



## O–Safe: Safeguarding Children & At-Risk Adults in Orienteering

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)). 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 at-risk adults 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*.

Good practice 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

#### **1 Working with children and coaching ratios**

There must always be 2 or more adult to supervisor and work with any group.

#### **2 Finding volunteers for positions of trust**

Coaches and volunteers responsible for caring for children (training, driving, overseeing overnighting) should be interviewed, the Recruiting Policy available on the website includes guidelines for clubs.

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:
  - once per week or more, or,
  - 4 or more days in each 30-day period, or
  - any overnight supervision between 2am and 6am

The full process can be found [here](#) but if they do not meet the criteria a check is not permissible *by law*.

#### **3 Using Social Media**

Social Media Guidelines are available in the Policy Booklet; 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).

#### **4 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 at-risk adult 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 at-risk adult
- 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 at-risk adult home with another person without parental permission

#### **5 Taking of pictures and video at activities and events**

We want people to take pictures but we need to safeguard children from their images being misused.

To find a pragmatic solution cameras are categorised:

- Smartphones and small cameras that do not have zoom lenses attached
- Digital SLR cameras and compact camera systems that either have zoom lenses or to which zoom lenses can be attached; used by professional photographers as well as enthusiasts

Suspicious behaviour by a person using a smartphone camera may be the way in which we identify people that should be challenged but in general we are unlikely to be able to police such cameras.

People using Digital SLR, compact cameras with zoom capacity or video cameras should register with the event organiser. The organiser should:

- Issue any photographer with identification which must be worn at all times
- Talk with the photographer about how they will avoid taking images of children without consent; most photographers are experienced in dealing with this situation
- Inform the photographer they must not pull children away for 1 to 1 sessions without consent and a chaperone

Good practice about the use of cameras at events includes:

- Publishing notices regarding the safe use of cameras at events prominently in event programmes and at significant places at the event  
The recommended wording is: *'In line with the policies of British Orienteering, the organisers of this event request that any person wishing to take photos or video showing children should register their details with event volunteers before taking any such photos or videos. The event organisers reserve the right to ask people to refrain from taking photos or video and may, if such warnings are ignored, refer the matter to the police. If anybody has concerns regarding the misuse of camera equipment they should report it to an event volunteer immediately.'*
- Inform participants and carers that a photographer will be at an event
- Parents/carers must provide written, informed consent for a child's images to be taken and used
- Images using Digital SLR should only be taken by authorised, registered persons

An event volunteer must challenge any individual about whom concern has been reported regarding the misuse of camera equipment:

- Approach the person and ask who they are, do they have permission; inform them of the concern raised
- Make the person aware they should have registered with the organiser to use their equipment; advise them of the protocol
- Make the person aware that if they are seen to be doing anything untoward, 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.

Videoring as a coaching aid: a coach may use a video for coaching purposes. The coach will make sure that any children and their parents/carers have given written consent and that they understand it is part of the coaching programme.

## **6 Using images of children**

- Gain consent by asking for written permission from the people, parents/carers in the case of children to take and use their image; explain what the image will be used for; a Consent Form is the best way of achieving this
- If a child is named, avoid using their image
- If an image is used, avoid naming the child and NEVER publish personal details: email addresses, telephone numbers, addresses etc.
- Only use images of children in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use
- Ensure that any images used reflect positive aspects of children's involvement in orienteering, ie fun, enjoyment

## **7 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 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

## **8 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.

British Orienteering, November 2015.