

# PERSONAL EFFECTS, CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

- **Establishing Policy**
- **Personal Effects, Including Jewellery and Cultural or Religious Adornments – Students**
- **Clothing or ‘Kit’ – Students**
- **Religious and Cultural Clothing – Students**
- **Footwear – Students**
- **Clothing, Footwear and Personal Effects – Staff**

## **Establishing Policy**

A clear, unambiguous policy should be established and made available to all staff so they can put into practice what the school policy requires.

There should be clear expectations throughout the school, and with parents, about the management of personal effects, clothing, footwear and personal adornments.

Such a policy sets out the standards expected by the school for PESSPA, and should be provided to new parents on their child’s entry to the school, as well as being easily available on the school’s website or through school newsletters.

Any changes to such a policy need to be communicated to parents through the channels described above, with notice of the forthcoming changes and the reasons for them. Having well communicated policies in place can help to support schools in their attempts to maintain high standards of safety in these areas.

Disclaimers from parents alleging the removal of responsibility from teachers in the event of an injury occurring while their child takes part in PESSPA while wearing jewellery, personal effects or non-policy clothing or footwear should be declined.

Such indemnities have no legal status, and the duty of care remains firmly with the school on such matters. As the student may make a claim for compensation in relation to any injury suffered when they become an adult, this nullifies any agreement made in good faith. Schools should work with parents to achieve a solution that does not compromise the safety of the student and others, nor the employer’s duty of care.

## **Personal Effects, Including Jewellery and Cultural or Religious Adornments –**

Schools have a duty of care to ensure students are able to participate actively without unnecessarily endangering themselves or those working around them.

A clear and consistently applied policy for the removal of personal effects should be in place. The Association for Physical Education (afPE) strongly recommends the practice of removing all personal effects at the commencement of every lesson to establish a safe working environment. This applies to all ear and body piercings, including retainer and expander earrings.