

## KEY STAGES

When working in schools, it is helpful to understand the Key Stages. Key Stages define the competency that a child should achieve in curriculum activity. Understanding the Key Stages will help you to pitch your coaching at the correct level when coaching children and schools will be more receptive towards the idea of including fencing in curriculum activity if you are able to demonstrate how fencing helps to achieve the Key Stages. The Key Stages are arranged as follows:

Key Stage 1	Ages 5-7	Years 1 & 2
Key Stage 2	Ages 7-11	Years 3-6
Key Stage 3	Ages 11-14	Years 7-9
Key Stage 4	Ages 14-16	Years 10 & 11

Throughout the Key Stages, coaches aim to, when evaluating and improving performance, make connections between developing, selecting and applying skills, tactics and compositional ideas, and fitness and health.

<b>Key Stage 1</b>		<b>How fencing achieves this</b>
<b>Acquiring and developing skills</b>		
Pupils should be taught to:		
Explore basic skills, actions and ideas with increasing understanding		Simple fencing actions such as basic footwork, thrusting and lunging are all relevant at this stage.
Remember and repeat simple skills and actions with increasing control and coordination		GO/FENCE games can be used to encourage learning new skills through repetition. Videos available at <a href="http://www.britishfencing.com/clubs/change4lifeschoolclubs/">http://www.britishfencing.com/clubs/change4lifeschoolclubs/</a>
<b>Selecting and applying skills, tactics and compositional ideas</b>		
Pupils should be taught to:		
Explore how to choose and apply skills and actions in sequence and in combination		GO/FENCE games such as the "Step-Lunge Game" encourage fencers to apply skills and actions in sequence and combination, and to think tactically. Video available at <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APtzI4BNTck">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APtzI4BNTck</a>
Vary the way they perform skills by using simple tactics and movement phrases		
Apply rules and conventions for different activities.		GO/FENCE games such as "In the River, On the Bank" involve fencers both as participants and referees, encouraging them to learn, understand and apply the rules and conventions. Video available at <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dD9CUNpbQQk">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dD9CUNpbQQk</a>
<b>Evaluating and improving performance</b>		
Pupils should be taught to:		
Describe what they have done		Fencers will be able to more successfully use the techniques and tactics that they are trying to use if they are able to describe them, for example "Snakes & Fencers": <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lchgS60qx9o">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lchgS60qx9o</a>

Observe, describe and copy what others have done	Footwork games where fencers have to keep distance will require them to observe and copy their coach/leader/partner. Being able to describe what you have done is important to understanding all fencing games and exercises. E.g. "Opposites" <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmiOrEl8mlc">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmiOrEl8mlc</a> .
Use what they have learnt to improve the quality and control of their work.	Numerous GO/FENCE games (e.g. "Bat the Bag": <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGI-R-ullUQ">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGI-R-ullUQ</a> ) teach, in a fun way, techniques and tactics that will be required in a competitive situation.
<b>Knowledge and understanding of fitness and health</b>	
Pupils should be taught:	
How important it is to be active	Many GO/FENCE games (e.g. the "Skipping Game": <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FarZ7mtFTro">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FarZ7mtFTro</a> ) are focussed both on training fencing skills and techniques and on encouraging an active lifestyle.
To recognise and describe how their bodies feel during different activities.	All fencing sessions should begin with a warm-up and end with a cool-down. Fencing uses muscles that are not often used in everyday life. E.g. <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C8AF8HmL-4">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C8AF8HmL-4</a>

<b>Key Stage 2</b>	<b>How fencing achieves this</b>
<b>Acquiring and developing skills</b>	
Pupils should be taught to:	
Consolidate their existing skills and gain new ones	GO/FENCE courses will start by introducing students to the basics of fencing. Skills learnt in previous weeks will be recapped before new ones are taught.
Perform actions and skills with more consistent control and quality.	Recapping skills learnt in previous weeks and the use of GO/FENCE games teaches control and quality. Coaches and leaders may wish to adapt their sessions to meet the specific needs of the group. GO/FENCE offers a series of off-the-shelf coaching sessions that are pre-planned and therefore quick and easy to activate.
<b>Selecting and applying skills, tactics and compositional ideas</b>	
Pupils should be taught to:	
Plan, use and adapt strategies, tactics and compositional ideas for individual, pair, small-group and small-team activities	GO/FENCE games such as "Hand Tap" ( <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KzMq2gu3ods">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KzMq2gu3ods</a> ) require the implementation of plans & strategies.
Develop and use their knowledge of the principles behind the strategies, tactics and ideas to improve their effectiveness	
Apply rules and conventions for different activities.	Many GO/FENCE games require participants to self-referee, e.g. "Knee Fencing" ( <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1P5owVpVr0">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1P5owVpVr0</a> ).
<b>Evaluating and improving performance</b>	
Pupils should be taught to:	
Identify what makes a performance effective	Due to the individual combative nature of the sport,

Suggest improvements based on this information.	fencers need to be mentally alert in order to succeed. Because of the individual nature of the sport, fencers will need to be able to think for themselves about ways in which they can improve.
<b>Knowledge and understanding of fitness and health</b>	
Pupils should be taught:	
How exercise affects the body in the short term	Fencers are encouraged to think about the importance of warming up and cooling down, staying properly hydrated, etc. All fencing sessions begin with a warm-up and end with a cool-down.
To warm up and prepare appropriately for different activities	
Why physical activity is good for their health and well-being	Fencers are encouraged to be physically active by taking part in fencing games and exercises.
Why wearing appropriate clothing and being hygienic is good for their health and safety.	The "Rules of the Salle" include simple briefings on kit and equipment, participants, environment and accidents (prevention and dealing with).

Please visit <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/QCA-99-457.pdf> for more information on Key Stages 1 and 2.

<b>Key Stage 3</b>	<b>How fencing achieves this</b>
<b>Acquiring and developing skills</b>	<b>How fencing achieves this</b>
Pupils should be taught to:	
Refine and adapt existing skills	GO/FENCE games such as the "Skill Circuit" ( <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mxZD3ILl8">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mxZD3ILl8</a> ) are great ways of refining and adapting fencing skills. When transferred to a fencing situation, these become specific and vital skills.
Develop them into specific techniques that suit different activities and perform these with consistent control.	
<b>Selecting and applying skills, tactics and compositional ideas</b>	
Pupils should be taught to:	
Use principles to plan and implement strategies, compositional and organisational ideas in individual, pair, group and team activities	GO/FENCE games such as the "Step-Lunge Game" and "Mask Trap" require the implementation of simple strategies, which can be built upon in a competitive fight situation.
Modify and develop their plans	GO/FENCE games such as "Mask Trap" will develop fencers' mental agility, teaching them how and when to use appropriate techniques and skill; this ability to modify and develop plans will be built upon in competitive fight situations.
Apply rules and conventions for different activities.	Many GO/FENCE games such as "Snakes & Fencers" ( <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lchgS60qx9o">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lchgS60qx9o</a> ) require fencers to self-referee or contribute to the refereeing.
<b>Evaluating and improving performance</b>	
Pupils should be taught to:	

Be clear about what they want to achieve in their own work, and what they have actually achieved	As an individual sport, fencing is perfect for goal-setting and performance analysis. Targets can be set both for the successful achievement of tasks in GO/FENCE games, and in terms of (individual and team) competition goals.
Take the initiative to analyse their own and others' work, using this information to improve its quality.	The coach or leader can explain how to analyse technical ability, but it will often be for the fencer to take responsibility for analysing the relative success of their tactics (which the coach or leader will encourage and support where possible).
<b>Knowledge and understanding of fitness and health</b>	
<b>How fencing achieves this</b>	
Pupils should be taught:	
How to prepare for and recover from specific activities	All fencing sessions should begin with a warm-up and end with a cool-down. Although the coach or leader will usually lead this, they will ensure that fencers are able to carry out such tasks themselves as there will often be times when they have to take responsibility for their warm-up and cool-down, for example at competitions.
How different types of activity affect specific aspects of their fitness	Fencing is a sport that requires explosive power and speed in multiple short bursts, with a fast recovery time: very different to sports that require endurance over a long period.
The benefits of regular exercise and good hygiene	Fencers are encouraged to think about the sort of condition that they need to be in order to perform at their peak
How to go about getting involved in activities that are good for their personal and social health and well-being.	As well as opportunities to participate in school & community clubs and competitions, fencing offers opportunities to get involved as a leader, referee, official and various volunteering roles. Speak to your coach or contact British Fencing for more information.
<b>Games activities</b>	
<b>How fencing achieves this</b>	
Pupils should be taught to:	
Respond to changing situations in the games.	Fencers need to be able to think on their feet and react quickly to changing situations when sparring. GO/FENCE games are designed to stimulate mind and body.
<b>Athletic activities</b>	
<b>How fencing achieves this</b>	
Pupils should be taught to:	
Set and meet personal and group targets in a range of athletic events, challenges and competitions	As above - as an individual sport, fencing is perfect for goal-setting and performance analysis. Targets can be set both for the successful achievement of tasks in GO/FENCE games, and in terms of (individual and team) competition goals.
Use a range of running, jumping and throwing techniques, singly and in combination, with precision, speed, power or stamina.	Fencing requires various movements to be combined e.g. combination of footwork and handwork; moves must be carried out with speed and power in order to be successful; precision is essential.

<b>Key Stage 4</b>	<b>How fencing achieves this</b>
<b>Acquiring and developing skills</b>	<b>How fencing achieves this</b>
Students should be taught to:	
Develop and apply advanced skills and techniques	As fencers develop, they will be taught more complex skills and techniques, and be increasingly challenged by their coach. As the overall standard of the class increases, the exercises that they take part in will increase in demand accordingly, as will one-on-one sparring sessions.
Apply them in increasingly demanding situations.	
<b>Selecting and applying skills, tactics and compositional ideas</b>	
Students should be taught to:	
Use advanced strategic and/or choreographic and organisational concepts and principles	Fencers should be able to compose and apply the techniques they have learnt tactically in a competitive fight situation without the assistance of a coach
Apply these concepts and principles in increasingly demanding situations	
Apply rules and conventions for different activities.	Many GO/FENCE games require self-refereeing; fencers will often need to referee themselves in training sessions. GO/FENCE leadership offers opportunities to get involved with refereeing.
<b>Evaluating and improving performance</b>	
Students should be taught to:	
Make informed choices about what role they want to take in each activity	Fencing competitions provide a variety of opportunities for young people to get involved: as competitors, referees, leadership and other officiating roles.
Judge how good a performance is and decide how to improve it	The GO/FENCE Leader Course teaches basic fencing technique and tactics. GO/FENCE Young Leaders should take responsibility for teaching and improving basic fencing technique and skill.
Prioritise and carry out these decisions to improve their own and others' performances	
Develop leadership skills.	The GO/FENCE Leader Course teaches participants how to lead fencing sessions and is a great way of developing leadership skills.
<b>Knowledge and understanding of fitness and health</b>	
Students should be taught:	
How preparation, training and fitness relate to and affect performance	Fencers are encouraged to think about how they prepare for competition in order to maximise performance.
How to design and carry out activity and training programmes that have specific purposes	The concept of periodisation training teaches fencers how to structure their training according to the stage they are at in the competitive calendar and the events that are coming up.
The importance of exercise and activity to personal, social and mental health and well-being	Fencing is a sport that requires both physical activity and mental alertness, making participants more rounded as individuals.

How to monitor and develop their own training, exercise and activity programmes in and out of school.	Fencers are encouraged to supplement their fencing-specific training with appropriate fitness, strength & conditioning and other similar training.
<b>Games activities</b>	
Students should be taught to:	
Play competitive games	By this stage in their development, fencers are encouraged to take their competition seriously and think about aiming towards national squads and teams.
Use advanced techniques and skills specific to the games played with consistency and control	Fencers should be able to compose and apply the techniques they have learnt tactically in a competitive fight situation without the assistance of a coach
Respond effectively to changing situations within their games.	Competitive fencing requires quick thinking and split-second tactical decisions. Fencers should be able to apply these with increasing complexity by this stage in their development.

Please visit <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/QCA-04-1374.pdf> for more information on Key Stages 3 and 4.

