



APPENDICIES

A collection of useful information relating to
athletics





Australian Little Athletics

Appendices

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This resource has been created by Darren Wensor on behalf of Australian Little Athletics.

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Appendix 1 - Athletics Safety

The New South Wales Department of Education and Training offers schools an excellent booklet entitled “Guidelines for the Safe Conduct of Sport and Physical Activity in Schools”. The NSW Department of Education and Training has kindly given permission to reproduce parts of the “Athletics” section of this booklet and include it in this “LAPS” resource. Please contact your local department of education for guidelines available in your State/Territory.

Extract from “Guidelines for the Safe Conduct of Sport and Physical Activity in Schools” NSW Department of Education & Training Athletics

INTRODUCTION

Where considered appropriate, for example inclusion in a school sport program, parents or care givers must be informed of full details of the location, supervision to be provided and activities to be undertaken when seeking their written permission.

Students are to be instructed to use adequate sun protection, eg. an SPF15+, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen reapplied regularly and a hat when appropriate.

TEACHER/INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The teacher/instructor must have appropriate expertise and or training in the teaching/coaching in Athletics.

A teacher must be present who has recognised current training in emergency care.

SUPERVISION

- Supervision will need to be provided considering:
- age, experience and capability of the students
- the combined experience or expertise of the staff
- the activities or events to be conducted. If an adult other than a teacher is engaged for instruction or coaching, a teacher must be present to take overall responsibility. Equipment awaiting use must be supervised. Equipment not in use must be stored to prevent unauthorised use.

EQUIPMENT

All equipment must be regularly checked for safety and regularly maintained. Equipment must be appropriately sized, modified or weighted to match the ability and strength levels of the students.

Clothing should not restrict movement or hamper students in any way.

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VENUES

Running surfaces must be level and firm so as to avoid foot and ankle injuries. Avoid running on hard surfaces such as bitumen or concrete.

Sand pits must be raked and checked for foreign materials prior to the commencement of the activity. The outer edges of the pit should be level with the ground.

SAFETY

Students are to be instructed to wear sports shoes, or as appropriate, running, throwing or jumping spikes.

Warm-up and stretching are essential prior to all training and competition.

Stretching and warming up are vital elements in preventing injury and the following points should be followed when stretching to ensure maximum safety:

- warm-up prior to stretching
- stretch prior to and after work-outs
- stretch alternate muscle groups
- stretch gently and slowly
- never bounce or stretch rapidly
- stretch to the point of tension or discomfort but never pain
- do not hold the breath when stretching, breathe slowly and easily while stretching.

Any complaint of pain, tenderness, limitation of movement or disability should be promptly referred to a qualified sports medicine professional for management. Particular note should be taken of the areas of adolescent growth which are vulnerable in training and include the spine, knees and wrists.

Students are to be instructed that equipment must not be used without supervision.

The use of spikes will be limited to structured training sessions and certain competition events (zone sport associations will have restrictions on the use of spikes). Spikes must only be worn at and during the specified competition event. They are not to be worn to and from an event or between events.

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Where the use of spiked shoes is permitted, students should be instructed to take extreme care to avoid spiking injuries, especially in track events. For those events not run entirely in lanes, particular care should be taken at the start. In the 800 metre event, the lane start is recommended.

A well equipped medical kit must be readily available.

Where possible, ice should be available for the treatment of injuries.

Prevention of dehydration is essential during training and competition. Students are to be instructed to consume water prior to and during sessions.

JUMPING EVENTS

Landing and take-off areas must be maintained to avoid risk of injury to students. Equipment awaiting use must be supervised.

Equipment not in use must be properly stored to prevent unauthorised use.

Jumping events are not to be undertaken by students with a history of ankle or knee injuries.

HIGH JUMP

For high jump activities the following safety strategies must be employed:

- ensure that where the landing area consists of several mats, they are held firmly together with straps or ties and the whole area is covered with a one piece overlay.
- ensure mats are carried by handles at the side and not carried aloft on backs, shoulders or head.
- ensure run-up and take-off areas are level, dry and free from slippery material.
- specific take-off points should be identified and insisted upon to avoid landing off the mats.
- triangular bars must not be used at all. Circular fibreglass bars are recommended for competition.
- to ensure high jump bars do not carry onto the landing mats, it is recommended that looped straps are used.
- the high jump bar must be removed from the competition area when not in actual use for supervised pre-competition warm-ups and actual competition.

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The high jump uprights must be sufficiently stable to avoid falling on to the mats during the course of a jump.

High jump landing mats should:

- cover an area of approximately 3600mm x 2400mm with height from floor of 600mm.
- be linked together to avoid separation.
- have linking tabs spaced at the distance of one every 900mm.
- have a breathing fabric on the top (landing) surface which is spike resistant.
- be filled with a foam rubber or synthetic foam block with a minimum density of 18 kg/m³.

Fosbury Flop high jump technique:

When appropriate, specially selected students who display promise in lead-up activities should be chosen for development in small specialised groups conducted by teachers or coaches with specific expertise in the event.

All students engaged in the Fosbury Flop technique must be given adequate lead-up activities before advancing to the actual technique.

Gymnastic mats are unsuitable for use as materials directly landed upon by the competitor, but may be used, at a depth of 15cm, around the end/back periphery of suitable high jump bags.

LONG/TRIPLE JUMP

For long/triple jump activities the following safety strategies must be employed:

- rake landing pits before any jumping takes place. Any solid or sharp objects must be removed.
- ensure the take-off board is clearly visible (and preferably painted white), flat and level with the ground surface.
- Steel or wooden markers are not to be used to note distances either adjacent to or in the landing pit. Coloured strips of a flat flexible material are suggested to indicate distances achieved by participants.
- ensure the approach area is clearly defined and kept free from any obstructions.
- ensure jumping takes place from one direction only.

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- rake pit after each jump to ensure a level landing surface.
- ensure rakes, forks and shovels are not left unattended in, or beside, the jumping area.
- ensure the depth of sand is appropriate for competition in all age groups and that the depth of the sand is consistent in all areas of the pit.
- the triple jump is not recommended for students with a history of ankle or knee injuries.

THROWING EVENTS

Throwing events require the development and refinement of co-ordination, skills and techniques in order to improve performances. In addition, strength is important in these events.

Training is of a repetitive nature and thus young athletes are at risk from overuse injury to immature tissues especially in the vicinity of upper limb joints, with the lower back and knees also being areas of concern. These injuries can be avoided if young students limit or restrict their volume of throwing in each session. Most throwing should also be sub-maximal in training situations.

Due to the nature of throwing events, special attention needs to be given to supervision at training activities or competition events. To ensure maximum safety, the following strategies must be employed:

- activities must be sited away from buildings, pedestrians and other activities.
- the site must enable adequate width for group instruction, or alternatively, the number of throwers is reduced on each occasion so that:
 - all throwing takes place in one direction.
 - the safety of individuals in adjoining areas is assured.
- considering the ability level of the group, the throwing area must be of adequate length to contain the implements thrown.
- the throwing sector area, approach and launch areas must be marked with highly visible markers to prevent access by non-participants.
- the approach and launch area must be dry and free of any loose materials.
- students should walk to retrieve implements only after the all clear is given. The implement should be returned by carrying, not throwing or rolling.
- students must be given instructions as to their movements following the throw and awaiting retrieval.

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SHOT PUT

For shot put activities, the following safety strategies must be employed:

- transport shots in sturdy containers and give due consideration to limiting the total mass.
- ensure students are in line, adequately spaced, and all throwing occurs in the one direction when instructing groups in the standing throw and linear glide techniques.
- the rotational throwing technique should only be carried out by a qualified athletics instructor. For group instruction in the rotational throwing technique:
 - ensure the turn is practised with modified equipment or without a shot.
 - where the shot is to be thrown using the turn, ensure only one individual throws at a time.
 - where throwing takes place, ensure that other students are behind protective cages or barriers and well clear of the wire.
 - where a protective cage or barrier is unavailable, ensure other students are at least 10 metres behind and to the non-throwing side.

It is recommended that a specific throwing area be set aside for shot put. This will assist when repairing indentations (using sand/soil) following the period of use. This measure will reduce the risk of ankle injuries.

Protective cages or improvised barriers are recommended when using the turn (eg. fence, hockey nets).

DISCUS

For discus activities the following safety strategies must be employed:

- check discuses, and withdraw from use those with cracked rims or loose centre screws.
- for group instruction in the standing throw ensure:
 - throwers are at least 5 metres apart.
 - left-handed throwers are placed on the left hand side of the group.
 - ensure the turn is practised with modified equipment or without a discus.
 - where a discus is to be thrown using the turn, ensure that only one individual throws at a time.
 - where throwing takes place, ensure other students are behind protective cages or barriers and well clear of the protective wire.
 - where a protective cage or barrier is unavailable, ensure that other students are at least 20 metres behind and to the non-throwing side.
 - ensure discuses being returned to the throwing area are carried not rolled.

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Protective cages or improvised barriers are recommended when using the turn (eg. fence, hockey nets).

TRACK EVENTS

The track must be checked to ensure it is free from obstacles and loose objects.

Starting blocks, pegs and hammers must be removed from the track and stored in a safe place when not in use.

SPRINTS

Finishing tapes must not be used in sprint activities.

Students should run in lanes wherever possible.

Ensure students are aware of potential dangers regarding the use of spikes.

RELAYS

For relay activities the following strategies must be employed:

- for 4x100m events, instruct students to stay in their lanes during baton changes and for a safe period afterwards.
- ensure relay changeover areas are supervised at all times during competition.
- ensure all batons are made of lightweight material such as aluminium and are regulation size.

Spikes must not be worn by students when learning baton changing.

HURDLES

For hurdle activities the following safety strategies must be employed:

- ensure hurdle weights are not placed too far from the base of the upright for the height of the hurdle.
- instruct students that hurdling must take place only in the direction for which the hurdles are designed to fall.
- ensure hurdles used for training beginners and primary school students are of light-weight construction.
- ensure hurdle heights and spacings are set to facilitate learning of the correct technique.

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THE USE OF STARTING GUNS AND CAPS

Starting gun caps are sensitive explosives which have the potential to cause serious burns and impair hearing. Concerns for staff and students' safety require that all schools take care in the storage and use of starting guns and caps.

Commonly, starting guns are mechanical devices which rely on a hammer being set by the user and released by a trigger action to explode a cap. These starting guns are available through sporting goods outlets and do not require a permit or licence. Principals must ensure that the following requirements are met:

- Schools are not to use the older style guns which use a metal encased charge and require the user to have a permit under the Firearms Act, 1996. It would be rare that schools still have these guns on the premises. Any school which has such a gun should surrender it to the local police.
- When not in use, starting guns and caps are to be securely stored in a locked cupboard inaccessible to students or unauthorised persons.
- Starting caps must be kept in a rigid plastic or wooden box until ready for immediate use. The box must be clearly labeled either as "Dangerous Goods" or "Explosive Items".
- No student is to operate a starting gun or have access to a starting gun or caps.
- Starting gun caps are not to be carried in pockets or placed in situations where friction or static electricity may cause ignition.

When using a starting gun, the staff member must ensure that:

- the gun is fired at arm's length above the shoulder.
- they wear ear muffs with an SLC 80 rating of not less than 20 or ear plugs with an SLC 80 rating of not less than 25. Ear muffs are easy to fit and generally give the best protection. Adults assisting with the starting procedure are also required to wear hearing protection.
- all other persons are positioned at a safe distance from the starting gun area.
- the gun and caps are in their possession at all times and are not handled by students or unauthorised persons.
- all spent or partially spent caps are disposed of securely. Particular attention must be paid to ensuring spent or partially spent caps are placed in a secure container immediately after use.

Appendix 2 - About Little Athletics

The concept of Little Athletics was founded in Australia in Geelong Victoria in 1964.

Little Athletics is the primary provider of modified track & field events for children under the age of fifteen years. It is a volunteer based, community orientated organisation committed to developing children of all abilities by promoting positive attitudes and a healthy lifestyle through family and community involvement in athletics activities. The philosophy of the Association is best captured by its motto "Family Fun & Fitness".

FAMILY

The cornerstone of Little Athletics is extensive family involvement, both in the conduct of weekly activities and in the various administrative tasks connected with the running of all levels of the organisation. Parents are engaged in the various activities at the local centre level through to state and national levels. This active parent support of their children reinforces family relationships.

FUN

With its focus on parent participation and personal improvement, Little Athletics encourages children to enjoy sporting activity. The opportunity for developing important physical coordination and social interaction skills occurs in a supportive and friendly environment.

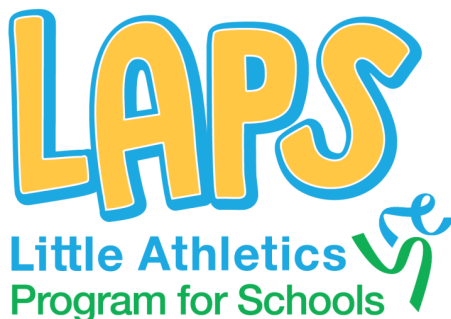
FITNESS

The emphasis on developing a healthy attitude to physical fitness at an early age is the key to developing good habits in life.

A wide range of age-appropriate running, jumping, throwing and walking events is conducted at Little Athletics Centres. Children compete with others of similar age, with an emphasis placed on participation and personal improvement, rather than winning.

Little Athletics contributes to the development of foundation skills in running, jumping and throwing that will stand children in good stead throughout their life and at the same time emphasises family values and enjoyment through personal improvement and participation.

Little Athletics Centres operate in more than 550 locations across Australia, involving approximately 90,000 young athletes.



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