



SAFE TRAVEL POLICY

Version 1.0



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Introduction

IGA is committed to safeguarding the health, safety, and wellbeing of all participants during any travel related to gymnastics activities, whether within the UK or abroad. This Safe Travel Policy outlines the standards and procedures that must be followed by affiliated clubs and individuals involved in organising or participating in travel. This policy applies to all trips, including day events, overnight stays, and international travel, with particular emphasis on the protection of minors and vulnerable persons.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all IGA members, staff, volunteers, and gymnasts experience travel that is safe, well-organised, legally compliant, and aligned with the values of our sport.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

IGA requires that all affiliated clubs comply with the following UK legislation and statutory duties when planning travel:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Clubs must also consider relevant international legislation and cultural or legal restrictions when travelling abroad.

Failure to comply with these requirements can result in legal liability for both individuals and clubs.

Safeguarding & Supervision of Minors

3.1 Appointment of a Welfare Officer

All trips involving participants under 18 years of age and involving overnight stays or travel abroad must have a designated Traveling Welfare Officer. This individual must:

- Hold IGA membership.
- Have an enhanced DBS check and current CPD accredited safeguarding training.
- Have no conflict of interest (e.g., not a coach or relative of a coach).



The welfare officer is responsible for:

- Supervising safeguarding during the trip.
- Conducting welfare briefings and debriefs.
- Coordinating with staff on accommodation, supervision, and behaviour management.
- Being available to respond to concerns at any time during the trip.

Where international staff or volunteers will have contact with minors, clubs must verify equivalent vetting and background checks in line with UK standards.

3.2 Staffing Ratios and Supervision

Clubs must maintain a minimum staff-to-child ratio of 1:10 for secondary school-aged children. For primary-aged children, younger participants, or children with additional needs, a lower ratio should be applied. A minimum of two adults must accompany any group. Mixed-gender groups must have at least one male and one female supervisor.

For children under 11 or those with additional needs, ratios should be adjusted to 1:6 or lower depending on risk. Risk assessments must identify if 1:1 support is needed.

3.3 Accommodation and Rooming Arrangements

- No adult may share a room with a child under the age of 16 unless they are the child's parent or legal guardian.
- Where possible, children of similar ages and the same sex should share rooms.
- Staff must have separate sleeping accommodation from participants.

3.4 Children Under 8

IGA strongly advises that children under 8 should not travel overnight or internationally without a parent or legal guardian. If permitted, the club must complete a specific safeguarding risk assessment and confirm that appropriate support is in place.

Planning & Consent

4.1 Consent and Communication

Parental consent is mandatory for all under-18s. Consent forms must include:

- Medical history.
- Emergency contact information.
- Permission to travel and receive medical treatment if necessary.
- Acknowledgement of the Code of Conduct.



A parent meeting should be held before any major trip, particularly overnight or international events, to:

- Explain the itinerary and travel arrangements.
- Address safeguarding procedures.
- Share emergency contact protocols.

Organisers must share information about emergency procedures, contact availability, and how updates will be communicated during the trip (e.g., group messaging apps, SMS, or email).

4.2 Itinerary Requirements

All trips must include a written itinerary detailing:

- Travel times and transportation details.
- Contact information for staff and accommodation.
- Scheduled activities.
- Emergency procedures.

Copies of the itinerary must be provided to all parents/guardians and staff.

Risk Assessment & Management

Every trip must be supported by a comprehensive written risk assessment. This must be specific to:

- The venue(s).
- The activities being undertaken.
- The mode of transport.
- The specific participant group.

The risk assessment must:

- Identify hazards.
- Assess who might be harmed and how.
- List control measures.
- Assign responsibility for implementing measures.
- Include a review date and contingency planning.

For trips involving young children, high-risk activities, or overseas travel, the risk assessment must include:

- Medical facility access.
- Translation/emergency contact strategies abroad.
- Additional safeguarding procedures.
- Weather-related contingency plans.



Medical Health Requirements

6.1 Pre-Trip Screening

Parents must provide medical and welfare information, including:

- Allergies, chronic conditions, and medications.
- Special dietary needs.
- Recent illnesses, injuries, or mental health concerns.
- Swimming competency (if relevant).
- Pregnancy or recent childbirth.
- New or expectant mothers must have a specific risk assessment completed.

6.2 Medication and First Aid

- At least one staff member must be trained in emergency first aid and CPR.
- A first aid kit must accompany the group at all times. The first aid kit must be suitable for the amount of people travelling and any activities being undertaken.
- Staff must know how to manage medications, inhalers, and EpiPens.
- Procedures must be in place to notify emergency contacts in case of illness or injury.

For groups larger than 10 or involving physical activity, a minimum of one first aider per 10 participants is recommended.

Transportation & Travel Safety

7.1 UK Travel

- All drivers must hold valid licences and have no disqualifications.
- Vehicles must have MOTs, roadworthiness checks, and seatbelts for all passengers.
- No adult may be alone in a vehicle with a minor unless the minor is their child.
- Travel consent forms must be completed for all under-18s.

7.2 International Travel

For international trips:

- Passports and visas must be valid.
- Appropriate travel and health insurance is mandatory (IGA does not provide this insurance).
- Participants must receive pre-trip safety and cultural briefings.
- Organisers must identify the nearest UK embassy, local emergency services, and hospitals.

Trip leaders must be aware of cultural laws, medication restrictions, and local expectations in destination countries. Consider FCDO travel advice for the region.



Behaviour, Conduct & Discipline

All participants must agree and sign a Code of Conduct, including expectations for behaviour, curfews, communication, and mobile phone use. This includes everyone on the trip including gymnasts,

All staff must model appropriate behaviour and remain alert to signs of bullying, distress, or abuse.

Serious behavioural incidents must be documented and reported to the club safeguarding officer. In extreme cases, the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) may need to be informed.

Conducting the Trip

Trip leaders are responsible for:

- Daily safety briefings.
- Activity-specific instructions (e.g., gymnastics safety protocols).
- Monitoring participant behaviour and welfare.
- Adapting plans for weather, illness, or injury.

Contingency plans must be available for:

- Delays or cancellations.
- Poor weather.
- Medical incidents.

9.1 Emergency Contact Protocol

An emergency contact plan must include:

- Paper and digital lists of parent contact numbers.
- Staff emergency numbers.
- Local hospital/emergency service details.
- Clear roles for who will contact parents and emergency services.

Post Trip Review

After each trip, a review meeting must be conducted involving staff and, where appropriate, participants. This review should:

- Evaluate what went well.
- Document any incidents or near-misses.
- Review the effectiveness of safeguarding and risk measures.
- Update internal best practice documents.

A Trip Evaluation Report should be compiled and stored with trip records.



Record Keeping

Clubs must securely retain the following documents for a minimum of three years:

- Risk assessments.
- Consent forms.
- Rooming plans.
- Incident reports.
- Trip evaluation documents.

All personal data must be stored in accordance with GDPR.

Insurance

Clubs must ensure appropriate insurance is in place for all travel. This includes:

- Public liability insurance for staff and volunteers.
- Travel insurance covering:
 - Medical emergencies
 - Trip cancellations
 - Lost or stolen items
- Coverage for gymnastics activities.

Clubs must be able to provide proof of insurance on request. IGA does not provide insurance for travel, accidents, or personal belongings.

Policy Review & Updates

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually by the IGA Governance and Welfare teams.
- After any serious incident or safeguarding concern.
- In response to changes in legislation or national guidance.

Clubs will be notified of updates and must incorporate them into their travel procedures.