England Rugby

# TRIPS TOURS AND OVERNIGHT STAYS

v.1 March 2024

Tours are a long-standing tradition of rugby and the best tours are usually the result of committed planning, as is the case with trips and overnight stays.

This aim of this guidance is to provide clubs with a resource towards running safe trips, tours, and overnight stays, to assist them in fulfilling requirements under Regulation 10, and that best practice is followed. The guidance is based on frequent questions posed to the RFU and acknowledges the experience of those who have previously organised tours.

For trips, tours, and overnight stays that involve children or adults at risk, clubs need to conduct thorough risk assessments, ensuring precautions taken are satisfactory to reduce the risk of harm. Recording decisions and keeping clear written evidence of decisions is essential.

While away from the club, adults who work or volunteer with children must remember that safeguarding is paramount. Adults should act as role models, setting an example of behaviour, and refrain from any behaviour that may bring the club into into disrepute.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the RFU Safeguarding Policies, Age Grade Rugby Codes of Practice, and the guidance and resources found in the Rugby Tours section of the website.

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# DEFINITIONS & PLANNING

The terms trips, tours and overnight stays are used throughout this guide and definitions provided in the table below. For ease, we refer to both incoming and outgoing tours as tours and where reference is made specifically to one, the full term is used.

All tours at Men's National League Rugby and below, and Women's Level 2 and below, and all age grade rugby, whether incoming or outgoing, require consent from the Constituent Body (CB) who have been delegated responsibility by the RFU. Clubs should contact their CB or the CB in which the activities are being conducted to seek their requirements and be compliant under Regulation 10. Clubs must contact their CB to establish local permissions for within England Rugby Union trips, tours, and overnight stays.

| TERM | DEFINITION |
|---|---|
| TRIP | any activity that involves children or adults at risk which involves a period of travel away from the club's premises, including training camps, away fixtures, tours and any other type of activity |
| TOUR | Incoming tour:<br>a match or series of matches (including 15-a-side, 10-a-side, 7-a-side, beach rugby, touch and tag, and such other variations of non-contact and contact rugby) played in England at any level involving a team from outside England including adult matches, age grade matches and/or matches involving scratch/composite teams (as defined by World Rugby), which may or may not involve an overnight stay<br><br>Outgoing tour:<br>a match or series of matches (including 15-a-side, 10-a-side, 7-a-side, beach rugby, touch and tag, and such other variations of non-contact and contact rugby) played outside of union (England) at any level including adult matches, age grade matches or matches involving scratch/composite teams (as defined by World Rugby), which may or may not involve an overnight stay |
| OVERNIGHT STAYS | Any activity or club/school activity, whether at the club's or school's premises or not, where children and/or adults at risk stay overnight for a period of one night or more |

In this guidance, the term 'children' is used throughout, relating to procedures and considerations in the guidance, but it is also applicable to adults at risk and persons who may become vulnerable to abuse or harm.

The work involved in planning a trip, tour, or overnight stay involves a substantial amount of time and work. This section provides clubs with key considerations for effective planning. Clubs may take advantage of the checklist and risk assessment templates within the Appendices of this document.

# COMMUNICATION

Parents/carers and children should be met and consulted with in the early planning stages of any trip, tour or overnight stay, while ensuring that it is as inclusive as possible for members to attend. Early planning will assist parents/carers making informed decisions as to whether to allow their child to participate. Regular updates throughout this process are a necessity, and it would be best practice to have a final briefing before the trip, tour or overnight stay. It is important to ensure a child wants to participate in a trip, tour or overnight stay and that they are comfortable with the arrangements

Clubs need to ensure they have emergency contact details and medical information for children participating, through a confidential process (e.g., online application form) for retrieving information such as:

- Emergency contact details for children and ideally a secondary set of emergency contact details
- Any allergies or dietary requirements
- Any medical conditions. For advice regarding medication and medical procedures, please refer to the Rugby Safe Toolkit
- Whether the child requires any assistance taking medication, and what qualifications the adult assisting needs
- Any cultural/religious needs or requirements
- Consent for activities, emergency medical treatment, and photography/filming
- Any other information that may assist the club to keep the child safe

Parents/carers should be provided full details of the trip, tour or overnight stay in advance of departure, with ample time to ask any questions they may have. A useful way to consolidate and communicate this is through an information pack, which may include:

- Full itinerary including dates, times and venues
- An application form, including consent for activities, emergency medical treatment and inclusion in photography/filming
- Full details of the accommodation, including address, contact numbers of staff/volunteers and details of sleeping arrangements
- Details of meals and refreshments, or requirements
- The names, roles, responsibilities and contact details of staff/volunteers attending
- Details of transport arrangements
- Insurance details and advice regarding personal travel insurance
- Supervision details including rotas

- Codes of conduct details  and the consequences of them being breached
- Safeguarding policy for the club and what policy is being adopted for the trip, tour or overnight stay
- Kit and equipment list
- Any cost that the parent/carer will be expected to cover and when to be paid
- Any spending money required
- Contact details for the club home contact

## CLUB HOME CONTACT

It is best practice for a club home contact to be appointed, who will be based back in the locality of the club (and not be part of the tour ) and will be required if an emergency occurs. Ensure they have:

- A list of all children together with parent/carer emergency contact details and medical information
- A list of all volunteers and their contact details, including next of kin
- The full itinerary and be kept up to date with any changes
- The name, address and contact details for the accommodation and venues used and be kept up to date with any changes

## PARENTAL CONSENT

Clubs must ensure that they gain parental consent for the child to participate in activities away from the club, either in writing or electronically (so there is a record), and store this consent for as long as they will need to refer to it. Clubs can use the parental consent template form, which can be accessed on the Rugby Tours resources page of the RFU website.

The club, if travelling without parents, or where a parent is not accompanying their child, will need to ensure that appropriate written consent is obtained. Where travelling abroad, certain countries have strict entry rules regarding evidence of parental permission. It is therefore important to check the entry requirements for the country that the club intend to visit well in advance. Ensuring appropriate documentation is in place prior to travelling will help to prevent any difficulties leaving England or at immigration upon arrival. Government advice is available here.

# ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation arrangements for parties may vary greatly but is often the most expensive aspect. Cutting costs by accepting unsuitable accommodation arrangements may appeal in the planning stages but may cause problems.

Careful consideration should be given to ensure that no child is put at risk or upset because of the arrangements and that parents/carers are fully aware in advance, and notified if there are any significant changes to these arrangements. Clubs may be able to visit the accommodation during the planning stages, but as much information about the accommodation will need to be gathered about it if this is not possible.

When choosing accommodation, clubs should consider:

- The accommodation meets basic fire and safety regulations
- Access is possible for all children and staff/volunteers, including those with mobility impairments
- There are clear policies on alcohol, adult channels, and smoking, and staff/volunteers can restrict access (e.g., to mini-bar)
- Health and safety and insurance requirements are followed
- Facility for storage of money and valuables
- Proximity to rugby club/pitches/venues where matches will be played
- Immediate accommodation area should be exclusive for party use where possible
- Careful considerations given to sharing accommodation with other groups
- Availability of recreational room or facility available for tour party to relax
- Religious/cultural requirements of children and staff/volunteers

If host families are being used, then please contact your CB or the RFU Safeguarding Team for advice.

# ROOM ALLOCATION

Where clubs are responsible for sleeping arrangements, it is best practice for rooms to be allocated before arrival at the accommodation, considering the following:

- Children should be sharing rooms with children of a similar age to them, and of the same sex as them. Children of different sexes **should not** share a room
- Any behavioural or historical issues children may have between each other
- Any carers or volunteers assigned to support children with disabilities should have adjacent rooms, or as close together as achievable
- No adult should share a room with a child other than their child, unless that child's parent is also sharing the room
- All rooms must be accessible in case of an emergency

# SUPERVISION

All supervision must be agreed upon before departure and must take the following principles into account:

- Clear boundaries and rules are agreed upon and set regarding mealtimes, bedtimes, lights out and team meetings
- Children must be supervised at a level that meets their maturity and needs. Therefore, adequate rotas describing shifts for the daytime and night-time should be allocated to all appropriate staff/volunteers
- All rotas must be communicated to staff/volunteers and children with the relevant contact details of those staff/volunteers on duty, such as their mobile numbers
- 24-hour medical care to be available to all participating in the trip/tour/overnight stay
- Fire alarm procedures to be communicated to all participating in the trip/tour/overnight stay

# DBS REQUIREMENTS

Any adult engaged in Regulated Activity while participating on a trip, tour or overnight stay must have an RFU DBS check. You can find out more about safer recruitment requirements here.

Some adults may already have an RFU DBS check through other club commitments, but a club may need additional volunteers on tour, and consideration should be given to the activities they may be performing with children and whether they require a DBS check. As a reminder, all DBS checks have to be completed through the RFU and applied for well in advance as they may take longer than six weeks to be processed. Clubs need to ensure there are enough DBS-checked adults to adequately supervise children at any time during the trip, tour or overnight stay.

It is a legal requirement for those who are supervising children overnight to have an RFU DBS check, as this falls under Regulated Activity. Volunteers supporting the trip, tour or overnight stay while working in Regulated Activity will require an RFU DBS check. Roles that require a DBS check for Regulated Activity include:

- Supervision of a child, or children, between the hours of 02:00 - 06:00
- Supervision of a child, or children, for four or more days in a 30-day period

There may be situations where a supervising adult does not meet the requirements of Regulated Activity but an Enhanced DBS check without Barred list is required - please refer to Regulation 21 and contact dbseapp@rfu.com

Adults attending the tour who only have responsibility for their own child do not need a DBS check, nor will they need a DBS check if there is a private arrangement between parents to extend their responsibility to another child/children as well. If a private arrangement between parents is set up, then those parents must accept responsibility for that arrangement. Where such arrangements are facilitated by the club, then a DBS check would be required as it would become Regulated Activity.

# TRAVELLING ABROAD, PLAYING OUT OF UNION AND OUTGOING TOURS

When travelling abroad and playing out of Union, in addition to the above guidance, the following areas should be managed:

- Permission from the CB to play out of Union and abroad or to host such a team and to establish any additional requirements, such as RFU authorisation
- A thorough understanding of the hosting Union's rules regarding match play and age groups. Check country's entry rules/laws and also evidence required of parental consent, which can be very strict for some countries
- Establishing an overseas contact/partner, if appropriate
- Foreign currency
- Passports and visas
- Travel advice from the Foreign Office, if appropriate
- Climate and weather
- Local issues - language, culture, food and water, laws, money, etc.
- Customs and Excise regulations in both UK and the destination country
- Adequate activity and health or medical insurance, which will cover limited medical expense
- Medical matters if travelling outside Europe – injections, medications, etc.
- Ensure mobile phones will work in the area or country the tour party is visiting
- The club home contact has copies of passport numbers, travel documents and tickets
- If host families are being used, then please contact your CB or the RFU Safeguarding Team for advice.

# HOSTING INCOMING TOURS

It is mandatory for any English rugby club planning to host an incoming tour to strictly adhere to RFU Regulations, including any need for permission or consents. Additionally, clubs must consider the RFU Safeguarding Policy as well as other guidance available from the RFU.

# INSURANCE

It is important for clubs to ensure that they have appropriate insurance. Information on insurance for rugby tours and contacting Howden can be found **here**. When liaising with insurers, the club will need to consider:

- The nature of both the main activity and other potential organised activities
- The ages(s) of participants
- The travel arrangements
- What the insurance covers
- Who the insurance covers

# WHILE AWAY

With time given to effective planning, it will mean that the club will be prepared for the trip, tour, or overnight stay and have considered how to mitigate risk and ensure safety of tourists. There are further considerations through effective planning that will assist managing risk while away.

# TRANSPORTATION

Where clubs are facilitating travel arrangements, the following should be taken into consideration:

- The Tour Manager will be responsible for the children, volunteers and any staff at all times of the trip/tour/overnight stay. This includes maintaining and managing good conduct of the children and volunteers
- Individuals who are tasked with driving should not be responsible for supervision while driving, and the club must make sure there are adequate staff to cover both driving and supervision separately and that relevant insurance is in place
- All the children and volunteers should be made familiar with emergency procedures within the vehicle (i.e., emergency door and seatbelts)
- The level of supervision necessary on double-decker buses and coaches (i.e., two supervisors on each deck)
- Clarity of the ground rules when the team is in transit
- Sufficient, supervised and scheduled stops
- In the event of a breakdown or accident, the children and volunteers remain under the supervision of the Tour Manager and those who have supervision responsibilities
- Headcount taken when children are getting on and off any form of transport

If children are being transported by parents through private arrangements, then DBS checks will not be required. If children are being transported by adults as part of arrangements through the club, then consideration needs to be given to DBS checks and ratios.

# ARRIVING AT THE VENUE

On arrival at the venue, consideration should be given to:

- Familiarise tourists and staff/volunteers with the venue
- Undertake a briefing with all staff/volunteers and children regarding the rules, emergency procedures, schedule and behavioural expectations
- The club/tour code of conduct should be reiterated, together with the consequences of any breaches
- Introduce the venue staff and ensure tourists they know who's who and their responsibilities
- Check venue and rooms for any existing damage and report it to the accommodation management (do the same on leaving)
- Check all doors and locks both internally and externally
- Always ensure that all members of the party have keys and/or access codes and stress the importance of keeping these safe

# CHANGING ROOMS

Clubs should consider the RFU's guidance on Safeguarding Considerations for Changing Rooms, supplemented from RFU Safeguarding Policy, if the use of changing rooms is required as part of an activity, linked to the clubs own safeguarding policy.

Establishing as much information as possible from the host venue regarding the changing rooms and that separate male and female changing facilities are available, will go a long way during the planning.

Clubs may refer to the aforementioned guidance for considerations to make in the planning stages and during the trip, tour or overnight stay, such as supervision, 17-year-olds in the adult game, mixed groups and best practice.

# OVERNIGHT SUPERVISION

For a child, staying away overnight from home with their club can be an exciting experience. However, there are several areas of overnight supervision that clubs should consider:

- Overnight on-call supervision, which must be provided for all children by RFU DBS-checked adults, unless this supervision is being provided by a parent, who is solely supervising their child, or another child as a private arrangement as described in the DBS requirements section of this guidance
- Children must be aware of who they should go to in case of an emergency or problem during the night, as well as any safeguarding concerns or worries they may have, whether about them or someone else

A member of the tour management team must be accountable for checking all children are safely accounted for before going to bed for the night. Volunteers/staff should also do a final security check before they retire for the night, including checking doors and locks.

# BEST PRACTICE FOR OVERNIGHT STAYS

To make overnight stays as successful as possible, there are a few areas of best practice that clubs should consider, including:

- Adults don't go into a child's room apart from emergency; if needed then accompanied
- Having a communal area for children to socialise during down-time, as well as an equivalent space for adults to have meetings
- If volunteers/staff need to collect or speak to a children who are in their room, they should knock and wait for the door to be opened by the child, and they should then wait for permission to enter the room. Volunteers/staff must not enter a child's room unannounced, or without an accompanying adult. If the volunteer/staff member is alone, they should stand in the doorway with the door open, rather than going into the room
- Children should not enter a volunteer/staff's room. If volunteers/staff need to speak to a child confidentially, avoid using rooms for this and speak in a communal space. If a child needs to collect something, the volunteer/staff should give the child this item in a communal space in the presence of others.
- If possible, clubs should ensure that the rooms are as close to each other as possible and not scattered across the accommodation venue

# ALCOHOL & CONDUCT

The RFU does not encourage a drinking culture, be that for adults or for children. Clubs should remind all concerned of the law in relation to the purchase and consumption of alcohol in the UK.

If travelling to a country where the drinking age is lower than 18 years old, this may be more challenging to manage, particularly where parents are responsible for their own children and there is 'free time' away from organised tour activities. Regardless of the licensing conditions abroad, those under the age of 18 are still children. Clubs are reminded that no adult should do anything that places a child at risk of harm, and this includes drinking to excess.

Safeguarding concerns in this regard will be managed by the RFU Safeguarding Team in the same way as incidents that take place in this country. If it is felt that an adult, either by omission or commission, has placed a child at risk of harm, we will seek advice from statutory agencies.

The boundaries need to be clear. There is a vast difference between a 17-year-old having a glass of beer with their meal, and adults allowing or facilitating a child to be so intoxicated as to be a risk to themselves or others. No child should ever be placed in the position where they feel pressured to engage in any activity, and adults should be mindful of culture and peer (or other) pressure in this regard. Adults should never encourage or be seen to behave in a way that does encourage children to consume alcohol, regardless of how close to adulthood they are.

Adults must ensure there are always enough adults who refrain from alcohol and able to look after children in case of an emergency. If adults are going to be drinking alcohol once children are in bed, all adults should be sensible and responsible.

Clubs should ensure adults always maintain professionalism and be positive role models for children. It is strongly recommended that all adults on tour are reminded of the club code of conduct and what is expected of them while away.

# MANAGING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

In the event of immediate harm, emergency services should always be contacted. While away, if there is a safeguarding concern, the safeguarding contact must:

- Report the incident to the RFU Safeguarding Team as soon as possible. This can be done by contacting safeguarding@rfu.com and using the referral form
- Decide, together with the Tour Manager, on a course of action using the RFU Safeguarding Policy, guidance notes and procedures. The RFU Safeguarding Team are happy to offer advice and guidance, as are the club, CB and local authority
- Follow the procedures described in the club's safeguarding policy
- Contact the police and/or social services if required

During any safeguarding concerns or incidents, it is important to put the welfare of the children involved first. Care should be taken to manage any additional stress the children may be facing if away from home. For further guidance, please see the RFU Safeguarding Policy.

# EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

It is important to ensure that all children remain supervised if an emergency occurs. Organisers must have a copy of the children's home contact details available, a summary of any medical conditions and must be prepared to contact the children's parents/carers. In the event of an emergency, it is important to:

- Remain calm and try to think clearly about your actions
- Establish the facts and nature of the situation
- Ensure all children are safe and supervised
- Contact the Tour Manager as soon as possible (the Tour Manager should ensure that all relevant personnel are contacted i.e. parents, club home contact)
- Identify if any children/volunteers/staff are hurt and their immediate medical requirements
- If medical attention is required, call the first aider or national emergency number for an ambulance (999)
- If abroad, ensure you have relevant numbers for emergency services or first aiders
- Volunteers/staff must be aware of who is the first aid contact either amongst themselves or on-site (accommodation or club)
- Ensure that any child going to hospital is accompanied by an appropriate adult volunteer
- Complete an incident form once the situation is resolved

If the home club contact is involved, they may assist to:

- Contact parents and keep them up to date with information
- Liaise with the Tour Manager and if necessary, the RFU
- Report the incident to insurers if required

In the event of a participant having to return home due to illness, injury, severe upset, or an incident occurring at home, clear arrangements would need to be made in agreement with the parent/carers. The Tour Manager must ensure a safe and appropriate handover and that supervision levels are maintained amongst the remaining group. Any individual returning home would be particularly vulnerable and care would need to be taken when managing this.

# RETURNING FROM A TRIP TOUR OR OVERNIGHT STAY

With the effort and time that has gone into planning and managing a successful trip, tour or overnight stay, it is key for clubs to consider procedures to be in place for returning to the club and what is required. The following considerations may help clubs in this respect:

- Parents/carers are informed of any changes or delays to the time that the party is due back
- Clubs need to ensure that any grounds where they are due to return to will be accessible at any given time for parents/carers to wait for their children
- Clubs should consider the risk when returning to the designated end point, such as if it is late at night
- The Tour Manager and club home contact must be aware of who is collecting the child and that they are only able to leave with that person when accounted for
- Having a register to mark off all children leaving against who they are to be collected by
- Clubs may adopt their late collection policy
- Consideration of children who may be of an age where they do not need collecting and how consent could be provided by parents/carers that their child may make their own way home

# DEBRIEF & LEARNINGS

If there were any safeguarding concerns during the trip, tour or overnight stay, procedures should be followed outlined in the Managing Safeguarding Concerns section. For a safeguarding matter that was not an emergency situation or required immediate safeguards to be put in place, it should be reported to the RFU Safeguarding Team.

Clubs may wish to hold a debrief session to discuss any matters on the trip, tour or overnight stay that went well, could be improved upon for next time, or where something unprecedented occurred. Whilst significant planning may be put in place, there may be something that occurs that wasn't considered. Utilising this guidance and associated documents and making it relevant to the club's situation and activities, will go a long way in mitigating risk.

# APPENDIX 1 - CHECKLIST TEMPLATE

| Section | Action | Notes | Who | When | Budget |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Planning | Purpose of tour | | | | |
| | Where | | | | |
| | When | | | | |
| | Who | | | | |
| | Itinerary | | | | |
| | Luggage | | | | |
| | Cost | | | | |
| | Code of Conduct | | | | |
| | CB/RFU permission | | | | |
| | DBS applications | | | | |
| Communication | Parents/carers | | | | |
| | Children | | | | |
| | Personnel | | | | |
| | Host venue | | | | |
| | Host accommodation | | | | |
| | While away | | | | |
| Staff/volunteers | Safer recruitment and DBS checks | | | | |
| | Code of Conduct | | | | |
| | Ratio of adult to children | | | | |
| | Roles and responsibilities | | | | |
| Supervision | Rota | | | | |
| | Overnight | | | | |
| | Club home contact | | | | |
| Risk Assessment | Dynamic | | | | |
| Transport | Form/mode | | | | |
| | Supervision | | | | |
| Accommodation | Venue | | | | |
| | Security | | | | |
| | Room allocation | | | | |
| | Catering | | | | |
| | On arrival | | | | |
| Emergency procedures | First Aid and physio | | | | |
| | Local medical services/hospital | | | | |
| | Incident reporting | | | | |
| | Emergency numbers | | | | |
| | British Embassy (if abroad) | | | | |
| Insurance | Travel | | | | |
| | RFU | | | | |
| | Personal accident | | | | |
| If abroad | Medical issues | | | | |
| | Vaccinations | | | | |
| | Consent | | | | |

# APPENDIX 2 - RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

| Subject | Consideration | Potential Risks | Risk level (High/Med/Low) | Action to mitigate | Residual Risk (High/Med/Low) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Planning | Venue and location | | | | |
| | Date | | | | |
| | Team(s) / Age groups(s) | | | | |
| Staff and volunteers | Safer recruitment and DBS | | | | |
| | Conduct | | | | |
| | Alcohol | | | | |
| | Number of personnel | | | | |
| | Parents | | | | |
| Supervision | Rota | | | | |
| | Overnight arrangement | | | | |
| | DBS checked | | | | |
| Transport | Form/mode | | | | |
| | Supervision | | | | |
| Accommodation | Venue and location | | | | |
| | Security | | | | |
| | Room allocation | | | | |
| | Catering | | | | |
| Emergency procedures | First Aid | | | | |
| | Local medical services/hospital | | | | |
| | Safeguarding | | | | |
| Travelling abroad | Medical issues | | | | |
| | Vaccinations | | | | |
| | Consent | | | | |