



Our Lady of Mercy College
Beaumont, Dublin 9

Principal: Ms. Maura Gray

Deputy Principal: Ms. Ciara Howard



Educational Tour and School Trip Policy



1. Introduction

Our Lady of Mercy College supports and facilitates a wide range of school tours and educational outings as part of our commitment to a holistic education. Tours are organised with the aim of exposing students to experiences that foster growth socially, academically, morally, physically, personally, and culturally, while equipping them with life skills.

School tours extend learning beyond the classroom, reinforcing the curriculum and contributing to the overall development of students' independence, resilience, and social responsibility.

Please note: The use of the word parent refers to parent and or guardian

2. Link to Mission Statement

This policy has been developed in line with our Mission Statement, which states that the core values of Our Lady of Mercy College are *"respect for all and the nurturing of individual potential, academically, spiritually and culturally as a member of the school community and in the spirit of the Mercy Ethos."*



Our Lady of Mercy College Beaumont, Dublin 9

Principal: Ms. Maura Gray

Deputy Principal: Ms. Ciara Howard



3. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to:

- All staff who take students off-site.
- Students participating in trips.
- Parents/guardians of participating students.
- The Senior Leadership Team and Board of Management (BOM), who sanction school trips.

It covers:

- Field studies
- Day trips
- Extra-curricular trips (matches, debates, drama etc.)
- Overnight trips in Ireland
- Overseas school tours
- Part-day trips

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- DES Circular M20/04 (Educational Tours)
- Our Lady of Mercy College policies: Child Protection, Code of Behaviour, Health & Safety, Substance Use, Anti-Bullying
- Legislation & guidelines: Children First Act 2015; Education Act 1998; Education Welfare Act 2000; Equal Status Act 2000; Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004; Teaching Council Code of Professional Conduct; General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018

Definitions of School Tours

- **Day Trips** – excursions where students leave the school premises and return within the same day. These trips may include cultural visits, sports events, workshops, or subject-specific field studies. They are designed to complement classroom learning within a safe, controlled timeframe.
- **Overnight Trips in Ireland** – trips involving at least one night spent off-campus at a designated accommodation. Examples include regional cultural experiences, sports tournaments, or academic competitions. These trips foster independence, collaboration, and practical application of classroom knowledge.
- **Overseas Trips** – trips outside Ireland involving a minimum of one night's stay abroad. They offer exposure to different cultures, languages, and international experiences, deepening global perspectives and fostering cultural appreciation.

4. Aims of the Policy

- To emphasise the educational and social value of off-site activities.
- To guide staff in planning and organising trips.



Our Lady of Mercy College Beaumont, Dublin 9



Principal: Ms. Maura Gray

Deputy Principal: Ms. Ciara Howard

-
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders (staff, students, parents, BOM).
 - To ensure a balanced programme of trips that enhances learning without overburdening the timetable or parents financially.

Benefits

School trips:

- Provide hands-on learning opportunities, linking classroom knowledge to real-world contexts.
 - Foster teamwork and social skills by encouraging collaboration and communication.
 - Expose students to diverse cultures and perspectives, nurturing empathy and awareness.
 - Spark curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.
 - Encourage responsibility and independence.
 - Promote inclusivity and community belonging.
-

5. Approval and Sanctioning of Trips

- Day trips and extra-curricular activities require approval from the Principal/Deputy Principal.
 - Overnight trips (Ireland and abroad) require prior approval of the Board of Management.
 - Proposals must include itinerary, dates, purpose, year groups, numbers, accommodation, transport, supervision ratios, insurance, costs, and (for overseas trips) tour company details.
 - The BOM will consider educational value, cost, safety, timetable impact, and sustainability before approval.
 - Overseas trips must be arranged through a licensed, bonded tour operator.
-

6. Planning and Organisation

- Teachers must complete a risk assessment for each trip.
 - Written parental consent is required for all trips outside the normal daily/extra-curricular programme.
 - Parents must provide up-to-date medical and emergency contact details.
 - For overseas trips, an information evening for parents and students is compulsory.
 - Students and parents must comply with deadlines for deposits, forms, passports, visas, and medical information.
-



Our Lady of Mercy College Beaumont, Dublin 9

Principal: Ms. Maura Gray

Deputy Principal: Ms. Ciara Howard



7. Participation: Attendance, Behaviour and Finance

Attendance and Behaviour

School trips, outings and tours are a **privilege**, not an entitlement. Students who do not meet expected standards of behaviour or attendance, as determined by the Principal, may be refused permission to participate.

- All school rules and policies apply during trips.
- Students represent the school at all times; the highest standards of conduct are expected.
- Serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour may result in:
 - Exclusion from trip activities.
 - Being sent home at parents' expense (unaccompanied or with a staff member).
- Any additional costs incurred, including staff accompaniment, will be the responsibility of the student's family.

Attendance

In Our Lady of Mercy College we encourage high levels of attendance. Students who do not meet a minimum attendance in school may be denied a place on a school trip.

Finance

- All school fees (services fees, Transition Year fees) must be up to date before deposits are accepted.
- Failure to pay or engage with a payment plan may result in exclusion.
- Payment for a trip does not guarantee participation; attendance and behaviour standards also apply, failure to meet expected standards may result in the loss of a place on a tour and forfeit of monies paid.
- Students may be offered a conditional place on a school tour; this place will be offered to a student provided they meet certain standards of behaviour or attendance. Failure to meet outlined conditions will result in the loss of a place and forfeit of monies paid.

Appendix 1

- Cancellation and refund conditions will be outlined in initial parent letters. Refunds are subject to tour operator terms.
- Students withdrawing may forfeit monies paid.

8. Supervision and Child Protection

- Supervision ratios will reflect the nature of the trip and student age. Ratios are determined by school management.
- Some trips may involve limited free time (e.g. shopping, theme parks). Students must remain in groups.
- On overnight trips, students are not under 24-hour direct supervision. Parents who are uncomfortable with this should not grant permission.



Our Lady of Mercy College Beaumont, Dublin 9

Principal: Ms. Maura Gray

Deputy Principal: Ms. Ciara Howard



-
- Teachers will establish protocols for:
 - Supervision of overnight accommodation.
 - Gathering students in busy or open areas.
 - Procedures for illness or medical needs.
 - The **Our Lady of Mercy College Child Safeguarding Statement** applies during all trips.
-

9. Health, Safety and Emergencies

- Health and safety are paramount. Staff will exercise due care and judgment.
 - Parents must notify staff of medical needs and provide medication.
 - Staff will administer basic first aid; professional medical help will be sought if necessary.
 - Accident/incident reports will be completed as required.
 - Students travelling within the EU must carry a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).
 - Student Personal Accident Insurance is included in school fees.
 - In the event of accident, injury, or illness:
 - Parents and the Principal will be informed promptly.
 - Appropriate medical advice will be sought and followed.
 - A parent may be required to travel if a student cannot return home as scheduled.
 - External agencies (Gardaí, Department of Foreign Affairs, Embassy/Consulate, local police) may be contacted where necessary.
-

10. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Board of Management** – Approves overnight/foreign trips; ensures compliance with policy.
 - **Principal/Deputy Principal** – Oversees planning, approves trips, ensures safeguarding compliance.
 - **Trip Leader** – Prepares itinerary, risk assessment, supervision plans; communicates with parents; maintains records; liaises with Principal.
 - **Staff Members** – Supervise students, ensure safety, uphold school rules, act *in loco parentis*.
 - **Parents/Guardians** – Provide consent, medical details, and support school expectations.
 - **Students** – Represent the school respectfully, cooperate fully, follow rules and instructions.
-



Our Lady of Mercy College
Beaumont, Dublin 9

Principal: Ms. Maura Gray

Deputy Principal: Ms. Ciara Howard



11. Review

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on .
It will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required by changes in Department of Education guidance or child protection legislation.

Signed: Gerry Lambe

Appendix 1 Conditional Offer

Date:

I _____ understand that my place on the school tour is conditional. It is subject to my adherence to the code of behaviour. I know that I need to be on time and organised for my classes. I will follow school rules and instructions given to me by any member of staff.

I understand that should my behaviour be in breach of the code of behaviour at any point before the school tour in April 2026 that my place could be forfeited and I will forfeit money paid as per the cancellation policy of the tour company. I am also aware that should my behaviour be in breach of the Code of Behaviour while we are away in Italy I may have to fly home with a teacher both of which are at my own expense.

I understand the above conditions _____ (Student)

Parent _____

School Principal _____