

Guidelines on transportation

The issue of transporting children to and from their sports activities safely can present challenges for sports clubs. Many sports clubs could not operate without the good will of volunteers and parents/carers ensuring that children are transported to and returned home from events in a private car.

It is reasonable for clubs and activity organisers to place full responsibility on parents for ensuring appropriate transport arrangements are made. Where parents/carers transport their own children, or make private arrangements with other parents/carers to deliver or collect their children, they are responsible for their children's safety and for the suitability of any travel arrangements. It is the job of British Equestrian and its Member Bodies to ensure that parents/carers are aware of their responsibilities.

However, where the activity deliverer, club or coach is organising transportation of children and asks or requires parents to transport other people's children on the club's behalf, the organiser has a responsibility to take reasonable steps to safeguard these young people for whom they have a duty of care. British Equestrian, along with the CPSU, encourages coaches or other volunteers/staff not to take children on journeys alone in their car.

Key considerations

- Staff and volunteers will be responsible children in their care when on the Organisations premises.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to transport their child/children to and from the event.
- The organisation must receive permission from parents/carers for young people to participate in all competitions and events.
- The Organisation will provide a timetable of activities at the beginning of a season and notify parents/carers of any changes to this timetable in writing where practically possible.
- The Organisation will require contact numbers for parents/carers, and any alternative numbers if they are not contactable on the number provided.
- The Organisation will provide the parents/carers with a contact number which may be used if the parent/carer will be late to collect their child/children.

When transporting children and young people:

Best practice is clearly to avoid transporting a child alone, but we recognise that in some circumstances it is an essential part of a child's participation in training and competition. If all alternatives have been exhausted and an adult has to transport a child, there are a number of safety measures that should be put in place to minimise the risk:

- The organisation must establish the suitability of any driver. The driver should have agreed to a vetting check (where appropriate).
- A person other than the planned driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans.
- The organisations must ensure drivers have valid car insurance, MOT and driving licence prior to carrying any passengers.
- The individual should check with their own insurance company if they want to use their car as part of their paid/volunteer role.
- When transporting children after an event or training session staff/volunteers should alternate which child is dropped off last. Ideally two children would be dropped off at an agreed point such as one of their family homes.
- Drivers must register their vehicle with the organisation.

- Parents/carers should be informed of transport arrangements including the person who will be transporting their child, the reasons why and how long the journey will take.
- Drivers must only use vehicles with seat belts and ensure that their passengers are wearing these when in transit.
- Drivers must be aware of their legal obligations when transporting children.
- Parents/carers must give written permission if their child is being transported in another adult's car.
- Clear information on the expected time of departure and arrival need to be communicated to relevant people, i.e. parents/carer.

Staff/volunteers should avoid:

- Taking the child home or to any other location.
- Asking the child to wait in a vehicle or the premises with you alone.
- Sending the child home with another person without permission.
- Being alone with a young person in the car at any time. If this situation arises drivers need to ensure that the young person is in the back of the car.
- The driver must have been DBS (or alternative in Scotland or Northern Ireland) checked and complied with appropriate recruitment procedures.

If hiring transport:

When booking transport for an event away from home, you will need to remember the following points:

- Passenger safety.
- Competence of the driver and whether the driver holds an appropriate valid licence.
- Number of driving hours for the journey and length of the driver's day, including non-driving hours.
- Whether more than one driver is required.
- Journey time, distance and stopping points.
- Supervision requirements - check with you Member Body.
- Suitability of transport, particularly if the team includes disabled participants.
- Appropriate insurance and breakdown cover must have been arranged.
- The vehicle must be suitable for the number of passengers required to be carried and has the required number of operational safety belts and appropriate child car seats.
- The parents/carer must have given their consent for the child/adult at risk to travel in this manner, preferably in writing, and should be given the driver's contact details. The driver should have easy access to all the parents' contact details including mobile phone numbers in case of emergency.

If the organisation hires a coach from a reputable commercial coach company it is entitled to assume the company uses properly maintained and insured vehicles and properly licenced drivers. However, it would be reasonable to check these details. Similarly, the organiser should check that the driver holds an up to date DBS clearance.

If a commercial company is used, the children/adults at risk must never travel unaccompanied. An adult member of the organisation must travel with the children /adults at risk and the contact details of those adults must be readily available to any parents who may have reason to contact them.

In the event of a late collection of the children/adult at risk, the accompanying adults should attempt to contact parents and wait with the child or adult at risk, preferably in the company of others. Parents should be notified by organisation of their responsibility to collect their child promptly. If the coach is likely to be delayed, the parents should be informed as soon as possible.