

Wearing of Jewellery in Schools by Pupils

School Advice Note

The wearing of jewellery is normally restricted for health and safety reasons during PE lessons.

Recommendations to schools on jewellery

The wearing of jewellery, earring and ear-studs (metal or plastic) should not be permitted on safety grounds during physical education lessons and other sporting activities such as out of hours school learning or competitive fixtures. This includes body piercings such as tongue studs or belly button jewellery.

These items represent a potential hazard not only to the wearer but also to other children. Medical advice confirms that any jewellery worn in physical education lessons is an unnecessary risk and should be avoided at all times. Serious accidents have occurred as a result of contact between pupils wearing earrings or studs and other pupils or equipment, thus damaging the ear, or where items of jewellery have caught in apparatus and torn the ear lobe.

Head teachers are advised to prohibit the wearing of earrings and ear-studs in all aspects of physical activity where these could present a hazard to the wearer and to others.

Pupils should be encouraged to leave items of jewellery and earrings at home on days when they have physical education lessons.

Newly pierced ears can take a period of up to six weeks before sleepers and studs can be removed. Head teachers are advised to remind parents that ears should be pierced at the start of the summer holidays to allow sufficient time for earrings to be safely removed. This may be communicated via a school prospectus or newsletter.

Head teachers are advised that pupils who are not able to remove earrings (as these may be newly pierced) should not actively participate in physical education for their own and others safety. In this circumstance a pupil will be asked to undertake the role of coach, official or other learning activity that is relevant.

Parents are encouraged to actively work with schools in helping to minimise disruption to the physical education curriculum. Parents can help by ensuring that school guidance on jewellery is adhered to and that ears are pierced at the start of the summer holidays to allow maximum healing time.

Head teachers are asked to note that they should not ask parents to assume responsibility or liability for the outcome of any future injury arising from the wearing of an earring or ear-stud since any such undertaking cannot be legally valid.

Further advice can be found in the following publication:
Association for Physical Education Safe Practice in Physical Education & School Sport held in school)