

## COACH TRANSPORT

### A Schools' Health & Safety Guide

***What every teacher needs to know about schools transport, from the member companies of the Guild of British Coach Operators.***

As you will know, the Department for Education and Skills has produced guidelines<sup>1</sup> for teachers organising school trips. These health & safety measures place responsibility on teachers to check every aspect of your pupils' journey, including the competence of your travel partners. At the Guild of British Coach Operators, our members take their responsibilities in that partnership very seriously.

***Based on the DfES guidance, we have set out to answer here the questions you will need to consider before booking a coach.***

Your local Guild members - listed on the back page - will be pleased to provide more detailed help but this leaflet sets out what you can expect from *all* our Members.

<sup>1</sup> The detailed guidance is set out in the DfES booklet *Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits* (ref HSPV2 - for a copy, call 0808 100 50 60) and in the supplement *Standards for LEAs in overseeing Educational Visits* (DfES publication 0564/2002 or [www.teachernet.gov.uk/dockbank/index.cfm?id=2576](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/dockbank/index.cfm?id=2576)).

**More than just coach hire...**

Guild Members can arrange your complete travel package!

Contact your local Guild coach operator for a no-obligation quotation...

# Quality Assured Coach Travel for Schools



from



[www.coach-tours.co.uk](http://www.coach-tours.co.uk)

## WHAT THE DfES GUIDANCE SAYS...

The checks and balances needed to satisfy the Health & Safety regulations are addressed in the latest guidance. In addition to checks within the school system - such as getting the head teacher's approval for all visits, ensuring parents have full information and provide consent, and ensuring that staff are appropriately qualified - the DfES guidance asks teachers to check details of outside agencies such as coach operators.

### Specifically, you should be in a position to verify:

- Driver competence and the transport provider's understanding of drivers' hours regulations
- The transport provider's breakdown contingency plans and insurance
- Their policy for comfort stops en-route
- The safety equipment on the coach, including first aid.

### The coach operator is required to maintain:

- Their 'good repute'
- A current Operator's Licence
- Seatbelts to current standards
- Insurances
- And, for packages including accommodation, bonding to protect your monies.



## ALL COACH COMPANIES ARE NOT THE SAME!

All the Member companies of the Guild of British Coach Operators are committed to achieving the highest standards.

Founded in 1985, Membership is restricted to those operators with the skills and expertise to offer world-class service with extensive experience in providing travel facilities throughout the UK and mainland Europe.

### How can you be sure this is not just a hollow claim?

- All Guild Members undergo a rigorous independent quality audit every two years - and are required to achieve 100% compliance
- Guild Members are amongst the most respected companies in the industry and have won many awards
- Many are also members of the **Coach Marque** scheme
- Guild Members sign up to a **Charter of Excellence**, guaranteeing:
  - Punctual pick up
  - A fully functional coach
  - 24-hour emergency back up
  - A courteous and prompt reply to all enquiries
  - Concise terms of hire, in writing
  - Uniformed drivers
  - A recognised complaints procedure

**Disclaimer:** Whilst the guidance in this leaflet has been produced with every care, the Guild of British Coach Operators and its Members recommend that teachers consult current guidance, and accept no responsibility for errors arising from changes in policy or the law. This leaflet does not assign any additional duties and responsibilities to the Guild of British Coach Operators or its Members other than those required by law.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

### Driver Competence

Guild Members select drivers based on their experience. Drivers are regularly tested on their knowledge of the relevant law. Work will always be scheduled to meet the legal requirements.

### Breakdown Contingency

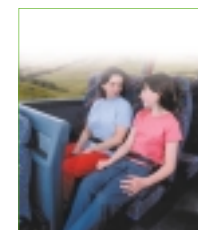
Guild Members operate modern fleets, maintained to the highest standards. In the unlikely event of a breakdown, 24-hour cover is provided and we can provide you with emergency contact numbers.

### Comfort Stops

Itineraries will be planned to provide ample comfort stops. Please help us by ensuring pupils do return to the coach on time - this is especially important for compliance with drivers hours regulations.

### Safety Equipment

Coaches will be equipped with all required safety equipment, including fire extinguisher, window hammers, adequate safety exits and a first aid kit. Seatbelts will be provided for all seats and we strongly recommend that pupils wear them at all times.



### Licensing and Insurance

Members will gladly provide details of their Operator's Licence and a copy of their insurance certificate on request. Maintaining 'good repute' is prerequisite to Guild Membership.

### Bonding

The precise bonding arrangements vary from Member to Member. They will be pleased to provide further details, where required.