



GUIDELINES FOR TRIPS AWAY AND OVERNIGHT STAYS

Briefing for Clubs, Coaches & Volunteers
Within Scottish Squash & Racketball

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sportscotland

GUIDELINES FOR TRIPS AWAY FROM HOME AND OVERNIGHT STAYS

1. Designate a Child Protection Officer for the trip

Those in charge of the group will be responsible for the safety and wellbeing of children in their care. It is recommended that one of the group leaders co-ordinates the arrangements to safeguard the safety and welfare of children during the trip. This Child Protection Officer should ensure all practical arrangements have been addressed and act as the main contact for dealing with any concerns about the safety and welfare of children whilst away from home.

A detailed itinerary will be prepared and copies provided to the designated contact for the club, parents and SSRL if appropriate.

2. Risk assessment

Potential areas of risk should be identified at the planning stage through a risk assessment, which is legally required, and which should be recorded in writing. Safeguards should be put in place to manage the risks, where appropriate. Risk assessment should be an ongoing process throughout the trip as groups can often find themselves in unexpected situations despite the best laid plans!

3. Travel arrangements - abroad

In addition to guidelines on transporting children, organisers must ensure there is adequate and relevant insurance cover (including travel and medical insurance). Organisers shall ensure they are aware of local procedures for dealing with concerns about the welfare of children and are familiar with the details of the emergency services in the location of the visit.

Children should be informed of local customs and regulations.

4. Adult to child ratios

All trips away should be planned to involve **at least** two adults, at least 1 adult should be the same gender as those children on the trip. The guidelines on adult to child ratios will inform an assessment of the numbers of adults required to safely supervise the group. Generally, a ratio of 1:6 for primary aged children and 1:8 for senior school children and young adults.

Those involved should be recruited and selected in accordance with SSRL Safeguarding procedures and PVG membership.

Group leaders should be familiar with and agree to abide by the SSRL Child Protection Policy, procedures and code of conduct.

5. Accommodation

Organisers should find out as much as possible about the accommodation and the surroundings at the planning stage. Where possible, an initial visit to the venue/accommodation should take place to help those organising the trip identify all practical issues and allow time to address them in advance, in consultation with children and parents where appropriate.

The following is a (non-exhaustive) list of some of the practical things which should be considered in advance about the arrangements for accommodation:

- Location: central and remote locations both present different challenges
- Sleeping arrangements: these will enable suitable sharing in terms of age and gender and appropriately located staff/volunteer bedrooms for both supervision and ease of access in case of an emergency. Parents and children should be consulted in advance about arrangements for sharing where possible and appropriate
- Appropriate safeguards where others have access to the sleeping quarters
- Special access or adaptive aids required by group leaders or children
- Environmental factors
- Personal safety issues

Some residential facilities offer dormitory sleeping arrangements where leaders may be required to share with children. In such circumstances organisers must ensure that at least two adults who have been recruited and selected using the recommended procedure are present, preferably one male and one female, and that such arrangements have been discussed and agreed with children and parents in advance.

In some circumstances older children may be required to share rooms with senior team mates (i.e. over 18s). If this is necessary, it should be discussed and agreed in advance with the young person and the parents (where appropriate and practicable). The young people involved should also be aware of whom they should speak to if they have any worries or concerns during this time.

Exchange visits/hosting

Before departure, organisers should ensure there is a shared understanding of the standards expected during home stays between them, host organisation/ families, parents and children themselves. These standards should include arrangements for the supervision of children during the visit.

Host families for more than three nights should be appropriately checked through the PVG scheme. Organisers, parents and children should all be provided with a copy of emergency contact numbers.

Children should be aware of who they should talk to if problems arise during the visit. Daily contact should be made by the trip CPO, with all children to ensure they are safe and well.

Residential at a facility/centre

Organisers should ensure the facility is appropriately licensed and has adequate and relevant insurance cover in place. The facility should have a policy on the protection of children and Health and Safety. Adequate security arrangements should be in place and facility staff should be PVG scheme members where appropriate. Facility staff involved in the training or instruction of children must be appropriately qualified and trained.

Organisers should ensure there is adequate supervision of the group for the duration of the stay, particularly when the facility is being shared with other groups.

6. Involving parents

Where possible, a meeting should be held with parents before departure to share information about the trip, answer their questions and make joint decisions about arrangements where appropriate. A Code of Conduct shall be agreed with children and parents in advance of the trip along with sanctions for unacceptable behaviour. Parents should have contact details of relevant person in charge and trip leader will have contact details for parents of all children on trip.

Parents should also complete a medical consent form for each trip detailing any medical issues.

In the event of an emergency at home during the trip, parents should be encouraged to make contact with the group leaders in the first instance so that arrangements can be put in place to support the child on hearing any distressing news.

7. During the trip

Organisers must ensure arrangements are in place for the supervision and risk assessment of activities during free time. Children shall not be allowed to wander alone in unfamiliar places, towns and cities.

Group leaders should have clear roles and responsibilities for the duration of the trip. They must not be over familiar with or fraternise with children during the trip and remember that they are in a position of trust at all times. The use of alcohol and/or drugs or engaging in sexual relationships (between two young people) should not be condoned during the trip, even if the legislation relating to any of these behaviours is more lenient than in Scotland.

Group leaders should maintain an overview of the wellbeing of all children during the trip. This can help to identify issues at an early stage and resolve them as quickly as possible. Children can participate in this process by, for example, taking turns to complete a daily diary about the trip. This can be an overt or discreet way for them to communicate things (both positive and negative) that they want you to know.

8. After the trip

Where appropriate, a review of the trip will take place with all those involved, including children. This will provide an opportunity to reflect on what went well, not so well and what could have been done differently. Feedback will be used to inform future trips

