

CROSS COUNTRY RECOMMENDATION FOR SCHOOL CARNIVAL

Short Statured People of Australia is supportive of all Short Statured students participating in Cross Country; however, we don't believe they should run the entire course. Below are some methods we have found to work.

Prep-Year 2 (Under eight years old)

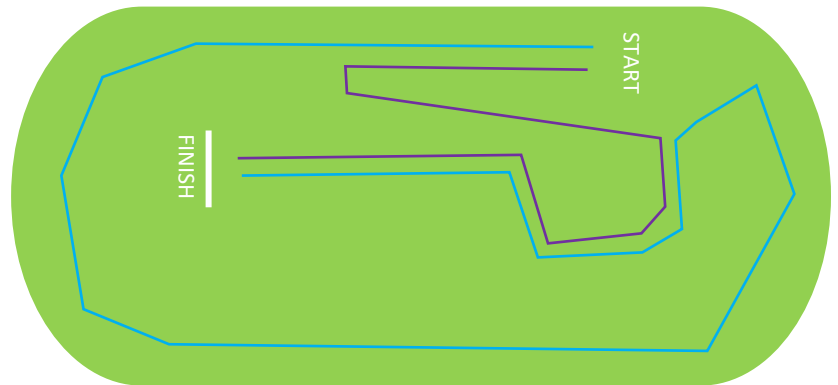
- We encourage Prep and Year 1 Short Statured Students to partake with a buddy (it can be a teacher aid, teacher, or an older student/sibling)
- Some Schools have 'obstacles included in their junior primary course. Ensure these obstacles are accessible and or set up an alternative route for the short-statured runner.

Adopt the "Start and Finish with Peers" method.

- The Start: Allow the SS student to start with peers but be mindful that the SS Student isn't accidentally knocked over by peers (an essential job for the assistant runner).
- Very shortly after the start (40m – 100m), implement the first 'Short Cut'. This short cut should be geared at cutting out the majority of the race. This part of the race is also a good chance for the student to catch their breath and walk if desired.
- The Finish: Allow the SS student to finish with peers. Timing is everything, and every short-statured student is different. Use PE time to determine the short-statured athlete running speed, fitness and maximum distance compared to peers. For example, if the short-statured person feels they need to walk after 50m after running, then make the first 'short cut' turn 50m after the start.

Visual Example:

Peers Students run 800m,
the Short Statured Student
runs 300m.



Year 3 – Year 12 (Age 9 +)

- Similar to the concept explained above, Short Statured should have a shortened course.
- The course should start with peers and encourage SS student to run the start (or jog)
- Place the first "short cut" after approx—100 m (this is so they don't feel pressured to keep up with peers. Tell the SS it is ok to stop and walk for a bit but encourage then to run the End or Home straight.
- If Peers run 2km, then SS should run/walk 600m – 1.2km. Pending on ability, fitness and mobility. The race aims to ensure the SS finishes alongside peers.

RESULTS: For School Carnival: Two methods for results

Method 1: Present a Tied Place/ equal points.

For example, in cross country, you may have the Short Statured Student-run half of what the peers run. However, they start and finish the same way. If, for example, the SS student finish second amongst the peers. 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 typically award awards.

Method 2: Personal Targets.

The PE Teacher/Sports Coordinator may set Targets for the SS Student based on “in class/past performances”. For example, the SS will have a Third Place Target of 10mins or finish top 20 against peers, Second Place Target of 8mins or Top 10 amongst peers, and First Place Target of 6m or finish top 5 against peers. If any standard is achieved, they received the medal/ribbon plus relevant house points. However, it is essential to note that the student should be challenged and winning a ribbon in every event is not always possible.

Cross Country Multi-Class Representative Pathways (District/Regionals/State)

Short Statured Athletes aged 10 + are eligible with a classification and a medical clearance. Athletes can compete at various levels, from regionals to nationals. Qualifying (as of 2020) are below:

	10 Years	11 Years	12 Years
2km	25:10.43	24:04.76	22:59.09

Whilst Representative pathways are significant; it is essential to ensure that all Short Statured athletes are doing it for the right reasons (beyond just making the team or medalling). Many young short-statured athletes complain of the leg, hip and sometimes lower back pain after running cross country. These are signs of an athlete being pushed beyond their limits – and the long term can have detrimental implications. Remember, not all cross-country courses are flat – some have uneven terrain, and some have steep inclines/declines (this adds pressure to various joints). We know first-hand how stubborn SS athletes can be and how much they love to prove people and push their limits. A good indicator of an individual’s limit; if an athlete struggles to attend a school or work a day after exercise, they have overdone it.