trips may involve a financial cost to the student. For example, a fee may be charged to cover the cost of transportation to/from sporting events which students are required to pay in advance.
   9. The centre will always have the mobile/contact numbers of the Coach Company or staff involved in case of delays or any other occurrences.
   10. For trips that extend beyond normal centre hours, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that arrangements are in place for their son/daughter’s journey to/from the centre if under 18 years old. The organiser of the trip must be informed in advance of these arrangements.
   11. Students will return to the centre. Exceptions will be made on an individual basis where a note/contact has been obtained from parents / guardians in advance of alternative travel arrangements.
   12. An Accident/Incident Report must 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 centre rules, particularly in relation to alleged or proven alcohol or substance abuse.

### Sporting Trips / Activities

1. The coach/teacher is responsible for taking a properly equipped first-aid kit to his/her match.
2. At the start of each academic year the Health and Fitness coach/teacher should ask students to complete a brief form outlining their medical history.  This will be signed by parents/guardians for students under 18 yrs. This should be kept securely and shredded at the end of each year by the teacher.  If a teacher has concerns about any condition raised in this form they should contact the Coordinator who will in turn contact the parents/guardians.
3. The coach/teacher organises transport to and from all matches, using a recognised coach company or centre mini bus. Coach/teacher/parent will **never accompany a student alone** in a car.
4. When an away match is organised during centre hours, the number of adults traveling must be dependent upon the staffing requirements of the activities in the Centre. Generally one teacher will travel with a team. The needs of the students in the Centre must receive priority when organising such matches and wherever possible one teacher and an accompanying adult will travel with teams.
5. At least one male supervisor will accompany all boys’ teams and at least one female supervisor will accompany all girls’ teams. In mixed-sex events both male and female supervisors will accompany teams where possible.
6. The ‘recommendation’ for activities involving supervising 15 to 18 year olds is what is called the two adult rule. (Ratio: 1 adult for 10 older students).
7. Trips/Activities with a high level of risk attached, such as sporting activities, will require TWO teachers – curriculum permitting.
8. If a minor accident occurs the coach/teacher will treat it on the spot and report the incident to the Coordinator and/or Resource Manager who will contact parents/guardians by phone call.
9. In the event of a serious accident;
   1. The coach/teacher will ring a Doctor/Ambulance/or other mode of transport directly.
   2. If a child is to be taken to A & E the driver should be over 21 and have a full licence for 3 years at least.
   3. In these cases there should be more than the driver and the injured student in the car. This can be done by;
      1. Delegating responsibility for the remaining group to the accompanying teacher, the coach (the designated person) stays with the injured party.
      2. Two other students, or an adult, accompany the coach and the injured student to the A&E or doctor’s surgery.
      3. The coach will contact the Coordinator with the details of the incident in order that this information can be relayed to parents/guardians. This information should include;
         * The nature of the injury.
         * Details of where the injured student is being brought and how.
         * Details of who is delegated the role of leader in accompanying/supervising the main group to their destination.

Any accident deemed to be of a serious nature is recorded on an accident incident report, a copy of which is submitted to the Coordinator. The coach will apprise students of the necessary safety equipment for each respective sport.

## Legislation

All DDLETB staff and outside agencies must adhere to legislation that is in force at the time.

**Child Care Act, 1991**

[**Child Care (Amendment) Act 2007**](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2007/act/26/enacted/en/html)**, 2011, 2015**

**Child Care (Amendment) Bill 2017**

[**Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998**](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/49/enacted/en/html)

**Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012**

[**Education Welfare Act 2000**](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2000/en/act/pub/0022/index.html)

[**Youth Work Act 2001**](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2001/act/42/enacted/en/html)

[**Children Act 2001**](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2001/act/24/enacted/en/html)

[**Children (Amendment) Act 2015**](http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2015/a3015.pdf)

**National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts, 2012-2016**

[**Thirty-First Amendment of the Constitution (Children) Act 2012**](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/ca/31/enacted/en/html)

[**Child and Family Agency Act 2013**](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2013/en/act/pub/0040/index.html)

**Children First Act 2015**

**Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011)**

**DDLETB’s Data Protection Policy**

**Childcare Guidelines**

**Safeguarding Statement**

## SANCTIONS

### Major Incident

If deemed necessary by Tour Leader and if possible, a student may be sent home.  
Centre and parents should be notified of this and time of arrival.  
Student should be accompanied by a member of staff accompanying the Tour Group.  
Cost of this to be borne by parents.

The Teacher concerned will:

* Fill out an official report.
* The student will sign a statement.

A standard letter should be sent to the parents with the student and a phone call made to parents expressing dissatisfaction regarding the student’s behaviour while on tour. This is to request parents to contact the centre and arrange an immediate interview. This should take place prior to the student returning to centre.

A meeting of the Tour Team should be held on first day after return to review report on incident(s) and agree sanctions.

Minor Incident:

Action to be taken by Teacher/Tour Leader on the spot.

A warning to be issued regarding report if incident recurs.