

# School Carnivals

**Note:** This is a general overview, every state and school operate differently. Take what is relevant for your child and or your schooling system.

Swimming, Athletics, and Cross Country are the key carnivals conducted in most schools.

School sport is an integral part of a child's development. So many great lessons can be learnt from them participating as an individual or as a team member. Students have to deal with success and disappointment and learn to work together as a team. Beyond the physical benefits of sports carnivals there is also the comradery that is formed by being part of a sporting HOUSE – the house colours, the war cries, the house mascots – this builds a feeling of team and community (and a little friendly school rivalry!!). **Overall just because your child has dwarfism does not mean they miss out on these experiences.**

Here are Kobie's Top Tips for participating in a carnival.

1. Establish a good connection with the Sports Coordinator or your child's PE teacher.
2. Identify the Strengths and Weakness of the Short Statured Student. This can be done in PE or outside sport; i.e. can they swim 25m? Can they Run 100m? Is a 1.5 kg Shot Put too heavy? Etc.
3. Keep it competitive. Nothing worse than coming last in every race and or not contributing to the house/team points. Below are some ideas on how to include the student and maximise participation.
4. Results:
  - a. **Method 1: Tied Place.** If applying one of the modifications below; i.e. shortened Cross Country Race, then Ribbons/Medals should be given if the SS Child finishes in a podium place, let's say they finish second. A second is given to the SS Student and a Second is given to the student who legitimately ran the whole course and came second. Hence a Tied Place. Still presented in front of peers or however the school normally award awards.
  - b. **Method 2: Personal Targets.** The PE Teacher/Sports Coordinator may set Targets for the SS Student based on "in class / past performances". For example Shot Put. The SS will have a Third Place Target of 2m, Second Place Target of 2.50m and First Place Target of 3m. If any standard is achieved they received the medal/ribbon plus relevant house points. However, it is important to note that the student should be challenged and winning a ribbon in every event is not always possible.

## Athletics:

Races:

Option 1: Reduce distance to run; i.e. SS Student starts at 60m mark whilst rest of peers start at 100m Mark. This should enable a closer finish.

Option 2 (If child wants to run full distance): SS Student goes on "On Your Marks" whilst rest of peers go on "Go" or something similar (traditional head start).

Throws: Decrease weight and or size of implement.

## Jumps:

Be careful of Short Statured Students Jumping. Neck stability and Spine Stability should be checked prior to allowing your child attempt Long Jump or High Jump.

Long Jump: Take off Mat is placed at edge of pit.

High Jump: Two options: 1. Traditional method, but a very low height (sometimes no bar, just jumping on thin mat) – always landing on feet! 2. Catch and throw. Student runs up to mat like traditional approach, teacher passes a 1kg or 2kg medicine ball. Student has to catch and throw ball underarm over high jump bar that students are currently jumping.

## Swimming:

If student can swim full distances, they may opt to swim with peers or go on "On Your Marks" whilst rest of peers go on "Go" or something similar (traditional head start). If the Student cannot complete the full lap, get the student to start in the water a quarter/half way down the pool. Start with other students.

## Cross Country:

Reduced distance – Usually by 50% or more. Unless Student (usually High School Aged) is happy to attempt full distance. When reducing course, make sure the SS Student Starts with Peers and Finishes with Peers.

Course is usually shortened in the middle.

Make sure they know it's ok to walk sometimes!

Hope these tips help you and your child for the upcoming year of carnivals. If you have any questions and or ideas for the next sports report topic, please don't hesitate to contact myself.

Kind Regards,

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