

Schools Festivals and Permanent Orienteering Course Template (Nottinghamshire model)

Festivals

For over 10 years the Nottinghamshire OC coaches have supported the LEA Orienteering Festivals which provides an opportunity for progression from orienteering on the school site. A net of controls (as on the map) of full sized markers on T bars (number on control = number of circle on map) in a limited area of a wood or park is used.

The format is:

- Briefing is provided in advance for the teachers who are encouraged to do some basic map setting work in school.
- Class size groups arrive at intervals with their teacher and adult helpers. 8 classes at 30 min intervals (9.30am to 1pm arrivals) or 10 classes at 20 min intervals (10am to 1pm arrivals). Each class has a 2 hour 'slot'. The day finishes at 3pm.
- Each class will have a teacher and a number of other adult helpers, including a first aider.
- Each class has a qualified orienteering coach for the first part of their 2 hours. The coach will spend approx 20-30 mins explaining setting the map and leading a map walk to the class' base for their activity time. The coach will start off the 'star' exercise and leave the teacher in charge for the rest of their allocated time.
- 2 coaches work at each festival and alternate between the classes. 1 other adult meets and greets the schools as they arrive, suggests parking spaces to the coach drivers etc.
- Each child has their own map (see separate document Acorn Woods map). The map is printed with control boxes round the edge for 'punching'. The club sells the maps to the LEA (usually 1000 at a time @ 40p per map). The LEA charges the schools a fee per pupil (£3) which covers the cost of the map and other overheads, including paying the coaches. There is a County discounted fee for children who have free school meals.
- Teachers are given suggested exercises (see separate document) from their 'base' in the progression: star, short loops and longer 'courses'. For primary pupils advice is given on courses using every decision point. Secondary teachers may be given additional suggestions (not many secondary groups attend) and for older groups (year 9 and older) a few extra controls are put out and marked on the teacher's map.
- Four different locations are used (2 wooded and 2 parkland). The same template (map walk, star, short loops or cross country courses) is used with slight variations according to each location's differing situation. At one park all classes operate from a central location, each one based at a separate picnic table. At a second park classes do a star exercise at one start then move to another start where they copy short loops from master maps.

Permanent Orienteering Course for beginners – for school or group use

- The example map (Acorn Woods) and the teachers notes could also be used as a template for a basic level permanent orienteering course which schools or other groups could use.
- The progression of map walk, star exercise and short loops follows the British Orienteering safety guidelines.
- This is deliberately quite different from the usual orienteering club designed Permanent Course with suggested 'courses' which are suitable for adults or family groups but not for the safe teaching of beginner school classes or groups.