

Jewellery in PE

There have been a number of calls to the Health & Safety helpline recently regarding taping earrings for PE. The issue also came up recently at Health & Safety training for Headteachers and has also featured in the recent Health & Safety Executive Newsletter.

Therefore detailed below is clarification:

Primary Schools:

- Generic risk assessments for PE Activities (Athletics, Dance, Games and Gymnastics) were issued in August 2009. These replaced the PE guidance in the Primary Schools Code of Practice 25.
- The assessments require that all jewellery is to be removed. They do not allow for taping as detailed in the Primary Code. This means that if pupils cannot take their earrings out they will have to sit out PE until they can remove their earrings.
- This policy must be applied within all Community and V/C Schools.
- Academy, Foundation or V/A Schools do not have to follow this policy if they do not wish. However if these Schools buy a Health & Safety Service and allow taping or any other variation in the policy this will need to be reflected in their risk assessments. It is advised that these Schools follow the advice they are buying in to.
- For any Community or V/C Schools who have not been aware of this policy until now, if there is a difficulty implementing this policy with immediate effect the Heateacher can allow taping of newly pierced ears until the end of the Spring term 2014 only. The PE teacher in charge may still decide that taping is not appropriate for certain PE activities. With effect from the start of the Summer term 2014 the policy should be implemented. Hopefully this will allow enough time for this to be communicated to parents.
- It is advised that all Schools remind parents of this policy towards the end of the summer term aswell so any pupils who plan to get their ears pierced can hopefully do this at the start of the summer holidays.

Secondary Schools:

- The Code of Practice 11 Safety Precautions in Physical Education (October 2002) is still in place and allows for the taping of newly pierced ears where the PE teacher deems it safe.
- The *Association for Physical Education* Guide 'Safe Practice in Physical Education and Sport' also contains guidance on 'making the situation safe'.
- When the Essex County Council Code of Practice on PE is revised it is likely that the policy of 'all jewellery to be removed' will be put in place for Community and V/C Schools.
- Academy, Foundation or V/A Schools can develop their own policy on this, although where they buy a health and safety service they are advised to follow the health and safety advice they are buying in to.

Date: January 2014

Corporate Health & Safety. 0333 013 9818 / hs@essex.gov.uk

Special Schools:

- Special Schools which teach PE to Primary level should follow the above Primary Schools policy and guidance.
- Special Schools which teach PE to Secondary level should follow the above Secondary School guidance.

For information link below to the HSE newsletter which contained the article on jewellery in PE (page 11).

[Health & Safety Newsletter – Winter 2013](#)