



HEALTH AND SAFETY IN SCHOOLS AND RISK ASSESSMENTS

Reviewed annually by Senior Management
Last reviewed August 2024

Signed _____

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Jason O'Connor (Managing Director)

Risk Management in PE and School Sport

Risk assessment is a legal requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992. In the context of physical education it requires both the assessment and, if necessary, further control of any significant risks which may cause harm to pupils and others. The assessment of risk should be applied wherever foreseeable risks or hazards may occur. A hazard is anything that may cause harm such as sharp projections from furniture stored in and around an indoor hall while a risk is the chance that someone may be harmed or injured by the hazard. The role of responsible staff is to decide whether a hazard is significant and to determine and implement the precautions necessary to eliminate or minimise the risks present.

Raising standards in physical education requires providing tasks of appropriate challenge within acceptable levels of risk. As with all practical areas of experience, PE involves some degree of risk. It is the term 'risk' and the likelihood of an accident happening that causes the greatest anxiety.

Every young person has the right to experience physical education and 'out of school hours' sports in a safe and healthy environment. However, neither can be completely free from the possibility of injury because they are practical activities that involve moving at speed and changing direction often in a confined space.

Through a comprehensive system of risk assessment, steps can be taken to ensure the health and safety of pupils.

There are three main types of risk assessment:

- Generic risk assessment – general principles which apply to an activity regardless of where it may take place.
- Site or activity specific risk assessment – usually carried out for each work area or activity with specific consideration of the people involved, the context and the organisation of the activity.
- On-going risk assessment – carried out while an activity or event is taking place, taking into account issues such as illness, changes in weather or ineffective officiating.

In attempting to manage the balance between appropriate challenge and an acceptable level of risk, there are four factors that have a direct bearing on this balance:

- The people involved.
- The context of the activity/learning balance.
- The organisation of the activity.
- The teaching /learning environment.

Please see our 'Risk Assessment for PE Delivery' Policy for a generic in-school version widely followed by staff.

Elms Sport in Schools Coaches must:

1. Have a duty of care for the children they are coaching (i.e. a responsibility for their safety)

2. Follow three basic duties to:

- Know and to follow the School's policy and guidelines for health and safety.
- Pass on information regarding any health and safety concerns to the school office.
- Do whatever is in their power to prevent further harm arising from the reported incident.

3. Possess particular competencies to be responsible for groups:

- Expertise (qualifications/expertise/competence) across the range of activities they teach in terms of technical knowledge about the activities, progressive practices, safety and knowledge of rules in order to coach effectively.
- Observation and analysis of skills in order to identify anything that is potentially unsafe and respond to it.
- Class management/organisation/control in order to stop an activity immediately if it is considered to be potentially hazardous.

4. Have sufficient knowledge of the pupil's medical and individual needs.

Pupils should:

- Be involved in their own safety.
- Develop competence in movement, techniques, skills and tactics.
- Be confident in their movement activities.
- Behave appropriately so as not to create risk situations.
- Be appropriately supervised as they progress towards more independent activities.

Facilities in which the activity takes place should:

- Provide hazard-free areas.
- Be of sufficient size to meet the demands of the activity.
- Be regularly maintained
- Be used appropriately

Equipment and clothing should be:

- Of an appropriate size and material to suit the age and ability of an individual.
- Regularly maintained
- Inspected annually
- Regularly checked for wear and tear.
- Checked before use.
- Stored safely.
- Disposed of effectively when condemned.
- Used for the purpose it was designed.

Issues Relating to the Organisation of the Activity

Preparation involves:

- A clear lesson structure.
- Adequate warm up based on safe exercise principles and appropriate to the age and experience of the pupils.
- A knowledge of the pupils, including their performance potential.
- A full understanding of all policies linked to H&S including 'Extreme Weather' and 'The Elms A&I procedure'.

Coaching, class management and organisation should ensure that:

- Tasks match pupil capability.
- Methodology is appropriate to the risk issues within the activity.
- Progressive practices enable improvement to occur.
- Pupils are involved in the learning of these progressive practices.
- Pupils are matched according to size, experience, ability and confidence.
- Regular and approved practice is followed.
- Accurate demonstrations are provided.
- Support techniques are known and applied.

Environment and equipment

Working environments for physical education, school sport and physical activity include:

- Gymnasiums and school halls
- Swimming pools
- Playgrounds
- Playing fields and all weather surfaces
- School grounds

Also some schools may have access to some of these working environments offsite:

- Outdoor centres
- Swimming pools
- Leisure centres
- Village halls