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# RETURN TO TRAINING - ICE SKATING GUIDELINES

## INTRODUCTION

British Ice Skating has developed the Return to Training – Ice Skating Guidelines, working with rink managers and other Ice Sport's National Governing Bodies to produce the following guidelines for our programmes and disciplines. The documents are currently being reviewed by DCMS to support a safe return.

By following these guidelines as well as those from the government and health agencies, skaters and their families will be able to make informed decisions as to when they can return to the ice.

Rinks & clubs should appoint a COVID-19 Officer to make sure all activities on and off the ice are being adhered to.



## PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Together, we can slow the spread of COVID-19 by making a conscious effort to keep a physical distance between each other. Physical distancing is proven to be one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of illness during an outbreak. With patience and cooperation, we can all do our part.

What does physical distancing mean?

This means making changes in your everyday routines in order to minimize close contact with others, including:

- Avoid crowded places and gatherings.
- Avoid common greetings, such as handshakes, a kiss or a hug
- Keep a distance of at least 2 arms lengths (approximately 2 metres) from others.
- Here's how you can practise physical distancing:
- Greet with a wave instead of physical contact.
- Conduct virtual meetings with, skaters and parents.
- Put skates on in the car, if possible.
- Keep all personal equipment in a secure bag or leave it in the car.
- Coaches should use verbal cues when instructing students rather than physical contact.
- All warm-ups should be done outside of the building, weather permitting where possible & if safe to do so.
- Skaters should enter/exit ice at staggered times and separate entrances in accordance with the rink guidelines.
- Lesson plans should be adopted to ensure skaters and coaches are keeping a distance of at least 2 arms lengths. Utilize markers on the ice and new activities to ensure spacing is maintained.
- Discourage gathering in groups in the lobby or bathrooms.

## HYGIENE

If faced with symptoms of respiratory illness such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing, please stay at home and self-isolate. Consult a doctor or NHS and follow their instructions. Limit contact with others and avoid interaction with individuals who are ill. Proper hygiene can help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the washroom and when preparing food.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

- When coughing or sneezing: Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand.
- Dispose of any tissues you have used as soon as possible in a lined waste basket and wash your hands afterwards.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

## PROGRAMMING CONSIDERATIONS

### Planning:

- All participants should be briefed on any new policies or protocols before arriving at the venue.
- Anyone participating in the activity (athlete, volunteer, official, etc.) should proactively and regularly check their health status (including taking their temperature and monitoring for any symptoms) in advance of arriving at the venue. Anyone due to participate who is feeling ill should not come to the venue.
- Schedule sessions to allow for skaters to exit and enter with minimal overlap or contact.
- Identify, educate and train all volunteers or coaches on roles at the arena to reinforce expectations and guidelines.
- Communicate with all families the new expectations and guidelines for Return to Skating prior to first day. Revisit, as necessary.

### During sessions:

- Work with the facility operator to establish traffic flow patterns to discourage gatherings.
- skaters arrive “rink ready”.
- Warm-ups can occur outdoors in a safe area, where social distancing can be followed.
- Encourage constant movement on the ice.
- All skaters must bring their own personal items (gloves, facial tissues, water bottles, etc.)
- Utilize lanes for class/group work.
- Use verbal cues and drawings on ice to enhance learning.
- Use verbal incentives and praises.
- No hands-on assistance unless a safety issue arises. Coaches should use verbal cues when instructing students rather than physical contact.
- For team skating, consider side by side (individual) practice activities and exercises.
- Limit coach/skater contact during lessons.
- Lesson plans may be adapted to ensure skaters and coaches are practicing physical distancing.

#### Post sessions:

- Encourage people stagger their departure to clear the area for the next session.
- Suggest cool down activities to be performed at home or in an outdoor safe area, where social distancing can be followed.
- At the end of each session disinfect all equipment and surfaces.

#### Parent & Toddler Sessions / Skate Tots

- Reduced numbers on the ice (A maximum of 6 children plus accompanied adult per coach)
- Ensure the parent has capability to control themselves and the child appropriately at all times, Skate aids to be used as additional support at all times

All equipment must be fully disinfected prior and after use (this will be undertaken by rink staff)

#### Skate UK GUIDELINES

##### Linked to the operational guidelines produced by rinks.

- Coaches should NOT combine grade classes together if possible
- Maximum of 6 groups on a 60x30 m ice pad
- Coaches should use cones or water-soluble marker pens to draw out circles and guidelines for skaters to follow
- Coaches to group skater's dependent upon their skating strength
- Coaches to use helpers, assistant coaches, ice marshals etc to assist if necessary
- For Grade 1 and above if required -Use an off ice programme approximately 15 minutes prior to lesson to go through basics of walking, sitting down & getting up safely to reduce contact  
\*Go through with group on how to tie up skates correctly ensuring all skates are properly fitted before leading group to ice pad \*Use barriers and skating aids of necessary for complete beginners to reduce any falls etc
- Coaches should aim to keep the pupils moving during lesson
- Each individual rink to determine how best to subdivide/utilise the ice space dependant on the Skate UK level being taught & numbers within the group

**PLEASE USE CALCULATIONS BELOW WHEN ASSESSING ICE PAD CAPACITY FOR SKATE UK**

**ICE RINK – for Skate UK lessons, following appropriate venue risk assessments and incorporating appropriate supervision ratios the recommendation is 25sqm per skater.**

60m x 30m = 1744 sqm

**25 sqm** per person = 65 to include all coaches, supervisors, skaters, parents etc on the rink.

- MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SKATERS PER LEVEL 2 COACH - **10**.
- **GRADE 1**\*Use an off ice programme approximately 15 minutes' worth prior to lesson to go through basics of walking, sitting down & getting up safely to reduce contact \*Go through with group on how to tie up skates correctly ensuring all skates are properly fitted before leading group to ice pad \*Use barriers and skating aids of necessary for complete beginners to reduce any falls etc.
- Use hockey circles, soluble marker pens & cones to help with social distancing. When using a circle put weaker skaters on inside & stronger skaters on outside to assist social distancing.

**PATCH ICE / FIGURE SKATING ICE**

- Coaches should teach from barrier / off ice where applicable (avoid touching barrier)
- Coaches should use water soluble marker pens to draw out guidelines / meeting point for skaters to follow
- Ice surface should be re-surfaced more frequently if possible due to skaters falling, blowing of noses (into tissues) & drinking by the barriers & the risks they carry
- Suggest skaters arrive "rink ready".
- All skaters must bring their own personal items (gloves, facial tissues, water bottles, etc.)
- Use tape to mark areas where skaters can put on/take off skates, if necessary. Use open areas like outside, lobbies, hallways, spectator areas, etc
- Keep all personal equipment in a secure bag or leave it in the car.
- Limit coach/skater contact during lessons. Coaches should use verbal cues when instructing students rather than physical contact.
- All warm-ups should be done outside of the building, weather permitting where possible & if safe to do so.
- Encourage constant movement on the ice.
- NO skate harness work to be carried out during COVID restrictions under any circumstances

**PLEASE USE CALCULATIONS BELOW WHEN ASSESSING ICE PAD CAPACITY FOR PATCH / FIGURE ICE  
(Due to the nature of Patch Ice usage our recommendations for Patch sessions are 56sqm.).**

**60x30m Rink Surface 1,744 sqm**

\*Maximum 28 skaters to include all coaches per session. Due to a mixed skill set, most skaters are without a coach & programme work being carried out causing an un-controlled environment. Also, multiple disciplines training together & skaters moving in different directions, at different speeds carrying out different skills increase the risks.

**56x26m Rink Surface 1,411 sqm**

\*Maximum 20 skaters to include all coaches per session. Due to a mixed skill set, most skaters are without a coach & programme work being carried out causing an un-controlled environment. Also, multiple disciplines training together & skaters moving in different directions, at different speeds carrying out different skills increase the risks.

**Obviously, rink managers, Head Coaches, Clubs etc should only use these figures as guidelines and a maximum. Please be mindful that differing levels of skaters may require more space.**

**Club Sessions**

- It is strongly advised that each club should have a dedicated officer responsible for Covid-19 liaison, making sure that from the club's perspective they are up to date with central or local government recommendations. This person will also have a key responsibility to liaise with the rink operator and be aware of the rules and guidance set by the facility (for all facilities used by the club).
- Clubs should discuss with the rink operator any changes that may affect club access.
- When determining skater ratios clubs should consider the advice on guidance and assessing risk in the rink alongside and with collaboration with the rink operator.
- Coaches should deliver from rink side if possible and avoid touching barrier.
- Review current first aid requirements with your rink.

**60x30m Rink Surface 1,744 sqm**

\*Maximum 28 skaters including coaches per session due to a mixed skill set & programme work being carried out causing an un-controlled environment.

**56x26m Rink Surface 1,411 sqm**

\*Maximum 20 skaters including coaches per session due to a mixed skill set & programme work being carried out causing an un-controlled environment.

**\*Obviously rink managers, Head Coaches, Clubs etc should only use these figures as guidelines and a maximum. Please be mindful that levels of skaters may require more space.**

## PAIR SKATING, ICE DANCE (COUPLES) AND SYNCHRO

- Skaters must try to keep a 3-5 metre distance at all times to allow for movement errors
- **NO** touching whatsoever **UNLESS** ice dance partners live together in same household

**\*The guidance above will constantly be reviewed in line with government guidelines**

## Coaching Ratios

Coaches working with young people should not work in isolation. It is important to have the correct level of supervision from a health and safety point of view so that coaches reduce the risk of injury to skaters and ensure adequate cover remains in case of an emergency.

Good practice means at least one other adult in addition to the coach should be present at every session to supervise. The additional adults do not need to be qualified coaches if the ratio of coaches: skaters are met.

Participants aged under 18 should not be included in staffing ratios even if they have coaching qualifications. Parents/carers should also not be included in supervision ratios unless they are acting in specific role and not solely in the role of carer.

The level of supervision should take account of the:

- Ability and experience of the skaters.
- Age and any disabilities or special requirements of any of the young people.
- Activity being undertaken.
- Geography of the facilities being used (i.e. restricted access to rink or off-ice facility).
- Risk assessment of the activity and facility.

When working with groups of children under 8 years of age government guidance states clearly that there should be one supervising adult for every 6 children (Care Standards Act 2000).

When working with young people aged over 8 years old the ideal teaching/coaching ratio is one fully qualified [Level 2 or above] teacher/coach for every 15 skaters.

**However, during the current situation BIS are recommending one fully qualified [Level 2 or above] teacher/coach for every 10 skaters due to the increased risk.** If there is an accident or an incident which may mean a member of staff has to treat first aid.

Coaches should complete their own risk assessments in collaboration with the rink operators to ensure the assessments are suitable and sufficient. Risk assessments are a requirement as a coach and demonstrates good practice.

**For advice and support on any issues relating to the operation of clubs contact British Ice Skating via their website <https://www.iceskating.org.uk/>**