
Adult Supervision Ratios for Young Ringers' Activities

If you are planning on running an event or activity for a group of young ringers, it's important to consider the suitable supervision ratio of adult helpers to participants.

This will reduce any risks to participants, reassure parents and guardians, provide helpers to support the ringing and is good safeguarding practice.

Although it's not possible to recommend precise guidance on exactly how many people you would need to cover the wide range of ringing activities, there are some good principles to consider when planning an event.

Think about whether any adults helping to run the activity are suited to do so, for example:

- Do they have an up to date DBS certificate?
- Are they covered by insurance if appropriate?
- Are they aware of any codes of practice you have in your group?
- Do they have qualifications or suitable experience?
- Are they aware of safeguarding responsibilities when working with children?

Whatever the ratio of adults to minors is, at least two adults should be present, so that there is basic cover in the event of one person being unavailable for some reason. An example could be one adult needing to give their full attention to a young ringer who had become unwell, or who had been involved in an accident - a second adult would be needed to continue to supervise the rest of the group.

When planning an activity, it may be helpful to think in terms of risk assessment, and decide on appropriate supervision levels. Some thoughts of the kind of things to consider include:

- The age of the children who will be attending.
- Any additional support needs of particular ringers (for example due to a disability or limitation).
- The competence of participants for certain activities, for example:
 - can they handle a bell safely by themselves?
 - do they need someone to stand with them?
- The nature of the activity, for example, will they be...
 - sitting down doing a quiz?
 - ringing unfamiliar bells?
 - clambering about in a belfry
 - or simply enjoying a barbeque...?
- The nature of the venue, for example:
 - is the Church open to the public meaning strangers could come in during the activity?
 - might young ringers go off exploring if not supervised?
 - will the young ringers be in an environment that has inherent H & S risks such as a belfry tour?

Also, think about what insurance cover is in place if a participant were to have an accident, or damage something. A good example might be visiting another tower on an outing and breaking a stay - who pays? If the group leader of an outing or activity day is an ART member, they would be covered by the members' insurance policy. If not, it would be wise to ensure there is suitable liability insurance.

Parents and Guardians

Although it's fantastic if parents or guardians want to accompany their children to young ringers' events, just because they've said they'll come along, we can't count on them in terms of formal supervision, unless they have agreed to certain responsibilities on the day.

Parents who ring might just like to come along to provide steady ringing around young ringers who are learning something, without being directly responsible for supervision of ringers or running the day.

Parents who don't ring but who want to contribute as helpers and support are a big help, but clarity is needed about what their responsibilities are likely to be - are they volunteering to help with transport, or just offering to get the lunch order organised? Think about whether they would need safeguarding checks for any particular responsibilities.

Contact details

If young ringers are going to be in your care for the activity day or outing, do you have up to date contact details for their parents or guardians in the event of an emergency?