



## **Courtesy Coaches Schools Briefing sheet**

There is an increased awareness of safety requirements on school trips following a number of high profile accidents over the last few years.

In order to minimise the possibility of things going wrong there is a legal and moral duty for schools to carry out risk assessments on all aspects of a school trip, ranging from hotels, activity centres, including facilities such as swimming pools, to the means of transport for getting there and back (and moving about if it is a multi-centre tour over a number of days).

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) have issued a set of recommended guidelines for study support co-ordinators in schools and local education authorities (LEA's). Most LEA's have appointed specific study support co-ordinators who will oversee school trip policies and offer advice and produce guidelines for schools and teachers.

Risk assessing transport and in particular coaches used for school trips will be an integral part of the process. The bus and coach industry trade body, The Confederation of Passenger Transport, (CPT) has drawn up a 'quality assurance standard' for coach operators who provide transport for school trips and tours that will be awarded to operators who meet a criteria agreed with the DfES and LEA's as being a minimum standard required. Courtesy Coaches complies with these CPT guidelines in the following ways: -

- Drivers are issued with a handbook, containing pertinent information to carry out their duties both professionally & in line with Courtesy Coaches procedures.
- There is a high quality driver training programme in place.
- All Courtesy Coaches vehicles used on school trips are fitted with seat belts.
- All coaches are presented in a clean and safe condition.
- There is a 24-hour breakdown call-out procedure.
- Courtesy Coaches has a sales office continuously staffed 0830 -\*18.30 Mon-Sat. (\*12.00 on Saturdays.)
- Conditions of hire are based on terms at least as favourable as those outlined by CPT.
- The customer's journey documents will accurately reflect the customers booking.
- There is an effective complaints procedure.
- There is a 24-hour contact procedure in case of emergency.





- Courtesy Coaches' drivers wear a company uniform, which makes them readily recognisable.
- Courtesy Coaches fully complies with financial protection legislation.
- Courtesy Coaches can prove commitment to the highest levels of safety and comfort.
- Courtesy Coaches has a written health and safety policy, complying with HSE guidelines - a copy of which is available on request.
- Courtesy Coaches is the subject of rigorous annual external assessment of all standards.

### **Quality Assurance Standards for school trips and tours**

Additionally to all those listed above, Courtesy Coaches complies with DfES guidelines in the following areas:-

- Courtesy Coaches has an appointed school trips safety officer.
- The coach will carry copies of an organiser's safety card, explaining emergency procedures to the group leader and all escorts.
- Courtesy Coaches have carried out risk assessments on school trips and copies of the written records are available to school organisers on request.
- Drivers licences are checked every year, including with DVLA Swansea when first employed or when a duplicate licence is presented. This is to check that drivers have a current valid licence to drive the class of vehicle they are driving.
- Checks with the Criminal Records Bureau are carried out on all drivers used on school tours work. This is to ensure that drivers used on school work are not a risk to schoolchildren through inappropriate previous criminal records.
- Courtesy Coaches keeps signed training records of all training given to drivers. This is ensure that drivers have received appropriate training and that this has been understood.
- Each driver is issued with a handbook which contains detailed guidance on customer care, safety & emergency procedures, drivers hours regulations, and advice on how to meet and exceed customer expectation and satisfaction.





## **Additional safety measures**

In addition to the measures listed above, schools and local education authorities can be assured that Courtesy Coaches adopt the following additional safety and “good practice” measures: -

- Courtesy Coaches has a published and effective Road Risk Safety Management Programme. This is a policy document that lists the processes and procedures Courtesy Coaches adopts to minimise the risks within their operations out on the road, including vehicle and driver safety systems.
- Courtesy Coaches issues each driver with a copy of the Highway code. This is to ensure that drivers are up to date with the rules of the road.
- Courtesy Coaches has an effective fatigued driver policy. This is to ensure that drivers know what action to take when they feel unexpectedly tired and in increased danger of having an accident.
- Courtesy Coaches has a policy on the use by drivers of mobile phones and microphones. This is to reduce the risk of accidents by drivers being distracted whilst driving.
- Courtesy Coaches vehicles are fitted with satellite tracking, which allows the vehicle’s location to be monitored at all times.
- Courtesy Coaches has an effective drugs and alcohol policy, including a policy document issued to all staff and evidence of periodic testing. This is to ensure that drivers are not driving whilst impaired through alcohol or drugs - illegal, prescribed and over the counter.
- Courtesy Coaches has an effective medical screening procedure. This is to ensure that drivers are fit to drive.
- Courtesy Coaches has a published environmental policy document, a copy of which is available to schools on request.