

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

Q: Is there a minimum age for competing?

A: The minimum age of competitor on race day (7th June) is 14 years.

Q: What is the format of the race?

A: The race is a 4 x 5k relay. There are four runners in each team. Each runner takes their turn to run around the course in Poole Park which is approximately 5k before handing over to the next leg runner in their team.

Q: Do I need to be a fast runner to take part?

A: No. The Relays are for all abilities of runner. However, competitors must be able to complete a 5k run comfortably. There will be a cut off time of 2 hours 45 minutes for teams to complete all four legs. All fourth leg runners who have yet to start by 12.40pm (100 minutes after the start of the Relays) will be started in a group and the total team times adjusted accordingly.

Q: What is the course like?

A: It is flat and good underfoot, being either road, tarmac path or firm gravel path. Each approximately 5k leg is made up of two laps, the first taking in the cricket pitch and a clockwise loop of the boating lake and the second a clockwise loop of the same lake. It will be well marked and marshalled and the park will be closed to vehicles for the duration of the race. 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: Does each runner in my team need to make a separate entry?

A: No. You must nominate one team manager who will enter all four runners at one time using the on line system and pay the entry fee for the whole team. The team manager can be one of the leg runners.

Q: Can I run more than one leg?

A: Runners may only run one leg for their team. There must be four individual runners in a team.

Q: Does it matter which leg I run for my team?

A: The order in which the four members of your team run their legs is for you to decide amongst yourselves. However, you must make sure that you wear the correct bib number for the leg you are running: your team's number plus A for leg 1, B for leg 2, C for leg 3 and D for leg 4.

Q: How much does it cost per team and per runner?

A: Teams of England Athletics registered runners have discounted entry at £48 per team / £12 per runner. Entry for all other teams costs £56 per team / £14 per runner. Note that entry for teams with a mix of EA-registered and non-EA registered runners costs £56 per team / £14 per runner.

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 race entries close?

A: At 9pm on Saturday 23rd May or once the maximum capacity of 125 teams is reached, whichever is earliest.

Q: Can I enter on the day?

A: There will be no entries on the day.

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

A: Yes. Changes such as runner replacements and leg order changes can be made by your team manager who should email eventsupport@poolerunners.co.uk before 9pm on 3rd June. Alternatively your team manager can visit the admin tent in Poole Park between 8am and 10.30am on the morning of the Relays.

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

A: Sorry, no. Entries are non-refundable. However, we are happy to transfer places. Your team manager should email eventsupport@poolerunners.co.uk before 9pm on 3rd June. Alternatively your team manager can visit the admin tent in Poole Park between 8am and 10.30am on the morning of the Relays.

Q: Is the race chip-timed?

A: Yes. Your bib number will have a chip attached to its back. The timing mats at the start/finish area will sense when you cross them and record your time.

Q: Are batons used in the Relay?

A: No. The chip timing system will monitor when your team's first leg runner starts the race. Your team's next leg runner should then make their way into the holding pen next to the start line. When your first leg runner is nearing the finish the next leg runner will be asked to step into the start area and they will set off when their team mate crosses the finishing line. The chip timing system will sense when the next leg runner sets off. This non-contact handover will also happen for the third and fourth legs. The timing system will automatically record individual leg times and total team time.

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

A: Numbers will NOT be posted out in advance. Your team's four race numbers will be available for collection in a single envelope and cannot be collected individually. Envelopes can either be collected 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 8am until 10.30am on the morning of the Relays.

Q: Where should I attach my running number?

A: Your bib number should be pinned to the FRONT of your shirt or vest and must remain visible at all times when you 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 you may have.

Q: Can I wear headphones?

A: No.

Q: Can I run with a dog, buggy or pushchair?

A: No.

Q: What time does the race start?

A: The first leg of the Relays starts at 11am. Note that the Junior Minithons start at 9am.

Q: Will I receive a memento for running?

A: Yes. Every finisher will receive a Poole Festival of Running memento.

Q: Are prizes available for teams and individuals?

A: Yes. There are 15 team categories which are listed on the Poole Runners website. Your team manager should choose the category that applies to your team (if none apply then you may still compete but you will just not be able to win a team prize). The fastest team in each category will receive a trophy. There will also be prizes for the fastest leg run across all competitors in each of the eight age/gender categories.

Q: My team does not fit into one of the 15 team prize categories. Can we still take part?

A: Yes, but you will not be able to win a team prize.

Q: When and where will prize presentations be made?

A: We aim to present prizes to the fastest teams and fastest individual leg runners at 1pm on the day of the Relays. This presentation will take place in front of the fountain by the start/finish area.

Q: Where will I see my finish time?

A: Leg times, total team 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 leg time go onto Power of 10?

A: No. Each leg is approximately 5k but is not accurately measured. The handover process from one leg runner to the next means it is not possible to have exact and consistent distances.

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. However, there will be toilets on site where you can change. We suggest you arrange for your team mates to look after your valuables whilst you are running.

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 Relays 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 you have entered at your own risk, so pay attention to the marshals and the race instructions. If you are not feeling well before the race then please don't run. Race officials will remain at the finish until the last runner has completed the course.

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 children happy. Spectators can watch the race 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.