

Top 10 tips for Organising a School Ski Trip

At 321ski we are often asked - Exactly what is involved in a school ski trip from beginning to end?

Now whilst we can answer this from a School Tour Operator perspective easily, we are also fortunate enough to be able to have a full insight from a teacher's outlook too. We at 321ski **are all ex-teachers** with considerable school trip experience hence we speak with authority from all angles.

1. Select an appropriate resort

Resorts differ. Each is more appropriate for specific standard of skiers than others. A quick and easy way to check is to look up the percentage or number of **Blue, Red** and **Green** runs within the resort. This provides the teacher a very clear indication on the suitability of the group for that particular resort. Keeping this in mind, 321ski has provided an easy description of all of our resorts on their respective homepage. An example is [Zell am See](#).

2. Check company's credibility in providing consumer protection

A good indicator of this is the ATOL (Air Transport Organiser's Licence) accreditation. Without this qualification the travel company will be unable to offer air packages. Additionally the company's ATOL can be checked easily online at the CAA site for integrity. [Check our's as an example here](#) which shows that ATOL10431 number for 321Ski and 321Dive is current.

3. Enquire about in-house resort representative

A good travel company will provide a dedicated rep to grease any required wheels and help with such things like the après ski programme. More experienced teachers arrive with a wealth of knowledge of suitable evening activities to engage their pupils and have no further need of help. Others, especially those arriving in resort for the first time, will make more use of the rep's local knowledge and advice.

4. Establish exactly what the APRÈS ski program involves

As the local amenities and options will differ from city to city and country to country a good travel company will provide a list of available options, some with incurring extra cost. Swimming,

tobogganing and ice-skating are often additional costs due to the obvious admission charges, but many activities can also be provided in house. On-site discos, karaoke, games nights and DVD evenings can all provide exciting evenings without the need of any additional costs; therefore these are to be explored in times of economic downturn! www.321ski.co.uk/inresort.php

5. Ensure that the ski equipment suppliers are reputable

Although a rare practice, suppliers can use poor quality fastenings and ski equipment in the hope that school children won't complain. The absolute misconception that schoolchildren will complain less than the average adult can be seen in some of the more remote areas. Large chains of ski suppliers and locally established ski hire shops are the norm, so don't worry unless an antiquated Citroen 2CV arrives with a gravity defying stack of skis outside!

6. Think carefully before allowing parents along

The benefits are obvious – an extra pair of hands and an adult viewpoint in case of strife and trouble. This could be crucially helpful. Conversely, adults without clear expectations of the standards of accommodation (when compared to their last family holiday to the Caribbean) can at best be an unnecessary distraction and a liability at worst. And of course as a lead teacher you are in charge. There is also the natural desire for them to share time with their children, and this may fragment the school group. There are clear advantages and disadvantages.

7. Stress the need for financial commitment from pupils at the very outset

Often companies are unable to make refunds to

321ski.co.uk

Toby Weeden is the Director of 321ski, a specialist school ski company that uniquely delivers school ski trips as designed by teachers. He has previously been a Housemaster at a prestigious Boarding School in Yorkshire, as well as more recently a Director of Sport at a Grammar School in Berkshire. He has taught in six different schools over the course of his career and is a keen skier and mountaineer. Previous to his teaching career Toby Weeden served as a Royal Air Force Officer on a Short Service Commission.

Top 10 tips for Organising a School Ski Trip

At 321ski we are often asked - Exactly what is involved in a school ski trip from beginning to end?

Now whilst we can answer this from a School Tour Operator perspective easily, we are also fortunate enough to be able to have a full insight from a teacher's outlook too. We at 321ski **are all ex-teachers** with considerable school trip experience hence we speak with authority from all angles.

pupils that change their mind due to incurred costs. In fact often the pupils may be further liable for other costs associated with the booking but not necessarily covered (e.g. Flights).

behaved schools are those with established and accepted behaviour policies. If the terms have been consulted upon between teacher and pupils prior to departure (or more importantly the punishments!) invariably the trip will run smoothly.

8. **Travel insurance**

The travel and ski insurance that is readily available to schools through the Local Education Authority, or sourced by an Academy or private school at their privileged rates, is usually extremely good value for money. It is imperative to take advantage of these rates as soon as you lodge a deposit with the travel company. And therefore make a booking. You can't predict the future for your pupils and the law of averages suggest that for every thirty booked pupils one will not be able to travel, usually for medical reasons.

9. **Breakfast is for everyone**

As well as being the most important meal of the day breakfast serves other purposes for professional teachers; like a registration and illness check. Skiing is physically exerting and many pupils underestimate how tired they become. Eating early in the morning may not be a habit to which they are accustomed but it is essential for safety reasons that every pupil eats well at breakfast. Being wary of this at 321ski, a large continental breakfast is provided for all to gorge on as the first thing to do in the morning.

10. **Establish a contract with your pupils prior to leaving**

Lunch time sessions for reinforcing your school policy is important, but a contract devised by the pupils is often a great exercise. Although you may expect pupils to try to manipulate what is acceptable in the conditions of their behaviour they can also be very fair. Far more powerful to be judged by your peers, 321ski have found that the best

321ski.co.uk

Toby Weeden is the Director of 321ski, a specialist school ski company that uniquely delivers school ski trips as designed by teachers. He has previously been a Housemaster at a prestigious Boarding School in Yorkshire, as well as more recently a Director of Sport at a Grammar School in Berkshire. He has taught in six different schools over the course of his career and is a keen skier and mountaineer. Previous to his teaching career Toby Weeden served as a Royal Air Force Officer on a Short Service Commission.