

## Health and Safety

Our aim is to ensure that the general conditions are safe for the conduct of P.E. and that all risks are avoided that can be reasonably foreseen.

Teachers need to be aware of safety procedures and be on the lookout for potential safety hazards at all times.

The teacher will keep the risk of accident to a minimum by ensuring that:-

1. All reasonable steps have been taken to ensure the safety of the premises and equipment.
2. The class have been taught about the need for safety in a manner appropriate to the children's age, intelligence and experience.
3. The class have been systematically prepared for the activities being undertaken and attention has been paid to footwear and clothing.
4. Teachers are aware of their children's special needs and medical conditions. Also of any drug therapy which a child is undergoing and its effect on sharpness of perception or motor control and co-ordination.

Teachers Staff should realise that:-

- Whilst it cannot be expected that all teachers should change clothing for a P.E. lesson, dress should allow for free movement. It is recommended however, that trainers/pumps should be worn - to facilitate ease of movement and to ensure personal safety.
- We all carry responsibility for safety. Where members of staff become aware of a hazard they have a duty of care to take appropriate remedial action as soon as practical to eliminate or minimise the hazard. They must report the circumstances and any action taken to management for future attention as necessary.
- At the beginning of every lesson they should carry out a risk assessment with the pupils to ensure the environment is safe for the activity with no large obstacles or small debris which might cause harm. • They must adequately supervise the activities.
- They need to be able to provide basic medical assistance in case of accident - at the very least, a knowledge of expired air resuscitation and cardiac massage.
- They need to know where the First Aid bags are kept, that they are immediately accessible and regularly restocked.

- They should use equipment only for the purpose it was intended. Do not improvise equipment. Unofficial repair or modification to physical education equipment is not allowed.
- Children should be taken through progressive stages of learning. Teach correct techniques, correct errors and ensure a thorough warm up before commencing strenuous activity.
  - They should be in a position where they can see the WHOLE class working all the time.
  - They must be aware of, and adhere to, national/LEA/school regulations concerning safety.
- After acquainting pupils with the safety regulations, as appropriate, involve them in the application. Teach the required standards and awareness - use question and answer to develop such issues as correct clothing; no jewellery; use of space; sensitivity to others. "Educate them to be a partner in their safety".
- There is a procedure for reporting any accident. In the event of an accident/incident see the Head Teacher in order to complete the required documentation immediately. It is also helpful to keep additional notes on that lesson, activity and accident. Any case involving shock or loss of consciousness, even momentarily, see parents are informed immediately and arrange to send child to hospital.
- They need to be aware of the health records of all pupils. Report any irregularities or abnormalities, to the Head Teacher for communication to parent, medical officer etc.
- They should ensure pupils take any necessary medication before/after exercise.
- They should report to the Head Teacher any potential dangers which may affect safe teaching.

### Pupils

- Children should always be in sports clothing for P.E. lessons
- They should also have suitable footwear or work with bare feet. Working bare footed allows for greater sensitivity and skill. Footwear if worn should be pliant and close fitting. Trainers with hard plastic soles give poor traction and should not be worn.
- Long hair should be tied back.
- Children should never eat or chew during a P.E. lesson.
- All jewellery and other personal effects such as watches and hard hair bands should be removed for P.E. Children are encouraged to leave all jewellery at home on PE days. Should removal of bangles conflict with acceptable cultural practices, a compromise would be to use sweatbands or sticky tape to secure the item.

- Jewellery (including earrings) can be removed by the children themselves or teachers as long as teachers have had permission from the parent/carer.
- Where earrings cannot be removed e.g. if a parent has not given permission or if a child has recently had their ears pierced, then it is the teacher's responsibility to try and enable participation by considering how, or if, the context can be made safe by amending the task, conditioning the activity or creating some other management strategy to make participation safe. Where safe participation cannot be assured then the child cannot take part in that element of the lesson:
  - Low risk - where children can work and be secure in their own personal space e.g. warming up, skills practices, observing and analysing, officiating, coaching.
  - Higher risk - is where that personal space could be compromised. This could be by other children or by equipment e.g. games activities, gymnastics where children are close to each other or where the floor/equipment could come close to the ears.

### **Students**

- A student on teaching practice should eventually be allowed to take a complete lesson, provided that the responsible teacher is present throughout, to provide direct support and supervision. Prior to the lesson the teacher should be satisfied that the student is capable and that the work to be attempted is appropriate to the age and development of the children.
- It must be remembered that the regular teacher of the class always retains the duty of care responsibility for the pupil's safety. AOTTs (Adults other than teachers) Adults other than teachers including coaches, parents, students etc. must be made aware of emergency procedures, storage of equipment, and use of large apparatus and should be familiar with the contents of this Safety Policy.

### **Facilities / Equipment**

#### **1. Small Apparatus**

- Children should be trained to look after and use the equipment carefully and safely.
- Small apparatus used during lunch/break times should be limited to the designated area.
- Children should not be allowed to help themselves to apparatus without permission. All apparatus should be returned to the correct storage facilities at the end of the lesson.

## **2. Large Apparatus**

- A specialist company checks the large gymnastic equipment annually and remedial action is taken immediately on their advice.
- Large Apparatus is stored around the sides of the hall so that the teacher does not have to lose sight of the children in their care at any time.
- Insecure or broken apparatus should be removed from the working area and clearly marked as UNFIT FOR USE. Defects should then be reported to the head teacher.
- Only apparatus that has been officially provided and approved should be used. Any improvised equipment has to be checked for suitability and stability by a P.E. adviser. Chairs should NEVER be used as P.E. equipment.
- Apparatus should be assembled and dismantled systematically. It should be checked immediately before use and should be adequately spaced out. There should be safe landing areas and these should be away from doors, radiators, windows and any other furniture. It should be adjusted to meet the needs of individuals.
- Once the apparatus is set out, children should know that they do NOT get on it or even touch it without permission.

## **3. Playground**

- Check surface of playground for any loose gravel, sharp stones or glass or any other possible dangerous objects.
- Establish zones for the apparatus and as a base for each group to work in. In the early stages Nursery/Reception children can wear coloured braids to remind them of their group.
- Encourage children not to wander into another group's area.

## **4. Hall**

- The surface of the floor should be checked. Wet patches are a hazard! Also check for broken glass, wooden splinters or staples or other dangerous objects.
- Boundaries to limit the playing area can be made using plastic markers.
- The teacher should position him/herself on the outside of the class so that he/she can see everything that is going on.

## Handling/Carrying Equipment

### **BENCHES**

Four carriers, two at either side, not facing each other to avoid bumping heads when bending down. Ideal movement is sideways, but look behind if travelling backwards.

### **MATS**

- SHOULD NEVER BE DRAGGED, Travel sideways. Lightweight mats stored on the vertical trolley may be carried by 2 pupils. The placing of mats is very important. They should be used where it is expected that the children will need to cushion deliberate landings. They should not be placed around profusely or indiscriminately as they can produce a real danger to children accidentally tripping over them and falling.
- A mat or mats may be required by inexperienced pupils in the very early stages of traversing apparatus at a height e.g. a ladder suspended across the climbing frame to the wall. Once pupils have developed sufficient shoulder strength to avoid the need to "drop down" then the mats may be dispensed with. It is sound practice to teach children to be aware of and to readjust mats which may have moved slightly in use.

### **LANKS, BEAMS, LADDERS**

Two carriers. Hands at end not sides (see illustration), where fingers can be trapped.

STOOLS /STACKING TABLES Small stools - two carriers - one either side, movement is sideways. Large stools - four carriers - two either side - movement is sideways

Remember to teach the correct method of lifting, using a straight back and bent knees.

### **ROPES, ETC.**

Four pupils, two to guide out the ropes safely, making sure they do not swing about dangerously, and one or two to move the ropes into position. The teacher must check that the ropes have moved into the correct position.

## Structured Play Activities for the Foundation Stage

- These are stored in the designated sheds by the play areas.
- Pupils should be discouraged from pushing others who are using "ride on" apparatus.
- Small climbing equipment should be stable and placed on non-slip surfaces.

- Slides should be gently inclined with a landing mat provided and should end well clear of other obstacles.
- Equipment should be checked before use. Damaged items must not be used and must be reported.

### **Pupils with Medical Conditions and SEND**

It is most important that parents declare any serious medical condition to the school. In turn, it is vitally important for all teaching staff to be in possession of all information held by the school about a pupil's medical condition.

A pupil's doctor and/or physiotherapist must be consulted before he or she takes part in P.E. Once this medical advice has been obtained then the correct programme of activity can be provided. The teacher must be aware of any medication that such children might be taking and whether there are any side effects.

### **Epilepsy**

- Before a child with epilepsy can take part in P.E. or swimming advice from parents and doctor should be sought.
- The teacher should know how to deal with an epileptic fit.
- Caution should be taken when working at high levels in Gymnastics. Low level apparatus could be provided that offers similar challenges.

### **Asthma**

- Children should be encouraged to cope with their attacks and especially to exhale in the event of an attack.
- Inhalers must be readily available.
- Prolonged strenuous exercise should be avoided.
- A thorough warm up is particularly important for asthmatics.
- Swimming is beneficial but overheated or under heated pools should be avoided.

### **Diabetes**

- The main potential danger for diabetics is when levels of sugar (glucose) in the blood fall too low during exercise.

- It is advisable to have sources of extra carbohydrate available, such as bite - size chocolate bars.

### **Cerebral Palsy**

- The child's physiotherapist must be consulted. Care must be taken to avoid any injury that may result from lack of sensation in the limbs.
- Fast movements may encourage bad movement patterns and provoke spasms.
- Holding and supporting is often difficult and care is needed in climbing activities.

### **Heart Defects**

- It is essential to have written medical advice as to which activities are permissible.
- These children should never be allowed to become cold.

### **Down's Syndrome**

A few Down's syndrome children suffer from "Atlanto-axial instability". In this condition the two upper cervical vertebrae of the spine are more mobile than normal. In such cases severe pressure can produce dislocation or may even sever the spinal cord. To safeguard pupils and teachers, therefore, children with "Atlanto-axial instability" should not participate in rolling activities or high level gymnastics or butterfly or breast stroke in the swimming pool.

### **SEND**

Teachers need to cater for needs of any SEND their classes by creating a structured, predictable environment with clear rules and consistent routines. Activities should be differentiated to reduce anxiety, avoid overstimulation, and provide achievable challenges that build confidence and self-regulation. Smaller group work, visual instructions, and calm, supportive communication help minimise conflict and emotional triggers. Risk assessments should consider individual behavioural needs, including space for de-escalation and supervised equipment use, ensuring that physical, emotional, and psychological safety are prioritised alongside physical activity outcomes.

### Hearing Problems

Before any physical activity is undertaken, clear methods of communication should be established between teacher and child. Consider methods other-than, or in addition to, verbal instructions such as Makaton signs.

- Where given, verbal instructions should be short and slow to facilitate lip reading.
- In swimming the use of the 'buddy system' (another child paired alongside) is essential.

### Sight Problems

- It is important for sight impaired children to become independent as soon as possible.
- Apparatus should be stored consistently in the same place.
- Support may be needed depending on the severity of the problem.
- Texture of apparatus is important use of "jingle balls" may help.
- Allowances should be made for the fact that many children may be well behind their peers as a result of lack of experience.
- Medical clearance for swimming is essential, as chlorinated water may damage the eyes. Teachers with such special needs children in their care should raise the awareness of the whole class, so that they all understand the needs of others.