

Statement of Intent for Safe Practice in Physical Education and Sports

This document is not meant to replace the Val Sabin/RCS Scheme of Work for Physical Education and i-Moves which are the main programmes used at High Green Primary School. The programmes of study within that scheme provide effective progression through age appropriate skills and safe handling, with risk assessments being integral to the teaching and learning programme. The Statement of Intent is designed to ensure the safety and well-being of all staff and children when involved in any Physical education and sports.

‘Safety is not a gadget but a state of mind’

Eleanor Evert, American H&S Consultant

Introduction

*PES (Physical Education and Sports) consists of practical activities involving lots of movement, often at speed, with changes in direction, frequently focusing on an object or other people, making rapid decisions, possibly in a relatively confined area and involving relatively large numbers. In such a situation, injuries will happen occasionally and almost always be of a minor nature, only rarely causing more serious harm. The fact that an occasional accident occurs does not mean there has been a breach of safety standards, particularly where **sensible, proportionate and appropriate forethought and planning are evident.***

The underlying rationale for identifying and applying consistent, safe standards is as follows:

- ✓ *Students should be able to experience a wide range of activities in which safe-practice measures enable such opportunities rather than prevent them.*
- ✓ *They are entitled to be taught in a safe and healthy environment.*
- ✓ *They should be empowered to manage their own safety in order to progressively become independent in lifelong activity.*
- ✓ *High quality PES involves challenge and progression.*
- ✓ *Safe-practice requirements should be proportionate to the identified risks of an activity.*
- ✓ *Common sense should be used in assessing and maintaining a safe learning environment.*
- ✓ *Teachers have a legal duty to be proactive in establishing and maintaining a safe learning environment.*
- ✓ *Accident prevention is desirable for health, economic and legal reasons.*
- ✓ *The existence of risk and exposing someone to that risk is sufficient for liability to be established.*

*Everyone has a duty of care not to cause harm to others. Where the expected **professional standards** are not met, resulting in injury and this was reasonably foreseeable; an allegation of negligence may apply.*

‘Teachers will teach safely and teach safety’

Three principles of safe teaching;

- ✓ **Teaching** – *good teaching is safe teaching.*
- ✓ **Managing** – *good leadership and management contribute towards a safe learning environment.*
- ✓ **Learning** – *Learning about and applying safe practice is fundamental to responsible independent participation in physical activity.*

When teaching PES the teacher will:

- Have the relevant **training** and **qualifications** to teach PES (QTS and/or coaching)
Evidence of qualifications and up to date training/CPD will be obtained and records/copies kept, including staff meetings where training has been disseminated to other colleagues.
- Have the competence and confidence to teach the activity safely
- Show forethought by thinking and planning logically through the lesson
- Have the observation and analytical skills necessary to ensure that activities are safe and within a safe environment
- Have good discipline, behaviour control and group management skills to organise and maintain a safe learning environment for all
- Know the students and cater for their individual needs including confidence, previous experience, behaviour, abilities, health and fitness profile, medical conditions, stages of development, religious and cultural needs, vulnerability and understanding of safety awareness
- Ensure support staff involved in the lesson are suitably managed and know their roles and responsibilities
- Develop students' involvement in, and responsibility for, their own safety relevant to their age, ability, experience and awareness by checking their understanding; providing opportunities to assume appropriate levels of responsibility; regular question and answer; giving clear instructions and demonstrations; and highlighting examples of good practice.
- Know the schools policies and procedures for dealing with emergency situations (refer to the Critical Incident Plan. This can be found in Staff Share)
- Use a well-structured and differentiated scheme of work to set appropriately challenging work. (Val Sabin/RCS/i-Moves)
- Establish a consistent lesson structure that includes introductory activity (including appropriate warm-up), technical development, consolidation of skills and concluding activity (including appropriate cool-down)
- Identify clear learning outcomes and safe strategies to achieve these, whereby the benefits of the experience outweigh the likelihood of injury occurring
- Carefully plan and graduate progression and pitch (level of demand) of the activity, check students are competent, confident and appropriately prepared before moving on to more complex or demanding tasks
- Use regular and approved practice (Val Sabin/RCS/i-Moves Schemes of Work). Where a teacher has received appropriate training and is confident in teaching, lessons will be adapted but will follow a similar pathway including relevant parts of an effective lesson. (warm-up, development, consolidation, cool-down) These may include historical or cultural dances which are not covered by the scheme of work.
- Ensure a safe learning environment through a clear explanation of the task, checking understanding, observing the students' initial response for safe standards, and then reinforcing the instructions and amending or developing the task for individuals in order to maintain a safe but challenging learning environment

- Monitor particular students closely, such as those with visual, hearing, cognitive, behavioural, language, confidence or any other individual needs to check that they understand the task, can learn within an environment that is safe for them and support staff can be guided accordingly
- Consider their teaching or observation position to enable frequent scanning of the whole class to ensure safe practice is maintained
- Manage and supervise group work whilst being aware of the safety of other students in the class
- Ensure preparation for the lesson is sufficient for the weather conditions and demand of the activity
- Provide accurate demonstrations and explanations in a form that enable individual perception preferences – visual, auditory, kinaesthetic – to be used to develop understanding and competence
- Where games are concerned, rules are strictly applied, even where the students have devised their own.
- Consider rehydration provision, additional clothing and sun protection (hats) being available as a safety factor according to the weather conditions or demand of the activity
- Monitor the group for signs of fatigue, adjusting the level of demand and participation accordingly

The following procedure will be applied at the beginning of every lesson:

- All staff need to change from fashion footwear into that appropriate to the lesson location. Staff clothing also needs to be appropriate to the activity and weather conditions. If necessary, staff may need to change into more suitable clothing.
- Check that student clothing is appropriate for the activity and weather conditions
- Check that student footwear (including bare foot work) is appropriate for the activity and work surface and provides traction, and consider any implications of mixed footwear
- Ensure long hair is tied back with a soft item (staff and students) to prevent entanglement in apparatus and to prevent it obscuring vision.
- All students' personal effects will be removed. Staff will give a verbal reminder to students and, where necessary, visually monitor the group and/or individuals. Particular vigilance may be required when dealing with body jewellery. If staff are aware that a student has body jewellery the same procedures will be followed as for earrings.
- If earrings/body jewellery cannot be removed, the individual will not take part in the physical activity but be involved in the lesson in another way, that doesn't impact negatively on health and safety, for example, observing skills and development, giving constructive feedback about performance. Staff will **not** remove or tape up earrings for students.
- Staff should consider removal of any of their own personal effects (earrings or jewellery) that would be deemed a safety risk to themselves or others.
- Fingernails are appropriately short to prevent injury to themselves or others. (Staff and students) Students should **not** participate in the activity section of the lesson if fingernails would compromise the safety of themselves and/or others.
- Ensure orderly movement to and from the work area.
- Carry out a visual check of the working area prior to the activity beginning.
- Visually check any equipment used in a lesson prior to the students using it, to ensure it is safe to use, assembled correctly and not damaged or faulty.

Clothing and footwear

The basic principle is the necessity for secure footing whatever the surface or activity involved.

- For student work in dance and gymnastics, barefoot work is the safest whether on floor or apparatus because the toes can grip; aesthetics are also improved through better foot extension. Where the floor condition is unsuitable for barefoot work then close fitting footwear with thin, pliable soles is next best. Hard-soled trainers are less appropriate and may create a hazard.
- Socks on a wooden floor cause slipping and are dangerous for any activity. Socks are **not** acceptable footwear.
- Some form of footwear is preferable for indoor games activities due to the higher frequency of sudden stopping and changing direction quickly where toes can be stubbed
- All footwear should be of the correct size and correctly tied in the manner of its design to ensure appropriate support for the ankles.
- Careful thought should be given to an activity where mixed footwear is worn by different students.

Equipment

- Any faulty equipment will not be used and reported immediately to the HT, Buildings Supervisor and/or subject leader for PE (Edd Gregory)
- Students should become involved in checking and reporting any faulty equipment in relation to their age, ability and previous experience
- Annual safety checks will be completed by a specialist company and any repairs or maintenance carried out. Any equipment that has been condemned by a specialist company will be removed from the working area.
- Students will be taught how to lift and carry equipment safely from an early age; how many to a particular item, how to carry correctly and to remain focussed on the task and not lose attention that may lead to inadvertent actions, such as stumbling over another item (Refer to i-Moves Schemes of Work)
- Equipment will be used for the purpose it is designed for. Improvisation may jeopardise safety.
- Staff will be aware of any uneven parts of the floor when placing items of equipment for use by children.

Work Area

- Before and during lessons, the work area needs to be checked to ensure it is safe for student participation.
- When a work area is too small for the safety of numbers involved, the teacher has to consider ways in which the delivery of the lesson can be adjusted to create a safe working environment.
- All staff to resist walking through the hall during PES lessons. The distraction could be dangerous for the students and have a negative impact on safety.

Staff Participation and Physical Contact

It is very likely that students at some time may need some form of support or physical contact during their physical education experience.

- If a context arises that requires physical contact to be made between a teacher and a student, it is important that the student is made aware of the provision of contact, such as in supporting someone learning a balance or other movement in gymnastics and what form that contact will take, and the student confirms this will be acceptable.
- Contact should be made in a manner that cannot be misconstrued and only for duration necessary for safe practice.
- Full staff participation in student activities is not advised, whether in lesson times or competitive context, such as staff versus student matches, because of the likelihood of injury caused by differences in size, strength, previous experience and confidence. Staff cannot be fully observant of student safety when fully involved in student activity.

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This document will be reviewed in line with updates from BAALPE and/or the Association for Physical Education.