

Away Trips

Travelling to away fixtures is a regular event for many clubs and teams. Trips may vary from short journeys to play another bowls team to more complicated arrangements involving overnight stays and events overseas. Even what may appear as the most straightforward of trips will require some level of planning. The following will outline the key issues that need to be considered when travelling with children.

Communication

Children – should be aware of the travel plans, venue and time for collection, time of return and any costs. Children should also have a clear understanding of what standard of behaviour is expected of them. Children must know what bowls kit they need to bring with them.

Parents – should be made aware of the above and must have completed a consent form detailing any medical issues for the team manager/captain. Parents should also have the name and contact details of the team manager/captain in the event of an emergency.

All Officials - should be provided with a full itinerary, including emergency contact information for the children's parent(s) or carer(s) and full transport arrangements. It can be difficult supervising groups where the parents of some players are also present. In this situation, it should be made clear beforehand that players are part of a group, that this group is under the supervision of a designated person, and that individual parents should not seek to compromise the situation.

There should always be a list of group members, so that a simple head count or register can be taken at any time. Also, ensure there is easy access to home and emergency contact numbers. It is vital for the responsible adult to acknowledge the significance of his or her role and to abstain from drinking alcohol whilst in charge of children.

For trips involving overnight stays, a list of group members must be left with a contact adult who remains at home. Contact numbers and accommodation details should be included on the list.

Transport

Planning needs to take place before the event to make sure that, whatever mode of transport is being used, any safeguarding and accessibility requirements can be addressed.

Ratio

As a guide, a ratio of 1:8 should be considered as a minimum for players aged 11 years and over. For younger children and people with disabilities, this ratio may be increased. There should always be more than one DBS checked adult supervising any group.

Insurance

The club committee needs to ensure that the club's general insurance covers travel to away events and cover should include baggage loss, medical cover and emergency expenses to cover accommodation and transport. Further guidance is available on the CPSU Website <https://thecpsu.org.uk/event-management/>

Breakdowns and accidents

In the event of a breakdown or accident, the group should remain under the direct supervision of the team manager/captain and/or other designated officials. If the accident is of a serious nature, then the Police should be informed immediately.

Emergencies

If an emergency occurs during a trip

- Establish the nature of the emergency as quickly as possible and if relevant, establish the names of any casualties and get them immediate medical attention.
- Ensure that the group are safe and supervised.
- Ensure that any group members who need to know are made aware of the incident, and that all group members are following correct emergency procedures.
- If there are casualties ensure that they are accompanied to hospital, if relevant, and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised (and kept together) at all times.
- If necessary, notify the police immediately.
- As soon as it is safe and sensible to do so, write down all relevant facts and any witness details, as accurately as you can, to preserve any evidence.
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident.
- Ensure that no-one in the group speaks to the media. All media enquiries should be referred to the relevant club secretary or National Governing Body as appropriate to the event.
- Notify the relevant National Governing Body's Safeguarding Officer.

De-brief on return – Appropriate for residential and international trips

After the trip, responsible officials should meet to discuss its success. If any significant issues arose on the trip, these should be detailed in writing. Areas for special consideration include the success of your pre-planning, the quality and accuracy of the programme information you provided, and any health and safety, discipline or safeguarding issues. This can form the basis of any feedback you give to parents/carers.

It may be helpful to hold a de-briefing meeting for parents/carers and players. Alternatively, you may wish to produce a general evaluation form. This gives everyone an opportunity to comment on the trip and highlight any good/bad aspects of the experience. This kind of feedback is extremely useful for deciding what lessons need to be learnt, and what can be done differently in the future to make trips even more enjoyable.