



Berkshire Schools Virtual Cross-Country Championships 2021

Due to the current pandemic and national lockdown, we are unable to hold our usual schools Cross Country Championships. We would like to however, offer pupils of all secondary schools in Berkshire the ability to take part and compete in a virtual cross-country championship. Virtual racing allows individuals to compete against one another but in a safe way that conforms with local government's current social distancing guidelines. This event is open to all those who go to school in Berkshire and are in years 7 to 13. It is free to enter and you do not need to be a club runner or have entered before – all runners are welcome. You must make sure that you follow the rules below and follow all government guidance at the time of running to stay safe.

You are only allowed one submission of a time, but you are welcome to have several attempts in the race window. Please only submit your best time. Your run time must be validated with a hyperlink to a GPS activity file. You can use any free IOS / Android apps e.g., Strava, Garmin, MapMyRun etc. I recommend Strava (free one – you do not need to subscribe). Your run must be set to public / available for everyone to see so that it can be checked, and your result validated.

Rules:

The rules for the competition are shown below and must be adhered to, paying particular attention to the social distancing and safety:

- Permission and safety of the runner are under the conditions set by the parent or guardian. It is advised that pupils particularly those in younger year groups should run with an adult / one other member of their household. The adult should also be involved in helping to plan the run and to risk assess the route chosen.
- Social distancing guidelines **MUST** be adhered to, following local Government Guidelines at the time of running.
- Athletes must avoid popular running/walking routes or busy parks and be considerate to other people by always keeping a 2m (minimum) distance when always passing the public.
- Do not drive somewhere to run unless necessary – stay close to home.
- Runs & entries should be completed between **00:01** on first day of the competition – **Saturday 6th February & 23:59** on the last day – **Sunday 28th February 2021**.
- As this is a cross country event competitors are to find a suitable park, recreation ground, woodland, green space, public footpath, or football pitch. It is advised that the terrain is as flat as practicable. Runs must not take place on a track or road.
- All runners are to take great care whilst running off road. Please ensure suitable shoes are worn for the running surface.
- All runs must start and finish at around the same point (200m leeway for GPS errors) - either lapped or out and back.
- Lapped courses must not include laps of **less than 1km**.
- There must be no more than **10m net elevation loss**.
- Performances submitted that do not comply with the rules set out will be marked as non-scoring in the results and will not be eligible as qualifying performances.
- The running routes should be evidenced using Strava or a similar GPS tracking platform.
- Runs should be named '**Berkshire Schools Virtual XC**'.
- Athletes must make their runs **PUBLIC** (available to everyone) on their Strava profile to allow results scrutiny.

Age groups:

Under 13	Academic year 7	Born between	01.09.08 & 31.08.09
Under 15	Academic years 8/9	Born between	01.09.06 & 31.08.08
Under 17	Academic years 10/11	Born between	01.09.04 & 31.08.06
Under 19	Academic years 12/13	Born between	01.09.02 & 31.08.04

Please ensure athletes are entered in the correct age group. Be aware that school cross country age groups differ to other sports. Age is taken from their age at the end of the academic year i.e., 31st August 2021.

Race Distances:

These race distances are similar to those which athletes would have run at the actual county cross country and in guidance with ESAA.

Under 13 Girls (Year 7)	2500m	Under 13 Boys (Year 7)	3000m
Junior Girls (U15)	3000m	Junior Boys (U15)	4000m
Intermediate Girls (U17)	4000m	Intermediate Boys (U17)	5500m
Senior Girls (U19)	4000m	Senior Boys (U19)	7000m

Planning route:

Runners need to follow all relevant guidance from the government - particularly in relation to out-of-home exercise and social distancing. Runners should be encouraged to consider the time of day and period of time they exercise, carefully select their route, and apply social distancing to stay clear/give priority to pedestrians and people using public spaces. Participants should conduct their own risk assessment of their own route. They should plan an appropriate route for their run, as well as considering any other factors e.g., elevation, access restrictions, terrain and what to do in an emergency. A route should be planned on a map and ensured that the distance is accurately measured in accordance with the athlete's class. There are many free map apps available on phones, tablets, or computers. Once the route has been planned in kilometres, it is advised that it is walked in advance to check the distance and to risk assess the terrain. The participant should have a sufficient level of fitness to complete the distance to the best of their ability.

First aid:

Berkshire Schools Athletics will not be providing any first aid cover for this event. Athletes are responsible for themselves and should take care to minimise the risk of injury to themselves when running. We would advise that all runners carry with them a charged mobile phone in case of emergency and ideally run with an adult from their household – particularly in the younger age groups. If they are running on their own, they should inform someone of where they are going and to check in with them on their return. When planning the route, they should risk assess the terrain and conditions underfoot and should ensure they are appropriately dressed and have the correct footwear for the terrain / weather at the time of the run.

Results:

When you have completed your run then you will need to complete the google form: <https://forms.gle/ZhfMK7dnprUrWGfBA> to submit your results. Please complete all the questions required, making sure that you select the correct age groups. You will need to insert a URL link from Strava (or similar) so that we can validate your run / time. Please see the Strava document if you need helping to get this URL. Make sure that you submit your google form before the end of the competition for the results to count!

Results will be emailed to schools and posted on the various social media platforms of Berkshire Athletics (these are the best way to ensure you see the updates to the competition)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BerkshireSchoolsAA>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BerksSchoolsAA>

Website: <http://www.berkshireathletics.org.uk/content/schools>

If you have any issues with any aspect of this championships, please email us on berkshireschoolsaa@gmail.com

Pip Kirkby & Jill Wright

Berkshire Cross Country Secretaries.