



Safety

Management System

January 2024

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1. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The safety of group members on visits is Learn Away's primary concern, and it is our policy to operate tours with the highest standards of health and safety that are reasonably practicable. Our policy has been devised to meet best practice standards in the educational travel sector to ensure that reasonable precautions have been taken and due diligence exercised. Our commitments to our clients are as follows:

- We will promote a positive health & safety culture throughout our own and our supplier's organisations world-wide.
- We will set standards that meet the needs of our clients that are measurable, achievable and realistic.
- We will ensure the provision of adequate resources, both financial and human, to achieve a high level of safety and enable continuous improvement.
- We will endeavour to provide client party leaders with information that will increase their ability to manage safety on their trips.
- We will measure and review our performance and compliance with our own system.
- We will ensure our staff are trained to respond quickly and efficiently in case of an emergency.
- We will review, maintain and update the SMS annually. We will review all procedures throughout the year when issues are notified to us. We will ensure that we investigate and make amendments if necessary.

Adelle Barnett
Managing Director, Learn Away 2024

2. MEETING OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to meet our responsibilities Learn Away has a Safety Management System (SMS) which sets out the standards that we expect to be maintained for the each of the key components of our tours. Additionally, the SMS describes the measures we take to monitor and review such standards. All staff are required to read and understand this document alongside Learn Away's general health and safety policy.

2.1 Managing Director's responsibilities

- 2.1.1 The Managing Director has overall responsibility for the direction of the SMS and its creation, implementation and monitoring.
- 2.1.2 The Managing Director will ensure there is adequate financial and human resource available for the implementation and monitoring of the SMS, including appropriate staff training.
- 2.1.3 Competent staff are appointed to implement the SMS.

2.2 Other staff responsibilities

- 2.2.1 All staff are responsible for ensuring that the policies and procedures which make up the SMS are complied with fully.
- 2.2.2 Staff must bring any matters of concern or any potential weakness with the SMS or any situation that has the potential for serious and imminent danger to clients or Learn Away staff to the immediate attention of the Managing Director.
- 2.2.3 All staff are responsible for keeping up to date with safety requirements and practices applicable to the provision of educational tours.

3. MONITORING

- Appropriately trained and experienced staff will audit suppliers of accommodation and coach transport.
- Any accidents, incidents or near misses brought to Learn Away's attention will be recorded and investigated.
- The Managing Director will conduct an annual review of the SMS and any accidents or incidents to determine if any improvements or remedial actions are required and if so, that these have been implemented.

4. ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation contracted by Learn Away will comply with local and national standards with respect to fire, hygiene and general safety, and will have current liability insurance cover for the duration of the contract. Accommodation is contracted either directly by Learn Away or alternatively through reputable agents. Where agents are engaged they are required to complete an agent's contract confirming that the accommodation conforms to all applicable standards for health and safety.

4.1 Standard Accommodation Check

All accommodation will be subject to a standard accommodation check prior to first use and thereafter when a significant change occurs, such as major structural alterations, or change of owner, or at a maximum of 3-year intervals. A standard accommodation check will not be required if an on-site accommodation audit has been carried out in the last 3 years.

The standard accommodation check result will be assessed by an appropriately trained Learn Away team member. Where the standard accommodation check indicates areas for concern, the auditor should instigate appropriate additional action, which may include the use of an on-site accommodation audit, before use.

We endeavour to inspect at random a selection of accommodation units to verify both the safety of the accommodation and the integrity of our audits/risk assessments.

4.2 On site accommodation audit

Accommodation used on 5 or more occasions in a year, or for 250 or more guests, is listed as 'frequent use' and an on-site audit is carried out by Learn Away within 12 months of frequent use being established. It is completed by an auditor who has received appropriate training.

Learn Away will carry out an onsite-audit of all 'frequent use' units of accommodation at least once every three years. A classification will be given to all properties as detailed below.

4.3 Accommodation ratings

Following the above audit and assessment, the accommodation will be categorised as follows:

- 4.3.1 **High Conformity:** No areas of improvement can be identified.
- 4.3.2 **Acceptable Conformity:** Areas for improvement have been identified, but the defects do not render the accommodation unsafe. The defects will be brought to the immediate attention of the management at the time of an on-site audit. The deficiencies will be risk assessed and a schedule of remedial action will be issued to the accommodation's management.
- 4.3.3 **Does not conform:** The accommodation will not be used and will not be reconsidered for use until defects have been rectified and the property has been re-audited and meets either of the above categories.

5. TRANSPORT

5.1 Coach transport

- Learn Away will endeavour to select coach operators who belong to recognised industry bodies such as the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT), or are Coach Marque accredited.
- Learn Away will verify an operator's membership of the CPT or Coach Marque.
- All suppliers will need to provide current public liability insurance, operating licence and motor vehicle insurance.
- We will ensure all coach companies used sign a contract in which they confirm that they comply with all national, local, trade & other laws, regulations, rules and codes of practice. This contract also stipulates a set of safety standards regarding drivers' hours, driver vetting, insurance cover and vehicle age.
- Confirmation is obtained every three years that contract conditions are being met.
- In certain unforeseen circumstances such as coach breakdown or driver illness etc it may not be possible to comply with the terms outlined above and Learn Away reserves the right to find the best available alternative.
- Learn Away will only contract coach companies that will confirm that their drivers have received appropriate clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service or Disclosure Scotland.
- All itineraries by coach are prepared taking into account current legislation on drivers' hours.

5.2 Airlines

The Civil Aviation Authority regulates all air transport from the UK. This authority operates to very strict safety criteria, so no additional practical safety measures are considered necessary. Flights originating in other jurisdictions are governed by the laws and regulations of the country in question.

5.3 Rail (including Eurotunnel), ferries and public transport

All rail, ferry, ocean-going cruise liners and public transport is regulated nationally by the countries through which they travel. It is not felt that Learn Away can take any additional measures.

6. VISITS, ATTRACTIONS AND EXCURSIONS

- Where visits, excursions or attractions are included in an itinerary, except where the itinerary specifically states the event is not being arranged or facilitated by Learn Away, we will take reasonable steps to ensure risks have been evaluated and monitored.
- Where appropriate, information is brought to the attention of our client group leaders that we consider is necessary to help them make informed decisions and manage their own responsibilities for the safety of their group.
- Client group leaders are responsible for ensuring their students are fully supervised at all times and that any instructions or safety briefings are followed.
- The client group leader and staff are responsible for the conduct amongst the group in any activity, including those led or accompanied by Learn Away staff, who act as guides not as supervisors.

7. SAFEGUARDING

The staff of Learn Away fully recognise the responsibilities and duty placed upon them to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of the young people (under 18s) taking part in Learn Away programmes.

In order to meet its safeguarding and child protection responsibilities, Learn Away:

- Conducts appropriate pre-employment checks for its staff, including where appropriate enhanced DBS checks.
- Requires all staff to undertake safeguarding and child protection awareness training annually.
- Reviews its safeguarding and child protection policy annually.

In the event of a member of Learn Away staff having any concerns about the wellbeing of a child either in the planning, execution or follow up of a tour, they are required to report this to the Managing Director immediately. Once a concern or allegation has been reported, this will be referred to the relevant local safeguarding authority and/or the police.

8. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Learn Away maintains and practices emergency procedures to follow in the event of a serious incident. A Duty Officer is contactable 24 hours per day whilst groups are on tour. The Duty Officer will have available at all times details of all groups currently on tour and emergency contact numbers for all suppliers. Similarly, all group leaders, drivers of coaches and agents are provided with these details.

The Duty Officer will log all calls. If a call represents an incident which has compromised the safety of a customer, an incident report will be completed. These reports are logged and used to review procedures and determine priorities for risk management. Changes will be considered following each incident and appropriate measures implemented as necessary.

9. STAFF TRAINING

Learn Away's commitment to the safety of the tours it organises, will ensure all employees are fully trained to enable them to meet the requirements of those areas of the Safety Management System for which they may be required to exercise responsibility. This training is detailed below.

- Employees of Learn Away will undergo SMS Awareness training as part of their induction process. This training aims to ensure that all employees are fully aware of the scope and principal commitments we make in our SMS. In addition, employees will be kept informed of the progress and latest developments of the Safety Management System.
- Staff employed by Learn Away will receive training in its emergency procedures within 3 months of joining the company.
- Staff who are selected as Duty Officers will receive appropriate training prior to their carrying out this role for the first time.
- Staff who undertake accommodation and coach transport audits will receive appropriate training.