

HIGHCLIFFE SCHOOL

**PE DEPARTMENT
SAFE PRACTICE
POLICY**

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INTRODUCTION

The health and safety policy has been drawn up in consultation with the Dorset County Council safety guidelines and within the school's general safety policy. The school has taken the AFPE document "Safe practice in Physical Education" as their reference as this document is widely accepted as an authoritative publication with many LEAs including Dorset.

The PE department has a responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its students and to engage students in safety education in accordance with current procedures.

General Procedures

1. The PE department has the responsibility to ensure that equipment and working areas are safe, clean and free from hazards and that any damage and/or faults are reported to the site manager Matt Kelly and Simon Fuller.
2. That both staff and students are dressed appropriately for the teaching and learning of physical education. Jewellery and watches should be removed.
3. That students and teachers follow safety procedures in all areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities as established by the governing bodies of that sport.
4. Teachers should be acting in loco parentis at all times. In PE, because of the increased risk levels which occur, a higher duty of care is expected of teachers.
5. Students on teaching practice should always be supervised by qualified teachers, even though they may reasonably assume greater responsibility for classes as their initial training progresses.
6. The PE department is responsible for displaying fire regulations and ensuring that students know the procedure for fire drills.
7. If an accident occurs procedures are in place as is identification of students with medical problems.
8. Any queries over Health and Safety can be directed to Dorset County Council.
9. In accordance with child protection legislation, any outside coaching projects/individuals should be supervised at all times by the member of staff responsible to ensure the safety of students.
10. First Aid supplies are available from the medical room where there are trained first aid staff.
11. This policy should be reviewed and updated in accordance with changes in the school situation, LEA and national advice.

12. All students are strongly recommended to wear shin pads and gum shields in appropriate activities.
13. A note from a parent requesting that a pupil be excused active participation in PE on given grounds should always be treated seriously and accepted. In prolonged periods of inactivity through ill-health or injury contact with the parents is made or a letter from the doctor/hospital is requested.
14. Non-participants should be as involved as reasonably possible in the work of the lesson; as officials, observers, recorders etc so that they may learn and understand the work alongside their more active peers and be better prepared to rejoin the class as active participants in due course. Where this arrangement is not practical, then alternative supervision by another teacher should be arranged.
15. PE staff are informed via parents and SEN staff of any significant physical or mental conditions of students. In some cases learning support assistants are present in lessons. Relevant risk assessments are written for these students.
16. Warming up is an integral part of all lessons. Pupils should be taught to warm-up correctly and prepare with gentle exercise followed by stretching of major muscle groups. Warming down is also essential to prevent blood pooling and DOMS.

Changing rooms

- Being in a state of undress can cause some students to feel vulnerable, particularly those who have experienced abuse, and cause them to misunderstand or misinterpret the actions of an adult.
- Changing for PE can cause anxiety for some students, can influence their perception of the subject and determine whether it is an enjoyable and positive experience. The concern caused by changing can influence a student's participation and lead to a variety of avoidance strategies.
- For staff there can be confusion and/or worry about supervision and how it accords with safer working practice. There can be a tension between the need to ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur and the risk of being accused of acting inappropriately or even being perceived as someone who might pose a sexual risk to students.

Key Principles

- Adults must always change or shower privately; never in the same space as students.
- It is recommended practice that students should change for PE, particularly when the exertion rate will necessitate a change of clothing for reasons of hygiene.
- Schools should make adequate and sensitive arrangements for changing which take into account the needs of students from different religions, beliefs and cultural backgrounds.
- Particular consideration might need to be given to, and alternative arrangements made (where possible) for, the requirements of individual pupils with needs relating to sexuality or sexual orientation.
- All students should be treated fairly and with respect for their privacy and dignity.

- Wherever possible designated single sex changing rooms or areas should be used. If this is not possible and boys and girls change together, in a classroom for example, consideration can be given to utilising furniture or screens to provide discrete areas. Also consider covering windows if practicable. Governing bodies should be aware of and approve such arrangements.
- Mixed gender changing areas clearly become less appropriate as children get older and staff need to have due regard for those who mature at a much earlier or later age than their peers. Ideally, boys and girls should change separately in secondary schools.
- Parents should be aware of arrangements, particularly in situations where designated changing rooms are not available.
- Students who express disquiet or concern about the behaviour of a member of staff should be listened to and appropriate enquiries conducted by the Headteacher.
- Allegations about a member of staff, from any source, must be reported promptly to the Headteacher, who will act in accordance with the school's procedures.

Should the member of staff remain in the changing room?

- This judgement will be based on the age and developmental needs of the students but there should not be an assumption that adults need to remain in the room in order to maintain good behaviour. This can also be achieved by being in close proximity and students being aware of it. They should also know that adults will enter the room if necessary - in response to a disturbance, for example.
- It is often possible to leave the door of designated changing rooms slightly ajar; their layout makes it unlikely that the occupants can be seen in this way.
- If there is a need for adults to enter the room it is recommended they should alert students to this by announcing it to give them the opportunity to cover up if they want to.
- All adults, but particularly those of the opposite sex, should avoid just standing in the changing room watching students, or repeatedly going in and out without good reason.
- A code of behaviour should be established with all pupils so they are clear about expectations about their conduct whilst they are unsupervised.

What if pupils need assistance with getting changed?

- Refer to the Intimate Care Policy for assisting students who are disabled or require additional support.
- Students of all ages should be encouraged to be as independent as possible; adults should consider prompting and giving verbal help/encouragement before they offer assistance.
- Adults should be especially vigilant when helping students with underclothes, tights and swimming costumes.
- Assistance should take place openly, not out of sight of others.
- It should be undertaken to meet the student's needs, not the adult's.

NON-SPECIALIST STAFF

On occasions when staff are absent and other members of staff in the school are assigned to cover lessons there are certain health and safety procedures that are followed.

Non-specialists:

- i) Are not permitted to take gymnastics, trampolining, athletics or rugby lessons.
- ii) Must take advice from PE staff as to what the lesson should contain.
- iii) Must supervise students at all times, before, during and after the lesson.
- iv) Must ensure that any equipment is taken out and put away properly.
- v) Must also check with a member of the PE staff which equipment may or may not be used.
- vi) Must understand that students' safety is paramount and no unnecessary risks are taken.

Where possible a qualified member of PE staff is close by should the non-specialist require assistance.

APPARATUS & EQUIPMENT HANDLING

Handling of apparatus involves the lifting, carrying and lowering of equipment which will vary in weight, size and shape, so will require the application of sound technique and safe management.

Many lessons in PE will provide opportunities for the learning of handling apparatus and students should be taught how to assemble, lift, rearrange, dismantle and store apparatus as required by the teacher.

Suggestions for teaching students how to handle apparatus:

- i) Ensure that apparatus is stored in accessible positions/areas.
- ii) Allocate enough students to any one piece of equipment to enable it to be lifted with relative ease for each individual.
- iii) Demonstrate with a number of students with the remainder of the class observing.
- iv) Select lighter pieces of apparatus and simple arrangements at first and build up to large and more complex combinations over time.
- v) Teach 'tandem lifting'. Benches should be set down quietly and gently.
- vi) Mats will require to be lifted and carried by 2 students.
- vii) Children should be taught never to use equipment or begin working on apparatus until permission to do so is given by the teacher after checking that:

- Everything is where it should be
 - Space around the apparatus is safe
 - Mats are correctly positioned
 - All fixings are secure
 - Apparatus units will not be used by too many students at any one time.
- viii) Leave enough time at the end of the lessons for all apparatus and equipment to be stored away.
- ix) The teacher should be involved in helping, moving and supervising students putting apparatus and equipment away.

A manual handling assessment checklist has been completed for specific activities that involve manual handling of equipment by students.

P.E TEACHING AREAS

The main areas where PE is practised is:

- Gymnasium
- School Hall
- Hard play area for netball and tennis
- Grass playing fields
- Fitness Suite

Individual risk assessments have been completed to cover risks in the above areas.

Gym/School Hall

- i) Floors should be kept clean (and swept between lessons, if necessary).
- ii) Floors should be checked after break time and lunchtime for wept patches.
- iii) Any cracking, lifting or damaged areas should be reported to the site manager and health and safety officer.
- iv) Any furniture (eg chairs) should be positioned against the walls and students should be made aware of such furniture by teachers.
- v) Teachers should ensure that activities carried out are not near surrounding furniture or permanent fixtures such as pillars.
- vi) Equipment and areas is checked regularly by professional equipment engineers. Any condemned equipment should be cleared marked and disposed of so that they are no longer available for use.
- vii) Equipment should be stored appropriately and arrangements should leave the items reasonably secure from easy interference by students.
- viii) Fire exits should never be blocked.
- ix) Play spaces should be sited to prevent the risk of running into walls or other obstacles.
- x) Equipment storage system should not place students at risk from tripping, falling over etc.
- xi) Teachers must supervise students at all times and students must be not permitted to use equipment or apparatus without a teacher present.

Hard playing area

- i) Surfaces should be clear of loose materials and equipment in the playing area.
- ii) Surfaces should be checked for broken glass, cans, rubbish etc, particularly after break and lunch times.
- iii) Surround netting should be maintained in good condition. Any loose netting should be reported to the bursar, health and safety officer and site manager.
- iv) Play spaces should be sited to prevent the risk of running into walls or other obstacles.
- v) During the Summer term with tennis posts and nets. Students should not jump over nets, or lean or sit against nets.

Grass playing fields

- i) Surfaces should be checked for rubbish etc, particularly after break and lunch times.
- ii) Teachers should complete a visual sweep of the playing area before and after lessons to ensure hazardous objects and equipment are removed for safety.
- iii) Surfaces vary according to the weather. Rain, snow, frost and dew need to be assessed and reacted to according to degree. Where there is a risk, games and other running activities should not be played.
- iv) Pitches should be marked out safely so that surfaces are and remain level.
- v) The spaces between playing areas should be adequate to accommodate various activities. Games posts should be secured and rugby posts must have padding.
- vi) Playing surfaces should be regularly maintained.

Fitness Suite

- xii) Floors should be kept clean (and swept between lessons, if necessary).
- xiii) Floors should be checked after break time and lunchtime for wet patches. Especially around drinks machine.
- xiv) Any cracking, lifting or damaged areas should be reported to the site manager and health and safety officer.
- xv) Teachers should ensure that students are not close to equipment being used.
- xvi) Equipment and areas is checked regularly by professional equipment engineers. Any condemned equipment should be cleared marked and disposed of so that they are no longer available for use.
- xvii) Fire exits should never be blocked.
- xviii) Equipment storage system should not place students at risk from tripping, falling over etc.
- xix) Teachers must supervise students at all times and students must be not permitted to use equipment or apparatus without a teacher present.
- xx) Student under the age of 14 should be permitted to use any weight equipment.
- xxi) Students over the age of 14 should be closely monitored using weight equipment and light weights should be used for under 16 year olds.

ACTIVITIES

Some activities are more hazardous than others, but certain generic procedures apply. They are:

- i) An adequate warm-up is essential before exercise.
- ii) Clothing should be suitable.
- iii) Sweets and gum should never be chewed during participation.
- iv) Jewellery, watches, and other personal effects should be removed.

Individual risk assessments have been completed to cover risks in more hazardous activities.

ATHLETICS

Athletics involves a range of both track and field events. Throwing events present the greatest hazard, though all aspects of athletics need careful planning. Sound management and vigilance is necessary to avoid dangers, which can arise.

Responsibility is a matter for teacher and student with the activities. Clear guidelines and established routines based on good practice will help to ensure that all individuals (teachers and students) are aware of their roles for specific aspects of safety.

Facilities

All facilities should be maintained in good condition through regular maintenance, particularly prior to and during the athletics season. At all times facilities are used, a check should first be made to ensure that the intended activities may take place safely.

There should be adequate space overall and throwing zones must be positioned in a defined area set aside for the purpose.

Responsibility rests with the teacher to decide when the facilities for teaching or training are suitable and safe. If unsure the head of department should be consulted.

Teaching and coaching athletics

Teachers must be confident that students are able to exercise control before the most hazardous (throwing) activities are introduced. Safe methods must be taught from the outset and the teacher must ensure that lessons follow a carefully graduated programme which meets the following criteria:

- i) The students must be sufficiently fit and skilled to tackle each new event. National Governing body recommendations should be used as a guide to events and distances that are suitable for students at different ages and stages of development.
- ii) All students must be taught to safe participants and safe spectators. Sweets and gum should never be chewed while actively participating.
- iii) Special vigilance and control is needed when standards are being recorded etc. Spectators should be allocated specific safe zones and should never crowd around the edges of the track or field event areas.
- iv) Teachers should remain in direct control of group events with beginners.
- v) Care must be taken in all events when the ground is wet.

Field events

All field events, especially the throws, involved obvious hazards. The activities must be introduced gradually into the programme, one event at a time. They must be under the direct control of a qualified teacher.

Throwing events

The routine of lining up, throwing and retrieving must be strictly enforced along the following lines:

- i) Throwers waiting to throw should stand well behind the circle or line until told to move forward.
- ii) The teacher and throwers must always check the predicted lines of flight and the adjacent areas are clear of students. A wide margin of error should be allowed.
- iii) Throwers must always remain behind the circle or line after throwing. Their implements must be retrieved only after instruction by the teacher, then carried back by the taught method, walking to the circle or line. On no account should implements ever be thrown back.
- iv) Left-handed throwers should work together at one end (on the throwers left) of the line.
- v) Where space is limited, only one student at a time should be allowed to throw.
- vi) Footwear must provide a firm foothold.

Javelin

Younger students or beginners should be introduced to throwing using balls and/or foam javelin shapes.

The following points must be observed:

- i) A student or carrier must never run with a javelin except when throwing.
- ii) Javelins should never be struck into the ground at a dangerous angle. At the throwing assembly point, they should be maintained in a vertical position in the ground.
- iii) Before a thrown javelin is removed from the ground, it should first be levered into a vertical position. It should be carried in the same vertical position with the point as near to the ground as possible.

Discus

Children can begin by using a small rubber practice discus which is less weighty, less hazardous and easier to control than a metal rimmed version.

The following safety points must be observed:

- i) Practice throwing must be confined to a safe area in which there are no other activities taking place.
- ii) Waiting throwers should stand well back from the throw line.
- iii) Control should be developed from the initial use of standing throws which, when accomplished, may be followed by movement with momentum.
- iv) A collected discus should be carried firmly and never rolled.

Shot Putt

The early introduction to the action of putting the shot can make use of cricket or rounders balls.

The following safety points must be observed:

- i) Students should never be allowed to play around with the shot.
- ii) Each shot should be carried securely in 2 hands held close to the body and placed carefully on the ground (never dropped) on arrival at the shot putt area.
- iii) The putt should be learned from a side-on still position. Movement should only be introduced when the standing putt has been accomplished successfully.

Jumping Activities

The sand should be deep enough to absorb impact of any landing without jarring. It must be checked that it is free of sharp or hard objects. It should be dug regularly. Digging and raking tools should never be left lying near the landing area, or with the teeth or prongs pointing upwards.

Long jump and triple jump

Take off boards should be painted in a distinguished colour and kept clean and dry.

High jump

Students must be taught that the angle of approach and take-off point largely determine the landing position. Round bars are recommended. If flexi-bars are used, the supporting stands must be secured so that they don't collapse for the student. Flexi-bars should be colourful and strong so that they are clearly visible and remain still for the students.

The landing area must be large enough to allow safe use of all participants, irrespective of jumping style. Teachers must ensure that students are responsible and do not attempt to jump until instructed to, making sure that the landing area is clear.

Indoor athletics

Many aspects of safe practice which are applied to outdoor athletics also apply to indoor athletics.

- i) Activity should take place well away from projections and walls.
- ii) Crash mats should be avoided when landing on one foot. The teaching of sound landing technique will do much to avoid potential injury where space is limited and no specialist facilities are available.
- iii) Approach runs should be kept to a minimum, eg. 4 strides when jumping for height and distance.
- iv) Throwing implements, such as those of foam or rubber manufacture should be used indoors. Even though such equipment is not as dangerous, the same strict throwing procedures for outside apply.

INVASION GAMES

General:

- i) Footwear appropriate for the playing surface in use is important. Studded boots should be worn on grass.
- ii) Shin pads should be worn by all students for football.
- iii) Students should wear trainers for all indoor games. Students should not wear just socks.

RUGBY

The strenuous and physical contact nature of rugby means that safety must be given paramount importance. Direct supervision by teachers with a good knowledge of the game is required.

Clothing and protection

- i) Boots should be firm-fitting. Studs should conform to the appropriate British Standard and should be examined regularly for wear.
- ii) Shin guards should be worn by all players. They should be strapped in position.
- iii) The wearing of personally designed mouth guards is recommended.
- iv) Rings, earrings and other jewellery should not be worn.

Facilities and equipment

- i) There should be no dangerous obstructions close to the perimeter of the playing field.
- ii) The base of the uprights of the goalposts should be padded.
- iii) Corner flags should be flexible, smooth and rounded ended.
- iv) The playing area should be checked and free from stones, glass and other sharp objects.
- v) Pitches should be accessible by ambulance.

CRICKET

General safe practice, conduct and supervision applies, but specific to cricket:

- i) Wickets should be sited to provide a reasonable boundary to avoid the risk of ball being hit onto paths, building etc.
- ii) Protective equipment for batters and wicket keepers should be worn as appropriate.
- iii) Bats, balls and protective equipment should be suited to either age, size, strength and ability of students.
- iv) Helmets should be worn for matches.

GYMNASTICS

Good communication is essential between teacher and student in the learning of skills, together with a clear understanding of their respective responsibilities.

A student learning a new skill should have the necessary strength, flexibility and body awareness and should be passed through the progressive stages leading up to that new skill.

Firm discipline and the implementation of established routines contribute to safe practice. A suitable warm-up should precede the main part of every lesson.

Gymnastics should be performed with bare feet. Footwear may be worn, but it should be pliant and close fitting. Training shoes should not worn.

Pirates and other competitive chasing games using apparatus as obstacles are dangerous and should never be played.

Gymnastics apparatus

The equipment should be stored so that it is reasonably accessible for use. Apparatus should be assembled and dismantled systematically. Teachers should check apparatus immediately before use and ensure it is adequately spaced out and adjusted to meet the needs of all the students. Students should be encouraged to check for safety and to report any wrong adjustments or loose fittings immediately.

After use, equipment should be returned to its usual place so that users become familiar with its position. In its stored position it must be stable. The equipment should be suitable for handling and management by the students following appropriate training under the direction of the teacher.

Mats

- Mats should be selected with care in order to meet the need of the students and the activity being followed. Whenever the opportunity is presented, it is helpful if students are guided as to why certain mats are used for particular activities and how their placing can enhance safety.
- The placing of mats is very important. They should be used where it is expected that students will need to cushion deliberate landing.
- Teachers should be wary of placing mats where it is considered there is a high probability of a student falling off the apparatus. It would be better to arrange the apparatus and the demands on the student so that there is a high expectation of safe performance rather than the student will fall.
- Where several mats on top of and to the side of each other are provided to give greater absorption cover, care should be taken not to leave gaps into which students might land and thereby injure themselves.
- Students should be taught to be aware of and readjust mats which may move slightly when used.
- Mats should be checked by staff and students for pins, stones etc.,
- Mats should not be folded as this can cause cracks and damage to the core.
- Where landing may be of high impact, thick landing mattresses of 10cm depth and upward may be more appropriate than the 25mm mats.

FIXTURES

For after school away fixtures involving the use of the mini-bus the following procedures are followed:

1. Students are notified at least 24 hours in advance of an away match and the approximate time of return to school.
2. A list of students is handed into the student support office.
3. Students are told to wear seat belts and are told procedures on behaviour whilst travelling.
4. Students are told to be aware of other traffic when they leave the minibus in schools' car parks.
5. Students are told to walk to the areas where they are due to play their fixtures.
6. Members of staff accompanying students on away fixtures take a first aid kit and mobile phone.
7. All staff has a copy of the procedures in case of an emergency at an away fixture or on the way to an away fixture.
8. A generic risk assessment had been completed for fixtures within Christchurch, Bournemouth and Poole.