

PESSPA – Physical Education, School Sport, and Physical Activity

[Safe Practice: in Physical Education, School Sport and Physical Activity - Association for Physical Education \(afpe.org.uk\)](https://www.afpe.org.uk)

Summary of Safe Practice from Association for Physical Education.

Personal Effects, Including Jewellery and Cultural or Religious Adornments – Pupils

- 2.14.8 A clear and consistent policy for the removal of personal effects should be in place. The Association for Physical Education (afPE) strongly recommends the practice of removing all personal effects at the commencement of every lesson to establish a safe working environment. This applies to all ear and body piercings, including retainer and expander earrings.
- 2.14.9 Staff are not required to remove or tape up earrings for pupils. Taping over ear and body piercings may offer a measure of protection in some physical activity situations, where individuals are required to work in their own space. However, the amount of tape used needs to be sufficient to prevent the piercing from penetrating, for example, the bone behind the ear should an unintentional blow be received from someone or some item of equipment, such as a ball.
- 2.14.10 Where a school accepts taping, the teacher supervising the group has the legal responsibility to ensure the taping is fit for purpose. **If the teacher considers the taping to be unsatisfactory to permit safe participation, they will need to make adaptations in terms of how the pupil takes part in the practical aspects of the lesson.** (examples of alternative participation are given in the paragraph)
- 2.14.11 Exclusion from a lesson should be avoided at all times if a pupil is unable to remove personal effects or the taping is deemed unsatisfactory.
- 2.14.16 Religious artefacts need to be removed or made safe. Health and safety law would usually take precedence over equality law because of the implication of “safety of others” ...generally, to attempt to succeed in making a claim on the grounds of human rights, there would be a commonly acknowledged religious obligation on a follower to wear the jewellery. However, where the safety of others is compromised from the wearing of such an item, the claim is unlikely to be successful.
- 2.14.19 Sensory aids: The decision as to whether it is safe or possible to wear glasses or hearing aids will usually be determined by the nature of the activity. Activities involving physical contact and full game situations may not be appropriate...Where sensory aids need to be worn, the activity can be amended, for example, by providing more space and time or using a soft ball instead of a hard one.
- **2.14.20 Long hair should always be tied back with a suitably soft item to prevent entanglement in apparatus and to prevent vision being obscured.**
- **2.14.21 Nails need to be sufficiently short to prevent injury to self and others.**

Clothing or “Kit” – Pupils

- 2.14.22 Pupils should ‘...wear clothing that is **fit for purpose** according to the PESSPA activity, environment, and weather conditions. From the earliest age, they should change into suitable PESSPA clothing (or ‘kit’) in order that they may participate safely and securely.
- 2.14.23 Clothing for PESSPA should be well suited to its function. For indoor sessions, it should be light and allow good freedom of movement, without being baggy or loose. Loose clothing in gymnastics, for example, may catch on equipment or cause injury. Any items of clothing for PESSPA, including those of cultural significance, need to be relatively close-fitting, made safe, or removed for reasons of individual safety.
- 2.14.25 For classroom-based movement in a limited space (e.g., ‘active’ maths activities), it can be acceptable for pupils to remain in their everyday uniform...
- 2.14.26 Pupils should wear sufficient and appropriate clothing for the weather conditions in order to minimise the likelihood of injury or hypothermia in cold conditions, and illness or heatstroke in very hot conditions.
- 2.14.27 When participating in hot weather, sun protection is advisable....
- 2.14.28 Clothing for outdoor lessons and activities should allow good freedom of movement, but will also need to offer some insulation from cold weather in winter months, when additional layers for warmth are advisable...

- 2.14.29 talks about the Daily Mile – we do not yet have that as a feature of the curriculum. It is, however, worth noting the footwear element.
- **2.14.30 ...Staff should consider safe practice and recommend that pupils remove hooded sweatshirts during contact or non-contact invasion games or similar to ensure they have adequate peripheral vision.**
- **2.14.31 If pupils arrive to a PEESPA session with clothing deemed to be inappropriate, strategies need to be applied to make their inclusion safe, or to limit the extent of the activity element of their participation.**

Some Activity-Specific Clothing Considerations

- 2.14.32...decide whether a fabric that reduced friction on gymnastics apparatus is appropriate as it could cause slipping, particularly if working at height or in inverted positions.
- 2.14.33 refers to swimming – we are currently bound by the requirements of the provider and the pool.

Footwear

- **2.14.37 Footwear that is fit for purpose is essential for pupil safety. Security of footing is crucial in all situations. All students need to change into footwear that is appropriate for the lesson location and for the PEESPA activity being taught. Pupils need to wear footwear that is capable of transmitting feel for the movement and the surface they are working on.**
- 2.14.38 Outdoor footwear should give effective grip and support and reasonable protection for outdoor PEESPA activities.
- 2.14.41 Footwear is advisable for indoor games activities due to the higher frequency of sudden stopping and changing direction quickly where toes can be stubbed, and games that require a ball to be kicked. Training Shoes, which provide good traction, will often prove effective for a range of indoors games and will also support the feet when carrying out activities that are largely high impact.
- **2.14.42 Pupils should never participate in socks (or tights) on polished wooden or tiled surfaces as the level of grip provided is poor.** Well-fitting socks may be acceptable on a carpet surface if traction is not affected, and transfer between carpet and wooden surfaces is not required.
- **2.14.43 Pupils should never be excluded from taking part in a lesson due to not having the correct footwear. Every effort should be made to involve the pupil in a much of the physical part of the lesson as possible. And to provide alternative activity-related tasks when this is not possible.**
- **2.14.44 Pupils should be (systematically) taught to take responsibility for preparing and checking that all of their kit (clothing and footwear) is fit for purpose for the lesson being undertaken and that it is safe.**
- **2.14.45 Systems should be in place to ensure pupils (and staff) regularly check the safety of their footwear.**

A Note on Temperatures

No minimum classroom temperature set by the DfE

The School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 (which applies to maintained schools) do not specify minimum classroom temperatures for any parts of a school. Similarly, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (which applies to academies) does not specify a minimum classroom temperature.

Prior to 2012, legal requirements for minimum temperature in maintained schools were set out in the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999. These no longer apply, however it specified that classroom temperature should be at least 18 degrees.

Essentially, the Department for Education (DfE) does not specify minimum temperatures for classrooms in England.

However, school has a duty of care for health and safety.

It should also be noted the Health and Safety Executive says that although the law does not state a minimum or maximum temperature, the temperature in workrooms should normally be at least:

- 16 degrees
- 13 degrees if much of the work involves rigorous physical effort.