



Holy Family Secondary School Educational Excursions, Trips and Exchanges Policy

As at June 2022

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Ratified by Board of Management on: **15th June 2022**

Proposed Policy Review date: **As required**

Ms T. Brophy
Chairperson, Board of Management

Ms S. Allen
Secretary, Board of Management

Sr. Kate Cuskelly
Representative of the Diocese

1. Link to Mission Statement

This Policy has been developed in line with our Mission Statement which states;

'We promote the Christian virtues of faith, hope, love, gentleness, respect and tolerance, and we emphasise togetherness and family. Guided by these Christian virtues, and dedicated to the pursuit of excellence, it is our mission to provide a safe, caring, inclusive learning environment in which to foster the spiritual, intellectual, academic, aesthetic, physical, emotional and social development of each pupil so that she may fulfil her own unique potential and may leave our school with the capacity and the willingness to contribute to the building of a society characterised by these Christian virtues'

All educational excursions, tours and exchanges will be compatible with the ethos of Holy Family Secondary School.

Rationale

Holy Family Secondary School strives to provide an effective education for all its pupils and is committed to the education, in the broadest sense of the word, of all pupils who attend the School. The Board of Management concurs with the Department of Education guidelines in Circular Letter M20/04 which states that; *"the objective of educational tours for schools should be that they be of benefit in the intellectual, cultural and social development of the pupils taking part in them..."*

Holy Family Secondary School provides an academic education, which also recognises that exposure to a variety of experiences and cultures, is part of a holistic education.

- To reflect a world which is developing and changing, current educational philosophy recommends that pupils have first-hand experience wherever possible. School tours allow learning to extend beyond the walls of the classroom and as such are an integral part of a balanced educational process. School tours require good preparation and organisation to optimise the learning experience for pupils.
- The curriculum content of some subjects requires field studies /trips /outings/ recreational activities, which take place off school grounds.
- Trips assist in bonding between pupils and across year groups and subject groups, as well as providing teachers with an opportunity to get to know pupils in a non-classroom environment.
- There should be a balanced programme of outings and trips for the school year that does not prove too costly to parents and does not overburden the school timetable.
- All educational trips must be consistent with the rationale as specified by the Department of Education and Science in Circular Letter M 20/04.
- To assist staff in the planning of trips and outings, so that they are aware of all necessary precautions which must be observed to provide for the health and safety of staff and pupils. It also ensures that trips and outings take place efficiently and smoothly and that the standard of supervision is firmly within guidelines and standards.

2. Scope of Educational Tours, Excursions and Exchanges Policy:

This policy applies to all members of the staff of Holy Family Secondary School who take pupils off school grounds. It is applicable to the pupils participating in the activity and to their parents/guardians.

The Code of Behaviour of Holy Family Secondary School applies to all pupils of Holy Family Secondary School and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours; it applies both on and off the school grounds and anywhere pupils are clearly identified or identifiable as pupils of the School.

Before a pupil is accepted for a trip, previous behaviour will be taken into consideration. Parents/guardians will be notified, in advance, of all trips and both parents and pupil should sign the appropriate consent. In this way, parents, pupils and teachers enter into a partnership promoting good and appropriate behaviour at all times.

This Policy should be read in its totality, as there may be some overlap in the requirements for planning specific trips and/or activities. To include;

- Local and one-day events and activities
- Tours/extended field trips greater than 24 hours and/or which require an overnight stay
- Foreign tour
- Foreign exchanges

The policy also operates within a legislative framework and takes account of the following.

- The Education Act ,1998
- The Education Welfare Act , 2000
- Equal Status Act, 2000
- The Equality Act, 2004
- Circular Letter M 20/04 (DES)
- The Children First Act, 2015
- The Education for Persons with Special Needs, 2004
- Health and Safety Acts, 1989 and 2005
- National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 (amended 2014)

Definitions:

- **‘School’** means Holy Family Secondary School, Newbridge, Co. Kildare
- **‘Educational excursion, trip and exchange’** includes but is not restricted to the following activities: off-site visits, study and cultural visits, adventure activities and expeditions, overseas trips and exchanges, residential trips and exchanges. It is not intended to cover routine sporting activities or physical education.
- **‘Tour Leader’** means a named member of staff who has been approved by the Principal. The Tour Leader has responsibility for the supervision and plan for the educational excursion, trip or exchange, wherein practicable and applicable.
- **‘Tour Assistant’** means named accompanying member(s) of staff who have been approved by the Principal to assist the Tour Leader with the task of the educational excursion, tour or visit.
- **‘Designated First Aid Tour Assistant’** means a named accompanying member(s) of staff who have been approved by the Principal to assist the Tour Leader with the task of the educational excursion, tour or visit.
- **‘Parent/Guardian’** means those having parental responsibility for a child.

3. Aims and Objectives of the Educational Tours, Excursions and Exchanges Policy

- That the health, safety and welfare of our pupils is safeguarded by ensuring that reasonable care has been taken in the nature of the trip chosen, the level of supervision provided, the venue, the means of transportation, the demands on the physical resources of the pupils, having regard to their age and capacity, and the dangers to which they may be exposed.
- That pupils gain maximum educational benefit, social interaction and enjoyment from all tours/outings/exchanges in keeping with our ethos and holistic development of our pupils in Holy Family Secondary School.

“To Build Family and To Be Family”

- To clarify expectations of behaviour and to ensure that all parents/ guardians and pupils are aware of the application of the school’s Code of Behaviour at all times when engaged in a school-related activity.
- That staff are aware that the degree of care required of them should be that of the standard of a prudent parent, which would vary with the circumstances and the age of the pupils. Participating staff members and other designated adults supervising the trip act in loco parentis and therefore have the responsibilities and rights of a prudent parent. Health and Safety, Child Protection policies also apply to supervision on trips. Teachers give up their free time voluntarily to give their pupils opportunities they might not usually be able to take and Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and pupils should show their appreciation of this by co-operating fully.
- To involve all members of the school community in ratifying this policy in order to promote partnership, ownership and implementation of an active, living policy.

4. Standard Operating Procedures PARTICIPATION and PLANNING

- i. The approval of any school outing must, in the first instance, be sought and obtained from the Principal.
- ii. Declaration of Interest in Tours/Exchanges of Extended Duration. For tours and exchanges of any extended period (typically 24 hours +), the Tour Leader must initially seek to determine if there is economic viability for the tour.

The completion of a declaration of interest DOES NOT AUTOMTICALLY ENTITLE THE PUPIL to the assumption that they have secured a definite place on the tour/exchange. Partaking in school tours is a privilege not a right.

- iii. It is wholly recognised that the organisation of, or participation in, any school excursion, tour or exchange is a voluntary undertaking on the part of member(s) of staff. It is also wholly recognised and valued that such educational outings are optional, extra-curricular activities and as such, there is no expectation or otherwise, that subject departments and/or any member of staff will be bound by precedent and/or any other factors to undertake the task of organising and/or participating in such an outing.
- iv. Each outing is a stand-alone event, however, all outings and events associated with HFSS are bound by the collective policies and procedural HFSS operational norms.

- v. It is for the Principal to decide, after consultation with, and taking due regard to the specific requirements of each outing, which staff members, and how, shall be appointed. Tour Leader(s), Tours Assistant(s) and wherein practical and applicable, Designated First Aid Tour Assistant(s).
- vi. Once the Principal has been fully appraised of all the details of a tour and only once has the Principal given approval, then the Tour Leader is fully empowered to proceed with the event.

These details include, amongst others; (this list is non-exhaustive)

- *Educational purpose of the event*
- *Names, addresses and emergency contacts of all participants*
- *Fitness to travel declaration from parents/guardians*
- *All medical conditions, allergies etc.*

*****If there is a persistent or serious medical issue, a doctor's letter of fitness to travel will be sought.***

- *Full itinerary of events*
- *Tour agent details*
- *Travel insurance details*
- *Visa and passport details*

****IMPORTANT NOTE: If any information is omitted at the time of application, and/or if information that may negatively affect participation later becomes known, the Principal, acting on behalf of the HFSS Board of Management, has the discretionary right to cancel participation and/or the event itself.**

Please communicate effectively and comprehensively with the school on matters of important loco parentis concern. Please take reasonable care to provide accurate and relevant information. If you do not do so, HFSS reserve the right to void participation.

All parties are expected and assumed to act in good faith and to provide all relevant details and comply with the criteria for participation. Failure to do so will result in exclusion from the event.

Health and Safety considerations at all times, take precedence over all other considerations.

- vii. Adequate arrangements for supervision of all pupils should be arranged as well as appropriate insurance. The ratio of members of staff to pupils shall be pre-determined by the Principal and the Tour Leader and will take consideration of the event intended.
- viii. Pupils and parents/guardians shall be acquainted in advance of the tour with rules, regulations and special requirements of that tour. Parents/guardians shall be given an outline of the purpose, itinerary, dates and costs of the tour, before a deposit is sought. Each pupil and her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given a form outlining the rules, regulations and special requirements and they shall be required to sign that (i) they understand the rules etc. and (ii) they are willing to abide by them at all times.
- ix. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may be required to complete a permission letter for the Tour Leader to travel outside the state's borders with their child.

Pupil participation on any outing is subject to the costs being met for same in FULL.

The costs and expenses of outings are planned so that they are cost-effective to pupils. All monies for flights and accommodation expenses, will be paid directly to the tour operator or travel agent, not to school staff or event coordinator.

- x. The inclusion and/or exclusion of particular pupils in a school tour shall be at the discretion of the school and ultimately rests with the Principal, acting on behalf of the Board of Management.
- xi. The Pupil Services School Charge is an entirely separate and distinct school support payment. The Pupil Services Charge must be paid before participation in an extra-curricular overseas/overnight tour, exchange and/or excursion.

IMPORTANT: Criteria for exclusion will include: persistent minor breaches of the Holy Family Secondary School's Code of Behaviour; suspensions arising from breaches of the school's Code of Behaviour; any drugs/ alcohol /smoking/vaping related suspensions; pupils who have shown themselves to be unwilling or unable to take instruction and/or failure to meet the financial obligations and costs of the outing.

In all cases the frequency, seriousness and how recently breaches of the Code of Behaviour took place will be factors. Behaviour on previous school trips will also be a factor.

Therefore possible criteria for exclusion may include; (this list is non-exhaustive)

- Breaches of Code of Behaviour
- Poor school attendance record
- Serious medical conditions
- Partial payment of event fee
- Criminal or anti-social behaviour(s) prior to or during the event
- Failure to full disclose all pertinent event related information
- Not compliant with travel requirements (e.g. failure to secure passport or visa in time, money paid will not be returned in such an event as costs must be met) Flight payments may be recoverable, depending on the terms and conditions of the travel insurance policy only. HFSS will not be liable for these repayments.

Pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s) shall acquaint themselves with the Holy Family Secondary School's Code of Behaviour and agree to abide by it. This is already understood to be accepted as being fully understood.

Each pupil and her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given a form outlining any additional rules, regulations and special requirements pertaining to the specific criteria and requirements of particular excursion, trips and exchanges. Parent(s)/ guardian(s) and shall be required to sign same to give consent for participation.

- xi. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be required to sign a consent form which will allow medical advice to be followed in the event of injury/illness and where it is not possible to contact them in the time available. In the event of accident or injury, medical opinion will be sought immediately

and best practice will be followed. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted as soon as is practically possible.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be required to give details of phone numbers for contact in the event of an emergency on a twenty-four hour basis for the duration of the tour. School mobile telephone(s) will be supplied to Tour Leader for school tours. The number(s) of the phone will be given to parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils prior to departure for use only in case of emergency or absolute necessity.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be requested to inform the Tour Leader in writing, and with full disclosure, any special medical needs, conditions or medication required by their daughter while on the tour.

Pupils must organise their EHIC cards for travel within the EU. Pupils who do not hold Irish passports may have to obtain additional visas for travel. It is the pupil's responsibility in such cases to obtain same, prior to travel.

Passports must be valid for at least six months following the trip and will be photocopied by the organisers. The onus is firmly on parents/guardians to ensure that their daughter has all necessary, up to date documentation in advance of the tour including visas and inoculations if necessary.

On occasion, photographs or videos of pupils may be taken during their educational tour/trip or exchange activities. Host institutions, associated organisations or HFSS may also ask pupils for an original creation or piece of work relating to an event. HFSS may wish to make use of, and/or, reference and publish such promotional materials. The publications could include, but are not limited to, school newsletters (online and in hard copy), associated school websites, web-pages and newspapers. If published, third parties would be able to view the photographs and work. If photographs are taken, or materials are used, this would only strictly be for the purpose of educating pupils, promoting the school, or promoting education.

Mobile Phone Use

Mobile phones can be brought on tours and exchanges (1) **OUTSIDE IRELAND** and (2) **for tours of LONG DURATION (more than 2 nights) INSIDE IRELAND**. Pupils can bring/use them but they must act in a responsible and fair manner. This is a high trust model whereby HFSS pupils are expected to fully engage with the experience and 'live in the moment and look up from the screen' and not abuse the privacy rights of others. This derogation of our OFF & AWAY school policy for the pupil to have access to a mobile phone, is balanced against the recognised need, to keep in contact with home and for additional travel security measures.

When on a visit or in lessons, students are not permitted to use mobile phones unless for educational purposes which will be at the discretion of teacher, as to when appropriate use of mobile phones is permitted. **The mobile phone will be confiscated if there is any abuse of this privilege.**

Travel Insurance

The school will use a bonded travel agent and avail of group travel insurance. However, the school's policy may **NOT** cover claims arising from certain medical conditions. It is the responsibility of the pupil and pupil's parents(s)/guardian(s) to inform the school if there is anything at all that may affect cover.

IMPORTANT Most travel insurance policies do NOT provide any cover for psychological conditions such as stress, anxiety, depression, eating disorders or mental instability.

Medical cover: The travel insurance policy is NOT private health insurance, in that it only covers unavoidable emergency treatment. For pre-existing medical conditions, travel insurance cover will not be given if travel is against the advice of a doctor.

Pupils will NOT be eligible for participation if travel is against the advice of a doctor.

Child Protection and Safeguarding Risk Assessment

The Holy Family Secondary School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures will apply at all times during educational excursions, tours and exchanges.

Any incident amounting to an allegation or suspicion of abuse which occurs whilst on any educational visit will be reported immediately to the Principal (Designated Liaison Person) who will advise as to how the situation is to be managed.

In compliance with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act, 2012, host families organised by the Holy Family Secondary School Exchange Tour Leader will be Garda vetted.

Vetting of host families abroad cannot be undertaken through An Garda Síochána. For exchange or home stay visits abroad the responsibility for vetting the host families, rests with the hosting school. Parents will be informed of this prior to their agreement to allow their child to attend such visits. Holy Family Secondary School facilitates, and does not select host family accommodation with the organising host school.

COVID-19: The tour provider will issue up-to-date guidance and the insurance policy information for cover for Covid-19 risk and eventualities. **This will be date and tour specifics determined.**

COVID-19 vaccination: As per HSE government guidelines, it is **strongly recommend that participants have their Covid-19 vaccination up to date. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure the student has relevant tests/Covid-19 cert for travel.** The Department of Foreign Affairs has up-to-date information for travel and COVID 19 regulations etc.

COVID-19 - Department of Foreign Affairs (dfa.ie) www.dfa.ie

First Aid : The Tour Leader will ensure that there are adequate first aid provision arrangements.

- ✓ bring a suitably stocked first aid container.
- ✓ one appointed person to take charge of first aid arrangements.
- ✓ risk assessment dealing with first aid requirements considering the nature and complexity of the activity and the number of pupils and supervisors.

Tour Finances:

All income and expenditure related to the Tour should conform fully to the accounting practices of the school and JMB FSSU Guidelines. A full account of income and expenditure should, at reasonable notice, be available to the Principal and the BOM. The Tour Leader is responsible for the following Financial Procedures:

1. Parents should be informed as early as possible of the full cost associated with the tour.
2. Pay the deposit, other interim payments and the final payment to the tour company, by the various due dates.
3. When on tour the Tour Leader should keep receipts of all money spent.
4. If for whatever reason there is significant money left over at the end of the tour, it should be refunded to the students when they return to school. Students must sign for any refunded money and parents/guardians must acknowledge receipt of the refund in question.
5. On completion of the Tour and all associated financial transactions, the Tour Leader must provide the Principal and the BOM with a complete Financial Statement.
6. Any deficit or borrowing to support a school tour must be avoided at all costs.

Transport

The Tour Leader, as part of the planning and risk assessment of an educational excursion, tour or exchange, shall consider the transport requirements, including contingency planning for cancellation, delay or breakdown of the transport arrangements.

5. The HFSS Code of Behaviour and Excursions, Tours and Exchanges

The Holy Family Secondary School Board of Management specifically wishes to draw attention to the following:

- (i) Pupils must adhere to the instructions and decisions and teachers/staff tour leaders and assistants at all times.
- (ii) Pupils must stay with the tour group at all times.
- (iii) Pupils must not purchase alcohol or tobacco products for any purpose at any stage of the tour.
- (iv) The use of alcohol or other non-medically prescribed drugs by pupils on a tour is absolutely forbidden.
- (v) The Board of Management requires parent(s)/guardian(s) to guarantee that when their daughter comes to the school to assemble for the start of a school tour, she does so free of illegal substances either on her person or in her luggage.

Pupils are expected to behave in a courteous, co-operative and considerate manner. They must abide decisions and directions in all matters. The school's Code of Behaviour applies on any school outing. In addition, other codes of behaviour must also be adhered to (such as museum regulations, guided tour participation conditions and so on) The full penalties for breaching either code will apply on the trip and/or upon return to school depending on which is most applicable and practical.

Parents/Guardians will contribute to the success of the visit by understanding and reinforcing the objectives and educational aims of the educational visit and by reinforcing the standard of behaviour and conduct expected of their child on the educational visit and by their understanding and support that the school's Code of Behaviour will be adhered to.

The following list of items, amongst others, may not be brought nor purchased by pupils on a tour/overnight activity/field trip: Alcohol, Vapes, Cigarettes, Fireworks, Weapons, and Exotic Animals, Illegal substances, Age-inappropriate materials or objects.

Duty Free and/or non-duty free alcohol or cigarettes may not be bought by pupils for personal consumption or acting at the request of others and/or parent(s)/guardian(s). This applies even if the pupil is over 18 years of age.

Serious breaches of trust may result in parents/guardians being contacted and requested to arrange and finance the return of their son/daughter.

Should there be a suspected breach of the Code of Behaviour, the Tour Leader or Tour Assistant has the right to ask the pupil to empty pockets/baggage/containers/items of clothing to ascertain if illicit articles/substances are present. Staff may carry out an inspection of rooms or personal property with the pupil present if there are reasonable grounds for concern for safety or use/possession of a banned substance etc. A second adult should be present, wherein practical, for such a search to be conducted. A second pupil should also be present should such a situation arise.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of a serious incident/accident as many members of staff as is possible/practical in the circumstances shall come together; they shall agree on an outline of the details of the incident/accident and taking into account all the facts as they are known at that time, shall decide on a course of action. The details and the decision(s) taken shall be put in writing as close to the event as is reasonable. The Board accepts that in cases where there is lack of consensus over the course of action, the Tour Leader (where available) has the final decision.

In addition to the Holy Family Secondary School's Code of Behaviour, pupils must adhere to the law of the country which they visit. In the event of a breach of laws, due process of law will follow. Incident reports and accident reports should be filed on return and communicated to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal(s).

Additional Notes on Supervision

The Board of Management expects that all school tours, field trips and extra-curricular activities will be adequately supervised.

It is not recommended that personnel other than the staff would be engaged to chaperone or supervise pupils. Sometimes this necessity may arise. In this regard, personnel other than staff should only accompany pupils if a suitably qualified member of staff is also accompanying the group and if that person has also received Garda clearance with regard to working with young people.

The Tour Leader must ensure that all Tour Assistants understand their roles and responsibilities at all times and that they are fully briefed as to the rules, regulations and requirements pertaining to the particular trip before departure. The Tour Leader must ensure that all Tour Assistants are made aware of their duties and responsibilities vis-à-vis pupil health, safety and behaviour prior to departure.

Pupils, whose behaviour is such that the Tour Leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential activities the Tour Leader should consider whether such pupils should be sent home early. Parents and pupils should be told in advance about the procedures for dealing with misbehaviour. Costs for any early return travel on such grounds will be borne by the parents(s)/guardian(s).

6. Pupil Exchanges

Rationale

Pupil exchange programmes provide a broad educational experience for pupils and increase international and cultural understanding among young people. They provide educational enrichment for exchange pupils by developing their linguistic skills and introducing them to a different educational philosophy, environment and curriculum. They develop cultural awareness and understanding among pupils in the school environment and they promote international understanding and co-operation.

It would not be feasible or possible for Holy Family Secondary School pupils to avail of the wide-ranging benefits that may be derived from participation on an exchange without the voluntary support of Holy Family Secondary School staff in going above and beyond the duties of the normal school day.

Pupil exchanges are an extra-curricular opportunity that are facilitated, wherein possible, by the school in partnership with parents(s)/guardian(s) and exchange schools.

As per this policy, it is furthermore, wholly recognised that the organisation of, or participation in, any school exchange is a voluntary undertaking at the discretion of member(s) of staff. It is valued that extra duties that attach to the organisation and/or participation in an exchange are gratefully acknowledged as such.

It is also wholly recognised, that such educational outings are optional, extra-curricular activities and as such, there is no expectation or otherwise, that subject departments and/or any member of staff, will be bound by precedent and/or any other factors to undertake the task of organising and/or participating in an exchange.

Every Holy Family Secondary School exchange is a stand-alone event.

In addition to this policy, supplementary conditions of exchange and criteria for pupil participation may be required by specific subject departments.

Host Families

The Exchange Tour Leader works in co-operation with the host families. It is recognised and valued that reciprocal pupil exchanges are only made possible by the support of Holy Family Secondary School host families.

The Holy Family Secondary School's Child Protection Policy and procedures will apply at all times during pupil exchanges. In agreeing to host, it is implied and understood that the hosted pupil will not be offered or given access to alcohol, drugs, illegal substances or age-inappropriate materials. It is also understood that there will be adequate and appropriate parental supervision in the home and on all activities organised or undertaken by the hosting family for the duration of the hosting period. Approval must be sought from the Tour Leader for all large group activities that are beyond the scope of the organised itinerary, such as house parties.

In compliance with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 when pupils stay with host families as organised by the Exchange Tour Leader, all host families will be required to be Garda vetted. The Exchange Tour Leader and/or Tour Assistant(s) may deem it necessary to visit the host family in their family home to ensure pupil safety and well-being.

Vetting of host families abroad cannot be undertaken by Holy Family Secondary School.

Holy Family Secondary School facilitates, but does not organise host family accommodation abroad. A letter of confirmation that host families are of good character, and that hosting accommodation is fit and proper for the purpose intended, will be sought from the hosting school or organisation.

Appendix 1: Department of Education and Science, Circular Letter M 20 /04



Circular Letter M 20 /04

To the Management Authorities of all Post Primary Schools

Educational Tours by School Groups (both inside and outside the State)

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 in the particular grade(s) taking part in the tour and which benefit cannot be provided by in-school activities alone. Where a Board of Management is satisfied that a school tour meets the above criteria, such a tour may be undertaken **without seeking prior approval from the Department**. However, the template attached as appendix 1 should be completed by the Principal in the planning of a school tour and should be retained in the school for examination by a Departmental Inspector in the course of normal school inspection.

Authorisation to grant approval for educational tours by school groups both inside and outside the State is hereby devolved to the school board of management subject to the following criteria.

- School tours should be an extension and reinforcement of classroom activities and should be designed to include the maximum number of pupils in a class. The tour should, accordingly, enhance the learning process of as many pupils as possible by providing educational experiences which the classroom alone cannot provide.

- Tours should be planned, in consultation with parents, well in advance of tour dates and preferably before the start of the school year. The full cost of the tour should be communicated to parents at the planning stage. This will have the added advantage of facilitating financial preparation with a view to allowing maximum pupil participation. Every effort should be made to ensure that the cost involved does not prevent any pupil or group of pupils from participating in the tour.
- By international standards, the school year in Ireland has long holiday periods. Educational tours of more than one day's duration should be arranged to coincide with normal school holiday periods.
- Schools should ensure that adequate insurance cover is in place and that written parental approval is obtained for each pupil to take part in the tour. Such written approval must not seek to devolve any liability to the parent for any aspect of the tour. (Boards of Management of Comprehensive and Community schools should refer to appendix 2 of this circular regarding State Indemnity cover for out-of-school educational activities)
- The Board of Management must ensure that pupils who are not participating in the tour (including pupils from other classes who will be affected by their subject teachers absence) are adequately catered for while their teachers are away on the tour. Appropriate arrangements should be made for the conduct of those teachers' classes in their absence in accordance with Circular PPT 01/03. Schools should on all occasions take into account the effect that the absence of accompanying teachers will have on the normal work in the school and numbers absent should be kept to the minimum level required.
- Where school tours impinge upon the standard school 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 school days:

(a) Educational visit involving an exchange of groups of pupils with another school.

(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)

(e) An educational visit should be appropriate to the age group/grade concerned (e.g. The Higher Options Conference would be more appropriate for senior cycle pupils than for junior cycle pupils)

(f) Educational visits (inside or outside the State) involving significant linguistic or cultural benefit to the maximum number of pupils.

This list is given by way of example and is not intended to be exhaustive. This circular supersedes and replaces Circulars M87/78, M62/83, 12/79 and Circular Letter to the Boards of Comprehensive and Community schools entitled "Out of School Educational Activities within the State" and dated 19 February 1987.

Appendix 3: Declaration of Interest for Participation on a Tour

Holy Family Secondary School Educational Excursions, Trips and Exchanges



Declaration of Interest Form (extended tours/exchanges)

****PLEASE SUBMIT DIRECTLY TO TOUR LEADER****

Proposed Tour: _____

Tour Leader(s): _____

Student's name: _____

Class:

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) please;

- Attend all necessary briefings and communicate effectively with the school and the Tour Leader.
- Sign all relevant consent forms and understand that they are fully informed of the nature, itinerary and schedule of activities of the event.
- Parents/Guardians will contribute to the success of the tour by understanding and reinforcing the objectives and educational aims of the educational tour and by reinforcing the standard of behaviour and conduct expected of their child on the educational tour and by their understanding and support that the school's Code of Behaviour will be adhered to.

I understand that the approximate cost of the tour will be XXXX and that I will pay this cost to a school tour provider directly.

PLEASE READ THE Holy Family Secondary School Educational Excursions, Trips and Exchanges Policy on www.holyfamily.ie (POLICY SECTION) Paper copy available from the school office upon request.

Parent's/Guardian's signature: _____

Date: _____