Greatham Youth Football Club
Travel, Trips and Tournaments Policy

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). It should be a chance for all children to grow in confidence, self-esteem, and skills.

Parents and carers will often worry when their children are away but careful planning and preparation should help to ease those worries and demonstrate that you have taken into account the various needs of their children and the potential dangers of a trip away.

To help you organise trips and travelling the following Safeguarding Children Guidelines have been developed.

Much of this preparation can be done at the start of the season when you register members at your club. For regular away trips you will find that very little needs to change from week to week, although if you have a new team member or helper with additional needs or a different cultural background you may need to consider your planning again.

Essential planning – At the Start of the Season

It is likely that you have already put much of this in place but please ensure that your club has:

- a Safeguarding Children Policy
- a policy and procedures for selecting/recruiting staff or volunteers
- an active Welfare Officer
- procedures for reporting concerns about the welfare of a child
- Codes of Conduct

Make Sure You Use the Following:

- Consent forms – make sure they are signed, returned and kept safely in line with data protection legislation
- If the group is aged over 8 years there should always be 2 adults and a minimum of 1 adult to 16 children (more adults are required when working with younger age groups)
- When taking a male group, there should always be one male member of staff and, of course, when you have a female group, there should always be female staff
- There should always be a qualified first aider and a full and up to date first aid box
- If any of the group have asthma or diabetes, ensure that appropriate club members are aware of how to deal with any situation
- Ensure you have the following insurance in place:
    - Public and civil liability - Personal accident - Vehicle - Breakdown cover (whether it's a car or mini bus)
- Remember to let everyone know where and when to meet, this is needed for both home and away games

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Other Important Considerations

- Holding a meeting with parents/carers at the start of the season, to explain your club philosophy, introduce staff, discuss club rules and your club code of conduct is very helpful. This is a great opportunity to discuss procedures for travelling for away fixtures, future trips or tours and the importance of the having up to date completed and signed consent forms
- 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
- The more people who have completed the Safeguarding Children Education Programme, the better.

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. The organisation of trips can be demanding, however properly planned they are often the highlight of the club year and very rewarding for all. When booking accommodation, you need to consider the following:

- 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 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.

Also consider:

- Make sure every child has a Safe Away Card
- On trips away, the children may take part in non- football activities, for example, swimming – make sure you have specific written consent for each activity for every child – The FA's Event Specific Consent Form is useful for this
- Check your insurance covers non-football activities
- Draw up a programme, including departure dates and times and when you are returning
- Have a meeting with parents/carers and players and run through the trip's programme of events and address any questions or concerns
- Someone from the club who is not going away needs to be identified as a point of contact. They should have a list of who is on the trip and their contact details (including the leaders/helpers)
- Make it clear who is the welfare officer for the trip, ensure they are suited to this role and make sure everyone in the group is aware of who this person is and what their role is on the trip
- Give everyone an information pack, that should include: dates, what you are doing, where you are going, rules, kit list, pocket money, medical care needs

- Ensure all helpers have a copy of the Emergency Procedures Guidance

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 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?
- When you arrive at your accommodation, check that all windows and doors are safe
- Remember to check the rooms for any damage and report any you find or you may end up with a bill!
- Check that the players are all allocated no smoking rooms – this is very important for anyone who has asthma
- 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.

Essential planning – Whilst You're 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
- Store money and valuables
  Have a group meeting to review the programme and rules. Give out the Safe Away Cards

During the Trip

- 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 can 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 that your insurance covers you when abroad, 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
- Don't forget European Health Insurance cards

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- Check the weather, what precautions are needed?
- Make sure passports and return tickets are stored in a secure place

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. Muslim communities
- Consider the implications of communication barriers where countries are not English speaking
- Consideration needs to 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 should be open to all. If you have young people with additional health needs/ disability you need to consider the following:

- Do any children with additional health needs/disabilities need extra helpers?
- Will these helpers 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 don't only provide positive role models, they 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.

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Additional Information

The Child Protection in Sport Unit have produced a comprehensive booklet – Safe Sports Event (£19.95) which is available via

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