

# Supervision requirements for children and young people

Supervision requirements and additional  
considerations for clubs, coaches, leaders and  
activators



COACHING AND EDUCATION





## INTRODUCTION

British Triathlon is dedicated to expanding the ways in which swim, bike, run is offered and making it accessible to more children and young people than ever before.

Our primary focus is to create an enjoyable and safe experience for all children and young people, emphasising the importance of their wellbeing. This involves minimising the risk of injury or illness during participation and implementing robust safeguarding practices to ensure the protection of everyone involved.

To support this, British Triathlon is introducing supervision requirements for clubs, coaches, leaders and activators when delivering to children and young people. These requirements must be implemented and adhered to by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024.

All affiliated clubs, coaches, leaders and activators who are sanctioned by British Triathlon to coach or lead must adhere to the requirements set out in this document. British Triathlon accepts no responsibility if an unsanctioned coach, leader or activator who doesn't hold a valid Home Nation membership or an unaffiliated club chooses to operate using this guidance.

This document should be regarded as a supplement to the following documents:

- [British Triathlon Coaching Guidelines](#)
- [Guidelines for Leading Swims, Rides and Runs](#)
- Relevant Home Nation Open Water Swimming Guidance

Further support is available by contacting [coaching@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:coaching@britishtriathlon.org)



## SECTION 1 - Overriding principles

Whilst detailed guidelines are provided within this document for provision of coaching and leading for children and young people, some overriding principles are outlined below:

- We must prioritise our focus on providing positive experiences for all children and young people in our sport.
- Children and young people are considered to be anyone under 18 years old on the day of participation.
- The minimum age for participation in any swim, bike, run, or triathlon activity is 6 years old on the day of participation.
- Coaches must only coach activities appropriate to their level of qualification and must comply with specified maximum coach to participant ratios outlined in the [British Triathlon Coaching Guidelines](#) and the supervision ratios in this document.
- Leaders and activators must only lead activities appropriate to their level of qualification and must comply with specified maximum leader/activator to participant ratios outlined in the [Guidelines for Leading Swims, Rides and Runs](#) and the supervision ratios in this document.
- All sessions and activities for children and young people in a club setting must be coached by a sanctioned British Triathlon coach or single discipline coach or led by a SBR/Triathlon Leader.
- All coaches delivering activities for children and young people must comply with the [British Triathlon Coach Safeguarding Standards](#).
- All leaders and activators delivering activities for children and young people must comply with the [British Triathlon Safeguarding Standards for Leaders and Activators](#).



## SECTION 2 - Supervision requirements

Supervision requirements in this guidance document are based upon the [National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children \(NSPCC\) for appropriate levels of supervision of children and young people's sport and activities.](#)

### Coaches, leaders and activators

When coaching and leading to children and young people, **there must always be a minimum of 2 adults present** with at least 1 being a British Triathlon sanctioned coach or single discipline coach or SBR/Triathlon Leader and the other holding a minimum qualification level of SBR/Triathlon Leader. This practice serves several purposes:

- **Emergency Response:** In the event of an emergency, having 2 adults present allows for a more effective and coordinated response. One adult can stay with the children and young people and manage the situation, while the other can go for help or address the emergency directly.
- **Supervision and Accountability:** Having 2 adults present reduces the risk of any inappropriate behaviour or misconduct. It provides a system of checks and balances, as each adult can observe and monitor the other's interactions with the children and young people, preventing any potential misconduct or allegations.
- **Allegation Prevention:** 1 to 1 contact between an adult and a child or young person can sometimes lead to misunderstandings or false allegations. Having 2 adults present can mitigate this risk, as there are always witnesses to interactions, reducing the likelihood of false accusations.
- **Support and Collaboration:** 2 adults can provide support to each other and collaborate in managing the group. They can share responsibilities within the remit of their roles and ensure that the needs of all children and young people are met.

### Parent/carer supervision

Depending on the age of the child or young person and the activity that are taking part in, parent/carer supervision may be required or recommended. The requirement for each age group and activity setting is outlined in Table 1.

Where parent/carer supervision is required or recommended, the maximum parent/carer to child ratio is 1:2 meaning that 1 parent/carer can be supervise up to a maximum of 2 children.



## Permitted activities, supervision ratios and requirements, and length of session recommendations

Table 1 – permitted activities, supervision ratios and requirements, and length of session recommendations

Age	Activity settings	Minimum adult:maximum child supervision ratio	Parent/carer supervision requirement	Recommended maximum length of session (including warm up and cool down)
6 – 7 years	Pool swim	2:12	Yes, line of sight	60 minutes
	Open-water swim	2:12	Yes, 1:1 supervision in water	30 minutes
	Closed setting bike	2:12	Yes, line of sight	60 minutes
	Closed setting run	2:12	Yes, line of sight	45 minutes
8 – 12 years	Pool swim	2:16	Recommended	90 minutes
	Open-water swim	2:16	Yes, line of sight	45 minutes
	Traffic-free setting bike	2:16	Recommended	2 hours
	Traffic-free setting run	2:16	Recommended	60 minutes
13 – 14 years	Pool swim	2:20	Not required	90 minutes
	Open-water swim	2:20	Recommended	60 minutes
	Traffic-free setting bike	2:20	Not required	2 hours
	Traffic-free setting run	2:20	Not required	60 minutes
15 – 18 years	Pool swim	2:20	Not required	No maximum
	Open-water swim	2:20	Not required	No maximum
	Traffic-free setting bike	2:20	Not required	No maximum
	Open-road bike	2:20	Not required	No maximum
	Traffic-free setting run	2:20	Not required	No maximum
	Open-setting run	2:20	Not required	No maximum

**Please note:**

- **There should always be a minimum of 2 adults present** when delivering a session to children and young people.
- All additional adults supervising the activity must hold a minimum of an Activator or SBR/Triathlon Leader qualification. The qualification of the additional adult(s) can be taken into account to increase the ratios where necessary. An example of this is shown in the scenarios on page 6.
- A parent/carer may also serve as the additional supervising adult, provided they possess the necessary qualifications and meet the requirements outlined in this document.
- Children and young people with significant training histories may, with the direction of a Club Head Coach, take part in longer sessions – please refer to Section 3 of this document.



## Participant ages

Ages shown for club sessions and coached activities are based upon the child or young person's age on the day of participation.

Where an activity is being delivered to a mixed age group of children and young people, the guidance for the youngest participant in the group should be followed. For example, if an 11 year old takes part alongside a group of 13 year olds, the guidance for 8-12 year olds must be complied with.

## Example scenarios

As stated in the [British Triathlon Coaching Guidelines](#) and [Guidelines for Leading Swims, Rides and Runs](#) coaches, leaders and activators must only coach or lead activities appropriate to their level of qualification – it is the club, coach and leaders' responsibility to ensure whoever is delivering the session has the correct level of qualification for the group they are delivering to and the activity they are delivering.

### Scenario 1 - 'I am a Group Coach delivering to 16 children aged 9 years old doing a 60 minute swim session in a pool.'

- **Coaching ratio** - 1:20 as per the [British Triathlon Coaching Guidelines](#).
- **Supervision ratio** - 2:16 as per Table 1.
- **Requirement for this scenario** - a minimum of 2 qualified adults present. 1 Group Coach + 1 adult Activator or SBR/Triathlon Leader or higher qualified coach.
- **Parent/carer supervision** is recommended as per Table 1.

### Scenario 2 - A group of 10 children aged 14-16 are taking part in 45 minute coached run session.

- **Coaching ratio** – Please refer to the [British Triathlon Coaching Guidelines](#) for the coach:participant ratio relevant to your qualification.
- **Supervision ratio** – 2:20 ratio as per Table 1.
- **Requirement for this scenario** – a minimum of 2 qualified adults present with at least 1 being an appropriately qualified British Triathlon sanctioned coach and the other holding a minimum qualification level of Activator/SBR/Triathlon Leader.
- **Parent/carer supervision** is not required.

### Scenario 3 - 'I am a 20 year old SBR/Triathlon Leader. Can I lead a run for group of 6 children aged 8-14?'

- **Leader ratio** – 1:8 as per the [Guidelines for Leading Swims, Rides and Runs](#).
- **Supervision ratio** - 2:16 ratio as per Table 1 (using the ratio set for the youngest participant).
- **Requirement for this scenario** – a minimum of 2 qualified adults are required. 1 SBR/Triathlon Leader may lead up to 8 children with another adult Activator/SBR/Triathlon Leader or higher qualified coach.
- **Parent/carer supervision** is recommended for the 8-12 year olds and not required for the 13-14 year olds.



**Scenario 4 - 'I am a parent of a 7 year old who is taking part in a pool swim session. Do I need to stay and watch?'**

- **Parent/carer supervision** is required and line of sight must be maintained as per Table 1.

**Scenario 5 - 'I am a parent of a 9 year old who is taking part in an open water swim session with 6 other 9 year olds. I have completed the SBR Leader qualification and Safeguarding and Protecting Children Course. I have a DBS and Home Nation membership. Can I support the Group Coach and be the additional adult supervising the session as well as still maintaining my role as a parent supervising my child?'**

- Yes, as you are a SBR Leader, you can support the Group Coach as the additional adult supervising the session.
- **Parent/carer supervision** is required as per Table 1.
- You can perform both roles set out above.

**Scenario 6 – 'I qualified as a Community Activator in February 2023. Can I be the additional adult supervising the session or do I need to complete the new SBR Leader course?'**

- Yes, providing you have completed your Safeguarding and Protecting Children Course, have a DBS/PVG and Home Nation membership, you can be the additional adult supervising the session.

**Scenario 7 – 'I am a parent of 2 children aged 6 and 7 years old who are both taking part in the same session. Can I supervise both children or will I need an additional adult with me?'**

- Yes, you can supervise both children.
- Where parent/carer supervision is required or recommended, the maximum parent/carer to child ratio is 1:2 meaning that 1 parent/carer can be supervise up to a maximum of 2 children.

**Scenario 8 – 'I am a 14 year old SBR Leader. Can I support a 19 year old SBR Leader to ensure they meet the supervision requirements?'**

- No. The supervision requirements state that there must be a minimum of 2 adults present when delivering to children and young people. You are, however, able to assist 2 adult SBR/Triathlon Leaders.



## SECTION 3 - Additional Considerations

### Overtraining

Care must be taken to ensure that children and young people are not placed at risk through overtraining. Overtraining is a chronic condition that can be caused by a training and/or racing overload and/or by not having enough recovery through a sustained period (under-recovered). As children and young people in triathlon can be training and competing in multiple sports, they are more susceptible to overtraining than most single discipline athletes.

Common signs of overtraining can include some or all of the following:

- no improvement or a dip in training/racing performance.
- being abnormally tired.
- feeling heavy armed and/or legged for a long period.
- lethargy or a lack of motivation to train or race.
- experiencing persistent or recurring illnesses that are challenging to overcome.
- an overuse injury.
- poor sleep.

To protect against overtraining, coaches must consider the following:

- The time limits included within Table 1 of this guidance, are the maximum time recommended for each activity within a 24-hour period and should be adhered to in all cases, unless the child or young person concerned has a significant training history in one or more of the single disciplines.
- Athletes current training loads, for example, the frequency and length of sessions they are doing in other sports/activities and in school PE lessons, which may vary through the year and adjust sessions/activities accordingly.
- Children and young people with significant training histories<sup>1</sup> may, with the direction of a Club Head Coach, take part in more than one session per day in a single discipline, almost always swimming. If this happens, consideration must be given to the intensity and duration of both sessions as well as the recovery processes that surround them. It is not recommended for children and young people outside of the Performance Pathway to run or ride twice in one day.
- For children and young people aged 8 and over, regular club nights can combine up to two sessions<sup>2</sup>. When this happens, coaches must consider the length of each session and the break between them. In their consideration they should account for the age, stage of development and the training history of all participants while balancing that against the session content before deciding on the appropriate length of each session.
- In the case of 'one off' club (school) holiday activity days athletes may take part in more than two sessions. On such days all the considerations detailed in the above point should be thought through in deciding appropriate session/activity length and breaks between, as well as communicating sufficient rest is taken in the days directly before and after and that good recovery processes (e.g., nutrition/hydration breaks) are in place throughout the day.

<sup>1</sup>A significant training history is varied; an example would be a swimmer with more than 2 years of training and a consistent weekly volume in the region of 5 hours.

<sup>2</sup>One session can include two or three disciplines e.g., a bike session can include some short runs (off the bike) as long as the maximum session length for that discipline is not extended.







## CONTACT US



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