

Information for Risk Assessment

Introduction

This information has been collated from group leaders' feedback and our site visits, to provide you with a guide to aid you as you develop your risk assessments. It is intended to be used in conjunction with the document 'Demystifying Risk Assessment'.

The key points below should help you identify potential hazards, which is stage one of risk assessing the elements of your tour. It is very important however, that the group leader, and/or supervisory adults, identify the proposed control measures for these risks, as it is inappropriate for anybody without intimate knowledge of the group to attempt to complete this aspect of risk assessment.

Additionally this document, together with our Safety Management Policy, will outline the steps that Key Stage Travel takes to ensure, as far as reasonably practical, the safety of their groups.

Information is divided as follows;

- Transport
- Accommodation
- Attractions
- General

If you have a booking with us and require more specific information for risk assessment, contact us and we will provide this directly to you.

Transport

UK Coach: All coaches are properly and regularly maintained to a high standard and have all necessary safety certificates. They are fitted with lap seat-belts on all seats. Drivers are required to comply absolutely with regulations regarding driving hours.

Non-UK Coach: All coaches are properly and regularly maintained to a high standard and have all necessary safety certificates. Please note that it is not a legal requirement that European coaches are fitted with seat-belts on all seats. However, if they are fitted, they must be worn.

Coach (General): The following are some coach-specific risks that you wish to consider;

- As modern coaches use airbrakes, stopping distances can be quite short and pupils who are standing in aisles have a higher risk of propulsion. To reduce the hazard of falling, students should be allocated a seat and encouraged to remain seated, with seat belts fastened, at all times the vehicle is in motion.
- Your driver should take you through safety procedures, if not ask before departure. This should cover evacuation, fire and general safety. It may be worth having staff seated at continental door exit, front door exit and rear emergency exit (this is a requirements in France anyway).
- Aisles should be kept clear (of bags/ legs/ students) to minimise risk of injury while braking, and allow clear evacuation if necessary.
- When your coach stops at service stations, pupils need to be aware of moving traffic.
- Road traffic can cause delays to your itinerary. You may be able to help your driver with quickest routes from School to the motorway. While travelling, your driver is briefed that if delays mean you may be late for a pre-booked visit, he will call ahead (or back to the office) to try and rearrange.
- In the event of a coach breakdown on the roadside, the general advice is that being out of the vehicle and away from the road is safer, but this may require a judgement based on the circumstances such as whether the coach is well away from fast moving roads and how much traffic is using the road, and if there is anywhere safe for the children to gather when it does break down. If you are within the UK, in instances where there is concern over the safety of the children by the side of the road, then a supervisor should contact the Highways Agency on 08457 50 40 30 and they will be able to mobilise one of their traffic officers and give warnings to drivers on overhead gantries.

Transport Contd.....

Ferry: Ferries are operated by SeaFrance, P&O and Brittany Ferries. All are required to conform to SOLAS standards. We recommend that pupils are advised after boarding the ferry and before leaving the coach that safety announcements will be made over the ship's public address system shortly before sailing. Such announcements should be listened to attentively as they include information regarding emergency assembly points, lifejacket usage and alarm signals. It can be useful to establish a meeting point, which can either be staffed throughout the voyage or used to collect the group prior to arrival to ensure smooth disembarkation. The following hazards may be useful to include in your risk assessment;

- Bad weather
- Wet decks
- Doors, which can swing shut and often have door sills
- Stairs, which can be steep and crowded
- Crowds / congestion
- Moving vehicles on vehicle decks

Tunnel: EuroTunnel shuttle trains are operated to special safety standards laid down in their operating licence. Safety announcements are made before departure and pupils should be advised to listen to these.

Air: Airlines are operated to special safety standards laid down in their operating licence. Safety announcements are made before departure and during the flight, and pupils should be advised to listen to these. At the airport, you may wish to divide the pupils into smaller groups, each with a supervisory adult, to ease check-in.

On Foot: All travellers should be alert to the fact that traffic drives on the right and therefore more care is required in crossing roads. If roads are crossed by small groups only at marked light-controlled crossings, and only when the lights indicate it is safe to do so, any possible problems should be avoided. Passengers should also be alert to cycle paths marked either by white lines or by different surfaces within the pavement area.

Underground / Tram: Passengers should be aware of the need to keep away from platform edges and not to attempt to board or leave a train after the audible warning is sounded. When travelling as a group, it is advisable that all party members are aware of a policy to be followed in the event of any party member(s) missing a train or remaining on a train after the correct stop.

Accommodation

Your accommodation is required to hold all necessary licenses and authorisations from the municipal authorities regarding fire, and general safety, food hygiene etc. Some risks you may wish to consider include;

- Falling from a hotel window. Emphasising the danger and patrolling outside should minimise this.
- A common risk with school groups is that of disturbing other hotel residents, which can in extreme cases lead to exclusion from the hotel or police arrest. This can be minimised through curfews, careful rooming and supervision.
- Intruders, with the risk of assault or theft. Highlight the risk and the need to be vigilant to pupils. Do not leave windows open, particularly on the ground floor. Lock doors. Ensure there are at least two occupants in each room.
- Fire risks with smoking in hotel bedrooms. Ban all smoking in rooms, and spot check. Identify fire extinguishers and exits.
- Hotels will charge the occupants of rooms for any damage found on departure. It is recommended supervisory adults check rooms on arrival and departure.

If there are any specific risks regarding your hotel, which we have identified through customer feedback, collation of safety information or on-site visits, we will make you aware of these also.

Attractions

All visits have been categorised into a number of risk categories, with appropriate risk control measures.

Category 1 visits have low inherent risk, the group is more involved with looking rather than doing and risks are more associated with group management. We still monitor accident and incident reports as well as client and staff feedback for all visits and excursions.

The risks you may wish to consider as part of your group management plan are;

- Getting lost
- Strangers
- Becoming ill
- Minor accident
- Petty crime
- Misbehaviour
- Major emergency

Category 2 visits are those with additional causes for concern, where pupils are more actively involved or there have been previous issues raised. If your itinerary contains any category 2 visits we will include further risk assessment information for your consideration.

Category 3 visits involve water immersion (water park / swimming pool). If your itinerary contains any category 3 visits, we will include further risk assessment information for your consideration. If you plan to spend any free time on the beach, please refer to your own employer's guidelines for health and safety.

Open Air Sites: Outdoor sites can be slippery in wet or frosty weather, but normal precautions should ensure safety. It is in any case good policy to advise that sensible footwear be worn at all times. Central and Eastern Europe can be very cold and wet during the winter months, and many elements of your itinerary involve being outdoors for significant periods of time, so appropriate clothing should be taken.

Pupils should be warned when visiting battlefield sites that ammunition debris can still be found. Most are innocuous, but some are unstable and explosions do still occur.

Theme Parks: Theme parks are subject to strict health & safety regulations. Due to crowd situations, group members need to be aware of their personal safety and the safety of their personal possessions. Time and place of meeting need to be agreed and contact details of the group leader communicated.

General

Free time: Where itineraries include some free time for the group, this is usually in town or city centre locations with the inherent risks this holds. Group members need to be aware of their personal safety and the safety of their personal possessions. Time and place of meeting need to be agreed and contact details of the group leader and accommodation communicated. If groups decide to go out in the evenings, staff must impose reasonable curfews, ensure adequate supervision and contact provision for emergencies.

Illness: Members of groups travelling to or through EU countries should note that on 31 December 2005 E111 forms ceased to be valid, and you will now require a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). Even though you are fully covered by insurance, in the event that medical treatment should be needed, the insurers would expect part of any costs incurred to be recovered under the EHIC scheme. You can apply for these cards through the Post Office, and they take 21 days. Alternatively, apply online (www.ehic.org.uk) or by phone 0845 606 2030. You will need your name, date of birth and National Insurance number. Applications online should receive their card within 7 days and phone applications take around 10 days.

Getting Lost / Split From Group: Although many schools have well established procedures for managing their groups, these are some suggestions from previous group leaders.

- Pupils should be made aware of full schedule, all accommodation contact details, nearest public transport stops and teachers' mobile telephone numbers. In return, teachers could have a list of pupils' mobile numbers.
- Each supervisory adult is responsible for a smaller number of pupils within the group and count checks them on entrance and exit.
- If possible, try to ensure that your driver does not drop off in one location and pick up in another.
- Suggest pupils stay in groups of at least three.
- Limit and indicate extent to which pupils may stray from base. Indicate landmarks. Check local time and reiterate return time.

Emergencies: You will be sent a group leader guide prior to departure, which contains local emergency services information at your destination(s), including details of your nearest chemist, doctor, dentist, hospital, police station and emergency numbers for police, ambulance and fire. This guide also contains a 24-hour emergency number for while you are travelling and the details of your nearest Embassy or Consulate.

Alcohol consumption: Can lead to sickness, hospitalisation, aggression, arrest. Students should also have awareness of having their drink spiked and maintain usual precautions, such as not allowing their drink out of their sight and staying in groups of at least three.

Bullying: Troublesome students might be placed near to staff on the coach and in your accommodation. Dispersement of staff throughout group on coach and during visits.

Weather: High temperatures can lead to dehydration, sun stroke or sun burn. Wet or freezing conditions could lead to slips or falls. Consider the season you are travelling and inherent risks.

Passports: We strongly advise group leaders to check that all members of the group have their passports in their pocket or hand luggage before they leave School and on leaving their accommodation.