



## **St. Leonard's Football Club**

### **Founded 1972**

#### **Commitment to Best Practice/Excellence Standards**

#### **Away Trips Some Tips & Advice**

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 social skills.

Parents and carers will nearly always 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 an trip away.

#### **Pre-Planning.**

No amount of planning can guarantee a safe and incident free trip but good planning and attention to safety measures can reduce the likelihood of serious incidents.

Check travel, venue, staffing, weather and catering arrangements for possible dangers and put in place safety and emergency procedures.

The Head of Delegation/Event Leader plans must include consideration of the:

- Age of players
- Nature of Event, particularly if non soccer activities are involved
- Ratio of staff to players (a minimum of 1:8/1:10)
- Qualifications and experience of Staff
- Description and rota of Staff duties, including designation of Staff to carry and use first aid equipment
- Medical, educational and/or other special needs of individual players
- Travel arrangements
- Contingency measures for exceptional circumstances
- Insurance
- Communication arrangements
- Emergency procedures
- Designation and briefing of the Designated Person for Child Protection if other than the Head of Delegation
- Other people who may visit the Event

- Any other person invited to attend the Event

### **Passports, visas and vaccinations**

The Event Administrator/Leader must check the validity of passports of all members of the Event.

If any player is subject to a care or court order, the appropriate Authority must be consulted well in advance and the necessary consent obtained for travel.

In the case of an Event to a country or countries, which require a visa, the Event Administrator/Leader must ensure that all Players and Staff are in possession of a valid visa for the country or countries.

In the case of an Event to a country or countries that require vaccinations, the Event Administrator/Leader must ensure that all Players and Staff have had the necessary vaccinations.

### **Medical Support and Equipment**

One member of Staff must be qualified in first aid, and should be responsible for the appropriate first aid equipment and for it being available to them at the Event and for treating young players at the Event.

All Staff must know how to contact the emergency services and a working mobile phone must be carried with the group at all times.

Parents/Guardians should be informed as soon as possible if their child suffers a significant injury or accident.

Injuries should be recorded, with a note of action taken in relation to each one. It is recommended that an accident/incident book be maintained with a specific incident form to be completed by staff/leaders.

### **Accommodation**

In an ideal world you would visit the accommodation before booking, but this is not always possible. So can you check with another club who have used this accommodation before or check with the local Tourist Information or visit their website?

- At all times the Head of Delegation must be satisfied that buildings meet health and safety required standards. When you arrive at your accommodation, check that windows and doors are safe.
- Check all rooms (are there the correct number of beds? Check the rooms for any damage and report any you find or you may end up with a bill!
- Ensure there is no access to alcohol in the rooms
- Ensure movie access is appropriate or indeed not available in the rooms

- Young player's accommodation must be close to rooms occupied by Staff.
- If there is a bar, what rules will you have in place?
- Some children have enuresis (bed-wetting) ensure that the hotel can deal with this discretely
- Consideration should be given when groups comprise both male and females by allocating the same gender, rooms within the same area. You might also consider agreeing who is sharing with whom before you go, however, be ready to change this as friendship groups with children can change very quickly!
- Where possible similar age groups should be kept together.
- On arrival, players should be shown the accommodation plan and be made aware of Staff rooms and fire exits. A fire drill should be carried out as soon as possible.
- At no time can a member of Staff share a room with any young person.
- Staff must not use changing, shower or cloakroom facilities at the same time as young players, except in the most exceptional circumstances.
- Where groups are of mixed gender, there must be separate male and female sleeping and bathroom facilities for both young people and adults.

### **Insurance for the Event**

The League shall ensure that it has adequate insurance cover for all Staff and Players. Parents/Guardians should be made aware of the need for comprehensive insurance to cover their child, e.g. health/medical insurance etc.

If the Event is to include any potentially hazardous activities, once having taken into account the risk assessment guidelines, (e.g. other sports or adventure experiences) particular care should be taken to ensure that Players and Staff are covered appropriately.

Additional insurance may be necessary for Staff or Players with known medical conditions. The Head of Delegation/Event Administrator should check this out, long before departure date.

### **Communication with Parents/Guardians**

The Event Administrator/Leader is responsible for ensuring that Parents and young players complete and return all consent forms.

Parents should be informed that when a young player is still attending school is selected, permission should be sought from the Principal to release the young player from school during term time.

Prior to any Event, parents will be informed if a player is selected. The Event Leader/Administrator must give to parents/carers written details of the Event including:

- Dates of the Event
- Times of departure and return
- Clearly specified pick up and set down points for players and the beginning and end of any Event
- Names of the Head of Delegation and accompanying Staff
- Details of soccer and non soccer activities (adventure and potentially hazardous activities at the Event must be emphasised)
- Specific parental consent should be obtained for water-based activities.
- Addresses and telephone numbers of the accommodation being used
- Contact telephone numbers of the **insert league name here**, the Event Administrator and contact number/s for the group
- Insurances
- Standards of behaviour and dress
- Clothing and playing equipment required
- What expenses are covered

### **Communication with Clubs**

When the player is under the age of 18 and not attending school, permission will be sought from the club as well as from parents/carers.

When the player selected is still attending school, Clubs will be advised that permission has been sought from the parent/carer and the player's school. Dates of the Event will also be supplied.

### **Communication with Young Players**

The Head of Delegation/Leader must tell young players:

- The standard of behaviour and dress expected of them, both on and off the football pitch. Standards of behaviour are equally as important as levels of performance. Check with Tournament Organisers for any specific rules or requirements.
- The safety precautions, including supervision arrangements, to be taken
- To wear seat belts (when provided) when travelling in cars, minibuses or coaches
- Which expenses will be their own responsibility and which will be met by the League/Club

- To carry the Group mobile telephone number, identity cards and address and telephone number of their accommodation with them at all times
- The name of the Designated Person for Child Protection at the Event
- That they can approach any member of Staff if they have concerns or worries while at the Event.

### **Parent/Guardian Meeting**

It is also advisable to have a meeting with parents/carers and players and run through the trip's programme of events and address any questions or concerns that may arise. Before you leave work with the players to establish rules for the trip (and what will happen to those who break them)

### **Documentation**

The Head of Delegation/Leader or nominated member of Staff must carry the following documentation at the Event:

- A list of all group members, both Staff and Players
- Players/Staff Personal Contact Forms
- Parental and Player Consent Forms/Contact Numbers
- Name, address and telephone number of the groups accommodation
- Emergency Procedures Guidance
- The Medical Staff must carry all relevant Medical Consent Forms

### **Documentation to be held by the League/Club:**

Someone from the League/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) They should also have copies of:

- The itinerary
- Names, addresses and telephone numbers of parents/carers
- Contact addresses and telephone numbers for Staff
- A copy of the Emergency Procedures Card carried by the Event Leader
- Copies of all documentation carried by the Event Leader
- Copies of all Consent Forms for Parents, Players and Staff
- Copies of all Medical Information

### **Documentation cont.**

In addition to the documentation carried at Events in the Irish Republic, the Head of Delegation/Leader must ensure the appropriate staff carry:

- Travel tickets
- Passports, visas and vaccination certificates
- Insurance arrangements and contact telephone numbers
- Address and phone number of the Irish Embassy or Consulate
- Location of hospital(s) and medical services and how to contact them
- A separate list of the numbers of any documents and passports

The Event Administrator/League/Club must be provided with appropriate matching documentation.

### **Mobile Phone**

The mobile phone carried with the group must be capable of use in the country or countries concerned and all the travelling party (adults/children) and parents should be informed of the number. (A good idea would be that all of the party program the number into their own phones at the beginning of the trip)

### **Contingency Funds**

Contingency funds (or access to them) must be taken.

## **The Trip Itself**

### **Supervision Arrangements**

The staff to children ratio will depend on

- The risk assessment. (Check travel, venue, staffing, weather and catering arrangements for possible dangers and put in place safety and emergency procedures)
- The age of the players: one staff member to 10 players is recommended for players over 11, more staff are recommended for groups of younger children, whether they are single or mixed sex groups. If mixed there should be at least one male and one female
- Any special needs, you may need extra staff if there are children with special needs or disabilities
- If you are taking any player who has been a management problem in the past who may need close supervision

The **minimum number** of Staff, (with the exception of remote supervision) at any time during the Event, must be a ratio of 1 member of Staff to every 8 players.

Under the age of 12, 1 member of Staff to every 10 players over 11 years of age.

The Head of Delegation/Leader must communicate with Staff to inform them of their exact supervisory responsibilities and ensure that these responsibilities are clearly understood by the members of Staff.

The Head of Delegation/Leader must ensure that there is a Designated person for Child Protection. All players must be made aware as to whom is to carry out this role at the beginning of the Event.

All Staff must have access to a list of the names of players at the Event and access to the Emergency Procedures.

Members of Staff are advised not to be left alone with a child or young person. Medical Staff will adhere to Good Practice Guidelines when treating children or young people.

The Head of Delegation/Leader and appropriate staff should liaise in relation to young people who might need closer supervision and/or support.

Roll calls should take place frequently and must be made before the group leaves a venue. Players must be given rendezvous points and told what to do if they become separated from the group.

Players should be provided with the address and telephone number of their accommodation, which they will be advised to carry with them.

During Players free time, Staff will continue to supervise players. This should be explained to the Players.

Where groups are of mixed gender, there must be a minimum of one male and one female member of staff.

Players at an Event must be easily identifiable and should wear designated kit, unless the Event Leader is advised otherwise. Ideally children shouldn't wear shirts or hats with their names on.

Players should not wear name badges unless these are specifically required by a Tournament or Festival Organiser.

All Players are advised to carry the phone number of the Group Mobile Phone.

**During the time away, make sure you consider the following:**

The need for daily briefings to discuss the day's events, problems and future planning. Provide an opportunity for players to speak alone with staff if necessary. Although private, remember this should always be in view, not behind closed doors.

The need for daily staff meetings to review, plan and troubleshoot. Its important to deal with problems (e.g. any conflict within the group, poor behaviour) as early as possible.

**After the trip**, you should hold a staff debrief session to discuss what went well, what did not go so well, what you have learnt and to make recommendations for further trips.

**Money and Valuables**

The Head of Delegation/Leader must tell Players how to carry money and valuables discreetly. The group's money including Players own pocket money should be held at a secure central location and distributed on a regular basis by a designated member of Staff.

## Guidance for water based activities

### **Swimming in the sea or other natural waters**

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for a group. They should only be allowed as formal and supervised activities, preferably in recognised bathing areas, which have official surveillance i.e., qualified lifeguard cover.

Nevertheless, young players should always be in sight of their supervisors. One supervisor should always stay out of the water for better surveillance.

A member of staff should hold a relevant lifesaving award especially where lifeguard cover may not be available.

### **Swimming is prohibited if there is no lifeguard present**

#### **The Event Leader should:**

- Be aware that many children who drown are strong swimmers.
- Ascertain for themselves the level of the young persons swimming ability.
- Be aware of local conditions, such as currents, weeds a shelving, uneven or unstable bottom, using local information from the lifeguard, coastguard, harbourmaster, police or tourist information office.
- Designate a safe area of water for use by the group.
- Be aware of the dangerous effects of sudden immersion in cold water.
- Ensure that the young players have not eaten (at least half an hour before swimming).
- Ensure the activity is suitable for young players (especially for those with any disabilities).
- Adopt and explain signals of distress and recall.

### **Swimming Pools**

Heads of Delegation/Leaders should consider a minimum ratio of 1 adult to 8 players for swimming pools. If using a pool that has not been used before it is advisable to check the following:

1. Is there constant pool supervision and a sufficient number of lifeguards?
2. Where there is no lifeguard, the Head of Delegation/delegated staff member should stay at the poolside at a raised location. In such circumstances, the Head of Delegation or designated member of staff should have a relevant lifesaving award and be accompanied by an appropriate number of supervisors.
3. Is the water temperature appropriate?
4. Is the water clear?

5. Are there signs clearly indicating the depth and is there a shallow end?
6. Does the deep end allow for safe diving?
7. Is there a poolside telephone?
8. Are there resuscitator and other pieces of first aid and rescue equipment, and is there someone trained to use them?
9. Have the young players been instructed how to behave in and around the water?

**Swimming is prohibited if there is no lifeguard present**

Specific parental consent should be obtained for water-based activities. Parental consent does not mean that the Head of Delegation/Leader or designated staff should not check for themselves the level of a players swimming ability.

## **Emergency Procedures Guidance**

**An emergency may be defined as an accident or incident for example:**

- An accident leading to death, serious or multiple fractures, amputation or other serious injury.
- Any circumstances in which a party member might be at serious risk or suffer serious illness.
- Any unusual circumstance in which the press or media are involved or might become involved.
- Any incident which may give rise to a legal liability claim against a player/staff member

### **First Steps – Care of the Group**

- Ensure their safety from further danger
- Arrange search, rescue medical care or hospitalisation of casualties as necessary

### **Next Steps – What Happened?**

- Listen carefully, write down
- What happened?
- To Whom?
- Where?
- When?
- What has happened since?
- Who witnessed it? (Get witnesses to sign and give their address)

### **Telling people about the incident**

As soon as possible

- Inform the contact person as soon as possible
- Notify the Irish Embassy or Consulate (for Events outside the Irish Republic)
- Whoever you contact you will need to know
- What happened?
- To whom?
- Where?
- When?

- What has happened since?
- A telephone number where you can be contacted

**Do**

- Keep a written record of all that happens

**Don't**

- Speak to the press or media – refer in the first instance to the relevant press contact.
- Admit any liability
- Let anyone talk to any young person involved in the incident without a member of Staff being present.

**Remember**

- Nobody, unless they have an official capacity (e.g. the police), has a right to see anyone who does not want to see them.
- If anyone tries to force a confrontation, do not do anything but call the police.
- Try your best to be compassionate with everyone involved.