

Poole Festival of Running **Minithons 2026**: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is there a minimum and maximum age for competing?

A: Children under 6 years old on the day of the race (7th June) can run in the Under 6 plus parent fun run which starts at 9.50am. There are four other Minithon races for older children, each covering a two year age bracket. In the Ages 12/13 race competitors cannot be over 13 on race day. Anyone 14 or over may enter the adult Relays as part of a team (closing date for Relays entries is 23rd May). The Relays follow the Minithons at 11am.

Q: What is the course like?

A: It is flat and good underfoot, being either road or tarmac path. All Minithon courses are out and back loops wholly within Poole Park. The Ages 6/7, 8/9 and 10/11 races are 1 mile in length, ages 12/13 race 1.5 miles in length and the Under 6 plus parent fun run 600m in length. They will all be well marked and marshalled and the park will be closed to vehicles for the duration of the races. Please click on the course map tab for more details.

Q: Are there water stations on the course?

A: There are no water stations around the course itself. However, water will be available at the start/finish area and competitors are encouraged to bring their own water bottles which they can refill.

Q: How much does it cost to enter?

A: Entries to the Ages 6/7, 8/9, 10/11 and 12/13 Minithon races cost £5. Entries to the Under 6 plus parent fun run are free. We ask for Under 6's to be formally entered even though there is no charge in order that we can control the number of entrants for safety's sake.

Q: Does my entry fee help support a charity?

A: Yes. A proportion of your entry fee will be donated to the Poole Hospital Charity which is part of the University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundations Trust. Money raised will be used to enhance the hospital's facilities and state of the art equipment and to support NHS staff health, wellbeing and development. We also encourage all runners and spectators to make additional donations by giving to volunteers from the charity who will be on site on the day.

Q: When will on line entries close?

A: At 9pm on Saturday 23rd May or once the maximum capacity of 75 runners per age group race is reached, whichever is earliest.

Q: Can I enter my child on the day?

A: Yes, provided that the maximum capacity of 75 runners per age group race has not been reached. Entries can be made in person on the day by visiting the admin tent in Poole Park between 7.30am and 8.30am.

Q: Can changes be made to runner details after entry?

A: Yes. Changes such as runner replacements can be made by emailing eventsupport@poolerunners.co.uk before 9pm on 3rd June. Alternatively you can visit the admin tent in Poole Park between 7.30am and 8.30am on the morning of the Minithons.

Q: Can I get a refund if I my child can't race?

A: Sorry, no. Entries are non-refundable. However, we are happy to transfer places. You should email eventsupport@poolerunners.co.uk before 9pm on 3rd June. Alternatively you can visit the admin tent in Poole Park between 7.30am and 8.30am on the morning of the Minithons.

Q: Are the races chip-timed?

A: Yes, the Ages 6/7, 8/9, 10/11 and 12/13 races are all chip-timed. The runner's number will have a chip attached to its back. The timing mats at the start/finish area will sense when your child crosses them and will record their time. The Under 6 plus parent race is a fun run and the children will not wear a number or be timed.

Q: Where should I attach my child's running number?

A: Their bib number should be pinned to the FRONT of their shirt or vest and must remain visible at all times when they are running. It should not be folded or cut. You must fill out the back of the number with your emergency contact details and any medical conditions your child may have. The Under 6 plus parent race is a fun run and the children will not wear a number.

Q: Can participants wear headphones?

A: No.

Q: Can they run with a dog?

A: No.

Q: How and when will I receive my child's race number?

A: Numbers will NOT be posted out in advance. Your child's race number will be available for collection at the Junction Sports Centre, Railway Approach, Broadstone BH18 8AX from 7.30pm until 9pm on Wednesday 3rd June or from the number collection tent on the West Field in Poole Park from 7.30am until 8.30am on the morning of the Minithons.

Q: What times do the Minithon races start?

A: Ages 6/7: 9.00am. Ages 8/9: 9.15am. Ages 10/11: 9.30am. Ages 12/13: 9.45am. Under 6 plus parent: 9.50am.

Q: Does my child need to be accompanied when they run?

A: They may run unaccompanied in the Ages 6/7, 8/9, 10/11 and 12/13 races. They must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult if they are in the Under 6 plus parent fun run.

Q: Will my child receive a medal for running?

A: Yes. Every finisher will receive a Poole Festival of Running medal, including those in the Under 6 plus parent fun run.

Q: Are prizes available for individuals and teams?

A: Prizes will be given to the first three girl and first three boy finishers in each age group race excluding the Under 6 plus parent fun run. There are no team prizes, however.

Q: When and where will prize presentations be made?

A: We aim to present prizes at 10.15am on the day of the Minithons. This presentation will take place in front of the fountain by the start/finish area.

Q: Where will I see my child's finish time?

A: Times and positions will be available on <https://www.timingmonkey.co.uk/results-list/> soon after the race finishes and will also be posted on <https://poolerunners.co.uk/events/poole-festival-of-running/>

Q: Will my child's time go onto Power of 10?

A: No. The Minithons are not accurately measured and the quoted distances are only approximate.

Q: Where can I park?

A: Poole Park will be closed to traffic on the morning of the Relays and there will be no parking in the park. There are four large car parks nearby which are detailed on the attached map. Parking at most of these can be paid for by phone and app as well as by card and cash. On street parking can be found around the park and parking restrictions should be followed.

Q: Is there somewhere to change or leave baggage?

A: There will be no changing or baggage tents.

Q: Will there be toilets on site?

A: Yes. There is a public toilet block at the top of the West Field near the entrance from Kingland Road. There will be a set of portaloos on the West Field. Public toilets can also be found at The Ark near the cricket pitch. However, the toilets at The Kitchen restaurant are only for customer use.

Q: Is it safe to run?

A: The Minithons are fully marshalled and have medical professionals on hand in case of emergency. The park will be closed to vehicles for the duration of the race. However, please remember that your child is running at their own risk and must pay attention to the marshals and the race instructions. If your child is not feeling well before the race then please don't let them run.

Q: Is the venue suitable for spectators?

A: Most definitely! Athletes and spectators are encouraged to congregate on the West Field near the start/finish area. There is a lot of space and a playground nearby to keep younger children happy. Spectators can watch the races from anywhere inside the park. However, we ask all spectators to take care not to impede the runners, especially close to the start/finish area, and to keep control of dogs and small children.

Q: Are there places to buy refreshments at the venue?

A: Yes, although there will be no food stalls set up on site. The Kitchen restaurant next to the start/finish area serves food to eat in. Next to it, Scoops take-away serves ice creams and hot and cold drinks. Over near the cricket pitch The Ark serves hot and cold food, drinks and ice creams. The centre of Poole is only a short walk away where you will find a wide range of places to buy food and drink.