

Cycling UK Participation Policy for Children and Young People

Cycling UK, the national cycling charity, exists to promote, protect and inspire people to cycle and to keep on cycling. We want people of all ages to cycle, on the road and off it, whatever their background, ability or income. Some groups are concerned by the prospect of having young and vulnerable people on their rides due to concerns about potential liability issues. However, activities that are well-run and supportive, and which have the best interests of the participants at heart, are unlikely to attract complaints, let alone claims.

Cycling UK has produced some supporting documents to help with any potential issues in order to minimise any such risks and these supplement the guidance in this policy. These are listed at the foot of this document.

This Participation Policy does not apply to competitive cycling, which is covered by the regulations of the relevant governing bodies, nor is it aimed at the requirements of training in cycling skills, which is covered by separate advice. It is designed to cover regular group riding activities such as: weekend leisure rides; randonnées; family rides; and so on.

Cycling UK's board of trustees has agreed that:

- Children aged 12 and under must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, or somebody acting 'in loco parentis' on rides; there is no younger age limit for accompanied children.
- Young people aged 13 and over may ride unaccompanied;
- Young people aged 17 and under should have a completed Parental Consent Form, which should be handed to the ride leader or event organiser;
- If an unaccompanied young person aged 13-17 comes on a group ride **without** a signed Parental Consent Form, then their parents/guardians must be contacted by phone. If the leader is satisfied that consent has been obtained this way, and the parents are aware of the ride details, the young person may be allowed to continue.
- The only exemption is where a young person having reached the age of 16 can prove that they are no longer living with parents or guardian and are de facto living as independent adults. This will be proven by the supply of evidence such as a rent book or utility bill with the person's current address in their name or a National Union of Students' membership card.
- The Parental Consent Form must make clear the nature and difficulty of the event so informed consent can be given. Parents and guardians must also be made aware of whether the young person is likely to ride alone or with others at any time.
- Where an activity is part of a series, such as a regular programme of group rides, a single Parental Consent Form can be given for more than one activity in the series. For example, one form can be filled in for a year of club rides, as long as the nature of the rides is clear.

- Where there is a substantial change in the programme of rides, it is important that parents are notified;
- If parents wish to accompany or meet the young person, or to spectate, explain how they may do so. This might involve agreeing to meet them at an event control, the finish or similar point, for example.
- Cycling UK's trustees have also agreed parents/guardians must make arrangements as to how the young person is to get home after the ride. Explain the normal procedure: if the group tends to break up towards the end or riders go home in ones and twos, explain this to the parents/guardians.
- If the young person is to be collected or accompanied home by a specific friend, neighbour or the ride leader, make sure this is agreed in advance.
- For activities where the young person may be likely to ride some or part of the event alone, he/she must be given a point of contact, such as a person, location or phone number, that they can use in the event that they are lost, distressed or feeling threatened. How this contact is to be made must be clear to the young person, and if the organiser is not confident that the young person has the means to make contact, then they may not be able to participate in the ride or event.
- The leader should confirm verbally with the young person and their parents the destination, duration and likely difficulty of a ride. Note that a young person should not be cajoled or encouraged on to a ride that they may not be competent to make by parent, guardian or ride leader.

The leader must be satisfied that this guidance can be fully satisfied and the young person's participation is fully supported by their parents or guardians. If contact with the child's parents cannot be made, or the leader is not satisfied that these conditions can be met, the young person should NOT be allowed to take part.

Organising events specifically for children and young people

If your group chooses to put on rides and activities **specifically** aimed at young people, this **may** fall within the scope of The Children Act 2004. Cycling UK recommends that all ride leaders and event organisers involved in such activities should:

- receive child protection awareness training;
- be familiar with the guidance in the Cycling UK Safeguarding Children Policy;
- undergo a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) or PVG check if the activity involves any kind of [regulated activity](#), for example regular teaching or coaching sessions.

Glossary

- **Young People** Cycling UK recognises that the term 'young people' includes children aged up to and including the age of 17;
- **Parents** The term 'parent' is used as a generic term to represent parents, carers and guardians, or people deemed to be acting 'in loco parentis'.

Supporting documents:

- Cycling UK Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Cycling UK Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy
- Cycling UK's Step-by-Step Guide to Reporting Safeguarding Concerns Involving Children
- Cycling UK Safeguarding Adults and Children Report Form
- Cycling UK Organisers' Liability Insurance fact sheet and FAQs