

Code of practice

Supporting schools to deliver out-of-hours (on-site) sporting activities involving adults other than teachers

Although there is no intention to stop current practices overnight, the following considerations are essential in the planning and delivery of out-of-hours (on-site) sporting activities involving adults other than teachers. It is intended that by following these guidelines, practices will be improved, risks reduced and the welfare, safety and education of pupils safeguarded in accordance with Every Child Matters.

Is there sufficient demand for the activity?

Are there adequate facilities and equipment within the school?

- National governing bodies can advise on the size and specification of equipment suitable for the age and ability level of pupils
- For details of national governing bodies of sport, visit www.sportengland.org
- For details of sports equipment available on loan from Medway Council's Youth Service, phone 01634 338765

Will a teacher be delivering the activity or supervising adults other than teachers (e.g. school support staff, paid coaches or volunteers) who work in schools with the permission of the head teacher?

In law the school governing body has a duty of care that operates for any activity in which pupils are engaged. School governing bodies and head teachers must therefore ensure that:

- Adults other than teachers are thoroughly screened prior to their deployment in school to check their qualifications, experience and suitability to work with pupils
- An appropriate level of supervision is available at all times
- Parents are informed when adults other than teachers are to be used to enhance physical education programmes

Are adults other than teachers sufficiently competent to deliver activities safely?

The standards of expertise, discipline, relationships and risk management expected of all adults working with pupils need to be consistent with providing a safe working environment for any school related activity. The competence of adults other than teachers to deliver activities safely should therefore be verified through up-to-date evidence of the following:

- Appropriate national governing body coaching award
- Relevant experience
- Satisfactory references
- Satisfactory enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure certificate

It is also good practice for adults other than teachers to have undertaken:

- Child protection training
- First aid training

Adults other than teachers lacking either relevant qualifications or experience should be encouraged to work as an assistant sports coach alongside a competent member of staff whilst being provided opportunities for continuing professional development.

Although confirmation of qualifications must be provided, it may not be feasible to complete all of these recommended checks for those activities led by adults other than teachers on an occasional basis.

Consequently, to guarantee effective risk management and health and safety in these circumstances, school governing bodies and head teachers must therefore ensure that direct supervision is maintained at all times.

What level of supervision is necessary for adults other than teachers to deliver activities?

In the first instance, to ensure appropriate standards of health and safety and continuous assessment of competency, adults other than teachers must be directly supervised by teachers at all times. Subsequently, according to their competence in the following areas (i.e. relationship with pupils, knowledge of pupils, pupil management, expertise in activities and observation and analysis skills) and also the level of responsibility assigned to them, indirect (distant/remote) supervision may be appropriate. However, frequent monitoring is still essential as the teacher involved maintains overall responsibility for what is taught and for the conduct, health and well being of the pupils involved regardless of whether he/she is present.

Regardless of qualifications and experience, a minor (under 18 years of age) cannot carry the legal responsibility for a group of children and therefore should always work directly alongside a competent adult.

What is the recommended ratio of adults other than teachers to pupils?

Supervision ratios should be modified according to:

- The competence of adults other than teachers and the level of responsibility assigned to them
- The maturity, competence, intelligence, experience and behavioural/emotional characteristics of the pupils
- The nature of the activities in which pupils are involved
- National governing body guidelines

Sports Coach UK and The Child Protection in Sport Unit also recommend that the following guidelines be considered as minimum requirements for any activity:

- Children under eight years of age: One adult to eight participants (with a minimum of two adults)
- Children over eight years of age: One adult to ten participants (with a minimum of two adults)

Is the proposed activity covered by the school's insurance?

Cover in the form of public and employers liability insurance will automatically be provided if adults other than teachers deliver an activity working independently under the auspices of the school and therefore Medway Council (either as volunteers or employed on the school payroll). In these circumstances, the responsibility for ensuring effective risk management and health and safety will reside with the school.

If adults other than teachers deliver an activity working on behalf of an external organisation such as a national governing body, voluntary sports club or private business (either as volunteers or employed as contractors), they also have a responsibility for health and safety and should therefore comply with requirements for public liability insurance cover (currently this should be at least £5m).

Flowchart 1: Planning out-of-hours (on-site) sporting activities involving adults other than teachers

Flowchart 2: Delivering out-of-hours (on-site) sporting activities involving adults other than teachers