



Adult to Child Ratios and Supervision Guidance for Squash Activities

Introduction

Sports and activity groups need to have enough suitable adults present to safely supervise all the children and young people in attendance. This is part of a club's legal duty of care, and it also helps to maximise the safety, wellbeing and effective coaching of young participants.

A 'supervision ratio' refers to the number of suitable adults (DBS checked and safeguarding trained) required to supervise a particular number of children. Deciding the exact number of supervisors needed should be part of the planning and risk assessment process carried out for the activity.

Note: The terms 'child' and 'young person' describe any person under the age of 18. References to 'parents' are intended to include both parents and carers.

Factors Informing Supervision Ratios

We recommend carrying out a risk assessment for the specific activity, considering the following:

- the ages of the children and young people
- any additional support needs of any of the participants
- the knowledge and experience of the staff or volunteers – usually at least one supervisor trained in first aid will be needed
- the skill level and experience of participants for the specific activity
- the nature of the activity
- the type of venue – whether open to the public, other activity groups or private use
- the equipment the children may have access to
- whether there needs to be both male and female supervisors
- if the activity is being delivered using a drop-in model where attendees may not be registered beforehand
- how adults who do not meet the criteria for criminal records checks are supervised

Minimum Supervision Ratios

This table shows our recommended minimum adult-to-child supervision ratios. These ratios would be suitable for many groups working with children and young people. But, if your risk assessment shows a need for a greater level of supervision, then

follow your own risk assessment. **Remember that a minimum of 2 supervisors is always recommended, even if the number of children is low.**

Child's Age	Number of Adults	Number of Children
0-2	1 (ideally minimum of 2)	3
2-3	1 (ideally minimum of 2)	4
4-8	1 (ideally minimum of 2)	6
9-12	1 (ideally minimum of 2)	8
13-18	1 (ideally minimum of 2)	10

What Makes an Individual Suitable to Supervise Children?

Some things to look for include:

- being appropriately qualified for the role and the activity (usually at least England Squash Level 1 – Participation Coach Award and First Aid trained))
- having gone through a safer recruitment process, including criminal records checks for eligible roles (valid Enhanced DBS Certificate)
- having appropriate insurance
- willingness to comply with the Code of Conduct
- showing an understanding of their responsibility to safeguard children and young people

Young People as Supervisors

Squash provides valuable development opportunities for under 18s to get involved in coaching, volunteering, or arranging events. However, under 18s are still considered to be children when it comes to safeguarding. This means the required supervision ratio should be met using only adults, aged 18 and over. Any younger coaches should be seen as additional helpers to the adults present.

Parents as Supervisors

We encourage parents to get involved and support their children at their activities. However, parents should only be included in supervision ratios if they have a specific role during the activity. If the parent does have a formal role, consider how they will receive the information they need to carry out that role effectively, such as:

- provide a role description let them know how to report a safeguarding concern
- share what is considered acceptable practice or a code of conduct
- clarify who has overall responsibility for the group

Parents should not be left alone to supervise children unless they have undergone the safer recruitment process.

Time Between Activities

Consider how children will be supervised between their scheduled activities such as at mealtimes and downtime. This may involve organising additional activities, establishing communal areas and agreeing boundaries beforehand, these could form part of a Code of Conduct for the participants. These supervision arrangements will need to be shared with parents and young people.

Toilet Breaks and Changing Rooms

Plan ahead for toilet breaks and the level of supervision that will be needed in the changing rooms. This could be included in your initial risk assessment. Things to consider include:

- whether the public will be using the same facilities
- whether there are mixed gender groups
- the age of the children and any additional needs

You might decide to:

- have more than one suitable adult supervising changing facilities
- put a timetable in place for use of the changing rooms
- ask children to let a supervising adult know they are going to the toilet and when they have come back
- encourage small groups of children to take a comfort break at the same time
- suggest toilet breaks at regular times in the routine such as just before the session begins
- remind everyone about any acceptable behaviour agreements or Codes of Conduct and who to speak to if they have a concern