



Discover the world beyond
your classroom

Safety Management System

Policy document January 2021





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Safety Policy Statement

European Study Tours is fully committed to providing the highest possible safety standards for all our clients and our Safety Management System takes all reasonable steps to ensure this is achieved. Over the last 30 years as a Tour Operator specialising in student groups we have developed our Safety Management System in conjunction with our suppliers and have received advice and guidance from the relevant recognised bodies. We are also a Full Member of the School Travel Forum (STF) and Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge accredited. European Study Tours Ltd, as part of HB Education Ltd, are dedicated to promoting best practice in educational travel.

European Study Tours maintains a focus on safety by -

- Requiring suppliers to ensure all components of each tour fully comply with EU legislation (where directly applicable) National or local government regulation in regard to hygiene, fire, and other safety standards.
- Ensuring European Study Tours staff have all received training on carrying out assessments of suppliers in conjunction with the guidelines set out in this document.
- Ensuring European Study Tours staff are trained to respond in the event of an emergency.

We are also aware that you often need to fill in Risk Assessment Forms and as you know, it is not acceptable practice to fill them in on your behalf, but we are very happy to provide you with as much information as possible. Please contact us if you need any further help.

The review of our system is ongoing and updated accordingly. A formal review is carried out on an annual basis.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'S. Craven'.

Steve Craven
Group Commercial Director

January 2021



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DfES Guidelines – Safety on School Visits

A Major Initiative to Help Teachers, Schools and Colleges

Supported by



European Study Tours is an Assured Member of the School Travel Forum.

The School Travel Forum is a group of leading school tour operators who promote good practice and safety in school travel.

All Assured Members of the STF adhere to a rigorous Code of Practice and Safety Management Standards and are externally verified each year by suitably qualified independent Health and Safety professionals.

Choosing an STF Assured Member ensures teachers, schools and colleges are meeting the requirements of DCSF and Scottish Executive guidelines and that they can delegate important tasks with confidence.

During the course of developing the STF Code of Practice, and in addition to liaising with the DCSF, advice has been sought from all leading educational Unions and Associations. The STF initiative is welcomed by the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel (OEAP) and the DCSF. It has the support of the ASCL, NAHT, ATL, NUT, 'Voice – the union for educational professionals' – and the NASUWT advises members wishing to organise school trips to use companies that have this type of scheme.

Details of the School Travel Forum Code of Practice are available from Discovery House, Brooklands Way, Whitehills Business Park, Blackpool FY4 5LW or visit www.schooltravelforum.com

Safety Management System

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1. Policy on safety

European Study Tours is fully committed to ensuring that the highest possible safety standards are maintained on behalf of our travelling clients.

- 1.1 Ensure all suppliers are made well aware of the safety standards expected and where applicable comply with current local, national, EU and international standards and to reasonably ensure these standards are maintained at all times.
- 1.2 Provide a contract to all our suppliers of accommodation and transport detailing what is expected of them.
- 1.3 Take all reasonable precautions to reduce the risk of accident.
- 1.4 Promote the importance and assessment of safety standards throughout the whole supply chain and within the industry.
- 1.5 Ensure staff within the organisation are able to carry out assessments of suppliers.
- 1.6 Ensure all emergency procedures are kept up to date and staff are fully trained.

The enhancement of this system is ongoing. A review will be completed on an annual basis.

2. The Safety Management System

In order to achieve the standards set out in our policy we have designed a formal Safety Management System. This was designed after taking training and guidance from recognised safety experts in the public and private sector who included RoSPA and Checkpoint. This document sets out the standards that we aim to achieve. The Safety Management System makes it clear as to the measures we have in place to monitor and review the standards we have specified.

3. The Responsibility for the Safety Management System

The Directors of European Study Tours along with our sister company NST are responsible for the Safety Management System, and through The School Travel Forum, are dedicated to promoting best practice in educational travel. The Safety Management System will be reviewed on an annual basis and if deemed appropriate external advice will be taken during this process.

4. Training

- 4.1 Safety awareness training will be provided for all employees. The level of training will be dependent on the level of responsibility. Those with ultimate responsibility for the system will receive training to an STF standard.
- 4.2 Emergency Procedure Training is provided to every member of staff irrespective of position. This is reviewed on an annual basis.

5. Insurance

- 5.1 European Study Tours has Tour Operators Combined Liability Insurance to a limit of **£30,000,000**. A copy can be provided on request.
- 5.2 It is vital groups have the right insurance cover prior to travel. The group leader should check all documents. No group will be allowed to travel without insurance outside the UK. We strongly recommend that all group leaders study the section on personal liability and if they require additional cover we will be happy to advise.

6. Emergency Procedures

- 6.1** The Emergency Procedures Manual was developed in order to form the basis of a response to major crisis. It is reviewed on an annual basis.
- 6.2** The response team is on call 24 hours a day via a message service. All group leaders will be given this number which can be contacted at any time during the tour. The on call members of the team will carry all the information they require to deal with an emergency.

7. Transport

7.1 Coaches - Booked Direct

For all coach operators used and booked direct by European Study Tours, our Contracting and Transport teams will ensure that:

- 7.1.1** All coach suppliers booked direct shall sign a coach contract, in which they confirm that they comply with all applicable national, local, trade and other laws, regulations, rules and codes of practice. This contract also stipulates a set of safety standards regarding drivers' hours, driver vetting, insurance cover, subcontracting and vehicle age.
- 7.1.2** Confirmation that contract conditions are still being met will be obtained every three years.
- 7.1.3** We 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.
- 7.1.4** Each coach company contracted to European Study Tours is required to take responsibility to establish that their drivers do not have a material criminal record or detrimental employment history and a system is in place for ensuring they are suitable for working with children.
- 7.1.5** 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 European Study Tours reserves the right to find the best available alternative.
- 7.1.6 Coach Standard Audit**
- In addition our Safety Team will ensure, all coach suppliers booked direct will be subject to a Standard Coach Audit prior to first use and thereafter at a maximum of three year intervals. A Standard Audit will not be required if a Coach On-site Audit has been carried out in the past three years.
 - The Coach Standard Audit may be completed by a School Travel Forum member, supplier or agent.
 - The Standard Coach Audit will be assessed by an auditor trained to STF standard.
- 7.1.7 Coach On-site Audit**
- In addition to the above Standard Coach Audit, if it becomes evident that the supplier will be used in any one year for five or more groups, or more than two hundred and fifty clients, whichever is reached first, it will be listed as 'frequent' use and, within a maximum of twelve months of the frequent use criteria being established, will receive on-site coach audit.
 - The Coach on-site Audit may only be completed by an auditor trained to STF standard.
 - The Coach on-site Audit will be assessed by an auditor trained to STF standard.
- 7.1.8 Additionally for UK Coach Suppliers booked direct:**
- We will check that suppliers are in possession of valid and current liability insurance, motor insurance and other necessary local certification and licences to operate legally.
 - European Study Tours will only contract coach companies that will confirm that their tour drivers have received appropriate clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service or Disclosure Scotland, and that they will meet the requirements of the Vetting and Barring Scheme when introduced.

- All itineraries by coach are prepared taking into account current legislation on drivers' hours.
- All UK coaches will be fitted with seat belts. In the event of a vehicle breakdown, if it is necessary to provide a replacement vehicle the coach will be fitted with seat belts if it is a UK coach. However, due to the different legislation in countries outside the UK, this may not be possible if a non-UK coach is supplied.
- It is the intention of European Study Tours to use our regular use coach companies whenever practical. The following are the circumstances in which we may select an infrequently used company:
 - ▶ In peak periods when availability is strictly limited.
 - ▶ Where the location of departure would be best served by an infrequently used company.
 - ▶ When a last-minute breakdown or other unforeseen event from a regular use company necessitates a subcontracted company.
 - ▶ When a coach breaks down on tour and has to be replaced by another vehicle.
 - ▶ Where a client specifically requests a company not used by European Study Tours.

7.1.9 For coach companies requested by clients:

- When the client requests a specific company that is not used by European Study Tours, we will attempt to secure their services and will obtain the Standard Coach Audit outlined in 7.1.6. In addition, the client will be advised that European Study Tours will not be able to carry out an inspection of the operator in question, and they must accept the operator on this understanding.

7.2 Coaches – Agent Supplied

For all agents supplying coach services, our Contracting team will ensure that:

- 7.2.1** All agents supplying coach services will sign a contract in which it stipulates that they comply with all applicable national, local, trade and other laws, regulations, rules and codes of practice. This contract also stipulates a set of safety standards regarding drivers' hours, driver vetting, insurance cover, subcontracting and vehicle age.
- 7.2.2** Confirmation that contract conditions are still being met will be obtained every three years.
- 7.2.3** Coach Standard Audit
 - Our Safety Team will ensure that all coach suppliers used by the agent will be subject to a Standard Coach.
 - The Coach Standard Audit may be completed by a School Travel Forum member, supplier or agent.
 - The Standard Coach Audit will be assessed by an auditor trained to STF standard.

7.3. Seat Belts

Seat belts will be available for all passengers on British coaches. The regulation regarding seat belts is a British regulation; this does not apply to foreign coaches although efforts are made to ensure foreign coaches are also fitted with seatbelts.

7.4 Air

European Study Tours holds an Air Travel Organisers License (ATOL) no. 3215. Flights from Britain are regulated by the Department of Transport and the Civil Aviation Authority. Flights originating in other jurisdictions are governed by the laws and regulations of the country in question. It is not felt that members can take any further measures.

7.5 Ferry and Eurotunnel

All ferries (and Eurotunnel) are regulated nationally. For major British ferry companies used, members shall check on an annual basis that levels of on board safety are being maintained and a record of such discussion will be kept.

7.6 Public transport

All public transport is regulated nationally. It is not felt that members can take any further measures.

7.7 Eurostar

Eurostar is regulated by a number of governmental bodies on both sides of the Channel. It is not felt that members can take any further measures

7.8 Rail Transportation

All rail transport is regulated nationally. It is not felt that members can take any further measures.

8. Accommodation

8.1 Accommodation Contract and Certification

For each accommodation centre used in our programmes or featured in our brochures, European Study Tours will ensure there is a signed accommodation contract or agent agreement confirming that the accommodation conforms to local and national fire, safety and hygiene standards and liability insurance cover for the duration of the contract. European Study Tours will endeavour to obtain a copy of the current fire certificate or local equivalent and the suppliers' current insurance. Furthermore European Study Tours will endeavour to obtain a copy of the current hygiene certificate or local equivalent.

8.2 SMS Standard Accommodation Checklist

This document aims to audit every aspect of fire safety, security, hygiene and the centres general facilities.

All accommodation used or featured in European Study Tours promotional material will be subject to a standard audit prior to first use and thereafter at a maximum interval of 3 years.

The Standard Accommodation Checklist will be completed by HB Education personnel, the accommodation centre manager or agent.

The results will be assessed by suitably qualified members of European Study Tours and scored via a predetermined matrix. Any areas of concern will initiate the appropriate action and in some cases a Supplementary Accommodation Audit will be required (see 8.3)

8.3 SMS On-site Accommodation Audit

In addition to the standard accommodation audit; if it becomes evident that an accommodation unit will be used in any one year for five or more groups, or more than two hundred and fifty clients, whichever is reached first, it will be listed as 'frequent' use and, within a maximum of twelve months of the frequent use criteria being established, will receive an on-site accommodation audit.

An On-site Accommodation Audit is similar to the Standard Accommodation Audit with the main difference being that it can only be carried out in situ by a trained auditor.

8.4 Monitoring of Accommodation Audits

Audits will be recorded in the following Categories:

- **High Conformity** – Minor or no areas of improvement have been identified. The management will be commended and encouraged to maintain their standards.
- **Acceptable Conformity** – Room for improvement has been identified, but the defects do not render the building unsafe. The defects will be brought to the immediate attention of the management at the time of auditing and followed up in writing within 14 days. The deficiencies will be evaluated and a schedule of remedial action will be agreed and monitored.
- **Unacceptable** – We will remove the accommodation from our programme and will not consider its reinstatement until the defects have been rectified and the establishment has been re-audited to a standard that is either high or acceptable conformity.

8.5 Accommodation booked through an Agent

European Study Tours will ensure we have an Agents Contract confirming that hotels which our agents have provided have a current fire certificate or local equivalent, appropriate insurance cover and endeavour to obtain a hygiene certificate or local equivalent.

We have been and will continue to pro-actively advise and educate our agents of the high importance of safety in all the accommodation units they provide for us. This is communicated via face-to-face meetings during visits, telephone, letter, facsimile and email.

8.6 Accommodation requested directly by a Client

No accommodation will be provided if it has been audited by European Study Tours and has a Rating 'Unsafe' (see section 8.4). If the requested accommodation has never been used before, European Study Tours would undertake to obtain a fire certificate and other such safety/security information via the agent or ourselves to enable all concerned to make an informed decision.

9. Attractions, Excursions and Visits

The Company will use reasonable endeavours to obtain from suppliers of visits and excursions included in tours, evidence that health and safety has been evaluated. Suppliers are also asked to outline any potential risks which they wish to bring to the attention of school and youth groups. The Company will not arrange or recommend excursions or activities which carry an inherent risk such as, for example, bungee jumping or tobogganing, white water rafting etc. However, Group Leaders are advised that almost any activity carries some inherent risk, particularly where children and young persons are involved.

Group leaders should ensure that any visits or activities, which they select, are appropriate to the age, abilities and size of the group. Group leaders will be responsible for ensuring that students are fully supervised at all times, and that any instruction or safety briefings are followed. Where any safety equipment is provided, this must be worn at all times.

10. Incidents, Accidents and Near Misses

We encourage group leaders to report any health and safety related issues immediately. This will enable us to investigate their concerns and to ensure that any necessary action is taken immediately. To facilitate this we will provide a form to all group leaders prior to travel. If clients highlight areas of concern regarding Health & Safety these are investigated immediately and appropriate action is taken.

We keep a record of all reported incidents, accidents and near misses and these are reviewed on an annual basis.

11. Training

The Head of Safety will ensure that as part of European Study Tours' commitment to the safety of the tours it organises, all employees will be fully trained to enable them to meet the requirements of those area of the Safety Management System for which they may be required to exercise responsibility. All employees will also receive appropriate annual refresher training. A record of all training undertaken will be maintained.

12. Pre-Tour Safety Information

Group leaders will be sent pre-tour information, including practical safety information, which must be followed in order for the tour to operate as safely and seamlessly as possible.

13. Group Leader's Inspection Visit

If a general inspection visit is not provided during the course of the year European Study Tours will provide 2 nights accommodation for up to two staff in a twin room and wherever possible this will be in the accommodation allocated for the group. Travel and other costs are not included. The cost of this will be deducted from the tour invoice once a firm booking has been made. Please note that although inspection visits are not available at Disneyland® Resort Paris relevant paperwork will be provided.