



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). 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

Guidance for children is available on the website at www.thinkuknow.co.uk or 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

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 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.

6 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.
- 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.

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 2016.