

PENTATHLON GB⁺

GUIDANCE: COACHING BEST PRACTICE AND RULE OF TWO

The "Rule of Two" in coaching, is a safety measure designed to protect children, young people, and coaches by ensuring that two adults are present in situations that could be perceived as potentially vulnerable or high-risk. This rule aims to create an open, observable, and safe environment for all coaching and communications.

At least two adults, preferably two coaches or one coach and one responsible adult, must be present during any interaction with child or young person group coaching. This includes coaching mixed age groups of under 18s and 18+ athletes.

The Rule of Two is helpful for coaching adults as it provides a second person to support in an emergency, such as a medical need.

Maintaining appropriate boundaries, like the Rule of Two, when working with children and young people demonstrates good practice; allows children/ young people 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 responsible adult role. Where this is not possible, other responsible adults may carry out the role, but they must know they are there to protect the children or young people. The children or young people need 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/ PVG check or equivalent.

The Rule of Two includes:

- Dropping off and collecting child/young person at a coaching session
- Coaching/ training sessions
- Transporting children/young people to and from training or to events
- Communication with a child or young person on video or phone calls, and messaging. (See Guidance on Communication).

Dropping off and collection

The Rule of 2 starts as soon as the child/young person arrives for the coaching session. They must not be left to meet the coach alone. Either the parent/ carer accompanies them to the session, or 2 responsible adults meet them and the parent/ carer. Plan and work with parents/carers on how the child/young person is handed to the coach for the coaching session and handed back to the parent/carer. (See Guidance for Drop off and collection)

Transporting Athletes

Coaches, support staff, adult volunteers working in Pentathlon activities should not travel 1:1 with a child/ young person (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. See Guidance on how to get a DBS check.

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Coaching on a 1 on 1 basis

There may be times when working on a 1 to 1 basis is necessary or appropriate to meet the needs of the individual athlete aged under 18 yrs. In these cases, you must follow the “Rule of Two”.

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](#).

Tips to support the Rule of Two

Here’s what you can do to limit the instances that put children/ young people at risk of being in vulnerable situations:

- Avoid private or one-on-one situations unless in an emergency. Leave the office door open or have the conversation in a part of the facility that’s within eye site.
- As a coach, self-identify situations that may put you or your athletes in a vulnerable situation and consider ways to avoid or alter the environment. Make this a regular practice.
- As a club or hub, if you see the Rule of Two as an obstacle, invite team members, including the athletes to brainstorm solutions.
- As a parent, you’re encouraged to play a proactive role by asking your child’s coach if their club/hub follows the Rule of Two.

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](#)

**IF YOU OR ANYONE IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM OR IN NEED OF MEDICAL ATTENTION
CALL 999**