

4.4 Guidelines on Staffing/Supervision Ratios for Children/Young People

Parents will expect that when their child takes part in the BSAC club activity they will be kept safe and the training will be organised in a responsible and safe manner. It is therefore important to ensure that, in planning and running sessions 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 and provide some protection for those responsible for providing the training.

The actual requirements will depend on various factors including the age of the participant, experience of the instructor, the training to be undertaken and the venue of that training. However, a number of **key principles** that should underpin good practice that BSAC recommend are listed below:

The recommended ratio of students to instructor is:

Children under eight years old: One adult to six participants.

This is based on the government's guidance for the provision of out of school care for children under eight years old.

Children over eight years old: One adult to eight participants.

This guidance is available here page 2)

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/media/446245/supervising-childrens-sporting-activities.pdf>

*Note: Whatever the recommended ratio of adults to participants is, a **minimum of two adults should always be present**. This ensures at least basic cover in the event of something impacting on the availability of one of the adults during the activity.*

In the planning of all activities, and regardless of any other assessments that may be required (for example of equipment or for Health and Safety purposes), a risk assessment should be undertaken which specifically informs decision-making about appropriate supervision levels. This is particularly important when training is to be in venues outside of swim centres i.e. in a lake, the sea.

Key factors to assess 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
- Nature of venue (whether closed and exclusive, or open and accessible to members of the public, or in a public place)
- Whether there needs to be appropriate ratios of male and female club officers
- Ensuring adults who do not meet the criteria for vetting and barring checks are supervised at all times.

Parents and Carers

Parents/carers can be required to accompany children to activities but should not be included in the staff/supervision ratios unless the carers/parents are acting in a formal volunteering or other capacity during the activity. If that is the case those parents/carers must meet all appropriate requirements in terms of:

- clarity about their role.
- understanding who has overall responsibility for the group.
- understanding relevant good practice guidance/codes of conduct.