

HOW CAN PHYSICAL EDUCATION SUPPORT THE NATIONAL LITERACY STRATEGY?

All pupils have an entitlement to the whole curriculum and the key to this is the development of competent language and literacy skills.

“Literacy unites the important skills of reading and writing. It also involves speaking and listening, which, although they are not separately identified in the Framework, are an essential part of it. Good oral work enhances pupils’ understanding of language in both oral and written forms and of the way language can be used to communicate. Thus the framework contributes substantially to the development of speaking and listening. It is also relevant to teaching across the whole National Curriculum” (The National Literacy Strategy – framework for teaching).

This is not about using precious PE time for ‘talking’ as a substitute for activity. Instead it seeks to raise awareness of the contribution PE can make to literacy through the teaching of physical skills and activities.

Of the four key aspects of literacy, their importance in PE lessons is:

**LISTENING
SPEAKING
READING
WRITING**

LISTENING

“the ability to absorb, understand and respond to information” (dictionary definition).

Listening is key in PE for:

- ⇒ safety
- ⇒ to follow instructions – understand and respond to instructions
- ⇒ to know what the task is – to understand the task and terminology used to express it
- ⇒ to improve – to act on advice given
- ⇒ to learn from others – ideas exchanged, team tactics, peer evaluation
- ⇒ for self esteem and confidence
- ⇒ for enjoyment

INSTRUCTIONS

SIMPLE – “stop” – “stand still” – “freeze”

COMPLEX – “stand up and run to the yellow line”

INSTRUCTIONS WHILST MOVING – warm-up activities build up listening skills – for example, children jogging in the space tell them to touch the floor, then go on jogging, touch the floor, clap above the head, three jumping jacks, go on jogging and so on likewise the “bean game”

EXPOSITION:

TEACHING A SKILL – the use of words and demonstration (teacher or pupil) in PE links listening skills and observation skills – one supports the other. In PE the two skills are inextricably linked – but words can add:

- ⇒ the relative importance of constituent parts of a skill
- ⇒ clarify order in which body parts move to perform skill
- ⇒ emphasis of safety factors
- ⇒ use of technical language
- ⇒ answer questions

TEACHING POINTS:

TO ENHANCE PERFORMANCE: listen to and act upon a teaching point – words translated into a physical skill.

LISTENING TO PEERS: in a whole class, in a group, with a partner

planning	exchanging ideas making choices taking decisions
evaluation	evaluation of others' work constructive criticism offering advice

SUPPORTING LISTENING SKILLS:

- ⇒ value listening skills – verbal praise**
- ⇒ positive recognition of those who listen carefully**
- ⇒ for the youngest children action and words together**
- ⇒ repeat instructions as activities are happening**
- ⇒ question to gauge listening skills/understanding of instructions**
- ⇒ observe pupils' activity – to see whether they have listened understood and acted upon advice given**
- ⇒ in children's evaluation ask them to include "was the task answered"**
- ⇒ have clear procedures and high expectations that pupils will listen to instructions and teaching points.**

PLAYGROUNDS AND FIELDS

- ⇒ have good procedures, be consistent in the use of whistle/voice (safety)
- ⇒ call the children together for instruction and whole class teaching points – ensure the group is inclusive of all
- ⇒ ensure the boundaries for activity are clear – lines, cones, discs
- ⇒ when children are expected to listen – face them away from what is going on beyond the fence
- ⇒ consider weather conditions:

<i>cold</i>	vigorous activity – minimum of standing/ listening some instructions can be given in the classroom
<i>windy</i>	voice is blown away – call the children together
<i>sunny</i>	ensure the sun is not in children’s eyes when they fact a demonstration/listening to instructions
<i>hot</i>	span of concentration – use shaded area when children are required to listen to instructions/exposition

SWIMMING POOL:

- ⇒ establish expectation, importance of listening in a pool before going to the pool (safety)
- ⇒ have good procedures in accordance with the pool guidelines for gaining children’s attention, be consistent in the use of whistle/voice
- ⇒ speak, slowly and clearly – ensure children are facing teacher/instructor, repeat as necessary
- ⇒ give each child individual feedback/praise at some point in the lesson – children will listen for it to be them

SPEAKING:

“the act of expressing ideas in words; conversation, discussion” (dictionary definition)

REPETITION:

by pupils of –

- ⇒ key points**
- ⇒ instructions**
- ⇒ new technical language**

QUESTIONING:

pupils given the opportunity –

- ⇒ to ask questions – to seek clarification**
- ⇒ to pose questions – to extend knowledge/ understanding**
- ⇒ to answer questions – recall previous work, technical terms**

PLAN, ORGANISE AND ARRANGE:

- ⇒ activities giving clear instructions to others e.g. setting out apparatus in gymnastics**

EXPLORE AND DEVELOP:

- ⇒ ideas with others – discussion, choice, decision, words into actions**

EVALUATE:

- ⇒ the work of self, partner, group, or class with increased use of technical terms**

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPEAKING:

- ⇒ time to ask and answer questions**
- ⇒ encourage answers in sentences**
- ⇒ give pupils opportunities for planning together
express ideas – set a time limit on it**
- ⇒ encourage discussion as ideas are tried out**
- ⇒ talk to groups as they plan – encourage each
child to contribute**
- ⇒ time for appropriate evaluation – use of
technical terms**
- ⇒ develop speaking and listening skills together**
- ⇒ a time for listening, a time for action and a time
for speaking**

WORDS:

In the literacy strategy there are lists of common words and specific phonics work for each key stage. The literacy strategy is prescriptive and sets out clearly what children should learn in each term. In order to support this work, words used in PE that correspond with this can be emphasised. The idea to be conveyed to the children is that literacy is part of every aspect of life.

RECEPTION:

- ⇒ using words and emphasising initial consonants**
- ⇒ common activities such as run, jump, hop, skip, the children should see these words written in the classroom, in the hall**
- ⇒ first letter in a different colour run, jump, hop**
- ⇒ *captions and labels* – labelling the apparatus**
- ⇒ *the alphabet* – a is for aim, b is for bat, c is for catch and so on adding words to the PE alphabet as they occur**

KEY STAGE 1:

Year 1

- ⇒ **using words with short vowel sounds – in like groups**
- ⇒ **mat, bat, pat hit, fit, kit, fun, run**
- ⇒ **using directional words – forward etc**
- ⇒ **using words with common consonant clusters – skip, climb, twist, travel, swim, ball**
- ⇒ **using common colour words – blue, red etc**
- ⇒ **words with long vowel phonemes – feet, stool, play, high**

Year 2

- ⇒ **words with vowel phonemes – bounce, throw, star (as in shape)**
- ⇒ **common spelling patterns – sport, floor, crawl, caught**
- ⇒ **compound words – headstand, handstand, cartwheel**
- ⇒ **multi-syllabic words – partner, straddle, asymmetrical**
- ⇒ **Common prefixes – unsteady**
- ⇒ **words from other languages – quiet, somersault**

Year ½ - part of the range of work is being familiar with signs, labels, captions, lists and instructions

- ⇒ **display common PE words, in the form of labels e.g. for apparatus, lists of equipment**
- ⇒ **instructions verbal – listening well enough to follow instructions**
- ⇒ **following written instructions for a simple game – year 2**
- ⇒ **more complex vocabulary including technical PE words pupils using them through speech and writing – symmetrical, opponent, dribbling (with a ball)**
- ⇒ **using descriptive words – squashy landing, resilient landing**
- ⇒ **adding “ed” “ing” doubling the consonant or not e.g. running, jumping, travelling**
- ⇒ **degrees e.g. high, higher, highest**
- ⇒ **following teacher’s written instructions for a task, game or activity**
- ⇒ **writing instructions for a game – so that others can follow them**
- ⇒ **making collections of words that belong to the game or activity featured in the current unit of work**

DANCE:

Dance has wonderful opportunities for imagery and figurative language, the use of rhyme and poetry. The latter are both an integral part of the literacy strategy across all years.

- ⇒ action words – for instance – whirling, twirling, slithering all contain common letter combinations that children will be able to recognise and this will reinforce their learning.**

- ⇒ dances based on class stories or familiar books – use the pictures and the words**

- ⇒ children’s writing and poetry could be a starting point for a dance**