

Travelling with age grade players

Traveling to and from venues is part of fulfilling fixtures. In order to ensure the safety of all involved, clubs must ensure that suitable policies and procedures are in place.

To put players and parents at ease, organisers should ensure all arrangements are in place and communicated to all involved before the event. Parents should be informed of the mode of transport.

Considerations:

- Ensure all arrangements are suitable for the journey to be undertaken.
- Vehicles must be roadworthy and appropriate and the driver to understand that he/she is responsible for the vehicle during the trip.
- Ensure parental consent is obtained prior to journeys being undertaken.
- All journeys to take place under the supervision of the team management.

Bus / Coach hire:

- When renting, make sure you deal with a reputable company.
- Make sure the vehicle is suitable and complies with the rules of the road.

Passenger cars:

Although this is the most frequently used option it is important to ensure that the safety of all players are not jeopardised at any stage.

- Prior to the trip, parents should be informed if this form of transport will be used and consent obtained for their child to travel this way. This can be done seasonally using parental consent form in IRFU Safeguarding Policy, Appendix 2
- Vehicles must be roadworthy, safe and have appropriate insurance cover.
- Drivers must have a suitable drivers licence.
- All passengers must use seat belts and booster seats (where necessary) for the duration of the journey.
- All drivers are responsible for the safety of the passengers and must be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Club members or parents should be asked to be involved if this mode of transport is used.
- One passenger per seat at all times.
- Inform parents of the time of departures as well as estimated time of arrival.

Air travel:

- Group to travel together at all times and not to be split up.
- Players to be informed of legal requirements and behaviour appropriate for air travel.
- Assist and guide all players through security and passport control when required.
- Adult player ratio to be sufficient to assist and deal with emergency situations.
- Adults to ensure all players are on board and in their seats before occupying their own seats.

- Ensure players know position of the nearest adult in group and as well as emergency exits.
- In the event of delays or cancellation the management and adults will be responsible for the well being of players.

Sea travel:

- Ensure all players know what freedom/liberties they will have while at sea.
- No player to be allowed on deck without supervision.
- All players to be under supervision at all times.
- Discuss emergency arrangements with players prior to departure.
- Discipline to be maintained at all times.
- Assist and guide all players through security and passport control, if required.
- Ensure players have enough to keep them busy and avoid boredom.

Hosting a match or event at your club

To ensure players, management and spectators enjoy the experience when involved with a match it is important for clubs, when hosting fixtures, to ensure all arrangements are in place and that all involved are informed of these arrangements before the event.

Suggestions for hosting a match or event:

Administration:

- Obtain permission from the Branch to play the fixture.
- Inform the Club Management Committee of the match and of the facility requirements for the match.
- Request Match Official(s) from the Branch Referee Association with sufficient notice.
- Inform the visiting team of any arrangements or club protocol regarding their visit in the week leading up to the match.
- Inform match official(s) in good time regarding postponement(s) or cancellation(s).
- In the event of a competitive match the Youth Coordinator to inform the Fixture Secretary of the result of the match within the agreed time.

Medical:

- An individual with first aid experience/ training should be in attendance.
- If possible have a doctor present at the match.
- The doctor should identify himself to the match official.
- Inform the nearest hospital accidental and emergency department about the match.
- If possible have an ambulance at the match, if not, ensure one can be contacted and arrive at the club in very little time.
- Ensure ambulance access to the playing area.
- A spinal board, hard neck collar and first-aid kit should be available in every medical room

- Ice bags to be available on the side line.
- Medical room to be available with appropriate equipment.

Facilities:

- Ensure the clubhouse facilities are open to supporters and club officials.
- Changing facilities must be open and clean for all participants.
- Toilet and showers to be clean and available.
- Post match refreshments should be sufficient, depending on the fixture and protocol involved for the match or competition.
- The playing area should be clean, safe and marked for the match. Touch line flags and post protectors should be in place before the start of the match.
- Inform both teams of the area allocated to the coaches, medical staff and replacements during the match.
- Ensure no spectators are in the playing enclosure during the match.

Hosting Touring sides

The following should be in place:

- Consent from the IRFU and Branch (whom the host club is affiliated to), regarding the match and conditions of the match.
- Consent from the Club Executive for the match to take place as well as the facility requirements and protocol involved.
- Written application for match official(s) (from Branch Referee Association) informing them of the match.
- Clarification of laws (prior to the visit) to be applied in the match.
- Schedule and other requirements of the visitors to be supplied by the visiting team prior to arrival.
- Medical requirements to be in place for the match.

Written consents must have been exchanged between the two Unions before leaving Ireland or in the case of hosting before the match is played.

When visitors being billeted:

- Establish with visiting group what will be required/ involved regarding the visit, accommodation and other requirements.
- Only members from the host club to be approached regarding accommodation requirements.
- Meet with interested parties (hosts) to discuss requirements; suitability (Club Child Welfare Policy to apply), duration and conditions/ protocol for billeting.
- Publish a list with information and contact details of the host families.
- Where possible ensure visiting players stays with their opposite numbers from the host club.
- Limit the number of nights' accommodation that will be required.
- Arrange most of the activities/ function at the club to ensure involvement for all.
- Inform all involved, regarding Club policy on age grade players and their safety.
- Have a plan available in case of an emergency.

When going on Tour (IRB regulation 15 to apply):

- Meet with players and their parents to discuss plans and conditions for the tour.
- Clarify the conditions (duration, mode of travel and accommodation, adult/player ratio for supervision, medical and insurance) of the tour before application being submitted.
- Establish a plan in the event of an emergency
- Written consent by the parents/ guardians for players to go on the tour.
- Written application to the Club Executive, Branch and IRFU for permission for the tour at least one month before the planned trip.

The following information should be supplied:

- Matches scheduled for the tour
- Number of players and management to travel as part of the tour.
- Proposed financial arrangements.
- Code of Conduct for the tour party.
- Details of insurance, medical and the travel agent involved.
- Written approval of the Union (to be visited) has been sought or been given.

Written consents must have been exchanged between the two Unions before leaving Ireland or in the case of hosting, before the match is played.

A brief report on the tour should be presented to the Club Committee and to parents of the players on tour within one month of the last match.

Overnight Stays

Accommodation

Hotels/Hostels:

- Ensure accommodation and arrangements are appropriate to the age group involved.
- Inform parents/guardians of room list and supervision arrangements prior to departure.
- Inform all members of the squad and management of the policy and/or restrictions regarding billing items to rooms.
- Be aware of individual dietary requirements, food allergies etc of traveling party.
- Establish clear policy regarding movement of individuals outside of the hotel, trips into town/city etc.
- Emphasise the “ambassador” role of the squad in maintaining a positive image of the club and the IRFU, with regard to other guests, hotel staff and property.

Billeting

- If being billeted ensure consent of parents/guardians prior to departure.
- Ensure the host families are members of the club being visited.
- Host club to ensure all host families have been vetted and are suitable.
- Contact details of host families to be supplied to visitors prior to departure