

# PENTATHLON GB<sup>+</sup>

## **GUIDANCE: COACHING BEST PRACTICE AND RULE OF TWO**

Adults coaching or otherwise working with children should not be alone with one child (under 18) unless it's unavoidable in a medical emergency.

There may be times when working on a 1 to 1 basis is necessary or appropriate to meet the needs of the individual athlete. In these cases, you must follow the "Rule of Two".

### **The Rule of Two**

The Rule of Two means that it's best practice to have at least two responsible adults present for any interactions with one child. This includes

- Dropping off and collecting child at a coaching session
- Coaching/ training sessions
- Transporting athletes to and from training or to events
- Communication with an athlete on video or phone calls, and messaging.

### **The Rule of Two exists to protect children and adults from potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring interactions are transparent.**

Maintaining appropriate boundaries like the Rule of Two when working with children demonstrates good practice; allows children and parents/carers to better recognise inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour; and limits the ability of normalising such behaviour by those motivated to abuse children.

The athlete's parent/carer may carry out the role of observer. Where this is not possible, other responsible adults may carry out the role, but they must know they are there to protect the child or young person. The child or young person needs to understand why a responsible adult is present. If an adult (who is not the parent/carer of the child) carries out this role more than once they may require a DBS check or equivalent.

### **Dropping off and collection of children at coaching sessions and the Rule of Two (See Guidance Drop and collection)**

The Rule of 2 starts as soon as the athlete arrives for the coaching session. The athlete must not be left to meet the coach alone. Either the parent/ carer accompanies the child to the session, or 2 responsible adults meet the child and parent/ carer.

The same approach is needed to collect the child from a 1 to 1 coaching session.

### **Coaching / Training Sessions and the Rule of Two**

- Is it necessary for a 1 to 1 session and does everyone involved want this; the coach, the athlete and the parent/ carer?
- Could the outcome be achieved in a group coaching session? Consider a smaller group to achieve the desired outcome?
- Is another qualified coach available to observe the session?
- Can the parent/ carer stay and observe the coaching session?

If you need further advice on coaching an under 18-year-old on a 1 to 1 basis, contact the Safeguarding and Welfare Lead.

### **Transport and Rule of Two**

Coaches, support staff, adult volunteers working in Pentathlon activities should not travel 1:1 with a child (for whom they are not a parent/carer). The Rule of Two must be followed. If the coaches, support staff, adult volunteers do need to transport children as part of Pentathlon activities they must have the appropriate vehicle insurance in place (business insurance). Transporting children will require a DBS check for the driver as it will fulfil regulated activity.

Contact [safeguarding@pentathlongb.org](mailto:safeguarding@pentathlongb.org) for information regarding DBS or PVG checks.

Remember that professional standards and boundaries are important because:

- People with motivation to harm or abuse children try to make inappropriate behaviour seem normal and may gradually violate boundaries to reduce the chance of being challenged.
- Not following the rule of two may be an attempt to erode professional standards and boundaries.
- Following the rule of two means there is always someone else to observe and question inappropriate behaviour, and it maintains safe and appropriate standards and boundaries.

### **Advice and Support**

If you are concerned the Rule of Two is not being followed, contact;

- Club Welfare Officer/ Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer
- or Pentathlon GB's Safeguarding and Welfare Lead on [safeguarding@pentathlongb.org](mailto:safeguarding@pentathlongb.org)