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COVID-19: Interpreting the Government Guidance in a PESSPA Context

A practical self-review tool for risk assessment

July 2020

Context Introduction:

This document, updated in July 2020, in line with the DfE Guidance on the Full Opening of Schools in September, is designed to support the planned wider re-opening of schools and facilities afPE has prepared this document to support the Physical Education, School Sport and Physical Activity (education based) workforce.

Leaders are reminded to always follow Government and employer's guidelines. The ultimate decision about pupil safety will depend on context and geography, and is therefore for individual headteachers to make, in consultation with their governing body. External facilities can also be used in line with government guidance for the use of, and travel to and from, those facilities.

Schools have the flexibility to decide how physical education, sport and physical activity will be provided whilst following the measures in their system of controls. Pupils should be kept in consistent groups, sports equipment thoroughly cleaned between each use by different individual groups, and contact sports avoided. Outdoor sports should be prioritised where possible maximising distancing between pupils and paying scrupulous attention to cleaning and hygiene.

We know all colleagues want children and young people (C&YP) to be safe and well and it is also important that the workforce is protected and safe. Considerations regarding PPE (that have been available to special school staff and some mainstream schools, with pupils with high level medical and physical needs) and hand washing facilities must also be considered as part of whole school consideration around effective infection, protection and control. Schools are able to work with external coaches, clubs and organisations for curricular and extra-curricular activities where they are satisfied that this is safe to do so. Schools should consider carefully how such arrangements can operate within their wider protective measures.

Below are three key questions you may want to consider in your planning:

1. Have you reviewed your risk assessments before re-commencing physical education?
2. Does your teaching activity meet the Government requirements? www.gov.uk/coronavirus
3. Are your teaching plans consistent with the requirement of any whole school/employer expectations which may have developed in response to the national guidance?

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Outdoor sports should be prioritised

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where possible, and large indoor spaces used where it is not, maximising distancing between pupils and paying scrupulous attention to cleaning and hygiene. This is particularly important in a sports setting because of the way in which people breathe during exercise. External facilities can also be used in line with government guidance for the use of, and travel to and from, those facilities.

Key principles for supporting safe PESSPA:

- Clean frequently touched surfaces
- Wash hands frequently as part of a clear hygiene regime
- Minimise contact
- Ensure good respiratory hygiene

Ensure pupils are regularly informed about what good hygiene is. Decide the approach to enhance hygiene (for example, toilet use, hand washing) and decide on the policy related to usually shared items (for example, practical equipment).

Ensure clear notices that build on NHS and Government guidance are on display, avoid information over load or the message will get lost. Posters are available for education settings from www.gov.uk/coronavirus.

Areas to consider	Suggested practice	Implications for the school/ department
Learning	• Pupils should be kept in class groups for PE. • Agree what learning is appropriate (including the relationship between face-to-face and remote education), for example, identify curriculum priorities, agree revised expectations and required adjustments in practical lessons, and any approaches to 'catch up' support. • Ensure you have considered the impact on staff and pupils with protected characteristics, including race and disability, in developing your approach. • Team games which involve contact should be avoided.	

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Areas to consider	Suggested practice	Implications for the school/ department
Protective Measures and Hygiene	• Decide the physical and organisational structures needed to limit risks and limit movement around the building(s) (for example, classroom layouts, entry and exit points, staggered starts and break times, class sizes, lunch queues, use of communal staff areas). • Agree how safety measures and messages will be implemented and displayed around school. • Ensure there are always sufficient tissues available for ensuring good respiratory hygiene – i.e. 'catch it, bag it, bin it' approach.	
Changing areas	• If used, these should be cleaned after every lesson – Wiping of surfaces is a reasonable approach. • Attending school with PE kit on will limit the need to use changing rooms. • Ensure sufficient standard cleaning equipment is available in all changing areas. • Social distancing measures still apply and marking out areas which cannot be used will help you to manage the area effectively.	

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Areas to consider	Suggested practice	Implications for the school/ department
Teaching areas	• Encourage outdoor PE and PA to support social distancing. • Students should work in their own zone which may be marked out, depending on allocated teaching space. PE outside could be preferable to indoor PE.	
PE Clothing	• The school will need to agree on modifications/adaptions on clothing expectations. It may be that you would like your students to attend in their PE kit for the whole day on the day when they have a timetabled physical education lesson in order to limit or avoid the use of the changing areas. This is a whole school decision. You may want to consider back up clothing for when the weather is poor.	
PE equipment	• Equipment will need to be cleaned between each use. It should be noted that this a whole school issue and all departments/subjects will be facing the same issues so this should be a whole school solution. • You will need to make a decision on which equipment is easier to build into lessons and take into account the cleaning regime at the end of the sessions. • Hand washing routines will mean more equipment is available to pupils, however it is often easier to plan for and discourage the sharing of equipment to mitigate against virus transmission.	

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Areas to consider	Suggested practice	Implications for the school/ department
Washing hands/ hand sanitiser	• Pay scrupulous attention to cleaning and hygiene. • Opportunities for handwashing before and after the lesson must be available. • Hand sanitiser should be readily available for students to use throughout the day. This is in addition to regular handwashing.	

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afPE is firmly committed to ensuring students can participate in purposeful physical education and physical activity at this time. Teaching physical education at the moment will not be like before, or the preferred model. However, by making adaptations we believe some meaningful work can be undertaken if it is planned well and protective measures and social distancing are applied consistently across your setting.

We are also committed to ensuring that the workforce is protected, feels safe and has access to the most up to date guidance.

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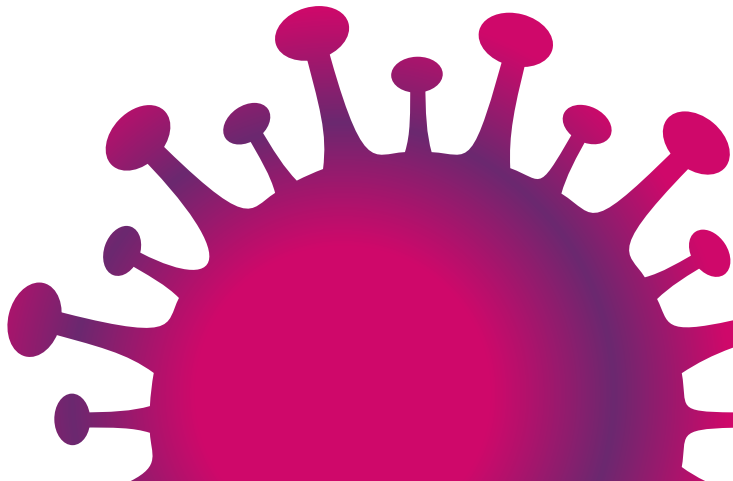

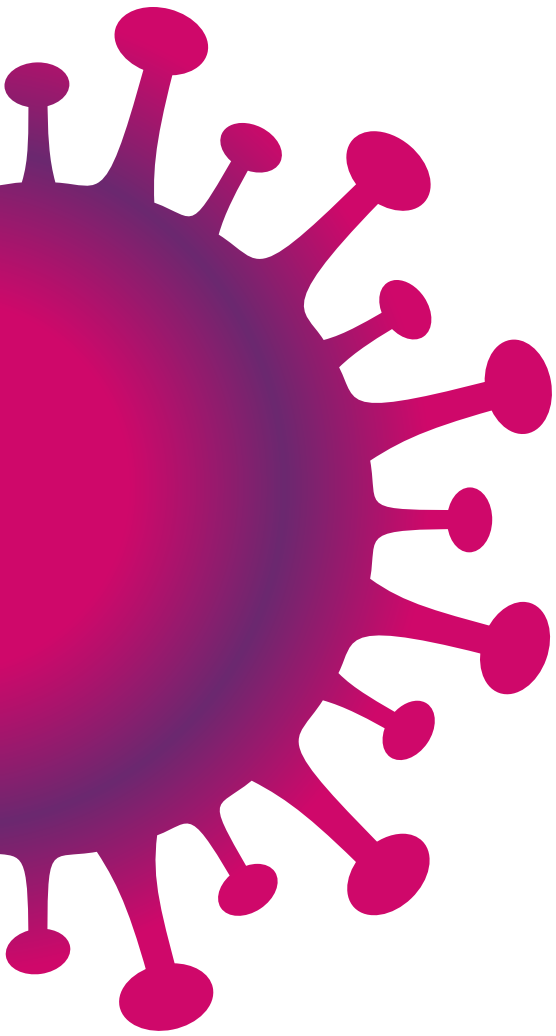

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