

Safeguarding Children in shared/non-formal accommodation sleeping arrangements



British Orienteering regards the safeguarding and welfare of children to be of paramount importance and is committed to taking all reasonable steps to provide a safe environment for them to participate in orienteering activities held under the auspices of British Orienteering and its partners.

Scope and context

These guidelines should not be regarded as definitive. They are intended to help orienteering clubs to understand the basic requirements of the child safeguarding legislation in relation to using non-formal accommodation such as village halls.

This document must be read in conjunction with the **O-Safe documents**:

- British Orienteering Child Safeguarding Policy
- British Orienteering Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy (To be published shortly)

All individuals involved in the provision of sport and recreational activities for children have a duty of care. All children have a right of protection and in particular the needs of disabled children must be taken into account. Clubs using non-formal accommodation must take care to ensure that risk assessments are carried out and risks minimised. In the event of an accident involving children officers of the club may be held liable for their injuries or deaths.

Children - definition

A child is defined as a person under the age of eighteen by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Children - duty of care

When considering under 18s, it is important to make clear precisely who has a duty of care for each child and when that duty is handed from one person to another. A parent accompanying their child has a duty of care for their own child. A parent may, with agreement, pass that duty to another person.

Risk and reasonableness

There are two questions the club should ask itself –

1. What are the risks to the young people?
2. What is reasonable in these circumstances and how can we take all reasonable steps to ensure the well-being of the young people in our care?

These provide useful guidelines. It is advisable to keep a record of the questions asked and the answers given.

In loco parentis

A parent may give consent to anyone they wish to take their child to accommodation which has non-formal accommodation arrangements for example a village hall, bunk house or a Youth Hostel. This is an arrangement between the parent and the person taking the child. The person taking the child will be acting in loco parentis (literally, in the place of the parents) and this requires them to exercise a duty of care that would be provided by a reasonably prudent parent.

In these circumstances it is wise to inform both the parent(s) and the child about the nature of the activities to be undertaken and any other arrangements so that they can decide whether they are happy with these.

Supervised groups including under 18s

Safety Guidelines in orienteering state that there must always be at least 2 supervisors with any group, this is to ensure that at least one supervisor is able to oversee a group while any injury or problem is dealt with. The level of supervision should take account of:

- The age and ability of the children
- The activity being undertaken
- Children's growing independence
- Children's need for privacy
- The geography of the venue being used
- The risk assessment

Government Guidance states that when working with groups of children under 8 years of age there should be at least one supervising adult for every six children (Care Standards Act 2000).

Participants aged 17 or under must be supervised at all times and cannot be included in staffing ratios.

The risk assessment may indicate the need for an enhanced level of supervision and staffing for a particular activity.

It is also recommended that there is a designated person for safeguarding present at all times, who is identified as such to all including the children, this may be the person in charge of the group.

Whenever possible, an adult should not be alone with a child.

Children should not sleep in the same room as an adult or adults where separate facilities are available.

When both boys and girls are present there should be male and female supervising adults.

N.B. Those directly supervising young people should hold a current and valid DBS.

Pro-forma documents

The pro-forma documents provided below ([pages 4 and 5](#)) may be used by British Orienteering clubs to satisfy their obligations with regard to children staying in non-formal accommodation. Clubs may need to amend these documents to meet their particular requirements.

Children using non-formal accommodation arrangements – Points for consideration

General

The accommodation and facilities available are likely to differ from those found in homes. Children, especially young ones, may have difficulty adapting to the new environment and may not appreciate the risks. Parents or guardians should be aware of this and the potential implications for children. Carers should take note of the following:

1. General safety considerations

- There may not be any covers on electrical sockets.
- Members may walk about with hot kettles and they may not expect to encounter children.
- Members may leave hot drinks on floors or low tables.
- The standards of hygiene and cleanliness may be less than at home.
- Members manoeuvring in car parks may not expect the presence of children.
- Stairwells may be dark, uneven under foot and even slippery when wet.

2. Accommodation

The sleeping accommodation in venues could be provided by individual bunks, dormitory type accommodation or even on the floor.

In order to safeguard all members the Group Leader, should discuss with all those present how the sleeping accommodation will be arranged. It may be arranged in family groups or on a single sex basis, according to the ages of the children and the needs of the group. The Group Leader should be mindful that this guidance is about safeguarding young people but also to reduce the risk of the staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

Ultimately, if a parent or an adult who is in loco parentis is with their child, they can decide whether they are satisfied and happy with the sleeping arrangements available for the children for whom they are responsible.

Group Leaders need to bear in mind that there may well be insufficient appropriate accommodation in certain venues and that they may need to review their plans.

In all cases where adults wish to take children for whom they do not have parental responsibility to accommodation, they must get permission from the childrens' parents using the parental consent form ([see pro-forma pages 6 & 7](#)). A copy of the guidance (Safeguarding – Children in shared/non-formal accommodation sleeping arrangements) should also be given to the parent. The consent form enables parents to provide medical details in an emergency and outlines to parents the shared nature of accommodation which are non-formal such as Youth Hostel, Village Hall or Bunk houses.

Additional considerations

Identify the risks that are specific to your venue. These may include –

- Unguarded drops from hut, car park, garden, e.g. into a field.
- Free access to roads and lanes;
- Free access to water hazards;
- Free access to deep drainage ditches;

Any child protection issues should be referred to the club's Welfare Officer who will be able to provide advice and guidance.

Name*

Contact numbers –

Tel Mobile

E-mail

Overnight trips and/or travel abroad checklist

Please fully complete the checklist

Purpose of the trip

- Competition
- Training
- Social
- Other (specify)
- Combination, please state: _____

Planning

- When
- Where
- Who (staff / volunteers / participants)
- Risk assessment of activity

Communication with parents

- Destination, sport and accommodation details (address / telephone)
- Name/number of lead club/school link or team manager
- Drop off/pick up times
- Transport arrangements
- Competition details
- Kit and equipment list
- Emergency procedures, home contact
- Consent form
- Information re medical conditions (including allergies) or impairments, and medication
- Code of conduct
- Safeguarding arrangements (reporting concerns, supervision etc.)
- Process for parent contacting coach or young person
- Process for young person contacting parent

Transport

- Drop off/pick up times
- Journey times and stopping points
- Supervision
- Suitability and accessibility
- Drivers checked
- Insurance

Accommodation

- Type (hotel, hostel, hosting, camping etc.)
- Pre-event visit and risk assessment made
- Catering, special diets, food allergies
- Suitability for group, including accessibility
- Room lists
- Supervising adults' sleeping arrangements

Preparing athletes

- Local culture, language
- Expectations on dress and behaviour
- Food and drink
- Currency
- Telephones
- Maps of area
- Safe sport away information

Supervision and staffing

- Ratio of staff to athletes
- Male/female
- Cover for all in-sport and free time periods
- Specialist carers
- Clear responsibilities

Documentation

- Travel tickets
- Passports, visas
- Check non EU nationals
- Accommodation and travel booking documents

Insurance

- Liability
- Accident
- Medical

Emergency procedures

- First aid
- Specific medical information available
- Access to and administration of medication
- Information on local emergency medical services, hospitals etc.
- EHIC European Health Insurance Card (replacement for E111) form completed (EU visits).
Further information: www.nhs.uk/Healthcareabroad
- Details of British embassy/consulate

Costs and cash

- For travel
- Payment schedule – deposit, staged payment
- Extra meals, refreshments
- Spending money
- Security

Arrival

- Check rooms, meal times, phones, valuables
- Check sporting venues
- Collect in money, valuables

- Information on medications
- Arrange group meetings
- Confirm procedures with staff
- Rules(e.g. curfews)