

Guidance on Staffing/Supervision Ratios for Children/Young People's Activities

1. Purpose of Document

It is important to ensure that, in planning and running sports activities for children and young people, consideration is given to providing an appropriate staffing/supervision ratio of adults to participants. This will minimise any risks to participants, enhance the benefits they draw from the activity, reassure carers, and provide some protection for those responsible for providing the activity in the event of any concerns or incidents arising.

Every situation is different and there is “no one size fits all” guidance, but the following should always apply:

- It is the responsibility of those commissioning, planning or providing sessions/activities to ensure that those running the activity are suitable to do so i.e.
 - Have had a recent criminal record check or consent to the organisation checking them
 - Have insurance appropriate to their activity
 - Have codes of practice
 - Have appropriate qualification for their activity
 - Have an understanding of their responsibility to safeguard children
- A minimum of two adults should be present. This ensures at least basic cover in the event of an incident happening which requires the attention of one of the adults – i.e. an accident to a participant or coach
- A risk assessment should always be undertaken to consider the supervision ratios and other factors. This should include
 - Age of children
 - Additional supervision/support needs of some or all participants (for example due to disability)
 - Competence/experience of participants for the specific activity
 - Nature of activity (for example climbing or swimming sessions may require higher levels of supervision than an aerobics class)
 - Nature of venue (whether closed and exclusive, or open and accessible to members of the public)
- British Fencing recommend a minimum of one coach per 12 participants. This should be taken as a minimum and not standard provision.

All British Fencing registered coaches have to be a minimum of 18 before they can be registered, but there is no minimum age for referees. It is important that where young people are being deployed as assistants or in an official capacity that this should be done to develop their sense of responsibility and belonging, and consideration should be given to the age of the group that they are allocated to. They should not take full responsibility for managing a group. Under18's who have attended the coaching course can only supplement the adult coaches supervising the activity. Whatever their capacity they should be supervised and supported.

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1.1 Recommended Minimum Supervision Ratios

British Fencing recommend a minimum one coach per 12 fencers, however the risk assessment may well indicate the need for an enhanced level of supervision and staffing for a particular activity. Consideration should be given to the following table that shows recommended adult to child ratios. These are based on Ofsted guidelines and would be suitable for most organisations working with children and young people.

Child's age	No of children / adult
0- 2	3
2-3	4
4-8	6
9-12	8
13-18	10

1.2 Parents and Carers

Although the CPSU encourages parents/carers to accompany children to activities, we do not recommend those planning or providing activities include carers in supervision calculations, unless the carers/parents are acting in a formal volunteering or other capacity during the activity. In these circumstances, this should mean that those parents/carers meet all appropriate requirements in terms of:

- appropriate checks
- clarity about their role
- who has overall responsibility for the group
- what is acceptable practice