

Please report any potential matters relating to safeguarding children to the National Office or to the Lead Safeguarding Officer ([safeguarding@britishorienteering.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@britishorienteering.org.uk) or **07891 091662**). This includes any concerns about the welfare of children either within orienteering or outside of orienteering and any concern over adult behaviour related to the welfare of children including those away from the sport that involve members or participants.

## Summary

British Orienteering regards the safeguarding and welfare of everyone and specifically children (under the age of 18) and Adults at risk to be of paramount importance.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, play your part, report any concerns and put good practice into effect.

Act on your concerns BUT it is not your responsibility or that of volunteers and members to investigate or decide if child abuse is occurring, it is the responsibility of child welfare experts. All members, clubs and associations have, by joining or affiliating to British Orienteering, agreed to abide by the *British Orienteering Safeguarding Policy & Procedures*.

This is a supplementary document that sits alongside the current Safeguarding policies. These policies can be found on British Orienteering's safeguarding pages and via the links here:

- [BRITISH ORIENTEERING – O-Safe CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY](#)
- [BRITISH ORIENTEERING - Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy](#)

## Good practice

This is built around the following framework:

1. Providing orienteering activities and events that are appropriate to a child's age and ability.
2. Training children to assess risk for themselves.
3. Adults working in pairs to avoid 1 on 1 situations with children arising.
4. Taking care when recruiting people who will work with children, this includes volunteers.
5. Checking and monitoring adults in positions of trust that have regular and frequent contact with children.
6. Adults being aware of the risks to children and understanding their responsibility to safeguard them.
7. Reporting concerns – not investigating them any more than is necessary to confirm a concern exists.

## Responding to a safeguarding concern or a child making a disclosure

1. Firstly, ensure the safety of the child – if the child needs immediate medical treatment, take the child to hospital or call an ambulance, inform medics of your concerns and ensure they are aware it may be a child safeguarding issue.
2. Make a judgement about whether your concern is sufficient to cause you to take immediate action, this may be to protect the child from potential harm or to report your concern while the state of the child is time sensitive and may normalise if time is wasted – for example bruising will subside over a period of time. If you need advice contact your Club Welfare Officer or the British Orienteering Lead Safeguarding Officer.
3. Where concerns are urgent refer immediately to Children's Social Care/Police and send a copy of the Incident Report form to both them and the British Orienteering Lead Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours.
4. Note down or record what has been said to you or what you have seen. Date and time your note and try and be as factually accurate as you can. This will help when producing an Incident Report.
5. Lastly, if you have any concern at all you must report concerns to the Club Welfare Officer who will:
  - Complete the British Orienteering Incident Report form.
  - Report to the British Orienteering Lead Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours.

If a child informs you directly that (s)he, or another child, is concerned about someone's behaviour towards them:

- Be calm – do not panic and do not allow your shock or distaste to show.
- Tell the child that (s)he is not to blame and that (s)he was right to tell.
- Take notes throughout for future reference. If this is not possible, write your conversation down as soon as possible and date it.
- Take what the person says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child who has a speech impairment and/or differences in language.
- Only ask questions to clarify and confirm your concern and to have sufficient information to act – do not 'investigate' any further.
- Reassure the child but do not make promises of confidentiality which might not be feasible in light of subsequent developments – make no promises and do not agree to keep secrets.
- Follow the procedures to report the concern – do not approach the alleged abuser.
- Time is of the essence, DO NOT wait, act as a matter of urgency.

## Making an Incident Report

If the incident or allegation is serious you should report it immediately to the police or social care. Ideally the subsequent report should be made utilising the British Orienteering Incident Report Form and should include:

- Details of the child i.e., age/date of birth, address, race, gender and ethnic origin.
- Details of the facts of the allegations or any observations.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Witnesses to the incident(s).
- Any times, dates or other relevant information.
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A signature, time and date on the report.
- Remember you must not investigate the allegation.

## Finding volunteers for positions of trust

The majority of people helping to deliver orienteering events and activities are dedicated and motivated by commendable reasons. However, all reasonable steps should be taken to prevent unsuitable people, or people with inappropriate motivation, from working with children. Good practice requires that supervision is available at all times to people working with children or at-risk adults.

It is to be noted that the law surrounding positions of trust in England, Wales and Northern Ireland changed on 28 June 2022 to include sports coaches. In addition, it's now against the law in these regions for those in positions of trust to engage in sexual activity with a 16- or 17-year-old in their care. Further information can be found via the [NSPCC](#).

Recruitment is a key phase in identifying suitable people to work with children and section 8 of the British Orienteering Child Safeguarding Policy contains procedures for safe recruiting. It is important that the procedures are understood, adopted and applied consistently when appointing people to a position of trust where they will, or may, deal with children or at-risk adults. Such positions and roles include coaching and volunteers that will be responsible for caring for children when they are overnighting.

The law varies across the UK but in general requires that you check that people do not have a criminal record only if:

- They are working with children in isolation from other adults, and
- Their contact with the child or children is:
  - More than 3 times a month or,
  - Any overnight supervision between 2am and 6am,

Full guidance for DBS, PVG or Access NI checks can be found [here](#) but if they do not meet the criteria a check is not permissible *by law*.

## Working with children and coaching ratios

Safety Guidelines in orienteering state that there must always be at least 2 supervisors with any group, this is to ensure that at least one supervisor is able to oversee a group while any injury or problem is dealt with.

Orienteering is different from many other sports and the level of supervision should take account of:

- The age and ability of the children,
- The activity being undertaken,
- Children's growing independence,
- Children's need for privacy,
- The geography of the venue being used,
- The risk assessment.

However, you should be aware of [NCPCC guidance](#) which states that when working with groups of children under 8 years of age there should be at least one supervising adult for every six children. Supporting staff under the age of 17 must be supervised at all times and cannot be included in staffing ratios.

While the risk assessment may well indicate the need for an enhanced level of supervision and staffing for a particular activity, the following table shows recommended minimum adult to child ratios.

Children's age	Number of adults
4 to 8	2 for the first 6 children and then 1 more for every additional 6 children
9 to 12	2 for the first 8 children and then 1 more for every additional 8 children
13 to 18	2 for the first 10 children and then 1 more for every additional 10 children
Mixed aged groups	Many groups in orienteering will contain children of mixed ages in which case the club or lead coach will need to work out what level of supervision (above the minimum of 2 adults) fits the circumstances.

Pre-activity planning should ensure that, in case of an accident or an incident involving a child or member of staff, there will be sufficient adults remaining to supervise the group safely. In coaching sessions any additional adult does not have to be a qualified instructor or coach.

## Transporting children

Clubs and coaches should encourage parents to make private arrangements to transport their children. Parents normally 'risk assessing' for their children and when parents arrange transport it is their responsibility keeping the club (or coach) away from various legal responsibilities.

Late Collection, volunteers should:

- Attempt to contact the parent/carer or alternative contact name/number.
- Wait with the child or adult at risk at the agreed collection point with another adult if at all possible.

Do not:

- Travel in a situation that puts you in a 1 to 1 position with a child or adult at risk.
- Take the child or at-risk adult to their home or to any other location.
- Ask the child or at-risk adult to wait in a vehicle or venue with you alone.
- Send the child or adult at risk home with another person without parental permission.

## Using social media

Social Media Guidelines are available [here](#); the policy is [here](#) and good practice for clubs and volunteers includes:

- Manage your social media – the manager will need to be trained to recognise signs of bullying and grooming.
- If in a position of trust with a child don't accept their 'friend' requests or communicate via social media.
- If you need to use social media with anyone under 18 gain permission from parents/carers; always copy another colleague, welfare officer or moderator into the message/communication.
- Don't give out or ask for personal information such as address, age, mobile number, your current location etc...
- If you are worried about any young person, use your organisation's reporting procedure and/or report your concerns to [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk).

Guidance for children is available on the website at [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) or [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk).

## Taking of pictures and video at activities and events

Lots of people like taking images either photographs or video. In general, British Orienteering is keen to promote the sport of orienteering and keen to support parents and guardians in celebrating and publicising their children's achievements and successes. Video can also be a useful tool for coaching.

However, the use of photos and videos (including drone footage) on websites and social media, and in posters, the press or other publications, can pose direct and indirect risks to children and young people if not managed correctly.

### The taking of images

- Event organisers should provide guidance to all spectators, members of the public and competitors about any specific areas where photography is not permitted under any circumstances (for example toilets).
- Parents, guardians or carers who have a reason to be sensitive about the children they are responsible for are advised to discuss with their club and the organisers of any event they are attending, the arrangements for photography or videoing. If the club or organiser is unable to provide the assurance the parent, guardian or carer requires, an informed decision can be made about whether to attend the event or not.
- People involved in orienteering are encouraged to report any concerns they may have about anyone's behaviour in this context to the National Office.
- The organiser of an event can exclude a person from entering an event or starting a race. This authority is specified within the rules. Therefore, if a landowner has banned the taking of images (stills or video) the organiser has the authority to refuse right of entry to a person wishing to use a headcam for instance.
- A club volunteer must challenge any individual identified as taking inappropriate photographs at the event. Approach the person and ask who they are, inform them of your concern and ask to see the photographs taken. If they refuse to do so, notify them that they will be reported to the Police.

All such concerns must be recorded in the same manner as any other incident or child protection concern and reported to the event organiser who will inform the Club Welfare Officer. Any serious concern should be reported to the police.

### Using an official or professional photographer

- Event organisers engaging an official or professional photographer to take images need to provide a brief the person must follow along with any areas of concern the photographer must avoid.

## Using images of children

- Think carefully before using any images showing children and young people on your website, social media, or in your publications.
- Establish the type of images that present the activity in a positive light and promote the best aspects of orienteering.
- Avoid supplying the full name(s) of the child or children along with the image(s), unless this is considered necessary, is in the child's best interests, and the child and parent/carer have consented.
  - Be aware that at some events, participants bibs may contain personal details such as names.

- Avoid using images showing the full face and body of a child; avoid images and camera angles that may be more prone to misinterpretation or misuse than others.
- Coaches who wish to use images of young athletes for development purposes should be aware of the guidance in O-Safe and are required to comply with: consents, retention, safe storage, confidentiality, and use.

## Non-Formal accommodation

Clubs using non-formal accommodation must take care to ensure that risk assessments are carried out and risks minimised. In the event of an accident involving children, officers of the club may be held liable for their injuries or deaths.

There is additional guidance when considering trips utilising non formal accommodation settings including check lists, this can be found [here](#).