

29 February 2024

Education Bureau Circular No. 5/2024

Developing an Active and Healthy Lifestyle Through Promoting Physical Activities

[Note: This circular should be read by

- (a) Supervisors, heads and teachers of all primary and secondary schools (including special schools) offering local school curriculum – for action;
- (b) Supervisors and heads of schools not included in (a) – for information; and
- (c) Heads of Sections – for information.]

Summary

This circular aims to remind schools of their responsibilities to ensure students to have sufficient physical activities within and beyond the classroom, and provide strategies and specific recommended measures as well as the information on relevant curriculum resources and support measures to schools. In this connection, heads of schools are advised to draw reference from this circular and formulate school-based strategies to help students increase physical activity level and develop an active and healthy lifestyle, thereby improving their physical and mental health.

Background

2. Helping students lead a healthy lifestyle is one of the seven learning goals of primary and secondary education. Regular participation in physical activities boosts students' fitness level, strengthens their cognitive ability and enhances their physical and mental health. To tie in with the World Health Organisation's recommendation that children and adolescents aged 5-17 should **accumulate at least an average of 60 minutes daily of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activities (i.e. MVPA60) across the week**, the Education Bureau (EDB) has incorporated this recommendation into the direction for the development of the Physical Education (PE) curriculum since 2017.

3. As stipulated in the PE Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6) (2017), schools are required to arrange diversified physical activities for primary and secondary school students to develop their physical competence and enhance their physical fitness for maintaining physical health. To effectively increase students’ physical activity level, offering only subject lessons is not adequate. As such, many schools currently provide diversified opportunities outside PE lessons for students to participate actively in physical activities and develop an interest in and a habit of regular exercise.

Details

4. Regular physical activities provide extensive benefits for all ages. Schools’ offering various opportunities for students within and beyond the classroom would motivate them to engage in physical activities. For details of the strategies and specific measures for promoting MVPA60, please refer to the **Annex**.

5. To create a better sports ambience in schools, the EDB has been providing continuous support for schools to promote physical activities holistically through various means. Examples of such support measures include launching the teacher professional network platform on “Developing an Active and Healthy School Campus” to align with the promotion of MVPA60 for sharing good practices in promoting physical activities, developing a variety of learning and teaching resources (e.g. the “Physical Activity Logbook”, sports infographics, presentation materials on demonstration of muscle training, rope skipping and parent-child fitness walking/running), and organising student activities (e.g. the “Dance for Health” competition, the “MVPA60 Award Scheme”). Relevant information has been uploaded to the webpage of the PE Section, Curriculum Development Institute. To achieve the learning goals of the curriculum, schools should plan their whole-school curriculum and formulate different strategies with reference to the above resources, thereby helping students meet the target of MVPA60.



“Developing an Active and
Healthy School Campus” and
Sharing of School Practices
(Chinese version only)



“Active Students,
Active People”
(ASAP) Campaign

MVPA60 Award Scheme



Physical Activity Logbook



Infographics on Developing an Active and Healthy Lifestyle through Physical Activity



6. Parental involvement is also vital. To facilitate home-school cooperation with a view to enhancing students' learning effectiveness, schools should encourage parents to do sports and exercise with their children together after school or during holidays to increase physical activity level and strengthen the parent-child relationship.

Enquiries

7. For further enquiries, please contact the PE Section, Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau on 2110 3147.

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for Secretary for Education

Strategies and Recommendations for Promoting MVPA60

- 1) According to the recommendation of World Health Organisation, children and adolescents aged 5-17 should **accumulate at least an average of 60 minutes daily of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activities (i.e. MVPA60) across the week.**
- 2) Schools are advised to provide various opportunities for students to participate in different types and levels of physical activities (PA) during Physical Education (PE) lessons, before, during and after school, etc. Family and community engagement are also playing a crucial role. Parents are encouraged to do sports and exercise with their children together after school/during holidays to increase PA and enhance the parent-child relationship.







Examples of Good Practices





- Adopting a whole-school approach to promote MVPA60 and engage students in PA, including participating in the EDB's "Active Students, Active People" (ASAP) Campaign or organising a school-based award scheme;
- Arranging morning exercises before class (approximately 10 minutes or more), setting up of exercises corner during recess/lunch break (approximately 30 minutes or more), and engaging students in doing stretching exercises before the end of a school day (approximately 5 minutes or more), i.e. **around 45 minutes or more of PA at school;**
- Encouraging students to participate in PA starting from doing a small amount and progressively increase the frequency, duration and intensity;
- Offering safe, diverse and enjoyable opportunities for students to participate in PA, including sports training or interest classes ;
- Providing adequate sports equipment, such as exercise bikes;
- Engaging students in extended PA at home or in the community (e.g. sports interest classes, sports competitions) (approximately 15 minutes or more), i.e. **around 15 minutes or more of PA after school; and**
- Engaging students in outdoor activities (e.g. hiking) during weekends (approximately 120 minutes or more).

Promoting PA in the PE Curriculum and Enhancing the Provision of PA Opportunities in the School Setting

- 3) Physical Activity (PA) refers to all movements, including during leisure time, for transport to and from places, or as part of a person's work (World Health Organisation, 2017). Examples of moderate- and vigorous-intensity PA in the tables below are common in the school setting. The talk test is a simple and useful way to measure relative intensity.

Examples of moderate- and vigorous-intensity PA:

Intensity of PA	Examples			
	Brisk walking	Skipping	Stair climbing	Dancing
Moderate				
	Talk Test* Can talk normally in sentences without pausing for a breath but cannot sing			

Intensity of PA	Examples			
	Running	Ball games	Cycling	Swimming
Vigorous				
	Talk Test* Have difficulty in talking			

** Other than the talk test, heart rate monitoring and the exertion rating scale are common measures of PA intensity in schools.*

- 4) Schools are required to provide PE lessons for students according to the curriculum guide and assign teachers with relevant teacher qualifications to take up the teaching of the PE curriculum.
- 5) Fundamental movement skills could be applied through physical play to help students achieve the target of MVPA60 and shape positive PA trajectories from childhood to midlife.

Locomotor Skills

Enabling students to travel from one place to another

Examples

- Walking
- Galloping
- Skipping
- Step-hopping
- Sliding
- Running
- Hopping



Stability Skills

Enabling students to maintain balance on the spot or when moving

Examples

- Rolling
- Airborne turning
- Twisting
- Stretching
- Curling
- Jumping and landing
- Snap stop/Direction changing



Manipulative Skills

Enabling students to control small objects

Examples

- Throwing
- Catching
- Bouncing
- Striking
- Shooting
- Kicking
- Dribbling



- 6) Developing a school-based policy for enhancing the provision for students to participate in different extended PA before, during and after school so as to enhance their physical fitness level. Schools are advised to make flexible use of learning time to provide students with opportunities to participate in physical activities through a life-wide learning approach and cultivate their interest in sports.
- 7) Promotion of students' physical development in schools is not confined to general PE lessons. Schools can strengthen students' physical development through a life-wide learning approach, which includes:

- introducing “PA session” such as morning exercise;
- increasing the ratio of PA in multiple intelligences lessons;



- arranging students to take part in PA before morning assemblies, during recess or lunch break, and after school;
- organising sports days, swimming galas, school team trainings, inter-class/house sports competitions and sports badges award schemes, and introducing the use of physical fitness charts;
- participating in PA/schemes organised by different government departments, professional bodies and organisations, or collaborating with them to organise related programmes, including the School Physical Fitness Award Scheme, the Inter-school Sports Competitions, the Schools Dance Festival and the Jump Rope for Heart Programme, and engaging professional coaches or instructors with existing resources to hold new sports activities in schools such as rope skipping and sport climbing, with a view to providing students with more opportunities to participate in PA;
- adopting different strategies such as optimising the design of school uniforms to facilitate students' PA participation, creating an exercise-friendly and flexible uniform policy for non-PE classes/days, and incorporating teacher-student and parent-child elements into school sports competitions, in order to extend the sports atmosphere from school to home; and
- making good use of the learning and teaching materials enriched from the EDB's professional development programmes, learning communities, and the "Active Students, Active People" (ASAP) Campaign, which extensively covers educational resources including the MVPA60 Award Scheme, the Physical Activity logbook, teaching workshops on urban sports and new sports, inspirational sharing by elite athletes, infographics on different sports, Chinese culture-related martial arts and dance videos, sports fun days, the "Dance for Health" competition, virtual sports contests and fitness challenge, sports exchange activities, etc.



Soliciting External Resources to Create More PA Opportunities

- 8) Collaborating with different government departments, professional bodies and organisations to provide various PA platforms, such as sports classes organised by national sports associations, the “Active School Programme” funded by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, inter-school sports and dance competitions organised by the Schools Sports Federation of Hong Kong, China (HKSSF) and the Hong Kong Schools Dance Association respectively, and the School Sports Programme subvented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD).
- 9) Allocating resources properly to hire professional coaches or instructors, including retired athletes with sport coach qualification to hold various interest classes and featured sports activities with a view to cultivating a sporting culture in schools.

Enhancing Students’ PA Level with Parental Involvement

- 10) Parents are also encouraged to do sports and exercise with their children together after school/during holidays to increase physical activities and enhance the parent-child relationship. Some of the examples are as follows:
 - active transport, such as walking or cycling to school or nearby destinations with children; and
 - family outings that involve outdoor activities, such as hiking or walking/running; playing sports or doing exercises with children such as playing basketball, soccer, badminton, swimming and cycling.