

G9 – Paddlesafe Away Trips

When planning a trip it is important to allow sufficient time for all the required arrangements to be made carefully. Whether it is a short trip in the UK or travel abroad, good planning is the key to a safe trip. All staff and volunteers should operate in a manner in line with the British Canoeing's/ their National Association's Codes of Conduct at all times.

Pre Travel Planning

- All such trips should be risk assessed.
- It is a good idea to be familiar with the area/ venue to which you are travelling or to have made an exploratory visit. If this is not possible gather as much information as possible from a variety of sources.
- Check to ensure that you and your club have sufficient insurance to cover the type of trip you are undertaking. When travelling abroad it is advised that the following cover should be in place: medical cover (including repatriation expenses), compensation for loss of baggage, passports and money, emergency expenses to cover accommodation and transport, legal assistance in recovery of claims.
- When dealing with insurance matters, be sure to obtain a full copy of the insurance policy and read it carefully, noting exclusions.
- Ensure that you have a procedure to cover any emergency situation that may arise. If an emergency occurs overseas, notify the British Embassy/ Consulate, inform club and home contacts, notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required, notify the tour operator or provider if appropriate, ascertain phone numbers for future calls (do not rely on mobile phones).

Information about the participants/competitors

- Written permission of parents/carers should be obtained for all overnight away trips. Parents/carers must inform the club/team manager at the outset of any medical condition or specific needs their child may have.
- Make sure that trip details and parental consent forms for extended trips and trips overseas are comprehensive in terms of the information and details of the trip in question and in the nature of the information sought. This would include an emergency contact number whilst you are away.
- For overseas trips you may wish to ask parents to provide spare passport photos and/or a photocopy of the passport for reference in an emergency.
- When preparing paperwork to leave with a home contact consider including the following: itinerary and contact number and address of the accommodation, list of all group members, contact names and address for all group members, copies of parental consent forms and emergency contact numbers.
- Where parents/ carers are not accompanying young paddlers consider asking them to provide the trip organisers with a letter of delegated authority, clear stating who is acting on their behalf for the duration of the trip.

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Staff and Volunteers

- All adults, staff, volunteers who travel on away trips with children should be carefully chosen and, if eligible, should have an appropriate Disclosure check (or equivalent) in place prior to going on the trip.
- Adults, leaders and coaches accompanying or participating in an away trip should make known any medical condition/specific needs they may have to the trip organiser in advance.
- The roles and responsibilities of adults participating in away trips should be clearly defined.

Conduct

- All participants taking part should be aware of the behaviour and personal conduct standards expected of them at all times on the trip. All athletes/ students, irrespective of age should adhere to the codes of conduct applied to the trip or team event in question.
- It should be made clear that illegal and performance enhancing drugs and substances are strictly forbidden. All other illegal drugs/ substances, alcohol and tobacco are also banned whether or not they are on the official banned substance list.
- All participants should be clear that breaches of the established trip code of conduct will be subject to sanctions and that these will in the first instance be dealt with by the team manager.

Roles and Responsibilities

- A team manager/ group manager should be appointed for away trips. They should have overall responsibility for the children's well-being, behaviour and sleeping arrangements. They should be appointed as an official of the club/ British Canoeing/ National Association for the duration of the trip; coaches should be accountable to the team manager in all non-performance related matters.
- Where there are mixed teams there should be at least one female in the management/coaching structure who should remain on site where overnight stays are involved.
- The team manager or group leader should submit a report to the club or lead body as soon as possible after the end of the trip.
- Adequate adult to child ratios should be observed.
- If a child suffers an injury or an accident the parents/ carers should be informed as soon as possible.

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Transport

Where self-drive minibus travel is arranged the following guidelines should apply:

- All drivers should have attended a minibus driving course as appropriate and have the appropriate licence to drive the vehicle.
- All minibuses used should be maintained to the standard required by law.
- Trips should be planned allowing sufficient time for breaks and additional drivers should be available to meet the driving regulations.
- All drivers should operate to the driving regulations and driving laws of the land in which they are operating.
- Where travel involves juniors, none should travel alone, except in special circumstances when appropriate arrangements can be made with the young person, their parents/ carers, travel companies and airlines concerned.
- Coaches and leaders are discouraged from travelling alone in their cars with children.

Accommodation

- Accommodation should 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 emergency. Parents/carers and children should be consulted in advance about arrangements for sharing where possible and appropriate.
- Where the presence of an adult is needed there should be more than one child in the room with the adult.
- Special care should be taken by both host and visiting clubs in the selection of homes for overnight stays and where practical more than one child should be placed with each host family.