

Travelling and Away Trip Policy

Travel Policy

The Travelling and Away Trip policy requires that adults should avoid travelling alone with a single child and details procedures for overnight trips. All laws and rules of the road pertinent to the country in which the children are travelling must be observed. Swim Ireland promotes the safety and well-being as paramount for all children travelling with adults.

General Travelling considerations

Any transport provided by Clubs, Regions or Swim Ireland for young people must be adequately insured, with sufficient seats and all road traffic laws must be obeyed. It is a good idea to arrange for central collection and drop-off points. Parents/guardians must be aware of the times and arrive promptly to avoid a child being left on their own.

Leaders should avoid travelling with a single child. There may be an occasion where this is unavoidable for the child's safety e.g. in an emergency situation. In this instance the adult should contact the parent/guardian to inform them of the situation, and the child should be seated in the rear seat. Consideration must be given to legal requirements for child and/or booster seats.

Leaders should avoid offering regular journeys or lifts to a child; this can only be arranged by the parent/guardian and the Club/Region/Swim Ireland must receive written permission from the parent/guardian taking responsibility for their decision and fully aware of the Swim Ireland Travelling and Away Trip Policy and any such risk incurred.

Away events including hosting

Camps, competitions and other group activities for young people help with their motivation and support their participation in sport. Travelling and staying together for an event or activity helps develop a team spirit together with an open, honest and inclusive team atmosphere.

There are a number of options for Regions and Clubs to consider when staying away:

- The travel and accommodation arrangements can be the sole responsibility of parents; this does not encourage the concept of the team and does not allow for the development of a team spirit; however it does remove's the Club's responsibility for children.
- The travel and accommodation are the responsibility of the Club – in this instance the Club need to assume the Swim Ireland protocol for away events as being the best practice for travelling and staying away with children.
- The travel and accommodation is a combination of Club and parent's responsibility – clear boundaries need to be stated for the benefit of the swimmer and the parents/guardians; it can be difficult to encourage team spirit.
- The Club consider using host families for the accommodation; the process described below must be in place to ensure the welfare and protection of children staying with host families.

Hosting can be an ideal way for Clubs and participants to form lasting friendships, however the necessary preventative measures must be observed.

The Swim Ireland Protocol for Away Events covers the requirements for teams and groups travelling away together where by the arrangements are made either in conjunction with or solely by the Club or Region. The protocol provides detailed procedures for all young people, coaches, team managers and associated personnel to adopt and adhere to for away events including all camps and competition (for both day and overnight trips) in order to safeguard the well-being of all participants.

Hosting

Hosting can be a very rewarding experience for children and if appropriately provided can add to a young person's enjoyment and experience during an away event.

The host families should undergo a recruitment and selection procedure with vetting (either Garda Vetting or Access NI) and references being required. If the family is abroad the host organisation should provide the vetting service where these may be available.

The host family should agree to abide by the codes of conduct and this document; host families should be provided with this information prior to the event and a formal agreement should be made.

Meetings with the families should take place prior to the competition or event

The host family should be provided with as much information about the child/children staying with them and details of the competition.

Where it is practicable more than one child should be placed with each host family.

Summary Protocol for Away Events

State the general aims and objectives for the event/camp/competition – participants should be aware of their goals for the event.

Provide a programme or plan for the event, camp or competition

Recruit and appoint required personnel – coaching staff, team managers and any support staff necessary; all voluntary personnel should be Swim Ireland members.

Ensure all forms are completed signed by the parent/guardian and returned, including any information applicable to a child being away.

Any travel abroad may require additional insurance cover.

Observe rooming restrictions for over 18 and under 18 athletes, and ensure separate accommodation for leaders

Extra-curricular activities are the responsibility of the Team Managers

Any form of drug misuse, drinking alcohol or smoking is forbidden for all children and team personnel on duty at any time during camps/competitions.

Any complaints or disciplinary matters are dealt with through the complaints and disciplinary procedures.

Issues concerning the welfare of children during the event should be raised on return with the Club Children's Officers/National Children's Officer and any matters requiring action are the responsibility of the committee of the Club/Region or CEO/Chairman of Swim Ireland.

A team report should be submitted to the relevant persons on return

All Team Staff intending to take children on away trips and camps are required to at least hold the **Swim Ireland Team Manager Level 1** qualification with associated requisites (child protection training, vetting and code of conduct).

Further more detailed information regarding children on away events is contained in the Team Manager Training Programme.

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