BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE ON THE EFFECTIVE USE OF INDIVIDUAL AND AGENCY COACHES IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT (PES)

The **Association for Physical Education (afPE)** has produced the following concise guidance for head teachers and other leadership staff responsible for deploying visiting support staff within physical education and sport (PES). This guidance is available on the afPE website: www.afpe.org.uk and pages 66-69 in *Safe Practice in Physical Education and Sport, 2012* (afPE/Coachwise Ltd). It has been updated in line with a Supreme Court decision in 2013, the development of afPE/1st4 Sport's Level 2 and3 Coaching Award in Supporting Physical Education and School Sport and recent safe practice developments, including managing suspected concussion situations.

"***Support staff***" is the term given to all **adults**, other than trainee teachers, without qualified teacher status (QTS) who contribute to the teaching of pupils in schools. This term includes regular staff on the school roll as well as visiting staff, whether occasional or regular contributors. In physical education and sport contexts such contributors are usually coaches employed directly or indirectly on short term arrangements.

Employers *(local authorities or governors/trustees),* as the ***school authority*****,** have a legal duty under the requirements of section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974, to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, others not in their employment (in this interpretation - the pupils) are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. One aspect of this duty is to ensure that the adults teaching the pupils are competent to fulfil the demands of the tasks to which they are deployed. The head teacher, as manager of the school, technically deploys all staff, whether on the school roll or visiting staff. As such the head teacher fulfils this duty under section 3 on behalf of the school authority and carries responsibility for ensuring all adults teaching the pupils have the necessary skills to fulfil the demands of the tasks to which they are deployed. *Jones versus Manchester Corporation, 1958,* reinforces this management responsibility and the **2013 Supreme Court** decision established in common law that the school authority *(local authority, governors, trust)* maintains the responsibility for pupils where a duty is provided through a third party such as an individual coach or a coaching agency. This is because the agency or individual coach provides the teaching service *on behalf of* the school authority and the responsibility for *the care of* ***the pupils cannot be delegated.*** This means that the school needs to check that ***whoever performs the duty does so without fault.***

This principle of holding the school authority always responsible for the duty of care of the pupils applies only where school has to provide some aspect of education or where it opts to offer particular experiences, whether in lessons or out of lessons, on-site or off-site and whoever teaches the group, whether school staff or others. Where the school has no direct involvement in the organisation or delivery of an event, thus having no control over those who take part, then the agency has the responsibility for those taking part.

Where the term "school" is used, this includes school sport partnerships, community learning partnerships and others working on behalf of the school. Where the term "lesson" is used this includes sessions organised by the school for the pupils and delivered before school, during lunchtimes and after school, whether on or off-site.

Head teachers and other managers of coaching support staff are strongly advised to ensure…

1. Safe Recruitment by:

a. Arranging a face to face interview with each coach to confirm that the coach is aged **at least 18** (i.e. an adult) and confirm identity using original documents (passport, driving licence, recent service provider bill confirming current home address);

b. Making the decision whether the coach will be engaged in regulated activity. If yes then request information from the Disclosure and Barring Service barred list. If the coach will not be in regulated activity there is no right to access information from the barred list. Then decide whether a disclosure certificate is needed where the coach will operate alone with pupils in some context (if the coach is to work alone with pupils then enhanced disclosure certification is necessary, if the coach will be supervised at all times by a member of staff who holds enhanced disclosure then the coach does not need disclosure certification but the employer has discretion in this decision). If disclosure is required then see original and record number (do not photocopy); decide if portability applies and is acceptable; check whether additional information is on the disclosure form that may influence any decision to accept the coach into school.

c. Checking qualifications – see originals; accept a Level 2 award as the normal baseline qualification for each activity

the coach is expected to teach, diverting from this standard only if the coach is observed prior to acceptance and demonstrates good coaching qualities and is working towards a Level 2 qualification where appropriate;

d. Checking the coach's training in, and experience of, working with children and young people – e.g. safeguarding workshops, concussion awareness and management;

e. Exploring the coach's motivations to work with children and attitudes towards children and young people;

f. Checking original reference/s – investigate any gaps in coaching employment, any conditional comments in the reference;

g. Checking, if relevant, with the appropriate Governing Body of Sport (GBS) that the coach is currently licensed to coach (qualification cannot be rescinded but GBS license to coach can be if any poor practice or abuse issues have arisen);

h. Ensuring correct employment status and employment rights are known to the coach – provide a written summary/include in contract as appropriate;

i. Ensuring the coach is fully aware of what, if any, insurance provision is made by the school and what aspects s/he needs to provide for self (according to employment status) re:

   i. Employers' liability (Compulsory) – legal liability for injuries to employees (permanent/temporary/contracted for services) arising in the course of employment,

   ii. Public liability (Essential) – legal responsibility for "third party" claims against the activities of the individual/group and legal occupation of premises,

   iii. Professional liability (Desirable) – legal cover against claims for breaches of professional duty by employees acting in the scope of their employment, e.g. giving poor professional advice,

   iv. Hirers' liability (Desirable) – covers individuals or agencies that hire premises against any liability for injury to others or damage to the property whilst using it,

   v. Libel and slander insurance (Optional) – cover against claims for defamation, e.g. libellous material in publications,

   vi. Personal injury - accidental bodily injury or deliberate assault (Desirable) – arranged by individual or employer,

   vii. Miscellaneous - a variety of types of insurance such as travel (Compulsory or Required) or motor insurance (Compulsory) (minimum of "third party") – check personal exclusions and excesses individual carries;

j. Setting out a clearly defined role identifying any limits of responsibility, lines of supervision, management and communication, specialist expertise needed (e.g. children with individual special needs) and ensure they are appropriately qualified/experienced to undertake the role;

k. Determining an agreed period of probation and monitor coach's performance and attitude closely during this period;

l. Checking that all of the above have been addressed by the agency or by the school before a self-employed or agency appointed coach begins work;

m. Agreeing an appropriate induction package that must be fulfilled.

2. Induction by:

a. The head teacher or their representative presenting the coach with a summary of relevant school policies and procedures, including: risk assessments, emergency evacuation, referral and incentives, behaviour management, first aid, managing suspected concussion, safeguarding procedures and something about the ethos of the school – how they work with children and young people [such as looking for success in young people, rewarding achievement];

b. Identifying a member of staff to manage induction into school procedures who will:

   i. arrange a meeting with the SEND designated person and class teacher/s as appropriate for specific information about pupils;

   ii. monitor and assess competency of coaches through observations and discussions with pupils and other staff;

   iii. determine the coach's role in contributing to the overall assessment of pupils.

3. Qualifications, experience and qualities necessary for a coach to work alone by:

a. Expecting a Level 2 award as the normal baseline qualification for each activity the coach is expected to teach. Diverting from this standard only if the coach is observed prior to acceptance, demonstrates good coaching qualities and is working towards a Level 2 qualification where appropriate or where a coach holds a recognised multi-games qualification and will be teaching generic skills to a basic level;

NB In addition to activity specific qualifications, afPE's good practice expectation is that coaches supporting curriculum time physical education should hold or be working towards a 1st4Sport/afPE level 2 and 3 in Supporting PE and School Sport

b. Checking previous experience in working with small/large groups;

c. Checking behaviour management skills;

d. Checking;
   i. quality of relationships – the way the coach cares for and respects pupils, is an appropriate role model and promotes the ethos of school;
   ii. a developing knowledge of the pupils – their levels of confidence, ability, individual needs, medical needs and behaviour;
   iii. pupil management – how they match pupils' confidence, strength and ability in pair and group tasks, maximise participation, have strategies for effective pupil control and motivation, apply the school's standard procedures and routines – e.g. safeguarding, emergency action, managing suspected concussion, jewellery, handling and carrying of equipment;
   iv. knowledge of the activities - appropriate level of expertise to enable learning to take place in the activity/ies being delivered, use of suitable space for the group, differentiated equipment, differentiated practice, evident progression and application of rules;
   v. observation and analytical skills - providing a safe working and learning environment, ability to identify faults and establish strategies for improvement;
   vi. a clear understanding and application of risk management principles;

4. Day to day management of the coach by:

a. Checking that the coach has received a summary of school and subject procedures and understands what is required; (including clear guidelines in relation to handover of responsibility at the start and end of lessons/ sessions)
b. Ensuring the coach receives relevant information on pupils/ groups – e.g. medical conditions that may impact on participation, illness, family bereavement, behaviour issues, pupils recovering from injury including concussion;
c. Monitoring promptness;
d. Establishing regular review and evaluation of the coach's work;
e. Determining who assesses pupils' work;
f. Ensuring the coach is supported, valued and is accepted as a member of staff;
g. Monitoring dialogue and relationship between class teacher and coach;

5. Monitoring quality and effectiveness by:

a. Ensuring direct monitoring of the coach for an agreed period – use criteria set out in 3 above;
b. Setting up continual indirect monitoring to ensure pupils make progress and enjoy lessons;
c. Ensuring that pupils are engaged in consistent high quality learning, using challenging and stimulating activities that support them to achieve their potential, not just activities that keep them "busy, happy and good" and that sessions have an educational focus with clear objectives and outcomes and are not used simply for "talent spotting".

6. Identification and provision of professional learning by:

a. Evaluating the coach's abilities against appropriate standards;
b. Arranging attendance on afPE/sports coach UK Adults Supporting Learning (ASL) induction course;
c. Agreeing essential qualifications and desirable qualifications – planning and providing for a personal development programme beyond GBS coach qualifications to enable the coach to proceed from emerging to established, and advanced ratings;

7. Dealing with inadequate performance by the coach by:

a. Proactively monitoring the coach's work as set out in 5 above;
b. Where performance is inadequate and poses a health and safety risk to the pupils or has the potential to impact on their welfare intervene immediately. Where performance is technically inadequate then review the situation with the coach after the lesson;
c. Agreeing and providing supportive professional development to improve inadequate aspects of performance;
d. Monitoring for improvement;
e. Where little or no improvement occurs terminate short term contract or initiate competency procedures if longer term contract;
f. Where necessary terminate longer term contract where competence does not improve.

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