

“Safety Guidelines for Physical Education Key Learning Area for Hong Kong Schools” (2011)
(Updated on 2 May 2024)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Q: Please highlight the major changes of the “Safety Guidelines for Physical Education Key Learning Area for Hong Kong Schools” (2011).

A: The “Safety Guidelines for Physical Education Key Learning Area for Hong Kong Schools” (2011) is a very important reference material. Physical Education (PE) teachers and persons who are responsible for planning/conducting physical activities should study it carefully. Based on its 1999 edition, some updates and rearrangement of information were made. The major changes include:

(1) Added the following guidelines in Chapter 1:		
Basic Measures	The required professional qualifications of PE teachers, instructors, coach and persons in-charge of co-curricular physical activities	Refer to 1 to 4, Part I - Professional Qualifications of Chapter 1
Roof Playground	The points to note on approval for use, structural requirements, supervision of pupils, the number of students allowed and the height of the metal fence when organising students activity on roof or balcony for PE or recreational purposes	Refer to 1 and 2, Part II - Administrative Considerations of Chapter 1
List of First Aid Items	The revised list of basic first aid items, that included the recommendation of installing Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)	Refer to 6 and Appendix I, Part II - Administrative Considerations of Chapter 1
Precaution for the Spread of Diseases	Measures to stop the spread of diseases by mosquitoes; antisepticise the sports equipment, venue and changing rooms in intervals, etc	Refer to 16 to 22 and Appendix V, Part II - Administrative Considerations of Chapter 1
Activity Cancellation or Postponement	Circumstances that schools should suspend, cancel or postpone the physical activities conducted outside school premise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Education Bureau announces suspension of classes; 	Refer to 10, Part IV - Environment and Facilities of Chapter 1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hong Kong Observatory issues the Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal; • The Hong Kong Observatory issues Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or above; • The Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) reaches 10+ at the activity zone; • Serious flooding in the district at which the school or the activity venue is located; and • The Hong Kong Observatory issues the Thunder Warning Signal (not applicable to indoor activities). 	
<p>(2) The “List of Events Suitable for School Athletic Meet” (Refer to Chapter 3 - “Athletics Meet”) and “List of Events Suitable for School Swimming Gala” (refer to Chapter 12 - “Swimming Gala”) were deleted</p>		
<p>(3) Added guidelines on “Measures to Avoid Excessive Sun Exposure” (Appendix II) and “Prevention of the Spread of Influenza or Communicable Diseases in Schools - Points to Note” (Appendix IV)</p>		
<p>(4) Added guidelines on “Sport Climbing” (refer to Chapter 10) and “Wushu/Chinese Martial Art” (refer to Chapter 14)</p>		
<p>(5) The guidelines on “Canoeing and Sailing” was updated in 2008 and moved to the “Outdoor Education Guide”, which can be downloaded from: https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/admin/about-activities/sch-activities-guidelines/index.html</p>		
<p>(6) For the part on “Swimming Lessons and Training” (Chapter 11), the “Water Safety Precautions” that teachers should teach pupils such as “do not swim alone”, “do not swim in dirty water”, “do not swim at unguarded beaches or pools”, “never pretend to be in difficulty”, etc were deleted. Schools should make arrangement for pupils to learn such knowledge in PE lessons or other occasions</p>		

2. Q: Why it is advised that Chapter One should be thoroughly studied first?

A: Chapter One “Basic Measures” lists some guiding principles that are applicable to a wide range of physical activities. PE teachers and persons who involve in instructing, coaching or organising co-curricular physical activities should study it thoroughly.

3. **Q: Is it necessary for schools to inform parents/guardians in advance when PE lessons/activities are organised outside school premises?**

A: Yes.

4. **Q: Is it necessary for a PE teacher to possess the relevant qualification, for example “ Level One Coach” certificate before instructing physical activities, e.g. bowling, snooker, Gongfu fans (功夫扇) routine activities, etc?**

A: Teachers who have completed subject-training in PE and possess thorough understanding and experience in the above mentioned activities are eligible to teach them.

5. **Q: What is the qualification for a non PE teacher perform the duty of a sports coach in co-curricular physical activities?**

A: **For non PE teachers** performing the duty of a **sports coach**, he/she is required to possess a “Level One Coach” certificate, or a “School Coach Certificate” issued by the Hong Kong Sports Institute or equivalent.

6. **Q: Are schools allowed to assign sports coach to teach PE lessons?**

A: Schools should only appoint teachers who have completed subject-training in PE to teach PE. If necessary, schools may assign sports coach to perform the duties of a teaching assistant. Schools must not replace PE teachers with sports coaches in PE teaching.

7. **Q: Is it necessary for PE teachers to have a valid lifesaving qualification when they conduct swimming lessons/ training in LCSD swimming pools?**

A: For the safety of students, we encourage PE teachers to frequently up-date their knowledge in lifesaving. The Education Bureau (EDB) and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) agree that:

- PE teachers who obtained a lifesaving qualification, Bronze Medallion or above, may conduct swimming lessons/training in a LCSD swimming pool with lifeguard(s) on duty ; and
- Non PE teachers, however, are required to possess a valid lifesaving qualification, Bronze Medallion or above when conducting swimming training in a LCSD swimming pool with or without lifeguard(s) on duty.

8. Q: Why schools need to install the “Automatic External Defibrillator”(AED) for first aid purpose?

A: The AED is an easily operated and effective first aid equipment for resuscitating patients suffering from coronary diseases.

9. Q: Under what circumstances schools can cancel physical activities organised in venues under the purview of LCSD and Housing Department (HD) and with compensation?

A: Student safety is the most important concern in all kinds of circumstances. The EDB and the LCSD have reached an agreement that under the following circumstances, schools should cancel or postpone# physical activities:

- i. The EDB announces suspension of classes;
- ii. The Hong Kong Observatory issues the Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal;
- iii. The Hong Kong Observatory issues Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or above;
- iv. The AQHI reaches 10+ at the activity zone;
- v. Serious flooding in the district at which the school or the activity venue is located; and
- vi. The Hong Kong Observatory issues the Thunder Warning Signal *(not applicable to indoor activities).

* If the thunderstorm warning is issued prior to the activities in outdoor area, schools should contact the venue office for information.

For activities conducted in venue under the purview of the LCSD, schools may arrange with the venue office for a re-schedule (if venue is available) or refund if the activity is cancelled.

10. Q: How should schools arrange physical activities for students under special weather conditions (such as hot and humid weather)?

A: To ensure students safety, schools should take note of relevant guidelines (e.g. “Safety Guidelines on Physical Education Key Learning Area for Hong Kong Schools” and “Guidelines on Outdoor Activities”) and develop appropriate contingency measures for different weather conditions. School should pay attention to the information/warnings issued by the Hong Kong Observatory and Environmental Protection Department, and decide whether the scheduled activities should be adjusted, postponed or cancelled according to the on-site environment.