

## Guidance on appropriate levels of supervision during athletics and running activities

When working with groups of children, young people and adult participants, there must be enough coaches, leaders and other suitable volunteers\* to provide the appropriate level of supervision. Supervision ratios can sometimes be difficult to determine. As a coach or leader, your responsibilities are to ensure you have enough suitable volunteers to ensure participants are safe, and that the session can be delivered in a safe and enjoyable environment.

*\*UKA Coaches and Leaders have been deemed competent to deliver athletic activities within the terms of their Coach Licence and should be the starting point for any supervision risk assessment. It is recognised that there may be occasion when the presence of enough coaches or leaders to fulfil supervision ratios may not be possible and in these cases a suitable volunteer to support the coach or leader could be a solution. What determines a suitable volunteer will vary depending on the nature of the activity being undertaken, the environment, the experience of the group and coach / leader and the ability of the participants. In all cases Licenced volunteers should have a UKA DBS/Access NI/PVG as applicable, Safeguarding Training and First Aid Awareness Training as a minimum and un-licenced volunteers should complete the relevant HCAF self-declaration form.*

We have put together some information below to help you make an informed decision.

### **Section 1 -Supervision**

Supervision levels and nature of that supervision will depend on a number of things:

- Age
- Gender
- Behaviour
- Ability of group and any reasonable adjustments that are required
- Any special needs
- The nature and duration of the session activities
- The competence and experience of volunteers involved
- The maturation levels and experience of the athletes being coached
- The location of the session
- Equipment type, complexity required for the session
- Experience of the Coach / Leader

Carry out a risk assessment of the activities you are planning, taking these things into account. This will help you to make a decision about the number of volunteers and the nature of their experience required for the session to remain safe, fun and promote learning.

### **Section 2 - Coaches and volunteers**

Coaches and Leaders (LiRF) need to have:

- A UKA Licence for coaching activities (see [Qualifications Defined](#))

Coaches and volunteers need to have:

- An understanding of their responsibilities to keep children, young people & adults safe and what to do if they have concerns about a child or vulnerable adults well-being (see [UKA Safeguarding Adults Policy](#) & [UKA Safeguarding Children Policy](#) for more

information)

- An understanding of the [UKA Codes of Conduct](#) and [Code of Practice](#)

NB – parents who attend activities with their children, can be used to supervise activities under circumstances where they have been specifically recruited to that role based on the guidance above and have the necessary relevant police checks and safeguarding training, or self-declaration where appropriate ( see [UKA Welfare and Safeguarding](#) for more information)

### **Section 3 - recommended supervision ratios when delivering athletics activities to children**

There are no specific guidelines on adult to child ratios for organisations that are not in the education or early years sectors. We have taken these guidelines from the NSPCC Best Practice Guidance and we recommend that you use these as a minimum guide, whilst considering the supervision guidance in section 1.

8-12 years; 1 suitable volunteer to 8 children (**with at least 1 UKA Licenced Coach present**)

13-18 years; 1 suitable volunteer to 10 children (**with at least 1 UKA Licenced Coach present**)

Based on the nature of the activity and ability of the children, you may need more than this minimum. We recommend 2 suitable volunteers should be present for all sessions involving children.

For more information please visit: [NSPCC - Recommended Ratios](#)

### **Section 4 – Toilet ratios**

If the group has boys and girls who require supervision to the toilet, there should be a male and female adult supervising these visits.

Best practice is to encourage the children to take toilet breaks at the same time or in groups so that this can be supervised by one suitable volunteer, leaving the other with the rest of the group.

### **Section 5 – Recommended supervision ratios in sessions involving people who are 18+**

The recommended ratio is 1 suitable volunteer to 10 participants. UKA recommend a qualified leader or coach should always be involved or oversee activities. There may be occasion when a lower ratio than this should be applied; for example, activities with a higher level of risk such as fell or mountain running. Refer to section one for considerations when planning suitable supervision ratios.

### **Section 6 – Club social runs**

UKA recommends that club social runs are supervised as per section 5. In instances, where other club officers' sanction social (non- training) runs then the following risk assessment should be used as guidance. [Example Risk Assessment \(document 4\)](#)

Any questions, please contact [coachdevelopment@uka.org.uk](mailto:coachdevelopment@uka.org.uk)