



Organising the best school Ski Trip:

17 Tips



In this guide, we harness our years of experience to provide you with what we regard as key considerations and top 'Tips for Organising the Best School Ski Trip'.

A school ski trip is a once in a lifetime opportunity for many pupils, providing a learning experience like no other.

Students have the chance to develop their social and physical skills, as well as to practice modern languages and explore new cultures.

However, planning and executing a school ski trip is no easy task. The best ski trips need careful planning and meticulous organisation.

We have been helping group leaders to organise tours for more than 30 years, picking up top tips along the way. In this article, we give you the inside track to help your trip run smoothly.



[1] Start early

If there is one thing you take away from our list, let it be to start planning your trip as early as possible. Most organisers begin planning their trip more than a year in advance, with many schools organising and booking trips up to two years in advance of departure. This will give you time to plan the perfect trip and give parents time to budget. Leaving plenty of time makes the tour accessible to as many pupils as possible, and when it comes to school ski trips, more pupils always means more fun.

[2] Fundraising

If there is enough time, you could also help pupils to organise fundraising activities. This can relieve some of the burden of paying for the trip from parents or could provide some extra cash for activities.

[3] Dates are important

If you can choose when you would like to travel, avoid the February half-term. This is a very popular time to travel and as a result, busier and more expensive.

[4] Enlist the help of a specialist tour operator

Specialist tour operators such as IBT Travel, have many years of experience in planning and supporting school ski trips. Booking and planning alongside a reputable tour operator can take much of the stress out of the process and give you peace of mind about your booking.

You can check the operator's accreditations to ensure they are reputable. Key accreditations for school ski trip operators include ABTA, ATOL Protection and membership of the School Travel Forum. IBT Travel is a member of the School Travel Forum, which means that we will always prioritise the health and safety of the school groups we work with. We will guide you through the booking and planning process and be there to support you from departure to return.

[5] Consider how you want to travel

You will need to consider the needs of your group, the time you have available,

and your budget when thinking about how you would like to travel. Flying is often the quickest option, but it can be expensive and transfer times to resort can be long and unexpected. Travel by coach usually is cheaper but can take up much of your valuable trip time.

Bonus tip: Remember, if you choose to travel by coach, you will need to pack a coach kit. This includes rubbish bags, DVDs, activities, water, sick bags, kitchen roll and wet wipes.

[6] Assess the expertise and needs of your group

To ensure that everyone in your party has a great time, it is essential to choose a resort that matches the needs of your group. Key considerations include:

- ▶ What previous experience of skiing does the group have?
- ▶ What is the budget?
- ▶ Do the pupils want to practice their modern language skills?
- ▶ Does the resort offer the right mix of daytime and night-time activities?

Most resorts are keen to accommodate first-time skiers. However, some are more suitable for beginners than others. We can advise you on the resorts best suited to your group needs. If your party is of mixed skiing ability, we would recommend choosing a resort where all pupils can enjoy great skiing but can quickly meet up for lunch or daytime activities most of the time.

[7] Keep parents involved

Keeping parents informed and engaged throughout the process can make everything much more straightforward. Initially, you should invite them along to a parents evening to discuss the trip and allow them to raise concerns and ask questions. You should share any plans for evening activities with parents well in advance, to gain any additional consent that may be needed.

It is handy to create a group email for parents by collecting their email addresses early in the process. Creating a group mailing list makes it easier to notify parents of any changes, meetings, deadlines etc. When you email parents about the trip, be sure to copy in relevant members of staff so they can provide additional support where required.

[8] Stay flexible

Unfortunately, planning everything down to the last detail doesn't always make for the best trip. You should build-in an element of flexibility to your plans and have back-up ideas. Weather and terrain can be unpredictable, so you may need to keep pupils entertained on an off day.

Also, a school trip, travelling and skiing can be exhausting for pupils (and organisers), so you may want to leave room for a quiet night mid-trip to allow everyone to get their energy back.



[9] Make sure group leaders are prepared

As the lead organiser, you should take steps to ensure that all other group leaders have enough knowledge to carry out their role. This includes learning about the pupils, their experience, medical conditions and physical capabilities. Leaders should also be prepared practically too, with extra sunscreen, gloves, hats and a first aid kit.

[10] Make sure you have enough staff

Pupils will naturally progress at different rates so you may need leaders across multiple runs throughout the resort throughout the week.

[11] Back to basics

It can be easy to get caught up in the excitement, planning and details of a school ski trip, but you still need to stick to the basics. Frequent head counting is essential, and you may want to make sure pupils are identifiable by using hi-vis bands or bibs. You should give students regular report back times and brief them on what to do if the group becomes separated.

[12] Contact cards

It is an excellent idea to provide students with contact cards with a written message in the local language (EXAMPLE: I am lost, please call my teacher on this number) as well as details of accommodation and

a contact number for the party leader. Try to make contact cards roughly credit card-sized so they are easy to carry around and can be kept with students lift passes.

[13] Promoting your trip is vital to its success

You need to make sure you have enough pupils signed up for the trip to go ahead, but also gain the support of parents and your school. IBT travel has created a Toolkit for promoting your trip to help you get started. However, generally, you should plan to promote the trip at assemblies, hold a parents evening and provide information leaflets to pupils. If your school is active on social media, you will also want to post about the trip on the relevant social media channels. The most important information to get across is dates, prices, deadlines and basic details of what the trip involves.

[14] Provide a packing list

Pupils and parents will be desperate to know what they should pack for their trip. We have created a 'What to pack' list to get you started. It is never too early to send this out, which leads us on to our next tip.

[15] Buying ski gear

The best time to purchase ski apparel and equipment is at the end of the previous ski season. If you can let pupils and parents

know well in advance, they might be able to pick up a lot of what they need on sale at a bargain price.

[16] Organise pupils into smaller groups

At the beginning of the trip, organise pupils into small groups of ten pupils or less. You can then assign a member of staff to supervise each group. Giving each group of pupils a team leader ensures pupils know who they should go to with any problems or concerns and can make head counting and keeping track of pupils much easier for you.

[17] Kit reminders

Often when pupils go on a school trip, all common sense goes out the window. Making sure pupils are well-prepared for the day ahead can make your activities run smoothly. One of the best ways to ensure pupils have everything they need is to create kit reminder lists. Group leaders can run through the list each morning before heading out.



Book your school ski trip with IBT Travel today.

We have built our business on providing exceptional experiences to school groups. From beginning to end, we are here to support you in making a case for your trip, and planning and executing a trip they will never forget.

We provide a bespoke booking experience, so get in touch with our team today to start building your ideal ski trip.

Call us now on **01292 477 771**
or complete our **online quote form**,
and we will get back to you without delay.

