



Risk Assessment

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR JUNIOR MEMBERS

'This year about 10,000 children and young people will be permanently disabled as a result of an accident' (Child Accident Prevention Trust)

The evidence proves that children are particularly susceptible to harm or injury. In reaction to the above shocking statistic it is hoped that all club's ensure that formal and regular risk assessments are in place to prevent and reduce the risks of junior members being harmed or injured.

Junior Club Sessions

The risk assessment process for junior sessions should only require the same procedures as your normal risk assessment process. You must be aware that many children have a lack of fear and they do not see the danger. Therefore ALL hazards, even those which have been rated as a minimal or tolerable risk must be regarded as a priority and actions must be put in place to reduce the risks. There is a risk ratings schedule to assist in planning the action to take.

It is unlikely that risk assessment is a new process to any club or coach, as informal risk assessment takes place at every session. All coaches and club helpers automatically assess the risks before and during their sessions. For example the coach arrives at the site early to set up the session and carry out a visual inspection to check for any unsafe conditions, any sign of damage to the equipment or facility which may cause a hazard.

It is recommended that all coaches continue to do their informal risk assessment, but this should also be backed up by a regular formal, written report.

The risk assessment should look for and correct any problem which may cause injury or harm, depending on the nature of the setting, resulting from:

Breakages, weather damage or vandalism

Rubbish or animal faeces

Inadequate cleaning

Blocked access to emergency exits or along walkways

Instability of large equipment, fences or barriers

Dirty water in playing/training areas

Non functioning of door or gate locks.

Safety Briefing for Junior Members

It is important to brief junior members on their responsibilities for protecting themselves and others against injury or harm. They should be encouraged to enjoy the sessions and enjoy new experiences without being subject to high risks. Ensure that all participants:

Wear the correct football clothing e.g. Boots and not trainers

Wear the correct protective clothing e.g. shin pads

All clothing and protective clothing fits correctly and laces are done up properly

Remove all jewellery, chewing gum etc.

Are familiar with the environment in which they are playing, point out any potential obstructions or hazards

Report any damage to equipment to the person in charge

Warm up so that they are ready for exercise

Always listen to instructions

Bring a drink with them to every session

In the sun – wear a hat, long sleeved T-shirt, high protective sun crea

STAFFING RATIOS

Through the SFA Quality Mark there are set minimum ratios for coaches/leaders to young people for coaching young people under the age of 18 years.

The following circumstances should be considered for adjusting the ratio's of children per coach:

The nature of the activities

The sex, age, attitudes, disability, behaviour and competence of the young people

The extent to which people with special needs are included within the group

The competence, experience and expertise of the coaches

The duration and nature of the travel to and from the activity

The type of venue

The weather conditions

The need to maintain a complete programme of supervision

The risk assessment for each activity – high, medium or low risk

Providers of open access activity (as defined in The Children Act 1989) should use the ratio of 1:8 as a guideline for all activities involving 4.5 to 8 year old children. Therefore the club must ensure adequate numbers of staff to organise these activities. A ratio of 1:10 is recommended for children aged 8 years plus, although the Quality Mark states a ratio of 1:20 for coaching sessions as a minimum.

In any club situation it is highly recommended that TWO ADULTS SHOULD BE PRESENT AT ALL TIMES with a group of children. This protects the children and also the coach from difficult situations or false allegations and should form part of a club's child protection procedures.

Whenever possible ensure that there is a balance of MALE AND FEMALE SUPERVISORS for all activities regardless of whether the group of children are boys, girls or mixed. For all activities at least one adult must be a qualified first aider.

The responsibility delegated to all accompanying adults (coaches, instructors, leaders or helpers) should be clearly understood by all, including the children under their care. Thorough briefings for accompanying adults are vital. When a volunteer assumes the role of coach it is essential that he/she is appropriately approved for the activity and relevant insurance's are in place.

People with special needs

The safety of people with special needs requires more consideration and planning, as what may be a low risk activity for most individuals, could be a high risk activity for those with special needs.

Attention should be given to:

Access to the site and its facilities

Security Arrangements

Medical needs

Additional support staff and carers

Dietary requirements

Emergency procedures and specialist advice in an emergency

GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH AN INCIDENT/ACCIDENT

Step-By-Step Advice for Club Members

1. Stay calm but act swiftly and observe the situation.
2. Is there danger of further injuries?
3. Listen to what the injured person is saying.
4. Alert the first aider who should take appropriate action for minor injuries.
5. In the event of an injury requiring specialist treatment, call the emergency services.
6. Deal with the rest of the group and ensure that they are adequately supervised.
7. Do not move someone with major injuries.
8. Wait for the emergency medics.
9. Contact the injured person's parent/carer.
10. Complete an incident/accident report form.