

# AWARD WINNING COACH TRAVEL FOR SCHOOLS





# GET THEM TO THE COACH ON TIME!

A school's health and safety guide – what every teacher needs to know about The Kings Ferry's school transport service – in the UK and abroad

For many teachers, organising a school trip is often a very demanding task, but with 'The School's Pack' from The Kings Ferry, we've got it covered!

As you will know, the Department for Education and Employment has now produced guidelines for teachers organising school trips. These health and safety measures place responsibility on teachers to check every aspect of your pupils' journey, including the competence of your chosen travel partners. At The Kings Ferry, we take our responsibilities in this partnership very seriously indeed.

This booklet was compiled using the DfEE's own guidance, answering the questions you will need to ask us before booking your trip. We hope we have covered all the major points, but if there are any other questions in your mind – or you would like to ask more general questions about planning school transport – please do not hesitate to get in touch.

#### DISCLAIMER

While the guidance in this booklet has been prepared with every care, The Kings Ferry strongly recommends teachers consult current guidance, and accepts no responsibility for errors resulting from changes in Government and Education Authority policy. This booklet does not assign any additional duties and responsibilities to The Kings Ferry other than those required by law.

## TRIPS AND PACKAGES

We work with companies such as Merlin for day trips to Madame Tussauds, London Aquarium, Thorpe Park, Chessington World of Adventures, London Dungeon, Emirates Stadium Tours, Wembley Stadium Tours and many more!



# WHAT THE DfEE GUIDANCE SAYS

Everything you need to know to satisfy the health and safety of pupils on educational visits, are addressed in the latest guidance.

## Teachers have certain responsibilities. These include:

- On any school trip with a large number of children we recommend a trained first aider is in attendance with a portable first aid kit and any necessary asthma pumps. (Our coaches will also have a first aid kit on board as standard). We recommend that teachers have ensured parents have authorised teachers to administer first aid and provide anaesthetic in case of emergency
  - Getting the head teacher's approval for all visits
  - Ensuring parents have full information and provide consent
  - Ensuring staff are relevantly qualified
  - Compile and maintain a full passenger listing
  - Ensure a minimum ratio of staff to pupils
  - Make sure all special needs of pupils are noted
  - Log details of pupils before and during the trip
- Log travel timings
  - Keep a log of emergency contact numbers
  - Time of arrival at the final destination must be logged with your school, and a copy prepared to carry with you during the trip
  - Maintain discipline of pupils during trip
  - Ensure safety rules for travelling on coaches are adhered to, including the use of seat belts
  - Checking the details of outside agencies, such as ourselves.

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

- Driver competence
- The transport provider's understanding of European drivers' hours
- The transport provider's breakdown contingency and insurances
- Policy for comfort stops en route
- The safety equipment aboard the coach, including first-aid kit

## It is the operator's responsibility to maintain:

- Good repute
- A current operator's licence
- Seatbelts to current standards

- Insurances
- And, for packages including accommodation, a 'bonding' arrangement to protect your monies.

**For trips involving:** caving, climbing, trekking and watersports, you should ensure the tour operator is licensed with the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority, or has similar qualifications to run the tour.

## FURTHER DETAILS

There are other duties listed in the booklet *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits*, and sample forms which can be printed for completion. Copies can be obtained free from the DfEE Publications Centre, PO Box 5050, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6ZQ, telephone 0845 6022260. Alternatively, a PDF version of the booklet can be downloaded via the DfEE website.



# DON'T LET OTHER COACH COMPANIES TAKE YOU FOR A RIDE!



Awarded Coach Operator of the Year on five separate occasions, and with many other consumer and trade certificates to its credit, The Kings Ferry has no intention of resting on its laurels.

Your choice of coach hire is not simply a matter of price comparison. You will often be given prices for an 'executive' coach. This is often used to disguise an ageing coach, which represented luxury in its day. Some operators will also especially provide bottom-end vehicles for school visits.

While the coach operator licensing system is very effective at monitoring the performance of operators, inevitably some poor quality operators slip through the net, or are able to trade for some time before the system detects problems.

At The Kings Ferry, we do not regard school pupils as second-class citizens;

you can always hire a modern, air-conditioned coach, fully-equipped for touring with toilet facilities.

Our drivers are the pride of our company. They are well-trained, uniformed and are provided with top-quality back-up at our base at Gillingham – purpose-built to be one of the most modern coach centres in the UK. Routes are fully prepared, and driver records meticulously maintained and monitored to the complete satisfaction of the authorities.

#### Awards

- Crowned 'Best British Coach Operator' 16 times
- Route One – 'Operator Excellence Awards', 2007 – awarded 'Coach Operator Innovation of the Year' (for land yachts) and 'Large Coach Operator of the Year' (for 31+ seat vehicles)

## THE SCHOOL'S PACK

- CRB checked and knowledgeable drivers
- Health and safety declaration
- Legal compliance
- Cost effective rates
- Letter templates for schools to send to parents
- Pre-packaged transport





# TO REASSURE YOU...

**The DfEE asked, and here are the answers...**

## **Driver competence**

The Kings Ferry selects its drivers for each trip based on relevant experience. All drivers are, of course, licensed and insured to drive full-sized coaches, and have had extensive training in European driving hours' rules and use of their tachograph machine. When required, The King's Ferry will supply an additional driver for your trip. It is The Kings Ferry's policy to provide a good margin for eventualities such as traffic jams, so that we can stay well within the guidelines for driving hours.

## **Breakdown contingency**

The Kings Ferry runs one of the most modern fleets of luxury coaches in the country, so breakdowns are extremely rare. However, The Kings Ferry has in place breakdown cover with a number of UK and overseas companies. Drivers carry suitable mobile phones. Every situation is different, but in the event of a breakdown, The Kings Ferry's priority will always be to arrange onward travel for your group, contracting other coach

operator partners to collect your group if required. The Kings Ferry will, if requested, keep any third party informed of a significant delay in your group's arrival at its destination. The Kings Ferry's office is manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 0845 257 9888.

## **Comfort stops**

It is The Kings Ferry's policy to ensure your group travels in as much comfort as possible. Key to this policy are the arrangement of ample comfort stops on your journey. Please talk to The Kings Ferry for advice on journey scheduling before booking your trip. Boredom produced by five-hour stints in a coach seat are the surest way to provoke bad behaviour from your pupils.

## **Safety equipment**

The modern coaches of The Kings Ferry are equipped with all required safety equipment. This includes a fire extinguisher, window hammers, adequate safety exits, and a first aid kit. Seatbelts are provided for all seats, and we strongly recommend pupils wear them at all times.

## WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT US

"The Kings Ferry transported 117 children from the Sherwin Knight Community Infant School to the 2012 Olympic site in Stratford. The coach drivers were really interactive with the children and the service from The Kings Ferry and the tour guides was excellent."

**Sandra Sheldrake, Headteacher**

## **'Bonding'**

By law, however, anyone who supplies or arranges both transport and accommodation must be 'bonded' - an arrangement which ensures any money paid to The Kings Ferry will be returned to you in the extremely unlikely event we fail to provide your service. The Kings Ferry is bonded with Vantage Services.

## **Best practice and insurance**

The Kings Ferry maintains its professional reputation with continuous reassessment of its operations and a professional quality management system. At all times, adequate operators licences are maintained, vehicles are serviced without regard to expense, and the company has vehicle and public liability insurance.



# HELPFUL ADVICE FOR TEACHERS

Over countless journeys, The Kings Ferry and schools have identified key areas in which teachers and escorts can help maintain discipline, making the coach trip safer and more enjoyable for everyone. We hope that some of the following hints and tips may be helpful to you.

## **Seat allocation**

Since all coach seats are numbered, it makes a great deal of sense to allocate each pupil with a seat which becomes their responsibility throughout the trip. As in classrooms, this is a good way of separating troublesome pupils. It also helps reduce the rare incidence of vandalism; in our experience, though, pupils respect the fact that they are provided with a modern, comfortable environment.

## **Teacher/escort seating**

It is virtually impossible to maintain discipline from the front seats. When the supervisory group agrees a rota

system, which ensures there are always teachers or escorts positioned near all emergency exits generally at the rear and the middle of the coach, we find we have an incident-free journey.

## **Toilets**

Coach toilets are designed for occasional use, and can easily be blocked by misuse. We are happy to issue the toilet key to your nominated teacher for issue to any pupil requiring the toilet, which helps cut down on unnecessary visits.

## **Seatbelts**

The Kings Ferry advises teachers to take special care to explain to pupils that seatbelts **MUST** be worn while travelling. Teachers should, of course, lead by example!

## TRAVEL THE GREENER WAY

Here at The Kings Ferry we strive to do our part for the environment. Choose to travel by coach and be happy in the knowledge that coach is one of the 'greenest' forms of travel around. We have developed our own carbon managed scheme which encapsulates every aspect of our business.



# A FEW THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW...

## Refreshments

Our cleaners face great problems removing some foods, such as chewing gum and chocolate, from coach seats. If pupils are expected to bring a packed lunch, please ask parents to avoid these two snacks. Some of our coaches are equipped with a fridge, and will stock cold drinks for sale on request. Drivers can usually carry a small supply of cold drinks at a cost of 60p per can. Please let our reservations department know what you want at least five days before the date of travel.

Hot drinks are also available at 60p per cup. They can be paid for either en route or at the end of your journey.

No glass bottles are permitted on the coaches.

## Entertainment

All Kings Ferry vehicles are fitted with DVD players which will help keep pupils entertained on route to trips, if needed. Any DVD must be chosen and supplied by the school to ensure it is appropriate for the age group.



## Tolls

Road tolls and coach parking fees may NOT be included in the hire charge for your coach. Please check your quotation or call us if you are unsure whether they are included in the fee. If not, ensure you can pay the driver as these charges arise.

## Gratuities

Occasionally on a coach tour the group may choose to tip the driver but this is optional and not an expectation.

## WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT US

“Wow, brill, fantastic!!

How can I ever thank you enough for helping me, (every step of the way) with organising this wonderful trip...”

**Ruth Mollins,**  
Saxon Way Primary School

“We have used The Kings Ferry coaches for the past five years now and they have always been reliable and efficient. They have always catered for our varying needs and our large school numbers. I have been more than pleased with the helpful advice of our account manager Ruth Honey and the dedicated staff at The Kings Ferry. I’m sure we will continue to use The Kings Ferry at St Paul’s Academy for a very long time!”

**Daniela Maestri, Teacher and  
Enrichment Manager at St Paul’s  
Academy School**





# CONTACT THE KINGS FERRY TODAY

If you need: managed, cost-effective,  
hassle free, safe and environmentally  
efficient coach travel.

Part of  
**national express**

The Travel Centre, Eastcourt Lane,  
Gillingham, Kent ME8 6HW

**Tel:** 0845 257 9888

**Fax:** 0845 257 9889

**Email:** [sales@thekingsferry.co.uk](mailto:sales@thekingsferry.co.uk)

**[www.thekingsferry.co.uk](http://www.thekingsferry.co.uk)**

Also available from The Kings Ferry



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