



# THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO ORGANISING A SCHOOL TRIP



Halsbury  
travel



# Thank you for downloading our Ultimate Guide to Organising a School Trip!



Our school travel specialists have put this guide together to take you through all the important steps in organising your school trip.

And we've also included some useful hints and tips, which come from over 35 years of experience in arranging school trips!

Originally founded in 1986 by former teachers, and with many former teachers still among us, we know that school trips take a lot of work to organise. But we're here to make your life easier and help you to provide these unforgettable educational experiences to more young people.

We hope that you find this guide useful. And please don't forget, we are here to help you every step of the way.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you require further information or advice.

**The Halsbury Team**

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## Think About Your Trip



### START PLANNING EARLY!

Our number one tip for planning school trips is to start as early as possible.

There are several reasons for this:

- You'll have a better chance of securing your preferred dates, transport, accommodation etc.
- You'll make your tour more affordable for your students, by giving them longer to pay for it.
- It will make your life much easier by giving you plenty of time to plan your trip and collect all the information you need from students and parents.
- You'll get a head start on the competition from other trips – if another department is likely to run a trip targeting the same pool of students, planning early will mean you get in there first!

### DECIDE ON OBJECTIVES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR YOUR TRIP – BUDGET, DESTINATION, STAFF:STUDENT RATIOS, TRAVEL DATE AND DURATION

You'll need to know why you're running your trip in order to gain approval for it and to convince parents to send their children on your trip. It will also help when you come to planning the itinerary.

You'll also need a good idea of where and when you want to go, as well as your budget and preferred duration.

Plus, you'll need to know the staff:student ratio required by your LEA or school. As standard, we usually base our quotes on the following free place ratios:

- 1:8 for coach trips
- 1:10 for trips by air

But as an experienced tour operator, we can provide any advice or information you require. So, don't be afraid to ask, even if you're not ready to request a quote!

## DECIDE WHETHER TO ORGANISE YOUR TRIP YOURSELF OR GO WITH A TOUR OPERATOR

It's certainly possible to make all the arrangements for your school trip yourself.

But there are some important reasons to choose a specialist school tour operator like Halsbury Travel:

- Make sure you and your group are properly protected.
  - By choosing a fully-accredited school tour operator like Halsbury Travel, your group are much better protected in the event that something goes wrong with your trip.
  - We can't promise that unforeseen circumstances like storms, volcanic eruptions and airlines going bust won't affect your trip – but we have a proven track record in quickly finding solutions, thanks to our experience and connections, so you won't be left to deal with it on your own.
  - Plus, our ABTA and ATOL protection means that your trip is financially protected.
- Working with a specialist school tour operator will free up a lot of your time and will mean planning for your school trip won't completely take over your life.
  - Plus, choosing a school tour operator that is an Assured Member of the School Travel Forum (and so has a Safety Management System in place) and holds the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge can form part of your risk assessment and provide you with assurance that the health and safety of your group will be prioritised.
  - The LOtC Quality Badge also means you won't need to seek further assurances that the operator provides the quality of tour advertised.
- Many of our staff are multilingual, so we can correspond with local suppliers on your behalf.

- A well-established school tour operator like Halsbury will have strong links with local experts who can use their expertise to lead courses or act as guides.
- You'll be able to take advantage of the tour operator's expertise in arranging school trips.
- And, perhaps the most important reason to choose a specialist school tour operator is that you'll be fully supported every step of the way.

## DECIDED TO GO WITH A TOUR OPERATOR? IT'S TIME TO GET A QUOTE!

Got several quotes? Of course, the key thing to remember is that you need to ensure you're comparing like-for-like.


Here are some of our other top tips on comparing quotes:

**How to Compare Quotes**

We appreciate that it can be confusing when comparing quotes and tour operators. It's easy to assume that the lowest price offers the best value for money, but that isn't necessarily the case.

Below are some hints and tips on what to look out for:

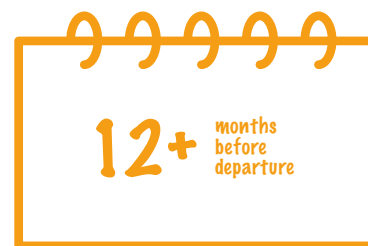
	OTHER OPERATORS	WITH HALSBURY
What board basis is the quote based on?	Remember to check what board basis you have been quoted on. A quote may seem cheaper because they've quoted on B&B only.	We usually quote on a half-board basis, but as we tailor the quote to meet your requirements, if you want a different board basis, you just need to let us know! Think about whether you want the convenience of having pre-arranged meals or if you'd prefer some flexibility.
What visits/activities have been included?	Don't make the mistake of assuming all the activities mentioned in the brochure are included in the price.	Your Tour Adviser won't usually include all activities at this stage apart from key visits, such as Auschwitz. However, we do normally indicate other activities mentioned in the destination guide which will be included in the price. We advise that you allow for activities later date.
Are UK coach transfers included?	If you require transfers from the airport, we will include this in the price.	Transfers are included as standard on flight. We advise that you allow for activities later date.
Do they offer inspection visits?	Not all companies offer inspection visits and may add this on as an extra charge after you've booked.	All Halsbury group leaders booking a trip of 2 nights+ for 20+ paying passengers are offered 2 nights B&B accommodation in a twin room in the destination they are travelling to. This will allow you to conduct any necessary risk assessments.

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[Download the guide »](#)



## Get your trip approved



### HOW TO GET YOUR TRIP APPROVED

When presenting your school trip proposal for approval, you'll need to answer the following:

- What's the value of your trip?
  - o You'll need to demonstrate that your trip offers enough educational value to justify taking students and accompanying staff off timetable, as well as the cost of arranging cover. The trips on our website all feature curriculum links, to help you with this.
  - o Plus, we've also created a [video](#) and a [PowerPoint](#) presentation that you can use for this.
- How will you keep the students safe?
  - o You'll need to show that you've considered how you'll ensure the health and safety of your group. This means performing a [risk assessment](#).
  - o You can lighten your workload by booking with a school tour operator who is an Assured Member of the School Travel Forum and has taken responsibility for the creation and implementation of a Safety Management

System, like Halsbury Travel.

- How reliable is your chosen tour operator?
  - o You'll need to show your chosen tour operator is reputable, fully accredited and will prioritise the health and safety of students.
  - o If you've chosen Halsbury Travel as your tour operator, you may find [this handout useful](#).

[See more of our top tips »](#)

### HOW TO GET PARENTS ON BOARD

In order to get parents on board with your school trip, you'll have to convince them that the trip is worthwhile and that there are adequate measures in place to keep their children safe on the trip.

Of course, the first step is to make them aware of the trip. We've created a [sample letter](#) you can use to send home with students.

And you'll probably want to hold an information evening too. We've put together a [PowerPoint template](#) to help you with this.



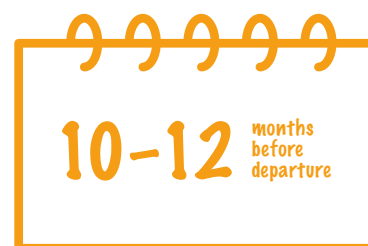
When you speak to parents about your trip, you'll need to answer these questions:

- Why should I send my child on this trip?
  - o As well as explaining the curriculum links, don't forget to explain the other [benefits of school trips](#), such as developing their independence and broadening their horizons.
- How has the trip been organised?
  - o If you're using a tour operator, parents will want to know more about them – are they financially stable, are they fully accredited, will their children be safe travelling with them?
  - o If you're travelling with us, [download our handout](#), which should help to reassure parents.
  - o And if you would like us to attend your parents' evening to help field questions, please just let us know!
- Will my child's medical and dietary requirements be catered for?
  - o The answer is, of course, yes, but it's worth letting parents know that they will need to provide you with information on their children's medical and dietary requirements as soon as possible, so that we can make sure these are properly catered for.
- How are we going to keep in touch?
  - o It's a good idea to let parents know whether you will be posting updates on [social media](#) – this can be a great way to reassure nervous parents.
  - o If you know what your mobile phone policy will be, it's a good idea to let parents know as soon as possible, as they'll want to know how to get in touch with their children in an emergency (and vice versa).



See more tips on getting parents aboard »

## Launch your trip



### NOW YOU'VE MADE YOUR PROVISIONAL BOOKING, YOU CAN START PROMOTING YOUR TRIP

You can put posters up around the school and promote your trip on the school's [social media](#) accounts.

If you've run the trip before, show your students photos of the previous trips. And if any of the students who have previously been on the trip are still at school, why not invite them to come and talk to your current students about the great time they had?

If you've struggled to get the numbers in the past, you may like to try some of these tricks:

- Limit the number of places on the trip – the competitive element could encourage students to sign up.
- Team up with another department to make the trip cross-curricular.

### SET UP YOUR TRIP'S SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

[Social media](#) can be a great way to keep parents up-to-date, both in the lead up to the trip and while you're abroad.

First, you'll need to think about which channels are most appropriate – we find most of our Group Leaders tend to use either Facebook, Twitter or both.

You'll also need to decide whether you're going to use the school's main account, or if you want to set up an account specifically for your trip.

If it's an annual trip, then a trip-specific account can be a great way of showing how fantastic past trips have been when getting students signed up for the next one!

Remember to provide parents with the details of your social media accounts, as well as how you intend to use them, as soon as possible. You can then use social media to remind them of deadlines and meetings, as well as sharing information on what to pack and where to meet for departure.

Just remember that not all parents will join you on social media, so don't make this the only place you share information!

### START PLANNING ANY FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

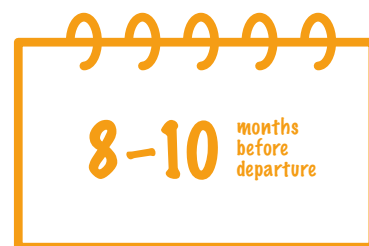
Encouraging students to get involved in fundraising activities for their trip will not only make the trip more affordable, it will also give them ownership of the trip.

Activities such as bake sales, raffles, car washes, car boot sales, bag packing and even crowd funding can be great ways to [raise funds for school trips](#).

If you are thinking about running any fundraising activities, start planning them at this point, so you have plenty of time to reach your target!



## Start trip admin



### **CONFIRM PASSENGER NUMBERS**

At this point, we'll need you to confirm how many people will be travelling in your group.

### **REQUEST YOUR INVOICE AND PUT TOGETHER A PAYMENT SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS**

And once we have your final numbers, we'll be able to issue your invoice, which will have clear payment deadline details.

At this point, it's a good idea to provide parents with a payment schedule that ensures you meet the deadlines on your invoice. Providing parents with this information as early as possible means that they will have enough notice to make the payments as required.

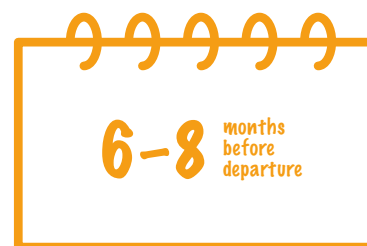
### **COMPLETE AND SUBMIT INITIAL PASSENGER INFORMATION FORM AND BOOKING FORM**

If you're flying, we'll need you to submit your initial Air Passenger List, as well as your booking form.





## Plan the finer details of the trip



### START WORKING WITH YOUR ITINERARY COORDINATOR TO CHOOSE ACTIVITIES AND BEGIN PLANNING YOUR ITINERARY

You'll now start working closely with your dedicated Itinerary Coordinator to start planning your itinerary and choosing the activities that will help you to meet your learning objectives and ensure that your students have an unforgettable experience.

### REQUEST MEDICAL AND DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Not only will you need these to complete your risk assessment, we also need to make suppliers aware of these well in advance, to ensure that those students with medical or dietary requirements are sufficiently catered for.

### START YOUR RISK ASSESSMENT

- What needs to be included?
  - You'll need to follow the guidelines provided by your school and LEA. However, using a reputable tour operator like Halsbury Travel can significantly reduce your workload – as an

Assured Member of the School Travel Forum we have a Safety Management System in place which can form part of your [risk assessment](#).

- Do you need to do a new [risk assessment](#) even if you've run the trip before?
  - An important part of the risk assessment is considering the individuals in your group. As this will change with each trip, you'll need to do a fresh risk assessment for every trip. However, you'll be able to use past risk assessments as a framework.
- Can my tour operator do the risk assessment for me?
  - Unfortunately, as you're the only one who truly understands the needs of your group, it is only you who can carry out the risk assessment. However, our Safety Management System can be used as part of your risk assessment, reducing your workload slightly.
- Where can I get more advice?
  - The '[Demystifying Risk Assessments](#)' guide has lots of useful information.



## REQUEST PASSPORT INFO FROM STUDENTS TO COMPLETE ADVANCE PASSENGER INFORMATION (API) FORM

- British citizens are advised to check the website of the British [Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office \(FCDO\)](#) for the most up-to-date information regarding required travel documents.
- For any non-British citizens in your group, we strongly advise that they check requirements with the relevant embassy as soon as possible, to give themselves enough time to arrange a visa if one is required.

## HOST A PARENTS' EVENING TO PROVIDE FURTHER INFORMATION

- Now is a great time to remind parents to check visa requirements if required
- You could also use this time to gather any information required for the API





## Make the final arrangements



### **FINALISE YOUR ITINERARY ARRANGEMENTS WITH YOUR ITINERARY COORDINATOR**

You'll now need to finalise the details of your itinerary with your Itinerary Coordinator. As well as activities and visits, this includes meal choices at restaurants or your accommodation (if applicable).

### **MAKE THE FINAL BALANCE PAYMENT**

Once your itinerary is finalised, the final balance payment will be due.

### **HOST YOUR FINAL PARENTS' EVENING**

It's a great idea to host a final parents' evening to ensure that parents and guardians have all the information they need. This will include sharing with them the finalised itinerary, making sure they understand luggage restrictions and know what their children need to bring with them.

And you'll need to remind them how they can contact you in an emergency, whether you'll be posting updates on social media and what the policy is on their children taking and using mobile phones.

### **COMPLETE ANY REMAINING RISK ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**

This is your final opportunity to complete your risk assessments. If you need any information from us, please don't hesitate to contact your Itinerary Coordinator, who will be very pleased to help.

### **COMPLETE THE ROOMING LIST**

You'll need to complete your rooming list before you travel, so that you don't spend ages allocating rooms to students on arrival at your accommodation.





## Get ready for your trip!



### RECEIVE AND CHECK THROUGH YOUR TEACHER'S PACK

This will have everything you need for your trip, including 24-hour emergency contact numbers, so you know that you can speak to us any time you need to.

### PACK YOUR BAGS

To make sure you have all the essentials, download our [packing checklists](#) – there's one for students and one for teachers!

Make sure you remind students about the baggage allowance once again.

### START YOUR JOURNEY!

#### Travelling by coach?

- Make sure you pack plenty of refreshments
  - o Check what the driver's policy is on eating and drinking on the coach – you may need to save snacking for comfort breaks.
  - o Water is obviously the best drink to take – it
- may be a good idea to bring along some extra water in case of a heatwave or breakdown.
- o Snacks to avoid include chocolate, crisps and sweets, which can be messy and will generally make students hyperactive or thirsty – fruit and nuts (as long as no one is allergic) are much better options.
- Dress appropriately
  - o Remind everyone to wear something comfortable to sit in. And layers are a great idea, especially if travelling overnight, when temperatures can drop quickly.
- Prepare to entertain
  - o You may want to plan some activities to help the journey go a little quicker, whether that's a DVD, a coach quiz or even a singalong.
- Prepare to snooze
  - o For long coach journeys, eye masks, ear plugs and neck pillows are ideal to help you get some much-needed rest.
- And don't forget the housekeeping!



- o As any teacher who has ever taken a coach trip with students knows, you should always pack air freshener, bin bags, wet wipes and kitchen roll.

[Check out our top tips for coach trips »](#)

## Flying?

Our former teachers and School Travel Advisers have some top tips for navigating your group through the airport.

- Have a chat about behaviour beforehand
  - o It's worth reminding students that customs and security at an airport are serious and officers are unlikely to have the same sense of humour as a group of teenagers.
- Make copies of travel documents
  - o It's a really good idea for you to have a copy of everyone's boarding pass and passport. It's also worth leaving a copy of everyone's passport with the school office.
- Make sure you get to the airport in plenty of time
  - o It sounds obvious, but it can take longer than you might think to herd a large group through an airport, especially at the check-in desks and security.
- Make sure your students are prepared for security
  - o It's important that students understand what they can and cannot carry in their hand luggage. It's also worth reminding them that they should say they packed their own bag (even if mum did it!), because we have had some students held up at security for giving the 'wrong' answers!
- Break large groups down into smaller groups
  - o It's much easier to navigate the airport in smaller groups. Ensure each member of staff knows where and when to meet at each

point (i.e. after check-in, after security, before boarding, etc.).

- o Once you're through security, each member of staff can designate a group base for students to check in to regularly if you decide to let them have some free time before boarding (we advise that they stick to groups of 3-4, rather than being allowed to wander around individually).
- Set up a staff Whatsapp group
  - o You should be able to stay in touch with the mini-group leaders and/or other staff on the trip via Whatsapp or similar – remember, most airports offer free WiFi, which is particularly useful on the way back!
- Devise a strategy for baggage reclaim
  - o Allowing the whole group to grab their own luggage from the belt will cause chaos, not just for your group, but for the other passengers too. So, you could either send them up in their mini groups, or you could designate a team of baggage reclaimers – and this is easier if you've tagged each of your bags with a recognisable ribbon, strap or sticker.

[See our top airport tips »](#)



## Any other tips?

### MONEY SAVING TIPS FOR CHEAPER TRIPS

Here are our top money saving tips:

- Choose your transport carefully – travelling by coach still tends to work out cheaper than flying, and it's more environmentally friendly too.
- Pre-book meals at your accommodation rather than eating out. You can even opt to book packed lunches, so you don't risk ending up in a café or restaurant with over-inflated tourist prices.
- Consider carefully the time of year that you choose to travel. For example, ferry crossings, among other things, run on a high and low season basis. So, travelling any time between September and March will be much cheaper than at any other time of year.
- And think about the day of the week that you travel. The most popular day of the week for travel is Friday so, for example, on ferry crossings there's a supplement of £1 a person for Friday crossings.

[See more money saving tips »](#)

### CONTINUE THE LEARNING BACK IN THE CLASSROOM

Your school trip was an unforgettable educational experience for your students – but the end of the trip doesn't have to be the end of the learning!

Here are our top tips for [continuing the learning](#) once you get back into the classroom:

- Classroom diary – have the students work together to create a diary of their trip. This could be a visual thing to be displayed on one of the boards in your department, or a blog on the school's website. Ask them to think about why they went there and what they learned.
  - o If they write an article you could even submit this to the local newspaper, which would be great PR for the school!
- If your students took lots of photos and videos of the trip, ask them to create a short film or collage.
- If it was a languages trip, you could ask them to write a trip diary in the target language. Alternatively, you could ask them to prepare a short presentation, if you want them to continue working on their speaking skills.
- Give your students some great public speaking practice by challenging them to speak about the trip in an assembly. They could work together as a group and could even put together a slide show featuring some of their photos.

## Enjoy your trip!

