

# New Oscott Safe Practice in PE

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## Overview

An activity is judged to be safe in physical education and sport where the risks associated with the activity are deemed to be acceptably low. **It is the responsibility of the teacher to identify those risks and decide whether the level of risk is acceptable.** They should do this through good teaching and management of a situation on a day to day basis. These principles should be outlined in a health and safety policy and reviewed annually.

We encourage the children to consider their own safety and the safety of others at all times. We expect them to change for PE into the agreed clothing for each activity area. Teachers are expected to set a good example by wearing appropriate clothing when teaching PE. No potentially dangerous jewellery is to be worn for any physical activity.

## People-related Principles

### Clothing for activity

- Young people should wear clothing that is fit for purpose according to the activity, environment and weather conditions.

**New Oscott PE kit includes a white Tshirt and red shorts for indoor. An additional tracksuit /jumper for outdoor PE.**

- Any items worn for gymnastics, including any of cultural significance need to be relatively close fitting or removed for safety reasons.
- Loose clothing for swimming is not advised. Staff should refer to guidance in 'Safe Practice in Schools Swimming – CBC 2011' for further clarification.
- Staff should always be suitably dressed to teach PE lessons. Appropriate footwear is essential.

**New Oscott PE wear is available from Kukri Sports, but this is not compulsory.**

## Competence

- Anyone teaching physical education lessons needs to be competent to do so.
- Competence to teach physical education may be defined as having the skills, knowledge and understanding and expertise necessary to plan, deliver and evaluate the physical education programme.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) highlights four means of demonstrating competence:

- to hold a relevant QTS qualified Teacher Status
- to hold an equivalent qualification

Staff are not legally required to hold a specific award in order to teach a physical education activity. However, it is wise for them to be able to demonstrate that they are suitably trained, experienced and qualified to undertake the activities in which they engage with young people.

Although an adult who does not have qualified Teacher Status (QTS) may be considered competent to work alone, they must always work under the supervision and direction of a qualified teacher.

**At New Oscott all PE lessons are taking by an adult with qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Other adults can be used in PE but under the direction of the teacher.**

## Control, Discipline, Behaviour and Group-management Skills

Poor discipline, control and behaviour management can adversely affect the standard of safety in any situation. Teachers need to consider:

- regular scanning of the whole group
- their own positioning in order to observe young people
- halting the activity when it becomes potentially unsafe
- that changing group sizes during a lesson needs careful consideration
- the whole school behaviour policy and how it relates to PE

## Footwear – staff and young people

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

All staff need to change into appropriate footwear for the lesson location.

Barefoot work is safest in dance and gymnastics whether on the floor or apparatus as it allows the toes to grip.

Wearing only socks on a wooden floor cause slipping and this practice is dangerous for any activity.

Careful thought should be given to an activity where mixed footwear is worn by different young people. The premise is, again, secure footing, but consideration needs to be given to whether the mixed footwear would create a likely potential for injury being inflicted on others.

#### **At New Oscott**

**For gymnastics, children need to wear pumps or barefooted.**

**For indoor PE lessons, other than Gymnastics and dance children can wear trainers.**

### **Knowledge of young people**

It is important that the teacher has relevant knowledge of the young people they teach.

Where the teacher is not the usual adult responsible, it is essential that the person is provided with key information about individuals within the group being taught.

Key information any teacher working with a group would benefit from knowing includes:

- relevant medical information
- behavioural information
- previous experience of the activity
- confidence and competence of individuals
- any special education needs and disability (SEND), individual need or any specific personal circumstances that may affect the young people's performance

#### **At New Oscott**

All supply are given class information regarding medical and behavioural issues via the green folders.

### **Observation and Analysis**

Teachers need to constantly check whether what is taking place is safe and, if not, intervene or stop the activity to make it safe. This requires the expertise to know what is safe and what is required to adjust the technique, skill or movement to make it safe.

Where teachers feel they do not have this level of expertise, they should discuss the issues with their line manager in order to determine what should be done to maintain safe situations in lessons.

#### **At New Oscott**

Teachers will check areas for safety by identifying any hazards, before any physical activity takes place.

## Parental consent

Parents cannot withdraw their child from prescribed curriculum subjects without formal agreement. They can, however choose whether their child can take part in optional Extra Curricular activities outside normal lesson times.

Consent forms do not indemnify the teacher should a young person be injured and thus no offer of indemnity by a parent should be accepted. A young person, if injured, can make a claim for compensation retrospectively in their own right within three years of becoming an adult, thus making the arrangement between teacher and parent meaningless in law.

**At New Oscott, 2 hours of PE is compulsory for all children. Children are encouraged to take part in Extra curricular activities. If children are injured, they still actively take part in PE lessons, through leadership, coaching and refereeing.**

## Personal effects including jewellery and cultural or religious adornments

Staff need to be mindful of their own adornments and remove them prior to teaching physical education for both safety and role-model reasons.

Long hair worn by both staff and young people should always be tied back with a suitably soft item to prevent entanglement in apparatus and equipment and to prevent it obscuring vision. Nails need to be sufficiently short to prevent injury to self and others.

A young person cannot be excluded from the curriculum for wearing jewellery but they and their parents must understand the safety risks involved. A young person must not take part if safety is compromised but this should be as a last resort.

Staff need to determine through their risk assessment of an activity whether a young person should participate or not, it may be acceptable for a young person to be withdrawn temporarily in certain situations, that judgement lies with the member of staff taking the session. Alternative arrangements for involvement in the session should be sought.

Disclaimers from parents about the wearing of any item of jewellery by a young person should be declined. Such indemnities have no legal status. The duty of care remains firmly with the school on such matters.

A compromise must be sought and careful discussion with parents usually results in the best outcome. Point out the dangers of not only the wearer being injured but also the possibilities for others to be injured too (e.g. a barefooted child standing on any

object is painful but to receive a stud earring in the bottom of a foot is extremely painful.)

At New Oscott, staff ensure that all long hair is tied back. Nails need to be sufficiently short to prevent injury to self and others.  
Children are instructed not to wear jewellery for PE lessons.

### **The following procedure should be applied at the commencement of every session:**

- All jewellery must be removed for all physical activity
- it should be the responsibility of the young person to remove such items and to be responsible for its care, but it is the member of staff's responsibility to ensure it happens
- it is not advisable for staff to remove, replace or be responsible for the safe keeping of such items
- young people should be asked at the beginning of physical education sessions whether they are wearing body jewellery. If they disclose this information, the principles above should be applied. If this information is not disclosed, the session may proceed as planned. However, if a member of staff becomes aware that body jewellery is being worn during the session, they should apply the principles described above as soon as they become aware of the situation

### **It is not advisable to put tape over earrings or other items of jewellery.**

Young people can claim an allergic reaction to the tape or the item of jewellery can be damaged. If a parent tapes their own child's earrings to enable them to participate, then that is acceptable in all sessions other than swimming. It remains the member of staff's responsibility to ensure that the taping is effective in its purpose.

In instances where young people are unable to remove jewellery themselves, (for example, very young children) then the parent has the responsibility to ensure that they do not wear such items on physical education days.

### **Medical aid wrist bands**

Recent developments in the manufacture of medical aid wrist bands have resulted in products with an acceptably low risk factor (soft materials used, Velcro fastenings). Such items should be acceptable for participation in most activities, largely avoiding the need for removal.

### **Teeth Braces or Dentures**

Young people know whether these are allowed to be removed and usually have a special container for them.

## Spectacles

Speak with parents of younger children; older children will know what is best for them.

Many young people can become disorientated when they are not wearing their spectacles, sometimes judgement of 'depth' becomes a problem when not wearing spectacles and this can be a particular hazard when young people are up high and cannot judge where the floor is.

If a child does need to wear spectacles for physical education lessons they should be made of plastic rather than glass and should be secured if they are likely to slip or fall off.

There is a risk of injury for young people wearing spectacles for games, whether they are contact or non-contact games. For competitive game situations it is of course advisable for soft contact lenses to be worn.

**At New Oscott, children are allowed to wear spectacles for PE lessons. Parents are advised to supply plastic lenses. In contact sports, children are advised to wear contact lenses or sports glasses. If this is not possible, then glasses can be worn with plastic lenses.**

**If earrings cannot be removed, then tape can be placed over the ear. It is parental responsibility to remove earrings, when children are incapable of removing themselves.**

## Hearing Aids

Advice must be taken from parents or guardians; usually hearing aids are worn during physical education lessons except for swimming activities

## Safeguarding

New Oscott have a safeguarding policy and procedures. Teachers need to know these, apply them and inform support staff of the required protocols and who the member of staff responsible for safeguarding is, to whom they should report concerns.

A teacher's duty is to pass on concerns about possible abuse to the appropriate person.

**At New Oscott, we follow the school procedures for safeguarding**

## Support staff

Any adult who is not a qualified teacher, licensed teacher or graduate trainee on the school roll who contributes to young people's learning comes under the collective term of 'support staff', sometimes known as 'adults supporting learning (ASLs)' or adults other than teachers (AOTTs).

No support staff should operate independently. They can work alone if competent and have been evaluated but must be managed effectively by the teacher, who remains legally responsible for the young people in their care, whether through direct or indirect supervision of the support staff. Such management involves ensuring any support staff are aware of the limits of their role and responsibilities in relation to applying school policies.

## Context-related Principles

### Changing provision

This principle is about ensuring dignity, decency and privacy where needed, be it for reasons of physical development or other individual needs.

There is no statutory requirement for young people to be supervised at all times.

**At New Oscott, children get changed in their classrooms up to Year 4. In Upper Key Stage 2 (years 5 and 6) boys and girls get changed in separate classroom and are supervised accordingly.**

### Equipment

Equipment used in lessons should be visually checked prior to young people using it, to ensure it is safe to use, assembled correctly and not damaged or faulty.

Equipment that has been condemned by a specialist company must not be used and needs to be removed so it cannot come back into use inadvertently.

**Young people need to be taught how to lift and carry equipment safely from an early age.**

Equipment should be used to the purpose it is designed for. Where a decision is made to use an item for a purpose it is not actually designed for, the teacher would

need to have a very strong justification for deciding to improvise in the event of an accident.

Safety and rescue equipment, such as that relevant to swimming lessons, needs to be confirmed as being to hand before lessons begin.

At New Oscott, equipment that could potentially be used inappropriately is only to be used when supervised in PE lessons. This includes rounders bats, tennis rackets, hurdles or other objects which may cause injury.

### **Injuries, emergencies and critical incidents**

Teachers need to know and apply the school's procedures for dealing with injuries and other emergencies. Where concerns exist about not knowing the whole-school procedures, teachers need to consult the head teacher.

**New Oscott have the Red hand procedure in place, where all teachers carry a red hand, which is taken to another member of staff if there is a critical incident.**

### **Work area**

Before and during lessons, the work area needs to be checked to ensure it is safe for young person participation.

### **Demonstrations**

Staff should be aware of safeguarding procedures with regard to placing parts of a young person's body correctly during a demonstration.

Staff must be fully capable if they wish to demonstrate a skill being taught, and have warmed up appropriately to be able to perform it safely.

Staff must not place themselves in a situation where they might cause damage to themselves or to young people in their care. It is always advisable to use a competent young person to demonstrate skills and activities.

At New Oscott, Staff must be fully capable if they wish to demonstrate a skill being taught, and have warmed up appropriately to be able to perform it safely. When appropriate, staff will use a competent young person to demonstrate skills and activities.

### **Group work**

Where the class is divided into smaller groups, methods of supervision need to be

carefully considered.

## Matching the young people

Individual young people's levels of confidence, strength, prior experience, size and ability need to be accommodated in teaching contexts and the earliest stages of competition. Grouping and pairing young people according to any of these individual characteristics need to be considered in order to establish a safe learning environment.

Such group management is essential where weight bearing, physical contact or where a hard ball is thrown or bowled at an opponent form part of the learning. Careful consideration should be given in mixed ability, mixed age and mixed gender groupings.

**At New Oscott, Reception, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, Years 5 and 6 are suitable groups for activities.**

## Ongoing risk assessments

Risk assessment is simply a judgement as to whether a situation is safe within established practice and procedures or additional precautions are required to make the situation safer.

Risk-benefit analysis is the act of comparing the benefits of the activity or experience against the level of risk and likelihood of injury occurring. If the risk is greater than the benefit, then the activity either does not take place or is amended to a level where the positive benefit is greater than the risk of injury.

Written risk assessment for physical education should be available in all schools and departments and should be readily available to all who contribute to teaching the programme.

**New Oscott has detailed risk assessments for all areas of activity, available to staff on the school server**

Dynamic (i.e. continuous or ongoing) assessment of risk, anticipating the likelihood of injury occurring, should be part of a teacher's normal planning, teaching and evaluation of a session.

Such risk assessments are not in written form but should be evident in planning and teaching of the activity as an ongoing process. This involves forethought and anticipation of what could go wrong in the planned session and how any such event would be managed effectively.

## Progression

Progression is about the staged development of expertise according to confidence, ability and successful prior experience.

Fatigue and injury may occur where young people are required to use equipment or attempt a task that is inappropriate to their age, stage of development or ability and where they are required to play on pitches and courts inappropriate to their stamina, strength or disability, or where they are required to carry out events over longer distances than those recommended for their age or stage of development. Age related pitch and court sizes should be made available, either in a permanent or temporary form as well as age related and ability related equipment.

## **Weather conditions**

Staff must assess the safety of weather conditions, there should be no risk to the wellbeing of either young people or staff to the dangers of extreme heat, cold, thunder and lightning, high winds, ice etc.

At New Oscott, playgrounds are used for PE, except when they are extremely wet to the point where they are slippery or if they are with standing water.

## **Exposure to sun**

Young people exposed to prolonged spells of sunshine (e.g. when playing a cricket match or taking part in outdoor athletics) may be at risk unless suitable preventative measures are taken. Staff should monitor young people for signs of heat exhaustion.

School staff are recommended to take the following common-sense precautions:

- young people should not be over-exposed to direct sunlight particularly around midday
- teach young people when and how to cover their bodies with loose-fitting, lightly woven material that will screen them from the sun, however, such clothing should not be so loose as to endanger them during physical activity
- be particularly vigilant with fair-skinned young people and very young children, whose skin reacts quickly to sunburn
- sunglasses and hats can provide effective screening in selected activities where they pose no danger to the wearer or other participants in terms of the quality of the items or the nature of the activity
- parental approval will be required to use sunscreen products, which parents should provide
- provide access to shade and water

At New Oscott, Children are not be over-exposed to direct sunlight. Children are allowed constant access to water. Children are allowed to bring sun hats. Sunglasses are not permitted.

## Rules

Teachers have a duty of care and a duty of control when officiating in competitive games.

They need to know the rules relevant to the activity and must apply the rules stringently in order to avoid unnecessary, foreseeable injury.

At New Oscott, Teachers are responsible for refereeing matches. Where appropriate and deemed safe by the teacher, Young leaders can officiate the games.

## Scheme of work

Every school should have a detailed scheme of work that provides for safe, structured progression in the physical education programme.

All schools should have a clearly stated policy on physical contact between staff and students. It is the responsibility of the school to inform parents of this.

It is important that a teacher informs a young person when contact is required for example in gymnastics, and what form the contact will take and that the young person confirms that this is acceptable.

Full staff participation in young people's activities is not advised, whether in lesson times or competitive contexts, such as staff versus young people matches, because of the likelihood of injury caused by differences in size, strength, previous experience and confidence.

Staff should not participate or demonstrate activities which are beyond their physical capabilities.

**At New Oscott, Staff do not participate in competitive activities with children or other staff**

## APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES TO SPECIFIC AREAS OF ACTIVITY

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### ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

Refer to afPE handbook pages 176 – 201

**For activities on school sites during normal curriculum time:**

- many activities which will take place on the school site do not require specialist qualifications - check very carefully before proceeding with any activities and adhere to the regulations for those activities which do require a specialist qualification

- there should be access to first aid at all times
- safety factors need to be considered for each activity undertaken
- young people and staff should be properly dressed, for example, clothing which prevents scratches and stings in a wooded environment, warm clothing and appropriate footwear for inclement conditions
- young people must be taught the restrictions and bounds of an activity and be aware of their own limitations, staff need to point out the 'out of bounds' areas e.g. pond, car park, school building and why restrictions are placed on these areas
  - safety codes for non-standard items of equipment do not exist e.g. milk crates, tyres etc. - you must set high standards for these and make sure the young people know them

**Before doing any activity involving the use of non-standard items of equipment:**

- spend time with the young people giving consideration to possible problems that may occur
- try out the activity with a small group - closely supervised
- make modification to the equipment, or activity if needed
- only use the equipment as part of a programme within which young people are taught the safety procedures

## **AQUATIC ACTIVITIES**

Refer to afPE handbook pages 202 - 212

The section includes guidance on:  
general safe practice issues

- swimming
- diving
- lifesaving
- swimming in open water
- hydrotherapy pools

## ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

Refer to afPE handbook pages 213 – 217

The biggest safety risk to young people is when they are asked to participate in activities that are beyond their capabilities. Staff must be fully aware of recent developments and advice given by the governing bodies of athletics especially those referring to the suitable distances that young people should be experiencing. Staff who teach and supervise athletic activities should be appropriately trained through specialist initial teacher training education programmes, local authority professional development opportunities or have acquired athletics coaching qualifications through the

The following tables are taken from the English Schools Athletics Association website and indicate distances that may be used during competitive athletic activities.

### Maximum Recommended Distances (Timed)

Running for:	Yrs. 1 & 2	Yr. 3	Yr. 4	Yr. 5	Yr. 6
Speed (sprints)	30m	40m	60m	60m	75 - 80m
Distance	-----	400m	600m	800m	1000m
Hurdles	30m and low height	50m Suitable height	60m Suitable height	5 flights 55m ( 59-61cm high)	5 flights 55m ( 59-61cm high)
Relays	20 – 30m each	40m each	60m each	60 - 80m each	80meach
Cross country	Not recommended until Year 5 or 6. Year 5 maximum 1500m and Year 6 maximum of 2000m				

### Cross Country Running - training in schools

- Young people should be kept on site and kept in sight at all times during curriculum activity.
- Courses should be chosen carefully to avoid unsighted areas e.g., ditches, trees, fences, walls etc.
- Distances must be graded for ages, abilities and fitness of all young people.

- If young people are allowed off site, CBC guidance for taking young people off site must be strictly adhered to and ratios must be observed. It is not sufficient for the teacher of the class to take young people off site alone. The Headteacher must give approval, and the teacher must inform the office on how many young people are off site, the number and names of the staff accompanying them, the route, when the group are expected to leave and return and which member of staff is overall responsible on each occasion.
- A mobile telephone should be taken for emergency situations and one of the staff should be an appointed first aider

### **Competitions - (inter house/form/school/district etc.)**

- Courses should be graded for different abilities and ages.
- Participants must be counted out and back in .
- The 'base' should provide changing facilities, showers or washing facilities, hot drinks and shelter from inclement weather for young people and their spare, dry clothing.
- First Aid and transport must be on hand at the 'base' and at other points around the course. Staff must make their young people fully aware of these before the race commences.
- supervisory/marshalling presence throughout the course is essential

### **General guidance relevant to throwing, jumping and running events**

#### **Context**

- Damaged equipment should never be used and must be labelled and then removed from the school site as soon as possible to avoid injury.
- Equipment should be safely stored.
- Checks should be made of approach and release areas in throwing events, take off areas in jumping events and that all areas are stable, level, smooth and non-slip for running events.

#### **Organisation**

- Ensure distances and types of event are suitable for the age groups of young people.
- Young people need to be sufficiently mature before progressing from soft, light, low equipment to competition-style equipment.
- Regularly remind young people of required safety procedures as well as correct technical points.
- Restrict multi-event lessons to a maximum of four activities with only one to be a directly supervised throwing event.
- Keep non-participants in safety zones.

- Staff and officials in competitive situations (this includes school sports days) should be competent to supervise safely.

### **Throwing activities**

#### **Context**

- Provide the appropriate age-related equipment for example, soft for Primary age young people.
- Please note the use of metal javelins is not permitted at Primary level.
- Javelins should be placed flat on the ground or in a rack when not in use.
- All throwing implements need to be carried back to the throwing line and not thrown back or rolled back.

#### **Organisation**

- Ensure procedures for entering throwing zones, in lessons and in competitions, are known and reinforced.
- Ensure procedures for releasing throwing implements are adhered to.

**Jumping activities and events guidance** – see pages 215 – 216 in the afPE handbook

## **COMBAT ACTIVITIES**

Refer to afPE handbook pages 218 – 227

Schools are increasingly offering a range of combat activities to enrich and expand both curricular and school sport provision.

Although many combat activities are regulated by a recognised governing body, others are not, although this does not necessarily imply unsafe practice. Schools should follow the

guidance in the CBC 'Adults other than Teachers Supporting Learners' policy when appointing coaches/staff to teach combat sports and should ensure they have the appropriate accreditation.

The section in the afPE guidance is most comprehensive and deals with the following

combat activities:

- boxing
- fencing
- judo
- martial arts: aikido, karate, kendo, ju-jitsu, kung fu and taekwondo
- self-defence
- wrestling
- It gives information about qualifications, locations, equipment, PPE (personal protective equipment) and considerations for risk management.

## **DANCE ACTIVITIES, MOVEMENT AND**

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Refer to afPE handbook pages 228 -229

Although it might be assumed that dance activities are relatively hazard free in comparison to other areas of physical education, a comprehensive and informed risk assessment remains essential.

#### **People**

- Staff teaching dance need to be appropriately qualified or experienced
- Know how to prevent injury.
- Young people should work in bare feet where safe to do so; otherwise appropriate footwear should be used.
- Wearing socks (without shoes) on a wooden floor can cause slipping and are dangerous for any activity; staff should ensure young people do not work in this way.

**At New Oscott children can wear pumps or have bear feet for dance activities.**

### **GAMES ACTIVITIES**

Refer to afPE handbook pages 230 - 241

One of the most significant features of games activities, in terms of assessing and managing risk, is that they challenge participants to work in situations that are constantly changing, where the body may be still or moving. The degree of challenge faced will vary significantly, depending on the demands of each particular game and the level at which it is played.

The use of a range of equipment in games activities, including projectiles – some of which are very hard – and a range of implements, such as bats, sticks and rackets, further complicates the situation.

#### **General safe practice issues**

##### **People**

- Staff should have a current working knowledge and understanding of the rules, techniques and tactics of the activity they are supervising, teaching or officiating on.
- Know and apply rules stringently and consistently.
- Wear kit, footwear and additional clothing appropriate to the activity and weather conditions.

##### **Context**

- Equipment should be fit for purpose and meet young people's needs, abilities and developmental stages.
- Equipment should be of the correct size and weight for the age, ability and category of player.
- Goal posts and nets need to be secured so as not to topple over during play, have protective padding applied where relevant, taking note of NGB guidelines.
- Facilities should be regularly maintained to provide a safe working environment.

### **Organisation**

- Good organisation should ensure weather conditions do not affect safety.
- Rules should be applied consistently to provide a safe context.
- Progression should be provided through conditioned practices and mini games that match the age, experience, ability and confidence of all young people.

### **Additional safety information for invasion games**

'Invasion games' is a collective term applied to team games in which the objective is to attack and defend parts of the playing area with the aim of scoring more goals or points than the opposition. They include fast moving activity, frequently involve physical contact and in some games, hard implements.

The most common causes of accidents include:

- unintended collision with other players
- being struck by a hard implement or ball
- poor application of technique, such as when tackling

### **Additional safety information for net/wall games**

Net/wall games are comparatively safe compared to other types of game, but injuries do occur, predominantly involving eye damage.

The most common causes of accidents include:

- being struck by a racket or fast moving missile (ball, shuttlecock etc)
- tripping or slipping
- collision with obstacles, equipment or another player
- crossing a court when in use

### **Additional safety information for striking and fielding games**

Striking and fielding games involve throwing, catching, running, bowling and striking using an implement. Potential risk is increased when using a hard ball.

The most common causes of accidents include:

- being unintentionally struck with a fast moving hard ball
- being unintentionally struck with a bat or stick

- collision with another player or item of equipment such as a post

## **GYMNASTIC ACTIVITIES**

Refer to afPE handbook pages 242 - 247

The aim of gymnastics activities is to develop and refine a broad range of movement skills using the floor and a range of gymnastic apparatus.

It is recognised that work on apparatus provides a potentially more hazardous environment, with the majority of recorded incidents typically involving falls or misjudged descents from gymnastic equipment. However, work at a low level – on the floor or when using low level equipment and mats – requires equally rigorous risk management.

### **People**

- Staff should work at a level in gymnastics that they feel comfortable about their own expertise.
- Staff should not demonstrate gymnastic skills unless they are fully competent to do so and a suitable warm up has been done in preparation.
- An appropriate British Gymnastics (BG) coaching award is strongly advised for staff wishing to offer formal gymnastics, school through an out of- hours club when seeking to involve young people in, and prepare them for competitive involvement.
- Young people should be involved in the moving and assembling of apparatus from the earliest ages in a manner appropriate for their age, ability, physical development and safety awareness, this should always be monitored closely by the member of staff.
- Young people should work in bare feet where the surface and cleanliness of the floor allows it, it improves the aesthetic quality of movement and provides safe traction and positional awareness when in contact with the floor and apparatus, young people should not work in thick soled training shoes.
- Socks only should never be allowed, there will always be an unacceptable risk of slipping both on floor and apparatus.

**At New Oscott, we allow pumps to be worn or in bare feet for/gymnastics.**

- When providing physical support it is essential that child protection principles are followed; staff must explain to young people what will happen and what physical

contact may be made and support must be in accordance with common and accepted good practice.

### **Work in pairs and small groups**

Care should be taken that holding, supporting, catching, lifting and lowering techniques

which are characteristics of work in pairs and small groups, satisfies the basic anatomical and mechanical principles which determine such activities.

The fundamentals which should be incorporated into all teaching and learning programmes of this type include:

- being stable when supporting another person's weight
- not supporting excessive weight relative to one's own weight
- building on activities progressively
- holding and supporting at or near to the centre of gravity
- graduated practices and consolidation of techniques

### **Context**

- Apparatus should conform to appropriate standards, purchased from reliable sources and stored in a manner that is easily accessible to staff and young people.
- Apparatus should be inspected at least annually by a specialist company but the condition of the equipment should be monitored regularly by a member of staff responsible for, and experienced in, the teaching of gymnastics and checked visually by all staff prior to young people commencing work each lesson.
- Defective equipment should not be used: it needs to be identified, labelled and taken out of use so it cannot be reintroduced until repaired.
- All condemned equipment must be disposed of so that it cannot be introduced at all.
- Keeping condemned apparatus and equipment for alternative uses, such as benches for sitting on only creates a hazard of possible reintroduction that places a serious liability on the school.
- Springboards and trampettes ('minitramps') should not be used in Lower Schools unless the teacher concerned has an additional qualification in the use of this equipment.
- Benches should not be turned upside down unless they can be secured to prevent them from tipping over; a floor beam or a beam which can be secured to other pieces of apparatus is safer when teaching young people to traverse a narrow surface.

### **Organisation**

- Analysis of accident reports indicates that accidents often occur when young people are asked to perform activities beyond their capabilities and maturity.
- Staff should be fully aware of the need to provide suitable activities for age, stage and the maturation of all young people.

- A jumping activity should always take place from a flat surface; it is not advisable to jump from a wall bar, climbing frame, ladder, pole, beam etc.
- 'Pirates' or other chasing games on apparatus should not take place, putting young people in a competitive situation within apparatus lessons is dangerous and often leads to collision or fall accidents.

### **General rules when young people are handling gymnastic apparatus:**

- always lift the apparatus and mats not drag, push or pull them
- always find a safe route around other young people, apparatus and the hall when moving items of equipment
- lift apparatus together and lower apparatus gently
- always look where you are going - do not walk backwards
- never climb on or over apparatus when carrying another piece
- always work in pairs or groups to carry the equipment
- bend the knees, not the back when lifting pieces
- a member of staff will check the apparatus is securely fixed and safe to work on before young people are allowed to commence their work
- young people should not sit on the apparatus or mats when finishing work, this prevents other young people from safely dismounting from the apparatus

### **Mats**

- It is essential that both staff and young people understand the structure, function, capabilities and limitations of mats when used within the physical education programme.
- Mats are primarily designed to absorb impact for landings on the feet.
- Mats whatever their construction and size, should never be seen as fail-safe protection systems that supersede effective technique.
- Young people need to be aware that a correctly performed landing contributes most to preventing injury.
- A mat should be regarded as a piece of apparatus rather than a precaution against a fall (in the event of a fall it is unlikely that a young person will fall conveniently onto the mat!).
- It is better to arrange the apparatus and the demands on the young person so that there is a high expectation of safe performance rather than that the young person will fall.
- Mats should never be used to protect against the foreseeable outcome of poorly developed skill, such as anticipating that young people will fall from a height.

- Apparatus and tasks should be modified to accurately reflect young people's needs and capabilities, thereby minimising the risk of falling and executing poorly controlled dismounts.
- Mats should never be indiscriminately placed around the working area. Each mat should be placed with a specific purpose in mind. Young people should be encouraged to use different starting points and exits when using apparatus and good placing of mats can enhance this variety of pathways.
- Mats should be light enough for young people to handle easily preferably in pairs if the mats are lightweight. Four may need to carry them according to their size and strength in relation to the size and weight of the mat. Young people should avoid carrying a mat by holding the corners as it allows it to sag and over time this will damage the structure of it.
- Mats should be stable and lie flat to the floor, wherever possible mats should be stored in a horizontal position to prevent warping. If they are stored in a vertical position – placing them in the trolley face to face and then back to back will keep them more upright than if they are all stored facing the same way.

At New Oscott, mats are placed under the high bar activities. Children are made aware that mats are only there for a cushion on landing and will not prevent serious injury. Children are instructed to carry mats with 4 people on a corner. In UKS2, 2 children can carry the lighter mats, one at each end.

### **Gym Displays –and other public performances**

- Schools should not attempt to provide spectacular displays which would contravene any safety advice or which go beyond the capabilities of young people and staff.
- Extra care and attention must be taken on such occasions as young people are at their most vulnerable when trying to do their best for an audience that may also include members of their family.

### **HEALTH RELATED PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES**

Refer to afPE handbook pages 248 – 252

- all children and young people should engage in moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for at least 60 minutes and up to several hours a day
- vigorous intensity activities, including those that strengthen muscle and bone,

should be incorporated at least three days a week

- all children and young people should minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary (sitting) for extended periods

An understanding of Health Related Physical Activity should permeate in and through all aspects of the physical education curriculum, as well as being delivered through specific activities.

## **General Issues**

### **People**

Staff should:

- be qualified or experienced in the specific activities (QTS is sufficient to be able to teach in fitness suites, although additional professional learning is recommended)
- be familiar with the safe use of equipment
- teach safe, effective and efficient technique
- involve young people in their own learning that is relevant and meaningful to their lifestyle contexts
- review young people's medical records to ensure they are not at risk from rigorous or strenuous physical activity
- know the appropriateness of specific exercises and avoid those considered to be controversial or contraindicated, such as straight leg sit-ups or deep knee bends, and offer safe alternatives

Young people should:

- be taught how to use equipment safely and adjust loads to suit individuals
- be taught the mental, physical and social benefits to be gained through maintaining a healthy, active lifestyle appropriate to their age, stage and ability

### **Context**

Equipment should be:

- stored safely and securely when not in use
- checked regularly and maintained in good condition by specialist contractors
- compatible with the age, size, strength, ability and experience of the young people involved

The facility should:

- be hazard-free and conducive to safe practice
- be secured to prevent unauthorised access where specific equipment is available

Organisation should:

- focus on quality of technique rather than the quantity of exercise
- develop activity over time, following carefully planned and graduated progression

## **Specific Activities**

Advice and guidance in relation to specific activities and such as warming up, cooling down and resistance activities can be found in the afPE handbook on pages 250 and 251.

### **Fitness Testing Organisation**

- A thorough and relevant warm up is essential prior to performing fitness tests.
- Maximal tests such as the Multistage Fitness Test ('bleep test') and Abdominal Curl Conditioning Test were designed for elite adult performers, requiring participants to exercise to exhaustion.

These tests can be problematic to use with groups of young people for the following reasons:

- they can impose inappropriate physiological demands on developing and immature bodily systems
- self-imposed and peer pressure can encourage participants to exercise beyond safe limits
- screening of participants is required prior to the test to ensure that only those with good health take part
- close and continuous monitoring of participants is essential to ensure they can cope with the demands of the test

See the afPE handbook page 252 for advice regarding alternative testing methods and staff personal use of fitness rooms.

## **PHYSICALLY ACTIVE PLAY IN THE**

### **SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

Refer to afPE handbook pages 253 – 255

Opportunities for physical play in the school environment may take a number of forms,

depending on the age and developmental stage of the young people.

Schools should have in place a clearly communicated policy relating to all aspects of play for which they have responsibility. The information below and the more detailed information provide in the afPE guidance will assist in compiling a policy with a view to

ensuring consistency and safe practice across all aspects of play.

#### **People**

- Staff with a responsibility for supervising play should be suitable qualified, trained

and competent to do so safely.

- Young people should not use the equipment unless supervised by an adult who will be a school employee.

### **Context**

Schools may wish to provide outdoor play equipment. This equipment can be expensive and if safer surfacing is to be included it becomes very expensive. It is important that

young people have the opportunity to climb, hang, swing, balance and rotate, but this experience should primarily be given in the physical education programme where attention can be given to the safe use of apparatus.

If, after these considerations, the school feels that outdoor play equipment will enrich the environment and provide opportunities for young people to develop skills, the following conditions should be fulfilled:

- equipment should comply with relevant British/European standards, such as EN1176
  - where a formal standard doesn't exist, equipment should be purchased and installed by a reputable contractor who can safety test it before its use. Schools should seek written confirmation of the safety tests results
  - schools should use API (Association of Play Industries) approved members when purchasing and installing play equipment or companies who have the 'kite mark' of the BSI in relation to the equipment to be purchased
  - the equipment should not normally be higher than 2.5m (1.4m in Nursery schools)
  - equipment should be sited on a level surface on an "apron" off the playground, it should be sited away from walls and railings, kerbs and other obstructions
  - equipment should not be sited on grass, unless it is below 600mm in height for example 'an adventure trail or trim trail'
  - equipment which is above 600mm in height, requires a safer surface, schools should seek advice from the equipment manufacturer about the regulations for impact absorbing surfaces
  - schools are advised not to install 'loose fill' (bark chippings) without fully understanding the high level of maintenance that such a surface requires
  - it is advisable to put a 'wear surface' under low level equipment sited on grass to get maximum use all year round
  - as a general rule there should be at least 1.8m clear around every piece of static equipment
  - the use of everyday items on the playground e.g. used car tyres needs careful consideration – they can often be unsuitable, dirty and pose hygiene risks, for example, stagnant water collecting in car tyre rims
  - a 'School Notifiable Project' form should be submitted to the CBC Property and Assets Team for approval before installation takes place (maintained schools)
- Installation of play equipment may need planning permission and it is vital that an application is done in good time before planned installation dates

- at least three companies should be considered and quotes for equipment and installation sought
- approval for self-building will not normally be given

### **Organisation**

- Supervisors must limit the number of young people on the apparatus at any one time so that overcrowding does not occur.
- Notices should be posted to discourage 'outside' users e.g. younger siblings of preschool age and use during other school events.
- Parents should be made aware that the apparatus is for use during school time only and only when supervised by a member of the school staff.
- Headteachers should arrange for daily and weekly visual inspections to be carried out.
- Annual inspections and maintenance are the responsibility of the school and Headteachers need to arrange these with a reputable company (CBC no longer does this on a school's behalf).