



GUIDANCE NOTES NO:

5.4

TRAVEL, TRIPS AND TOURNAMENTS: ADVICE AND PERMISSIONS

FOR ALL



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TRAVEL, TRIPS AND TOURNAMENTS: ADVICE AND PERMISSIONS

Travelling to away games and having trips away from home should be both safe and fun for children (which includes all those aged under 18).

Trips and tournaments are exciting opportunities – but they must be carefully planned. The following guide will outline safeguarding considerations when travelling with children and young people.

It should be a chance for all children to grow their confidence, self-esteem and skills. Parents and carers may worry when their children are away, but preparation should ease those worries. This will also demonstrate you have taken into account the various needs of each child and potential dangers.

Some of the preparation can be done at the start of the season when you register members at your club. For regular away trips you will find very little needs to change week-to-week. However, to create safe, memorable experiences it starts with involving children, placing them centrally to your planning, and sharing the plans clearly with parents and carers. If you have a new team member or helper with additional needs, or a different cultural background, you may need to re-consider your planning.

A key member of staff or volunteer should take overall responsibility for organising the event or activity – becoming the point of contact. Safer recruitment procedures must be followed to ensure everyone working is suitable to do so. The more people who have completed an FA Safeguarding Course, the better. [Safeguarding Courses | England Football Learning](#).

Open-age football – Clubs without youth teams but who have players aged 16/17 (defined in law as children) are responsible for ensuring appropriate safeguards are in place when arranging transport and trips away. The guidance provided is applicable for youth teams and open-age teams.



ESSENTIAL PLANNING AT THE START OF THE SEASON

It's likely you already have much of this in place, but check your club has a current:

- Safeguarding Children Policy;
- Safer recruitment Policy and procedures for selecting/recruiting staff or volunteers;
- Welfare Officer who has completed the FA's Safeguarding training requirement;
- Designated point of contact for parents/carers;
- Procedures for reporting concerns about the welfare of a child;
- Clear communication with parents;
- Codes of Conduct.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- **Use Permission Forms:** Make sure they are signed, returned and kept safely, in line with data protection principles; Use the [FA's Player Passport](#), an enhanced way to get to know the players, particularly important for children and young people who may need extra support.
- **Have the right adults-to-children ratio:** Adult/child ratios must be based on the age of the children involved, the degree of risk the activity involves, and whether there are disability needs within the group. The lower the age of the

participants, the higher the ratio of staff must be. For more information, please refer to **Guidance Notes 5.5: Ratios of Adults to Children**;

- **Have the right gender of adults:** When taking a male group, there should always be a male member of staff. When you have a female group, there should always be a female member of staff;
- **Have medical cover:** There must always be a qualified first aider and up-to-date first aid kit;
- **Are prepared for specific medical conditions:** If any of the group have a known medical condition, ensure that appropriate club members are aware of how to deal with potential situations;
- **Have insurance in place, to cover:**
 - Public and civil liability;
 - Personal accident;
 - Vehicle insurance and breakdown cover (whether it's a car or minibus);
- **Have valid licences:** Ensure that anyone transporting children or young people on behalf of the club has a valid driving licence, MOT and tax when using their own vehicle.
- **Ensure accessibility issues are considered for the activities you offer.**

BE PRO-ACTIVE

Holding a meeting with parents/carers at the start of the season, or before a 'trip' to explain your club philosophy, introduce staff, discuss club rules, contact details and your club Code of Conduct is essential. This is also a great opportunity to discuss procedures for travelling for away fixtures, future trips or tours – and also to emphasise the importance of having up-to-date completed and signed Permission and medical Forms.

Involve the young people in shaping the experience by asking them what would help them feel comfortable – use short surveys and other age-appropriate ways of briefing and receiving feedback.

DBS CHECKS

Anyone who is directly responsible for children (on behalf of the club) needs an in-date FA DBS Check. For further guidance and to check eligibility for DBS Checks: [Section 3 - safer recruitment and DBS Checks - Safeguarding | The Football Association](#)



ESSENTIAL PLANNING WHEN STAYING AWAY

During the season, many clubs organise trips to take part in festivals/tournaments or go on a tour. These trips often include an overnight stay. When properly planned they are often the highlight of the club year. In addition to the planning at the start of the season and when booking accommodation consider the following questions:

- What is the locality like?
- Is there secure parking?
- Can varied dietary needs be met?
- Can valuables be stored safely?
- What are the night-time security arrangements?
- Is there a current fire certificate?
- Are there any cultural and religious practices that need to be considered? E.g access to a quiet area for prayers, support whilst fasting.
- Ideally children aged 12 or younger will share a twin or triple room. All players sharing must be of the same sex and must have their own bed;
- Are there en-suite facilities or separate facilities for children and adults? Remember all beds must be single and staff and players must not share a room;
- Make sure every child has a 'Safe-Away Card' (see template opposite);
- Have you got specific written permission for each activity a child may undertake? On trips away, the children may take part in non-football activities, for example, swimming;
- Does your insurance cover non-football activities?
- Have you drawn up a programme, including departure dates and times and when you are returning?
- Have you had a meeting with parents/carers and players to run through the trip's programme of events, essential items for trip and to address any questions or concerns?
- Have you identified someone from the club not going away as a point of contact? They should have a list of who is on the trip and their contact details (including the leaders/helpers);
- Have you made it clear who is the welfare officer/designated point of contact on the trip? Ensure that person is suited to this role and make sure everyone in the group is aware who this person is and what their role is;
- Have you got an incident form to record any issues and the course of action taken?

- Have you given everyone an information pack including: dates, what you are doing, where you are going, rules and kit list?
- Do all helpers have a copy of the venue's Emergency Procedures Guidance?

EXAMPLE OF A SAFE – AWAY CARD

CLUB
CREST

PERSON/ PLACE	NAME(S)	CONTACT NUMBER
TEAM MANAGER		
EDUCATION AND WELFARE STAFF		
HOTEL		
COUNTRY EMERGENCY NUMBER		
NEAREST EMERGENCY HOSPITAL		

ESSENTIAL PLANNING WHEN STAYING AWAY CONT'D

OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN STAYING AWAY

- Before you leave, work with the players to establish rules for the trip (and what will happen to those who break them);
- You've provided the adults with a detailed information pack, it's a good idea to provide the younger children with a scaled-down version of the pack;
- Ideally, children shouldn't wear shirts or hats with their names on;
- Agree who is sharing with whom before you go. However, be ready to change this as friendship groups with children can change very quickly;
- In an ideal world you would visit the accommodation before booking, but this is not always possible. Can you check with another club who have used this accommodation before or check with the local Tourist Information or visit their website?
- Transport should be planned ahead and safeguarding considerations made. See the CPSU guideline for more information '[Guidance on transporting a child or young person in your car](#)';
- When you arrive at your accommodation, check that all windows and doors are safe and secure;
- Check the accommodation for balconies. Consider any hazards to children and never leave them unattended on a balcony;
- Check the accommodation for unguarded pools that may pose a hazard to younger children. Never leave them unattended near a pool;
- Remember to check the rooms for any damage and report any you find or you may end up with a bill;
- If there is a bar, what rules will you have in place?
- Is there a social area? What is there for children to do when not playing football?
- Some children have enuresis (bed-wetting). Ensure that the hotel can deal with this discretely;
- Ensure that you have your staff bedrooms spread out, for example – if the group is over three floors, there should be at least one adult room on each floor;
- If self-catering, who will do the cooking? Are there any special dietary needs? Agree the menu before you travel. Will there be kitchenware such as knives or cleaning chemicals that need securing?



ESSENTIAL PLANNING WHEN ACTUALLY AWAY

ON ARRIVAL

- Check all rooms (are there the correct number of beds?);
- Ensure there is no access to alcohol in the rooms;
- Ensure movie access is appropriate or, indeed, not available in the rooms;
- Ensure that everyone is aware of fire exits and emergency procedures;
- Ensure everyone is aware where the staff bedrooms are;
- Store medicines, money and valuables;
- Have a group meeting to review the programme and rules. Give out the 'Safe- Away Cards' during the trip;
- **During your stay**
Hold daily group meetings and a staff meeting. They don't need to be long and they provide the opportunity to discuss any issues or problems and solve them before they grow.

ON RETURN

- Ask the children and the staff what they enjoyed and what they would change. This will help with next year's planning.

ESSENTIAL PLANNING WHEN GOING ABROAD

- Make sure your insurance covers you when abroad, as you may need to take out additional cover, e.g. medical;
- Check if you need visas;
- For some trips, you may need vaccinations, or to take pre-trip medication such as anti-malaria medicines;
- Don't forget Global Health Insurance cards you can find more information
- **Applying for healthcare cover abroad (GHIC and EHIC) - NHS.** Check the weather, and if any, what precautions are needed?
- Make sure passports and return tickets are stored in a secure place.
- Ensure all staff are aware of what to do in the event of an emergency. Ensure you have the local emergency services details and specific medical information for all staff and children.

OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- Check the cultural traditions of the country. This may have an implication on what clothes you ask the group to take, e.g. within Muslim communities;
- Consider the implications of communication barriers where countries are not English-speaking;
- Consideration must be given to the use of remote supervision when utilising host families.

ENSURING EVERYONE CAN BE INCLUDED

ESSENTIAL PLANNING

Football is an inclusive sport and is 'for all'. If you have young people with additional health needs/disabilities, you need to consider the following:

- Will you need any staff/volunteers to support the inclusion of children with additional health needs/disabilities?
- Will staff/volunteers need any extra training e.g. asthma medication/diabetes management?
- Make sure any accommodation is suitable and has suitable access for players/supporters with a disability;
- Volunteers from various ethnic groups not only provide positive role models, they also provide knowledge of language/diet/prayer needs;
- Be aware of dietary needs of children from different ethnic groups. This includes fasting times linked to religious traditions;
- Some activities may not be permitted with a mixed gender within some cultures e.g. not all teenage girls will be allowed to attend mixed swimming sessions.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) has produced the following comprehensive guidance – 'Away day trips and fixtures – safeguarding considerations' and '[Overnight trips and international travel](#)' both contain links to their own useful checklists.





The Football Association
Wembley Stadium
London HA9 0WS
T: +44 (0)800 169 1863
F: +44 (0)800 169 1864
W: TheFA.com