

Transport Guidelines

When it comes to transport, the main points to consider are:

- Passenger safety.
- The competence and training of the driver to drive the proposed vehicle (assessed by an allocated person within the club/national governing body) and whether he/she holds insurance and an appropriate, valid licence.
- Total journey time, hours on the road, overall distance and suitable stopping points.
- The length of the driver's day – will more than one driver be required?
- Type of journey, traffic and weather conditions, appropriate insurance and breakdown cover.
- Supervision requirements.
- Suitability of transport, if players with disabilities are travelling.
- Emergency procedures.

Legislation

It is the responsibility of the organising official to ensure that the travel arrangements and transport used are suitable for the journey. Vehicles transporting players should be appropriate, roadworthy and insured. Drivers must be appropriately licensed and are responsible for the maintenance and care of their vehicle during the trip.

Minibuses and coaches

Minibuses and coaches carrying groups of three or more children (aged 3 to 15 years) must be fitted with seat belts for each child. Where seat belts are provided, they must be worn. Vehicles used to transport wheelchairs should have anchor points. The driver must be suitably qualified and experienced in driving a minibus or coach.

Private cars

It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that the travel arrangements and type of transport are suitable for the journey. Vehicles transporting players should be appropriate and roadworthy and they should also have the appropriate licence and insurance cover.

The insurance cover when transporting people as part of work, whether paid or not should be business cover (insurance companies charge very little for this extra cover). It is the driver's responsibility for making sure the players have seat belts and use them. Vehicles without seat belts should not be used.

It is important that adults driving players around are not put in a position where they are alone with the player. If this is absolutely necessary and approved by the club/national governing body, then parental permission should be obtained. When groups of players are travelling together in a private car then a central collection and dropping point should be arranged.

Particular reminder for coaches: you are not a 'taxi driver' you are a bowls coach. It is the parents' responsibility to get their child to a certain location or event.

The private car user form should be completed for all private drivers.

Child Seats/Restraints

The law says that all children under the age of 12 must use some form of child car seat, unless they are taller than 135cm (4ft 5in). Regardless of whether the child is in the front or rear seats in cars, vans and other goods vehicles, the child must travel in the correct child restraint for their weight with very few exceptions.

The correct child restraint may be a rearward facing baby seat, forward facing child seat, booster seat or booster cushions. The law states that it is the driver's responsibility to ensure that children under the age of 14 years are restrained correctly in accordance with the law.

The law does not require child restraints to be provided in taxis, private hire vehicles, minicabs, minibuses, buses or coaches, although they must be used if available. Seat belts must be worn, if fitted.

Exceptions to the rules

In limited circumstances, children can travel without the correct child restraint. These include:

- In a licensed taxi or licensed private hire vehicle – If the correct child restraint is not available then, in the rear seat only, children under three may travel unrestrained. Children aged three years and over must use an adult seat belt.
- In cases of unexpected necessity over a short distance – If the correct child restraint is not available then, a child of three years or more must use an adult belt and be seated in the rear seat only. This exemption does not apply to children under three years and does not cover regular school runs or other journeys that are planned in advance.
- Where two occupied child restraints in the rear seat preventing, you fitting a third - In this case, provided the front seat is occupied, a third child aged three years and over can use an adult seat belt (lap OR lap and diagonal) in the rear. If the front seat is free, then they must sit there using the correct child restraint.
- In older vehicles with no rear seat belts – In this case, children three years and over may travel unrestrained.

Travelling in a Coach or Minibus

- All coaches and minibuses manufactured after October 2001 must now be fitted with either three-point seat belts or lap belts on forward or rearward facing seats. If you plan to travel by coach or minibus, you should contact the Operator in advance and ask if the vehicle is fitted with seat belts and if they offer the appropriate child car seat restraint. It may not always be possible for the Operator to carry a range of car seats on their vehicle.
- If the Operator is unable to provide the appropriate car seat restraints, you should inform the parent/guardians/carer of this. If the Operator is able to provide the appropriate child car seat restraints, you should use these and inform the parent/guardian/carer of this.