



Guidance on Organising Safe Trips Away

December 2015

Trips Away

Does your club organise trips to the mountains for members? Or does your club suggest a venue and leave members to make their own arrangements? Or maybe some of your coaches or other officials organise trips away to the snow?

Your club and everyone on the trip need to be very clear about whether this is a club trip, or a holiday with like-minded friends from your Snowsport Club.

Snowsport England has produced the guidance below to ensure your club knows its responsibilities and to help ensure you safeguard all children and young people. A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

This guidance is consistent with nationally expected standards of safeguarding across the sports sector and is based on best practice. Taking children away on trips can be fantastic for their growth and confidence but only if these trips are managed correctly, particularly with regards to the adults in a position of trust looking after the children involved.

Parents, children, coaches, club welfare officers and all committee members must know their responsibilities whilst away.

When parents are present on club trips it is important the parents agree to abide by the Club rules. For example parents may wish to ski with their own children some of the time. This can be done if it is agreed by all concerned (eg on one or two afternoons). Problems occur when parents demand to take their own children, or the children of others, off for a free ski during the lunch break. If they are the Club's responsibility, the coaches should decide whether or not to allow this and should feel confident to say "no" if the child needs the rest.

Set out the Club's expectations, rules and requirements clearly before you go together with the relevant Codes of Conduct and ask all to agree to the conditions and sign to show their agreement.

The following guidance is to be read in conjunction with **SnowSafe**, Snowsport England's Child Safeguarding Policy.

1. **Is the Club organising the trip?** If you answer "yes" to **ANY** of the following questions, it is likely the club is responsible for the organisation, risk assessment, safeguarding of children and young people and the legal responsibilities associated with the trip – or at the very least has some responsibility for certain aspects of the trip.
 - Has someone from the club e-mailed members asking who is interested in going on the trip, using contacts they have obtained from the club database or from previous e-mails they have received from club officials?
 - Has a coach, committee member or official asked members if they want to participate?
 - Is one of your coaches, or a coach organised by the club going to be coaching, leading or supervising children or young people whilst away?
 - Has someone at the club arranged the accommodation, room allocation or travel arrangements?
 - Is it a race training trip or preparation for a competition?

2. **Is the trip being organised totally independently of the Club?** If you answer “yes” to **ALL** the following questions, it should be accepted by all on the trip that it is a private arrangement – make sure there can be no confusion here and if in doubt, it is recommended the Club makes a statement saying they are not making any arrangements for ski trips/race training/holidays this year and any arrangements being made are not the responsibility of the club.
- Is everyone making their own accommodation arrangements?
 - Is everyone making their own travel arrangements?
 - The Club Committee have had no direct lead involvement in the organisation of the trip?
 - The person organising the trip has just asked a few people/friends to come and not opened it up as a general invitation to all
 - If a coach is coming they will not be acting in any way as a coach (leading, instructing, helping racers in the gate or with course inspection etc)

Why does it matter whether this is a Club trip or a family trip or holiday with like-minded friends? In order to have a safe trip and ensure children are safeguarded it is really important everyone knows who is responsible for your children and where the responsibilities start and finish. This avoids any potential confusion and safeguards children and/or club officials who might be in attendance in either a club or non-club capacity.

Make a decision – Is it a Club organised trip either completely or in part? Or is it a group of like-minded individuals going on holiday together? Make sure everyone knows including parents and most importantly, the children.

If it is a not a club trip, the club should not be involved in any aspects of the organisation of it and it is up to parents, guardians and families to make their own arrangements just as they would if they were going on a Summer holiday to the sun.

The following information is only applicable if the Club has any responsibility for any aspects of the trip.

GUIDANCE WHEN ORGANISING A CLUB TRIP

Although parents can be a great support on away trips, it can be confusing for children to know who is responsible for them. Where no parents are accompanying the trip this becomes clearer.

The club trip may be a race training or competition training trip where club staff ensure there are adequate supervision ratios and coaching ratios for children, and with someone appointed to take care of their welfare. Children know the coaches are responsible for them and they should do as they are asked (assuming it is a reasonable request). The coaches or staff are responsible for the children on the mountain, at lunch, off the mountain, in the evenings and at bed times. Misunderstandings are rare and everyone knows what is required of them.

However, within snowsports, Club trips often include parents accompanying their children and either training with coaches themselves, or having a “holiday” whilst their children are receiving training. Boundaries must be very clearly set and abided by. The Club should have Codes of Conduct and rules for coaches, volunteers, children and parents and all should sign and abide by them.

Things to think about when organisation a Club Trip

1. Staffing for the trip
2. Travel arrangements for getting to the resort
3. Getting the children to and from the ski area
4. Arrangements for lunch
5. On the mountain
6. Sick child
7. Accommodation arrangements
8. Who is responsible for the children when they are not taking part in snowsports activities?
9. If you allow unaccompanied children, who will be responsible for them off the mountain?
10. Club practice including photography and use of social media.

1. Staffing for the trip

- Ensure you have adequate staff on the trip to supervise all the children
- There should be an adequate number of coaches so children can be split up into ability/specific groups
- There must be a designated Welfare Officer or House Parent
- You may wish to officially recognise one or two parents as club officials for the trip to help with supervision; if you do, they must undergo the usual recruitment checks including DBS
- See *SnowSafe – Guidelines on Supervision of Children*

2. Travel Arrangements

- You will need to do a risk assessment for the method of travel you choose
- Are these arrangements compatible with your club transport policy? It is recommended all clubs have a transport policy – see SnowSafe for further information
- If parents are going too, ideally parents will be responsible for making their own travel arrangements for their own children and the Club will not then be involved in this aspect
- Hiring a coach and driver from the UK to the resort can be a good option, depending on numbers involved

- Hiring a minibus from the UK may be an alternative option but most of the points below should be noted
- Some travel companies will arrange the travel for you
- Snowsport England **does not** recommend the club arrange transport in private vehicles, with coaches and club staff driving their own vehicles transporting club children. This is because if you do, you must ensure:
 - anyone covered by these arrangements has a roadworthy vehicle
 - is insured for this activity (taking passengers abroad)
 - has a clean driving licence
 - if they have Penalty Points or other driving convictions a risk assessment must be done
 - driver/s must have adequate breaks
 - if the club organises transport the requirements for a DBS should be considered as they will be “Driving a vehicle for children”
 - drivers must ensure they abide by the laws of the countries they are driving in, eg breathalyzer kits, hazard warning triangle, high viz waistcoats, GB sticker, snow chains, using headlamp beam deflectors etc where applicable.
 - there should be at least 2 adults (18+, preferably a female and male if children of both genders present) in each vehicle and one adult and one unrelated child should never share a vehicle with nobody else present
- If travelling by minibus ensure you abide by the UK law and by the laws of the countries you are travelling through.

3. Getting Children to and from the ski area

- If this is by public transport, ensure adequate supervision ratios
- If this is by minibus, private cars, or club officials cars, see above
- If the children can ski to and from the piste it is recommended coaches meet the children at the ski room and take them back to the ski room or other appropriate place. This will to some extent depend on the capabilities of all the children and it may be appropriate to meet them at the lift
- If parents are allowed to take their children away from the bottom of the ski lift, the coaches remain responsible for the children until they are all collected
- Always make it very clear to parents the arrangements for dropping off and picking up their children and always have a back up plan in case they do not arrive.

4. Arrangements for lunch

- Arrangements must be pre-agreed
- Coaches will usually be responsible for the children during the lunch break if lunch is taken on the mountain
- Make sure you communicate with parents over lunch arrangements and any allergies, this involves having the parents contact details for each child you are responsible for and these must be obtained before the trip and circulated confidentially to staff who need the information
- Parents must not be tempted to take their children off for one or two runs during the lunch break. It is important for the children to have a rest no matter how much energy they appear to have, and coaches must at all times know where the children are
- If lunch is taken back at the accommodation, the same arrangements should be made as above (*Getting Children to and from the ski area*).

5. On the Mountain

- Club staff will be responsible for the children whilst on the mountain
- They must ensure there are adequate supervision ratios
- They must ensure adequate coaching ratios with a minimum of two coaches/club officials present at any time
- They must ensure they have all medical details for the children in their care, including dietary restrictions
- They must ensure they have emergency contact details for parents
- They must ensure all children have adequate travel insurance cover, including race cover, off piste where applicable
- They must ensure they have emergency travel insurance details/copies of passport etc with them (where applicable)
- It is recommended the above information is put onto a spreadsheet and is made accessible, in confidence, to all club staff who may need it
- Coaches or other club staff must never take a lone child away from the rest of the group except in the case of injury or an emergency
- Ensure children are using the lifts safely
- Depending on the age and ability of the children, it may be advisable for a coach to sit on the lift with a child next to them for safety reasons. In this case it is advised the coach waits, where possible, for an additional adult to join them on the lift before riding. However if the child is competent and capable of using the lift safely, it is not advised for coaches to accompany a single child on a lift (risk assess the situation)
- Where possible have radio links to ask for help or to arrange for parents to collect children if they are tired
- Never leave children unaccompanied; wait for the parents or guardians to arrive.

6. Sick children

- The Club must adequately supervise a child who is not able to take part due to illness or injury
- The Club will have a child welfare officer, or house parent/deputy CWO present who must stay at the accommodation with the child. This person will have been appropriately recruited for the role including DBS disclosure and references
- If they need to enter the child's room ideally another adult will be present and wait by the door, but it should be accepted this might not be possible during the day due to staff numbers
- If entering the child's room ensure the door is propped open whilst the adult is in the room with the child
- If the child's parents are present it may be appropriate for them to supervise their own child. However once other children are back from the mountain the rules concerning parents not entering bedrooms must be applied (see 6. below)
- **NEVER ALLOW ANOTHER PARENT TO LOOK AFTER AN UNRELATED SICK CHILD** unless they are in an official volunteering role, and have been subject to your recruitment checks including DBS disclosure.

7. Accommodation arrangements

- Will families be sharing family accommodation, or will the club be allocating rooms?

- If the Club has made the accommodation arrangements care must be taken over the rooming allocations
- If children are roomed in friendship groups, their rooms should be out of bounds to their parents and other parents
- Boys should share with boys, and ideally of approximately the same age
- Girls should share with girls, and ideally of approximately the same age
- Children should only socialise in the communal areas and not in their rooms. Rooms should be for rest and sleep
- Boys must not enter the rooms of girls
- Girls must not enter the rooms of boys
- Coaches, CWOs, clubs officials should not enter the children's rooms unless absolutely necessary, and then they should go in in pairs. There must be at least one adult of the same gender as the children (except in cases of emergency)
- Evening patrol – if the Club is responsible for the rooming arrangements two club officials should check the children are quiet. Always work in pairs to safeguard yourself from potential misunderstandings or allegations. Whilst unfounded allegations are rare, best practice is not to put yourself in any situation where they could occur
- Club staff should stipulate bed time
- Under 18s should not share with over 18s.

8. Who is responsible for the children when they are not taking part in Snowsport activities?

- It must be agreed whether club officials look after children in the evening, or whether parents do.
- If parents are, this should be from the time they are brought down from the mountain, until the time they are handed over the next morning for their Snowsport activities. If the parents are responsible, the accommodation arrangements, bed time, disciplining of children etc will all be down to their parents just as it would be on a family holiday
- However this system can be complicated if there are unaccompanied children. If there are, and they are the club's responsibility, many more safeguards need to be put in place
- If the club is responsible, this includes supervision in the evenings, evening activities, dinner etc.
- If swimming, the club must ensure they know the capabilities of the children in the pool and there must be either a life guard present, or suitably qualified people responsible for the children in the pool
- Coaches/officials must not get changed in the same changing room at the same time as the children
- It is recommended all individuals use separate changing cubicles where provided
- In some countries it is customary practice for adults to be naked in the sauna; coaches/officials MUST NOT do this with U18s present
- Your club may have a "dry camp" policy regarding alcohol; if not, at any one time there must be a nominated club official in a position of responsibility who must refrain from alcohol in case of emergency
- If you allow club officials to drink alcohol, they should ensure they drink alcohol in moderation where U18s are present, eg a beer or glass of wine with a meal
- Make sure whoever is supervising the children knows about allergies and other conditions

- If some children go to an activity and others stay at the accommodation there must be adequate staff to supervise them, without asking parents to help out unless it is just to supervise their own children – never ask parents to supervise or look after other people’s children unless they are officially volunteering and have been subject to the Club’s recruitment checks including DBS disclosure
- Transporting children to and from activities requires the same safeguards as above

9. If you allow unaccompanied children, who will be responsible for them off the mountain?

- Careful consideration needs to be given if taking a few unaccompanied children
- They can sometimes be cared for by the parents of their friends, but this must be a firm arrangement made between the parents before the child is accepted on the trip. No parent should be asked by Club officials, or allowed to volunteer during the trip, to look after a child they wouldn’t normally consider taking on a family holiday with them
- Parents of unaccompanied children (not being cared for by the parents of friend – see above) must accept their child will be under the care of the club and abide by club procedures and trip policies
- The club must ensure other children’s parents do not enter the bedroom of an unaccompanied child, even if their children are sharing a room with the unaccompanied child
- It is often best to have a named staff member/members to look after the unaccompanied children. The child must be made aware of who this is, and told to go to them with any concerns
- Depending on the number of unaccompanied children it might be appropriate for one or two parents to officially volunteer for the role of supervising these children. The parents should then go through the Club’s usual recruitment procedures including a DBS disclosure and have their role clearly identified in consultation with the CWO.

10. Club practice including photography and use of social media

- Your Club will have policies for photography/videos and social media
- Staff, children and parents (where present) should be reminded of these policies including:
- Photographs (unless taken by children/parents for their own private use) are covered by the Data Protection Act and this must be considered when taking, storing and sharing them
- Do you have permission to take photographs and videos of all children? Eg there may be children who must not be identified due to potentially being in danger if someone was aware of their whereabouts
- Make sure you only share photographs in accordance with your photographic policy. Eg for the promotion and publicity of snowsport activities.
- Do you have permission to share photographs on the Club Facebook account?
- If so, make sure photographs being shared are appropriate
- Coaches and club officials should not be friends with children (under 18) on Facebook and other forms of social media using their personal account. It might be appropriate to have a staff facebook account so comments and photographs can be shared. However:
- Always ensure comments are limited to Snowsport activities
- Never contact someone under the age of 18 without including their parents in the communication

- Use group e mails/texts where possible and never send a message to just one child under the age of 18
- If you wouldn't display it on the club noticeboard, you should not be displaying it elsewhere or sending it to anyone.

The information above will give you an idea of important things to think about but it is not intended to cover every eventuality.

Are you a Coach or Instructor going away with families?

Your Coaching Code of Conduct applies at all times. You must always:

- Maintain professional boundaries with the children and young people you coach
- Be an excellent role model at all times including not smoking or drinking alcohol whilst in the company of children in your care.
- Ensure you abide by the Club's transport policies
- Ensure there are always at least 2 responsible adults present when you are with children or young people (for safety reasons or in case someone is injured and also to safeguard yourself)
- Ensure you are not alone with children or young people when off the mountain
- Refrain from going into bedrooms of children or young people and never invite them into your room
- If children need to be supervised in changing rooms encourage parents (if present) to take responsibility for their own child. If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure coaches work in pairs. It should not usually be necessary to supervise children getting changed unless they are very young
- Ensure if changing or showering that you do so before, or after the children or young people or in a different changing room to them; never shower or change with them
- Treat all children equally with respect and dignity
- Refrain from swearing in front of children and challenge others in the club who swear in front of children
- Put the welfare of the child first, before winning, the child's welfare being paramount
- Be acutely aware of the power that a coach develops with participants in snowsports and avoid any inappropriate or intimate interaction (sexual or otherwise)
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where any form of manual/physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the child. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the child's consent has been given
- Always work in an open environment
- Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Remember at all times, you are the coach, they are the child/athlete and make sure you maintain professional boundaries at all times.

See **SnowSafe**, Snowsport England's child safeguarding policy for more information.

Suggested Models your Club May Wish to Adopt

1. Club Trip with no parents or adults

- Minibus out to resort, with at least 2 staff members in each minibus, one of each gender if boys and girls are both present. Ensure adequate breaks. Check valid driving licences, and penalty points. Remember the paper counterpart of the Licence is no longer valid and checks should be made via the Government website - <https://www.gov.uk/check-driving-information> Ensure compliance with UK law and the laws of the countries you are travelling through (see Travel Arrangements above)
- Ensure adequate coaching ratios and supervision ratios
- Appoint a house parent, or camp welfare officer who everyone knows is responsible for the welfare of the children. Parents, children and staff should all be made aware
- Club staff make room arrangements ensuring boys and girls do not share; children are grouped roughly in age groups making provision for children who do not get along. Over 18s and Under 18s should be in different rooms where possible
- Club staff are responsible for children in the morning, getting them to the ski/board area, training, lunch, returning to accommodation, supervision in the evenings, evening activities, meal times and bed times
- Club staff are acting in loco parentis and medical information and contact information must be given confidentially to the house parent and head coach (consider others too, depending on the trip).
- **Coaches and Club officials must at all times when in the company of Club children behave professionally, abide by the Code of Conduct and adhere to Club policies.**

2. Club Trip with Parents and No Unaccompanied Children

- Parents responsible for making their own arrangements to transport their own children to and from resort
- Parents make own arrangements for their accommodation (often in same hotel/apartment as other club members)
- Club officials make their own transport arrangements, not taking any children other than their own, in their cars
- Club officials make their own accommodation arrangements
- Parents are responsible for their children until the agreed time (eg 9am), when they meet to drop their children off for the snowsports activities
- Club staff are then responsible for the children until the end of the snowsport activities (eg 4pm) when they meet the parents and hand the children back to them
- Club staff are responsible for children over the lunch period. Club staff resume snowsports activities after lunch with the children
- Club to ensure adequate coaching and supervision ratios throughout
- Once club staff hand the children back to their parents after the Snowsport activities (eg 4pm) children are the responsibility of their parents
- All evening activities are the responsibility of the parents
- Ideally club staff will stay in different accommodation, enabling them to relax and enjoy the evenings with no responsibility for children
- If club staff are in the same accommodation, or meeting parents and children in the evenings they must maintain appropriate boundaries, drink responsibly and behave professionally at all times
- Although club staff may think they are off duty, if they meet with the children the children will still perceive them as their coach
- Parents responsible for their children in the evenings, for their conduct and for ensuring they go to bed
- Club should make the arrangements very clear, and give this in writing to the parents
- **Coaches and Club officials must at all times when in the company of Club children behave professionally, abide by the Code of Conduct and adhere to Club policies.**

3. Club Trip with Some Parents and some Unaccompanied Children

- Parents responsible for making their own arrangements to transport their own children to and from resort
- Club may wish to consider using a minibus to resort to transport unaccompanied children. Minibus out to resort, with at least 2 staff members in each minibus, one of each gender if boys and girls are both present. Ensure adequate breaks. Check valid driving licences, and penalty points. Remember the paper counterpart of the Licence is no longer valid and checks should be made via the Government website - <https://www.gov.uk/check-driving-information> Ensure compliance with UK law and the laws of the countries you are travelling through (see Travel Arrangements above)
- Ensure adequate coaching ratios and supervision ratios
- Appoint a house parent, or camp welfare officer who everyone knows is responsible for the welfare of the children. Parents, children and staff should all be made aware.
- Club staff make room arrangements ensuring boys and girls do not share; children are grouped roughly in age groups making provision for children who do not get along. Over 18s and Under 18s should be in different rooms where possible.
- Club staff are responsible for children in the morning, getting them to the ski/board area, training, lunch, returning to accommodation, supervision in the evenings, evening activities, meal times and bed times.
- Club staff are acting in loco parentis and medical information and contact information must be given confidentially to the house parent and head coach (consider others too, depending on the trip)
- Club staff, not parents, should check children have gone to bed and this should always been done in pairs to safeguard yourself from potential misunderstandings or allegations
- **Coaches and Club officials must at all times when in the company of Club children behave professionally, abide by the Code of Conduct and adhere to Club policies.**

4. Club Coaching Trip – but external organisation responsible for all arrangements: Coaching may be offered by Club

There are holiday companies specialising in ski trips who will make all the arrangements for you. The Club may decide to offer coaching between certain hours and charge for this. All other aspects of the trip are not the responsibility of the Club.

- Club invites members to attend a Snowsport camp
- Club lets members know they will be going to X resort, and members can make their own arrangements or book with Y ski package organisation
- Club offers Snowsport tuition with their own coaches between (for example) 0900 and 1600 hours, for certain abilities (subject to them being allowed to coach in the country) and may charge for this
- Club coaches are acting in loco parentis and must have medical information, emergency contact details, insurance details for all children they are coaching, in case of emergency
- Parents are able to choose whether to book their children into the available Club tuition, free ski/board with their own children, or book resort lessons
- Parents are responsible for their children until dropped off at the agreed time and place and handed over to the Club coaches for coaching
- Club coaches are responsible for the children until the agreed time when they are handed back to their parents
- Transfers from hotel/accommodation to ski area are often arranged by Y ski package
- Parents are responsible for their own children at all times other than whilst under the care of coaches during the Snowsport activities
- **Club must make it very clear, in writing, they will only be responsible for children booked into club coaching sessions, for the duration of these sessions, including lunch**
- Due consideration must be given to whether unaccompanied children can be accommodated, bearing in mind all factors on the pages above
- **Coaches and Club officials must at all times when in the company of Club children behave professionally, abide by the Code of Conduct and adhere to Club policies.**