

Safety Management System

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Signed:



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Contents:

1	Introduction
2	Our Safety Management System aims and objectives
3	Responsibilities
3.1	Directors and Managers
3.2	Accommodation and Coach auditors
4	Accommodation
4.1	All Accommodation
4.2	Standard Audits
4.3	On-site Accommodation Audit
4.4	Monitoring of Accommodation audits
5	Transportation
5.1	Coaches
5.2	Coach Supplier Checklist
5.3	Monitoring of Coach Suppliers
5.4	Provision of seatbelts
5.5	Coaches for ski programme
5.6	Emergency Protocol
5.7	Airlines
5.8	Rail, Ferries (Inc. Le Shuttle), Ocean-Going Cruise Liners and Public Transport
5.9	Services Secured by Agents and Ground Handlers
5.10	Services Obtained Through Approved Third-Party Verification Schemes
6	Snowsports
6.1	Equipment hire
6.2	Instruction
6.3	Standard of up-lift and Ski Runs
7	Visits and Excursions
7.1	Low to medium risk visits and excursions
7.2	Excursions not booked through Select School Travel
8	Pre-tour information and preview visits
9	Safety Information Before Travel
10	Emergency Procedures
11	Training
11.1	Auditor Training
11.2	SMS awareness training
11.3	Duty officer training
12	Safeguarding / Child Protection
13	Post tour evaluation

1. Introduction

As a company managed by a team with a long history in educational travel, Select School Travel fully appreciate the role of Health and Safety within our industry, and these policies form the bedrock of our organisation.

Our commitment to Health and Safety is inherent in everything we do, from our staff working environment both in the UK and overseas, to all aspects of our school groups' tours. Our Safety Management System documents the procedures that we have in place to ensure consistent standards are maintained.

Financial Security is also a crucial hygiene factor when choosing a tour operator partner, and our affiliations with ABTOT (membership number 5519) and Civil Aviation Authority (ATOL No. 11022) guarantee that, in the unlikely event of insolvency, any monies paid to us by customers will be protected. Should this occur whilst your group is on tour, repatriation is also assured.

We understand and operate in accordance with our obligations under The Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018, which, as well as spelling out our financial protection requirements, ensures our customers can expect the package that they have booked and paid for.

We have Public liability insurance cover to the value of £10 million, arranged by Touchstone

When schools book with Select School Travel, they can be confident that we have all bases covered, and will do our utmost to ensure a safe and rewarding tour for their students.

2. Our Safety Management System (SMS) aims and objectives

The directors, management and staff of Select School Travel are committed to ensuring that all reasonable measures are taken to provide our customers with a high level of health and safety throughout their tour. We shall achieve this through:

- Implementation and ongoing annual review of our safety policy, through sufficient resource allocation of responsible individuals.
- Commitment to ensuring that all of our tours comply with current local and/or national standards as an absolute minimum.
- Promoting a positive culture of health and safety within our business, which actively encourages similar dedication from our suppliers and customers.
- Training and development of all staff to ensure ongoing compliance and competence.
- Continual review of external providers' services, through customer feedback (including post-tour reports) and regular site visits, to ensure weaknesses and failures are identified, and hence standards are maintained in accordance with our SMS procedures.

3. Responsibilities

Every member of staff at Select School Travel has a responsibility to exercise diligence in complying with the requirements of the SMS.

There are several levels of responsibility:

3.1. Directors and Managers

Directors and Managers are responsible for enabling the overall implementation of Health and Safety within their own business.

Directors and Managers are responsible for the annual review of the SMS by themselves and a suitably qualified external expert.

They are responsible for the investigation and annual review of incidents, accidents, trends and “near-misses”.

They are responsible for the provision of adequate resources to ensure policies are carried out.

They are responsible for ensuring remedial action is taken to resolve safety issues and non-compliance.

3.2. Accommodation and Coach auditors

Trained auditors are responsible for making sure that the relevant documentation is in place to ensure products comply with the School Travel Forum’s guidelines.

They will review feedback provided by group leaders and take immediate action should Health and Safety be threatened.

They are responsible to use good judgement when assessing accommodation and coach suppliers that will be used by our groups.

4. Accommodation

4.1. All accommodation

For all* accommodation contracted and supplied by Select School Travel, an accommodation contract or agent agreement is signed, or where use of the supplier is fewer than five times per calendar year a purchase order issued, in which it stipulates that the accommodation conforms to local and national fire, safety and hygiene standards and will have current liability insurance cover for the duration of the contract or order. Confirmation that the contract conditions are still being met will be obtained every three years.

All accommodation contracted and supplied by Select School Travel Limited, whether sourced by the company or booked on request of a customer, will comply with local and national legislation in regards to fire, health and safety, through the implementation of the following procedures:

4.2. Standard Audits for accommodation booked direct or through agents

All accommodation (used or featured) will be subject to a Standard Accommodation Audit prior to first use and thereafter when a significant change occurs, such as major structural alterations, or change of owner, or at a maximum of three-year intervals whichever is sooner.

The Standard Accommodation Audit may be completed by an STF Member, hotelier or agent.

The Standard Accommodation Audit will be assessed against the STF's Accommodation Core Values.

Where the Standard Accommodation Audit results indicate areas for concern the auditor should instigate further appropriate actions to clarify those concerns before use.

Members will complete random sample spot checks of Standard Accommodation Audits annually. The results will be analysed by a trained auditor and where significant discrepancies in the accuracy of the information provided by a third-party are identified suitable corrective action will be undertaken before accepting any further Standard Accommodation Audits from that source. Records of these checks will be maintained.

A Standard Accommodation Audit will not be required if an On-site Accommodation Audit has been carried out in the past three years.

4.3. On-site Accommodation Audit

In addition to the above Standard Accommodation Audit requirement, if it becomes evident that the accommodation will be used in any one year for five or more groups or 250+ clients, whichever is reached first, it will be listed as 'frequent use' and, within a maximum of twelve months of the frequent use criteria being established, will receive an On-site Accommodation Audit.

An On-site Accommodation Audit can only be carried out on-site by a trained auditor.

The accommodation will be re-audited to On-site Accommodation Audit standard at least every three years as long as it remains 'frequent use'

4.4. Monitoring of Accommodation audits

Select School Travel will be recording audits in the following categories:

1. High Conformity

Minor or no areas of improvement have been identified. The management will be commended and encouraged to maintain their standards.

2. Acceptable Conformity

Room for improvement has been identified, but the defects do not render the accommodation unsafe. The defects will be brought to the immediate attention of the management at the time of auditing, or at the time of the audit assessment, and followed up in writing within 14 days. The deficiencies will be evaluated, and a schedule of remedial action will be agreed and monitored.

3. Unacceptable

Room for improvement has been identified which renders the accommodation unsafe for use. The defects will be brought to the immediate attention of the management at the time of auditing, or at the time of the audit assessment, and followed up in writing within 14 days. The Member will remove the accommodation from its programme and will not consider its reinstatement until evidence is obtained that the defects have been rectified and the Member is able to reclassify the accommodation to either High or Acceptable Conformity.

5. Transportation

5.1. Coaches

For all* coach operators booked by Select School Travel Limited, a coach contract or agent agreement is signed, or where use of the supplier is fewer than 5 times per calendar year, or 250+ clients, whichever is greater, a purchase order is issued.

5.2 Coach Supplier Checklist

Each coach operator used by Select School Travel (whether booked direct or agent booked) will be required to complete and return a Coach Supplier Checklist form prior to first use and thereafter when a significant change occurs (such as major fleet changes, or change of owner), in the event of a significant safety related incident, or at a maximum of three-year intervals if neither of the above occur. This audit process will check that they comply with all national, local, trade and other laws, regulations, rules and relevant codes of practice, as well as complying with a set of safety standards regarding drivers' hours, driver vetting, insurance cover, subcontracting, and vehicle age.

The Coach Supplier Checklist will be assessed against the STF's Coach Core Values by a trained auditor.

The following elements will be discussed.

- i) Valid certification and operating licences for UK and overseas work where applicable
- ii) The operation of policies to check Driver suitability and compatibility for working with children
- iii) Appropriate vehicle maintenance, emergency and business continuity procedures are in place.

The checklists, along with supporting evidence documents provided by suppliers, will be held on file in the Select Travel transport supplier database.

5.3. Monitoring of Coach Suppliers

Members will record checklist / conformity in the following categories:

1. High Conformity

Minor or no areas of improvement have been identified. The management will be commended and encouraged to maintain their standards.

2. Acceptable Conformity

Room for improvement has been identified, but the defects do not render the supplier as unsuitable for use. Defects identified should be brought to the attention of the management at the time of or very soon after the completion or receipt of the Checklist. All defects should be confirmed in writing, together with suggested solutions, within 14 days. Resolution of defects should be discussed with suppliers and a timed schedule of remedial actions agreed and monitored if possible.

3. Unacceptable

Room for improvement has been identified which render the supplier unsafe for use. The defects will be brought to the immediate attention of the management at the time of auditing, or at the time of the audit assessment, and followed up in writing within 14 days. The Member will remove

the supplier from its programme and will not consider their reinstatement until evidence is obtained that the defects have been rectified and the Member is able to reclassify the supplier to either High or Acceptable Conformity.

5.4. Provision of seatbelts

Please note that whilst all UK coaches must be equipped with seatbelts (in line with UK regulations) for all passengers, this is not the case in many other countries. Whilst we will request coaches with seatbelts be provided where possible, this cannot be guaranteed unless seatbelt provision is mandatory for that destination.

5.5. Coaches for ski programme

All coaches used on the ski programme will be suitably equipped for winter conditions, including snow chains (or mud and snow marked tyres) and appropriate anti-freeze systems

5.6. Emergency Protocol

In the event of an emergency such as breakdown, driver illness or accident, Select School Travel reserve the right to use coach companies that have not been subject to audits, so as to provide the best replacement services possible under the circumstances.

5.7. Airlines

- 5.7.1. All air transport to and from the UK is regulated by the Department of Transport and the Civil Aviation Authority. These bodies operate to very strict safety criteria and it is considered no additional practical measures can be undertaken by members.
- 5.7.2. Flights originating in other jurisdictions are governed by the laws and regulations of the country in question; however, members will ensure that use of airlines currently prohibited from UK and EU airspace will not be used, or where no alternative is available, brought to the attention of clients. See Banned airlines list | UK Civil Aviation Authority

5.8. Rail, Ferries (Inc. Le Shuttle), Ocean-Going Cruise Liners and Public Transport

All rail, ferry, ocean-going cruise liners and public transport is regulated nationally. It is not felt that members can take any additional measures.

5.9. Services Secured by Agents and Ground Handlers

Where Agents or Ground Handlers provide services that would be the subject of a safety review if booked direct by members e.g. visits and excursions, they will* sign a contract agreeing to use the appropriate STF standards as a minimum.

5.10. Services Obtained Through Approved Third-Party Verification Schemes

Where services are obtained through the approved schemes, the quality of the third-party verification has been assessed and, other than confirmation of the supplier's current membership of the scheme, such as validation via the scheme's website, the STF's safety management requirements can be considered as met and further substantiation is not required.

Approved schemes are: LOTC Quality Badge, CPT Coach Marque, Guild of British Coach Operators membership or DVSA UK Earned Recognition Scheme.

6. Snowsports

6.1. Equipment hire

An annual written contract is* in place with our equipment hire suppliers and agents specifying the following conditions:

They have sufficient liability insurance.

Equipment is of an acceptable standard and is checked every time it is issued.

All equipment should be easily identifiable so that children do not try to use the wrong equipment.

Only members of hire shop staff who are suitably competent will undertake the fitting of equipment.

Bindings must be fitted with due consideration to the age, weight and ability of the participant and the manufacturer's instructions. Ski fit records must be kept in case of accident investigation.

At the time of issue boots must be dry and in full working order with no significant damage that could reduce performance. All fastenings must be fully functioning.

Helmets are correctly fitted with no significant damage and where applicable meet local standards.

An adequate safeguarding policy is in place for all staff having conduct with our school groups.

6.2. Instruction

In accordance with STF guidelines, all* of our ski school suppliers will have signed a contract confirming that they comply with the following guidelines:

They comply with all National Regulations and are certificated to operate locally.

They have sufficient liability insurance.

The arrangements for instruction, for example instructor/pupil ratios, maximum class sizes and class sharing are acceptable.

The runs to be used will be selected to match the needs of the group and level of instruction needed.

All ski lifts to be used will be licensed and approved to local regulations and be suitable for safe use by school groups with particular consideration to beginners.

All instructors used for school groups will be qualified according to local and national regulations (where they exist), and approved by the Director of the local snow sport school. The minimum acceptable level of qualification is equivalent to BASI Alpine Level 2 Instructor.

We recommend that Maximum class sizes will be 12 for ski and 10 for snowboarding, and classes will not be mixed with other groups unless otherwise agreed in advance.

We will endeavour to ensure that Ski schools are informed of any special needs, including essential medical information in advance.

An adequate safeguarding policy is in place for all staff having conduct with our school groups

***Please note that on rare occasions, some suppliers (for example multinational companies or some franchises) have their own in house health and safety processes or contracting requirements and so are unwilling/unable to engage in our audit/contracting process. We endeavour to take all reasonable steps to ensure that their standards fall in line with STF requirements and that they are suitable to work with our school groups.**

6.3. Standard of ski lifts and ski runs

All ski lift systems comply with and are licensed according to local regulations. Select has chosen resorts based on their suitability for school groups, and in particular for providing the most suitable conditions for beginner and intermediate skiers.

7. Visits and Excursions

7.1. Low-to-high risk visits and excursions

Select School Travel will audit excursions in accordance with the STF Excursions and Visits Safety management table. Any 'Adventurous Activities' will be audited in accordance with the STF Adventurous Activities Guidelines

a) Where visits, excursions or activities are included in a final itinerary, except where the itinerary specifically states the event is not being arranged or facilitated by the member, Select School Travel will take reasonable steps to ensure that risks have been evaluated and monitored.

b) Sufficient information on the visits, excursions or activities will be provided to group leaders so that they are able to make informed decisions for their own group.

7.2. Excursions not booked through Select School Travel

Select School Travel clients are obliged to advise us of their full itinerary in advance of travel, and should any visit, excursion or activity be planned that is not currently offered by the company, we will flag it with our client and make recommendations regarding its suitability. Clients will be made aware that any visit, excursion or activity not available through Select School Travel will be booked entirely at their own risk.

8. Pre-Tour Information and Preview Visits

Select School Travel encourage group leaders to make preliminary visits to help with itinerary planning and conduct their own risk assessments of hotels, visits and excursions, etc.

We will arrange for 2 nights' complimentary B&B accommodation for 1 person, or one night in a twin room for 2 people (subject to a confirmed booking of minimum 30 paying pupils) at, or near to the hotel booked for the group. We regret that transportation arrangements and other costs cannot be covered by Select School Travel, and encourage group leaders to budget for this accordingly in their pre-tour planning.

9. Safety Information Before Travel

Practical Safety information will be provided by Select School Travel prior to tours.

10. Emergency Procedures

Select School Travel hold a fully documented emergency procedure.

Select School Travel operate a 24-hour emergency assistance line which is available for all our group leaders throughout the duration of their tour. The line will be operated by trained full-time members of staff (Duty Officer) whom will either be, or will have access to, Company Directors with appropriate financial authority.

UK and Overseas suppliers will also be provided with emergency contact details so serious incidents can be escalated should the need arise.

The Duty Officer will have details of current groups on tour, along with a laptop and access to our systems database containing contact numbers for all relevant customers, suppliers and support staff in the event of a major incident.

11 Training

11.1. Auditor training

All in-house auditors will complete an initial training course, which is supplied, or approved by the STF or the STF's relevant consultants.

All in-house auditors will complete refresher training at least every three years, which is undertaken or approved by the STF.

11.2. SMS awareness training

As part of our induction policy, Select will advise all staff of our Safety Management System and outlining our obligations as responsible educational tour providers.

11.3. Duty Officer training

Whenever possible, the Duty Officer will be a Senior Manager or Director of the company so that our clients receive access to immediate decision making and the best possible service when it's needed most.

Any member of staff appointed as Duty Officer will receive training on how to deal with the most common emergency scenarios for our business and understand how and when to implement crisis management procedures.

12 Safeguarding / child protection

Existing and any new staff will be given relevant training / refresher course on our safeguarding policy and guidelines on annual basis.

Select School Travel's behaviour code outlines the conduct we expect of all our staff and suppliers, in their dealings with children and young people. This includes permanent UK staff, seasonal overseas staff, coach drivers and ski instructors.

The behaviour code aims to help us protect children and young people from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made.

13 Post Tour Evaluation

As part of our commitment to continually evaluate and improve our tours, we encourage every group to complete a post tour questionnaire. Each questionnaire is analysed and recorded.

Should Health and Safety be raised as an area of concern it will be immediately flagged for the attention of the Directors and, following investigation, action will be taken where required.