

Advice for the Safeguarding and Protecting of Children in Road and Multi-Terrain Races

Background

This guidance is written for race organisers and parents regarding the participation of young people being pushed or carried in road and multi-terrain races.

Responsibility

Where the parent is the participant in a race that has age limits for taking part and the child is not of competitor age range, race organisers should follow welfare guidelines and take necessary actions if they have a concern over the health or wellbeing of a child.

The race organiser has “A Duty of Care” towards the child (the responsibility of an organisation to ensure all practical steps are taken to ensure the safety of those involved in an activity organised).

Safeguarding is a legal requirement and where a child is concerned, **failure to act** is prosecutable and cause for an investigation if harm occurs. Safeguarding falls into two categories:

- To keep a child safe
- To protect from immediate danger.

Recommendations

The carrying of a child whether in a harness/papoose or manually in any race or fun run should not be permitted under any circumstances.

Participants pushing a buggy should only be allowed to take part in a race or fun following a full Risk Assessment that should take cognisance of the considerations highlighted in the section below and implement appropriate steps to mitigate against risk.

If a decision is taken based on Safeguarding concerns to not allow participation, then the reasons for this decision should be given in writing.

Considerations/Reasons for not allowing Participation

It must always be borne in mind that the child is a very young minor whose decision making regarding whether they deem it fit to participate in a race or fun run is not possible. Therefore, the parent in such situations is the responsible adult in charge of the child and must abide by any decisions made by the race organiser regarding the Safeguarding of that child.

The following points should be considered when deciding if participation can be allowed: -

- Does the parent have the physical capacity when running to keep the child safe?
- In an adult race, a minor may be required to participate by their parents when they, the child has no independent voice. Is the parent considering the child's welfare?
- The child coming to harm by either being carried or pushed where it is not possible to ensure that they would be kept secure.
- The child being manually handled at speed on unsuitable terrain (rough/bumpy surface, speed bumps, gradients, pavements with no dropped kerbs etc.) and potentially exposed to rigorous physical activity.

- The high risk of accidental hurt which may cause the parent to fall into the category of neglect through maltreatment by inflicting or failing to prevent harm for example if they tripped, caught someone else and lost balance etc.
- The risk of the child being smothered, crushed etc. due to impact from an adult.
- Competitors must ensure that their equipment is in a safe or roadworthy condition. Unsafe equipment should not be allowed to start the race. Has the buggy been checked for tread and road worthiness?

Other Considerations

Fair Play principles such as the duty to other participants who may be hindered by a buggy being pushed next to / in front of/ behind or in close proximity to them.

Support/Advice

If the race organiser feels a child is being put at unnecessary risk or ensuing immediate danger by participating in a race, then they can contact Social Services / Children's Dept at their Local Authority who can provide advice on Safeguarding concerns.

UK Athletics [Safeguarding & Protecting Children in Athletics](#)

Useful Contacts

Child Protection in Sport NSPCC 0116 234 7278

UK Sport 02072115100

Sport England 02072731551

Legislation

Children's Act 1989 and 2004

The Children Act 1995

The Protection of Children Act 1999

The Safeguarding Vulnerable (baby) Group Act 2006

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012