

# O-Safe Update – New Draft Guidance

**August 2015**

This note is a summary of the new British Orienteering guidelines, which are contained in a 30 page document which can be found on the British Orienteering web site. **It is important that this summary should be used as a guide only after reading the original document.** The summary was discussed at the 2015 CLOK AGM on 13-Oct-2015.

The link to the British Orienteering guidelines is:

<https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/images/uploaded/downloads/O-Safe%202015%20discussion%20draft.pdf>

## **Good Practice**

Good practice is built around the following framework:

1. Training children to assess risk for themselves.
2. Adults working in pairs to avoid one-on-one situations with children arising.
3. Taking care when recruiting people who will work with children.
4. Checking and monitoring adults in positions of trust that have regular and frequent contact with children.
5. Adults being aware of the risks to children and understanding their responsibility to safeguard them.
6. Reporting concerns – not investigating them any more than is necessary to confirm whether a concern exists.

How can we translate this into action?

1. Adopting and complying with British Orienteering Safeguarding Policy & Procedures.
2. Promoting the policy to all members and parents.
3. Treating all children equally, with respect and dignity.
4. Making orienteering fun and enjoyable.
5. Building relationships based on mutual trust which empower children to share in the decision-making process.
6. Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment; i.e. no secrets).
7. Always putting the safety and wellbeing of children first, before winning or achieving goals.
8. Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance from participants (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them unless they are from the same family). In some cases it may be a serious breach of the British Orienteering Code of Ethics and Conduct, unlawful, or both.
9. Ensuring any form of physical contact is provided openly and only when absolutely necessary; for instance when a child requires physical contact for personal safety reasons.
10. Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance.
11. Ensuring parents/teachers/coaches/instructors/officials work in pairs if groups have to be supervised.

12. Ensuring that if mixed groups of children or adults at risk are taken away, they are accompanied by a male and female member of staff.
13. Ensuring that at competitions or residential events, adults do not enter children's rooms/tents or invite children into their rooms/tents. If an adult is working in a supervisory capacity, he or she should only enter the children's rooms/tents when accompanied by another adult.
14. Being an excellent role model. This includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children and promoting a healthy diet.
15. Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
16. Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children. Avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing children into things against their will.
17. Securing written parental consent to act in loco parentis. Permission may be needed for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment.
18. Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs and the details of any treatment given. Where staff witness an injury this must be reported to the parents at the first opportunity.
19. Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport children in their cars.
20. If any of the following incidents occur, you should report them immediately to another colleague and make a written note of the event. Parents must be informed of the incident.
  - If you accidentally hurt a participant.
  - A child is distressed in any manner.
  - If a participant appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
  - If a participant misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

### **Adult : child 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.

4 to 8 years	2 for the first 6 children and then 1 more for every additional 6 children
9 to 12 years	2 for the first 8 children and then 1 more for every additional 8 children
13 to 18 years	2 for the first 10 children and then 1 more for every additional 10 children

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.

### **DBS Checks – Checking a person does not have a criminal record**

The law requires that people teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, or driving a vehicle to solely transport children require checking to ensure they do not have a criminal record if they are working in isolation from other adults and the contact with the child or children is:

- once a week or more, or,

- 4 or more days in each 30 day period, or
- Any overnight supervision between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m.

If the answer is 'no' to the questions then a check is not permissible. This is a considerable change to the situation that existed previously when many people volunteering in orienteering were checked; that situation is no longer lawful.

### **Social media – Guidance for members, volunteers and coaches**

The following guidance will help to protect your privacy and prevent allegations against you. We strongly advise coaches and other volunteers communicating with children and young people do not use social media. The informality of social media can lead to misunderstandings and misuse.

Good practice points for consideration include:

If you are in a position of trust with a child or young person we advise you not to accept their friend requests or communicate with them via social media.

1. If you communicate with anyone under the age of 18 make sure you have permission to do so from parents/carers and always copy another colleague, welfare officer or moderator into the message/communication.
2. Remember that any photos, video clips and comments uploaded to the internet may be there forever, even if you delete them, and they may also be viewed by people you don't expect. Make sure photos, video clips and comments are appropriate for everyone to view and seek the relevant permissions.
3. Don't comment on the performance (either positive or negative) of any athletes you coach.
4. 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).

There is specific guidance for clubs using Facebook.

### **Poor practices and practices to be avoided**

Poor practice is where an adult's or another child's behaviour is inappropriate and may cause concern. Poor practice includes any behaviour which contravenes the British Orienteering Code of Ethics and Conduct, infringes an individual's rights, or is a failure to fulfil the standard of care expected. Poor practice is unacceptable in orienteering and will be treated seriously. A variety of actions may be taken to remedy the poor practice. These may include requiring the individual to be trained, placing with a mentor, banning them from practicing, etc. The two following rules should be adhered to except in cases of emergencies:

1. Never spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
2. Never take children to your home or into your car where they will be alone with you.

Situations may arise where these rules must be broken. This should only be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge at the club or the child's parents.

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horse play.
- Share a room (1 to 1) with a child unless they are a member of your family.
- Travel in a situation that puts you in a 1 to 1 position with a child or adult at risk.

- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults that they can do for themselves. Only trained carers may do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or disabled; at no time should a coach or volunteer do such things.
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at home unsupervised.