School Sport

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Section Social Policy Section

The purpose of this note is to outline the current debate about the provision of sport and Physical Education (PE) in schools and to highlight recent policy developments and commentary in this area. The note relates to England only.

Since the Secretary of State for Education's October 2010 statement, calling for a new direction in school sport, there have been some significant policy changes.

In October 2010 the Secretary of State announced that the previous administration's Physical Education and Sports Strategy was being discontinued and, therefore, ring-fenced funding for School Sport Partnerships (SSPs) was to end in March 2011. The Government wanted to encourage more competitive sport in schools and to give schools the freedom to concentrate on the improvement of competitive sport provision by removing many of the requirements of the previous strategy.

In December 2010, after some vociferous criticism from teachers, sportspersons and the Labour opposition, a revised DfE announcement stated that funding for SSPs was being extended until August 2011, and that additional money was being made available to encourage take-up of competitive sport.

A National Curriculum Review was launched in January 2011. Physical Education was initially included in phase one of the review, with a new programme of study expected to become statutory in September 2013. However, the timeframe of the Curriculum Review has been extended and the new curriculum for all subjects, including Physical Education, will be introduced in September 2014.

In February 2011 it was also confirmed by the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport that funding from the Lottery and the Department of Health was being provided to develop a new "Olympic style" School Games in partnership with the Youth Sport Trust and others. This was followed in January 2012 by the announcement of the Youth Sport Strategy, to encourage people to play sport for life.

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1 The previous Government's strategy

The previous Labour Government's Physical Education and Sport Strategy: *PE, School Sport and Club Links* (PESSCL) was launched by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in October 2002. *A Guide to the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links Strategy*[1] was published in March 2003 to accompany the strategy.

The plan, supported by funding of £1.5billion from 2003 to 2008,[2] was to be delivered through eight programmes of Physical Education: Specialist Sport Colleges, School Sport Coordinators, Gifted & Talented programme, QCA PE & School Sport Investigation, Step into Sport, Professional Development, School/Club Links and Swimming.

The ultimate aim was to increase the percentage of school children participating in two hours a week of "high quality" Physical Education and sport to 75% by 2006.[3] To deliver this the previous Government created a network of 450 School Sport Partnerships across England. The most recent *PE and Sport Survey* describes SSPs in detail below:

> Partnerships are 'families' of schools which typically comprise a Specialist Sports College linked to a set of secondary schools, each of which has a further group of primary and special schools clustered around it. The Partnership Development Manager (PDM) is at the core of the Strategy and is responsible for managing the partnership; in every secondary school there is a School Sport Co-ordinator (SSCo), and in every primary or special school there is a Primary Link Teacher (PLT) or Special School Link Teacher (SSLT) who is responsible for leading the strategy at that particular school. Staff are funded by the Strategy to allow them to do this. There is also a national network of 225 Competition Managers which was set up to create more and better opportunities for a wider range of young people to take part in competitive sport.[4]

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[1] DES and DCMS, *A guide to the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links Strategy*, 2003
[2] HC Deb 9 Feb 2009 c 1715W
[3] DES and DCMS, *A guide to the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links Strategy*, 2003, p3
[4] DfE, *PE and Sport Survey 2009/10*, September 2010, p5

A new National Curriculum in 2007 retained Physical Education as a compulsory subject.

The PESSCL strategy was extended in 2008 by the *PE & Sport Strategy for Young People*.[5] This was launched to build upon the existing approach and was supported with funding of £755million to be spent from 2008 to 2011. The purpose of the *PE & Sport Strategy for Young People* was to continue increasing the percentage of children participating in two hours of high quality sport and to create new opportunities for children to participate in a further three hours a week with a new "5 hour offer". 2008-2011 was the proposed period for achieving the new strategy's aims.

In 2009 Ofsted published the report, *Physical education in schools 2005/08: working towards 2012 and beyond*[6], which reviewed the impact of the Labour Government's PE and School Sports strategies between 2005 and 2008. The report stated that the PESSCL strategy was having a "major impact" on Physical Education and that it had widened participation in after-school sport activities.

The report noted that the quality of Physical Education in schools had improved, and that the vast majority provided at least two hours of PE a week at Key Stages 1-3, but it also stated that many missed the two hour target at Key Stage 4.[7] It recommended that the funding for the sports strategies should continue beyond 2012.

The most recent annual *PE and Sport Survey*[8] carried out by TNS-BMRB[9] to assess participation in PE and out of hours school sport was published by the Department for Education in September 2010. The main aim was to measure the proportion of pupils receiving two hours of curriculum PE and the proportion of pupils participating in at least three hours of "high quality" PE a week.

The survey had a number of key findings:

- during the academic year 2009/10, across years 1-11, 84% of pupils were spending at least 120 minutes a week taking part in curriculum PE, an increase of 40% on 2003/04;

- by 2007/08 90% of pupils (years 1-11) were participating in at least two hours of high quality PE and out-of-hours school sport in a typical week, and that in response, a new target was set and subsequent surveys were to measure pupils' participation (years 1-11) in at least three hours of high quality PE and out-of-hours sport a week, for which it recorded figures of 57% for 2009/10, a 6% increase on 2008/09;

- 78% of pupils (years 1-11) had participated in intra-school competitive sport during 2009/10, up from 68% in 2008/09, and that 49% competed in inter-school competition, an increase of 5% from 2008/09;[10] and,

- during 2009/10 21% of pupils (years 3-13) regularly participated in inter-school competition, up 2% from the previous year.

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[5] DCSF and DCMS, *PE & Sport Strategy for Young People*, 2008
[6] Ofsted, *Physical education in schools 2005/08: working towards 2012 and beyond*, 2009
[7] There are four Key Stages of compulsory education: Key Stage 1: pupils aged 5 to 7 - year groups 1 to 2; Key Stage 2: pupils aged 7 to 11 - year groups 3 to 6; Key Stage 3: pupils aged 11 to 14 - year groups 7 to 9; and, Key Stage 4: pupils aged 14 to 16 - year groups 10 to 11.
[8] DfE, *PE and Sport Survey 2009/10*, September 2010
[9] An independent research company http://www.tns-bmrb.co.uk/
[10] Intra-school competition refers to sports competitions contested within the same school, while inter-school competition refers to sports competitions between two or more different schools.

An answer to a Parliamentary Question sets out statistics from previous surveys, and includes data on participation in competitive sport:

> **Ian Austin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he made of the proportion of school children who undertook two hours of sport or physical activity at school in each of the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement.
>
> **Tim Loughton:** Since 2003/04, the date that the Department started collecting the data, the percentage of pupils taking part in at least two hours high quality PE and sport each week, was as follows:

%	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
5 to 16-year-olds taking part in at least two hours high quality PE and sport each week	62	69	80	86	90

> In 2008/09 and 2009/10, the survey collected data on the percentage of pupils taking part in at least three hours high quality PE and sport each week, as follows:

%	2008/09	2009/10
5 to 16-year-olds taking part in at least three hours high quality PE and sport each week	51	57

> In addition, the 2009/10 survey collected data relating to the percentage of pupils involved in regular competitive sport, within and between schools, as follows:

%	Regular intra-school sport	Regular inter-school sport
Of pupils in yrs 3-13 taking part in regular competitive sport	39	21

> High quality PE and sport was defined by the previous Government, as "High quality PE and school sport produces young people with the skills, understanding, desire and commitment to continue to improve and achieve in a range of PE, sport and health-enhancing physical activities in line with their abilities."[11]

2 The present Government's strategy

The Government's approach to PE and sport in schools was announced by the Secretary of State for Education in October 2010. A press notice entitled *Refocusing sport in schools to build a lasting legacy of the 2012 Games*, and a letter to the Chair of the Youth Sport Trust, outlined a number of significant changes, notably the decision to end the previous administration's PE and Sport Strategy by discontinuing annual DfE funding of £162million, including ring-fenced funding for School Sport Partnerships.

2.1 The October 2010 Announcement and Reaction

The announcement emphasised the Government's aim of increasing participation in competitive sport and reducing bureaucracy for schools. It said that far too few children were participating in regular competitive sport and that the previous administration's PE and Sport Strategy would end, and schools be given the freedom to organise more competitive sport.

The Government announced a new Olympic-style school sport competition to encourage more competitive sport in schools:

[11] HC Deb 12 Jan 2011 c 343W

> The Coalition Government is committed to reforming sport in schools to create a lasting Olympic legacy. Ministers want to encourage more competitive sport so it is a vibrant part of the ethos of all schools, and to give schools the freedom to organise sport themselves rather than imposing a bureaucratic system for them to follow.
>
> The Department for Education is ending the £162 million PE and Sports Strategy of the previous administration, to give schools the time and freedom to focus on providing competitive sport. In recent years there has been a decline in young people taking part in traditionally competitive sports such as rugby union, netball and hockey because teachers and school sports coordinators have been too focused on top-down targets. In fact the most recent School Sport Survey showed that only around two in every five pupils play competitive sport regularly within their own school, and only one in five plays regularly against other schools.
>
> After seven years and £2.4 billion investment from the Government and Lottery, the Department expects all schools to have embedded the good practice and collaboration developed over this time and to continue providing two hours a week of PE and sport.[12]

The DfE Press notice on the 20 October 2010 announcement also reproduced Michael Gove's letter to Baroness Sue Campbell, Chair of the Youth Sport Trust:

> Letter from the Secretary of State to Baroness Sue Campbell, Chair of the Youth Sport Trust
>
> Since my appointment as Secretary of State for Education, I have been reviewing the Department's existing programmes in the context of the Coalition Government's schools policies. This includes the various programmes relating to physical education (PE) and sport.
>
> I know that the Youth Sport Trust has advised successive Governments and that, funded by the Department for Education, the Trust has built up a network of school sport partnerships and has supported schools in meeting previous Governments' priorities on PE and sport. I am grateful to you, to Steve Grainger, and to the staff of the Youth Sport Trust for the hard work you have done for school pupils.
>
> The Coalition Government will encourage more competitive sport, which should be a vibrant part of the life and ethos of all schools. We are committed to doing this through the creation of an annual Olympic-style school sport competition. The best way to create a lasting Olympic legacy in schools is to give them the freedom and incentives to organise it themselves, for themselves, rather than imposing a centralised government blueprint.
>
> Over the next year, my Department will work closely with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to develop a model to assist an Olympic-style approach to school sport. I firmly believe that the ideals of the Olympic and Paralympic Games can be an inspiration to all young people, not only to our most promising young athletes. Indeed, they embody the ethos of achievement and self-improvement which the best schools manifest in their sports provision for all pupils.
>
> Our approach differs fundamentally from that of the last Government. As part of this change of approach, I have concluded that the existing network of school sport partnerships is neither affordable nor likely to be the best way to help schools achieve their potential in improving competitive sport. While the network helped schools to increase participation rates in the areas targeted by the previous Government, the fact remains that the proportion of pupils playing competitive sport regularly has remained

[12] Refocusing sport in schools to build a lasting legacy of the 2012 Games, DfE Press notice 20 October 2010.

disappointingly low. Only around two in every five pupils play competitive sport regularly within their own school, and only one in five plays regularly against other schools.

I can confirm therefore that the Department will not continue to provide ring-fenced funding for school sport partnerships. I am also announcing that the Department is lifting, immediately, the many requirements of the previous Government's PE and Sport Strategy, so giving schools the clarity and freedom to concentrate on competitive school sport. I am removing the need for schools to:

plan and implement their part of a 'five hour offer';

collect information about every pupil for an annual survey;

deliver a range of new Government sport initiatives each year;

report termly to the Youth Sport Trust on various performance indicators;

conform to a national blueprint for how to deliver PE and sport, and how to use their staff and resources; and

get permission from the Youth Sport Trust and the Department to use their funding flexibly or to vary how they do things.

In giving schools this freedom, we are trusting school leaders to take decisions in the best interests of the pupils and parents they serve. I would expect every school to want to maintain, as a minimum, the current levels of provision for PE and sport each week for every pupil. Primary, secondary and special schools have enjoyed between them some £2.4 billion of Exchequer and Lottery investment since 2003, and parents and the public will expect them to have embedded the good practice and collaboration developed over the last seven years. I should also clarify that the Department is not closing down school sport partnerships. Rather, they are being entrusted to schools, who can decide whether and how to use them in the future.

Earlier this month, the Department paid £71 million grant to school sport partnerships, part of the funding for the final year of the previous spending period, 2008-2011. The Department's officials will ensure that the relevant final payments are made to partnerships, and will write shortly about the exact transitional arrangements and revised terms and conditions.

I have also considered the future of the specialist schools programme. The Youth Sport Trust has been instrumental in creating a national network of specialist sports colleges, and I know that many school leaders attest to the value of the sport specialism as a catalyst for school improvement and as a means of developing a distinct character and ethos for their schools.

Now that specialism is so firmly established, I believe that the time has come to remove the prescription that has built up around the programme and to give school leaders greater freedom to make use of the opportunities offered by specialism and the associated funding. This is part of my wider commitment to trust school leaders to take decisions in the best interests of the pupils and parents they serve. Of course, Academies are already freed from centralised control and are not constrained in their choice of specialism or required to undergo designation or re-designation. I look forward to the number of schools enjoying these and other Academy freedoms increasing.

> In particular, I have decided that, from April 2011, funding for specialism should no longer take the form of a dedicated grant, so that all schools can decide how to develop their specialisms in the light of the total resources available to them. Schools will not be required to re-designate. I should stress that funding is not being removed from schools: money currently paid as specialist schools' grant will continue to be routed to schools through the DSG. This is in line with the approach set out in the Department's consultation on the Pupil Premium, which envisaged the mainstreaming of dedicated grants wherever possible.
>
> I have also decided not to fund the current range of HPSS options after March 2011. Again, the funding will remain with the frontline. Our best schools will continue to be able to take on system leadership roles and support others to improve, and I am looking to expand the opportunities available to them. Academy status already offers a route for outstanding schools to support others as does becoming a National or Local Leader of Education. I intend to set out further plans in the White Paper which is due to be published later in the autumn. Of course, I would expect locally driven collaborations to continue to develop and flourish.
>
> The Department's grant funding agreement with the Youth Sport Trust, which covers its role as a Government delivery partner for PE and sport and funding for a range of national programmes and support to schools - including support for specialist schools - expires at the end of this financial year. I can also confirm that, at this point, I have no plans to commission further work from the Youth Sport Trust in these areas beyond March 2011. Officials will discuss shortly with the Trust how best to manage the grant-funded activities over the remainder of the current financial year in the light of the changes outlined above.
>
> Again, I am grateful to the Youth Sport Trust and its staff for the work that has been done over the last decade and more. I am making this letter public and copying it to school sport partnerships. I have also written to the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust about the specialist schools programme.[13]

On 30 November 2010 the Shadow Education Secretary, Andy Burnham, responded to the announcement during an Opposition Day debate on School Sports Funding:

> There was a developing consensus, which was repeated just before the recent general election. A write-up of a Radio 5 Live debate appears on the Youth Sports Trust website and it says that, on school sport partnerships, Hugh Robertson said it would be wrong to dismantle "13 years of work" and, instead, "the party would build on" them. But that broad consensus has now been broken by the Secretary of State. School sport partnerships have joined a growing list of things that the Conservative party said it would protect in opposition, but has scrapped in government.
>
> Let me make one thing clear: Labour Members would have understood if the Government had decided to reduce funding to school sport partnerships and the Youth Sport Trust, as long as they kept the basic school sport partnership infrastructure in place. What we are struggling with is having to accept the Secretary of State's decision to remove 100% of their funding and demolish an entire infrastructure and proven delivery system that is improving children's lives here and now. I cannot understand why he has done that.[14]

The Association for Physical Education (afPE)[15] responded to the reforms by stating that it shared the concerns of all in the PE profession regarding the proposed changes, but that it

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[13] Refocusing sport in schools to build a lasting legacy of the 2012 Games [DfE Press notice 20 October 2010]
[14] HC Deb 30 November 2010 c 693
[15] http://www.afpe.org.uk/about-afpe

wished to build upon the positive aspects of the announcement, such as the commitment to maintain as a minimum the current levels of PE and school sport each week. The afPE also commented that although Government funding for SSPs was ending, it was "heartening" that they were not being abolished and that schools could still directly fund SSPs if they wished.[16]

The afPE's letter to the Secretary of State, sent in November 2010, re-iterated the points made in their initial response.

The Youth Sport Trust (YST)[17] said that while it appreciated the challenging economic environment and respected the policy of empowering schools and reducing bureaucracy, it was "deeply disappointed" with the decision to cut school sport funding. It noted that SSPs had exceeded their given targets, were internationally envied and helped to increase participation in competitive sport.[18]

Community of Providers of Physical Activity and Sports (COMPASS), the trade association for providers of physical activity and sport, wanted to "balance the somewhat biased and negative views which have been represented in the media". They said that it was important to acknowledge that £2.4 billion had been spent on school sport over the last ten years and that this funding was never expected to be permanent, and that the "investment has provided a positive legacy on which further progress can be made".[19]

Some of the policy changes received substantial criticism in the media, particularly the decision to end direct funding for SSPs. A selection of press comment is listed below:

Fears for London 2012 legacy as sport along with arts is cut by 30%, *Guardian*, 20 Oct 2010

London 2012 Olympics: Government accused of 'devastating' legacy with school spending cuts, *The Daily Telegraph*, 20 Oct 2010

Olympians fear impact of school sport cuts, *Youth Sport Trust,* 27 Oct 2010

End of sports strategy is 'devastating contradiction', *Times Educational Supplement*, 29 Oct 2010

Campbell joins in the chorus of disapproval, *Times*, 30 Oct 2010

School sport will be hard hit by funding cuts, *Guardian*, 16 Nov 2010

Michael Gove defends school sports funding change, *BBC*, 21 Nov 2010

Don't assume we'll pick up slack in sport, *Times Educational Supplement*, 26 Nov 2010

2.2 The Revised Policy

A revised policy was announced on 20 Dec 2010: "*A new approach for school sports - decentralising power, incentivising competition, trusting teachers*".

The most significant points were that direct Government funding for School Sport Partnerships (SSPs) was to continue until August 2011 instead of March 2011 at a cost of £47 million, and that a further £65 million of Government funding was being provided until 2013 to fund one day a week of secondary school PE teachers' time to be spent out of the classroom encouraging intra-and inter-school competition in primary schools. It was

[16] afPE's statement in response to the letter to Baroness Campbell [25 October 2010]
[17] http://www.youthsporttrust.org
[18] Letter from Baroness Campbell in response [1 November 2010]
[19] Open letter to the secretary of state for education [29 November 2010]

emphasised that although central Government funding was ending schools could continue, if they wanted, to fund SSPs directly.

The Government described the new approach as a departure from the previous government's approach, with less bureaucracy and fewer top-down targets, more decentralisation and increased school freedom.

Lottery funding from Sport England to establish the new Olympic-style School Games was announced, and the Government's intention to review the PE National Curriculum, increasing the emphasis on competitive sport, was repeated:

> Michael Gove has today set out the direction of travel, and initial funding, for the Coalition Government's new approach on school sports. Schools will receive funding to allow PE teachers to further embed competitive sport in schools across the country and raise participation.
>
> Every secondary school will receive funding up to the end of the academic year in 2013 to pay for one day a week of a PE teacher's time to be spent out of the classroom, encouraging greater take-up of competitive sport in primary schools and securing a fixture network for schools to increase the amount of intra- and inter-school competition.
>
> Lottery funding from Sport England will also be deployed to build a framework of competitions as part of the new School Games. Competitions for pupils with disabilities and SEN will be included at every level. All schools will be invited to compete against one another in district competitions, leading to county festivals of competitive sport, and even the chance of appearing in the first national finals in spring 2012 with events at the Olympic Stadium.
>
> This approach will mean that funding and support are there so that school sports partnerships can continue, if schools wish them to, in order to drive an increase in competitive sport.
>
> The Government will also:
>
> - revise the PE curriculum in our curriculum review to place a new emphasis on competitive sports
> - invite Dame Kelly Holmes to lead a network of sporting advocates to work with her in promoting school sport around the country and to encourage more young people to participate in sport
> - work through Sport England with the national governing bodies of individual sports to get more volunteer sports leaders and coaches into our schools to encourage wider participation
> - fund the Youth Sport Trust to expand the Young Ambassadors programme so that every secondary school, and some primary schools too, can appoint ambassadors in the run up to London 2012.
>
> The Coalition Government's new approach marks a departure from the previous strategy.
>
> Previously, PE and Sports strategy was driven by top-down targets, undermined by excessive bureaucracy, limiting the freedom of individual schools on how they used their funding, especially on sports and PE and lacked a proper emphasis on competitive team sports.

> We have abolished the targets and the box-ticking that went with it. Instead we will ask schools to list the sports they offer and the fixtures they have arranged on their website so parents and the local community can support children and young people.
>
> We have removed ringfences around the main school funding pot which limited headteachers' powers to spend money as they wished. Schools funding can now be spent through a variety of sources. For the first time schools now have the freedom to choose how they deliver sport in schools. This is a bottom-up, decentralised approach to sport.
>
> As we move towards a system where schools enjoy progressively greater freedom over how they spend money it is important that we do not lose the benefits of those aspects of the existing school sports infrastructure which have brought real benefits.
>
> The Government recognises the good work that school sport partnerships, and national bodies such as the Youth Sports Trust, Sport England, the Association for PE, Sportscoach UK, and many national governing bodies of sport, have done in supporting sport in schools and wants to ensure that there is a smooth transition to this new system. The Department is therefore announcing time-limited funding to help schools embed this good practice:
>
> The Department will pay school sport partnerships for the full school year to the end of the summer term 2011 at a cost of £47 million. This will ensure the partnerships and their service can continue until the end of the academic year.
>
> A further £65 million from the Department's spending review settlement will be paid to enable every secondary school to release one PE teacher for a day a week in the school year 2011/12 and in 2012/13. This will ensure all the benefits of the current system are fully embedded.[20]

The DFE press release also included comment from Government Ministers, the Youth Sport Trust, and Dame Kelly Holmes.

2.3 Some other reaction

The Shadow Education Minister, Toby Perkins, reacted to the Education Secretary's new announcement during education questions on 20 December 2010. He welcomed the change in policy but criticised the Government's approach to reforming school sport funding:

> **Toby Perkins**: We welcome the Secretary of State's humiliating climbdown on the school sports partnerships. It is hard to know what is most disgraceful: the refusal to meet Baroness Campbell or the way the Government badmouthed the Youth Sport Trust, the hundreds of school sports co-ordinators and the thousands of volunteers. The Secretary of State said that school sports partnerships had failed, another Minister slammed them and even the Prime Minister said they had a terrible record. Now, in the face of a storm of protest, the Government claim to be leaving them in place until shortly after the Olympics, albeit with dramatically less funding. We hope that the Secretary of State learns a lesson from this, which is just the latest shambles he has presided over. Will he acknowledge that school sports partnerships have not failed and have not got a terrible record, and will he promise to back them up to the Olympics and beyond?[21]

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[20] A new approach for school sports - decentralising power, incentivising competition, trusting teachers DfE Press release 20 December 2010

[21] HC Deb 20 December 2010 c 1171

The afPE expressed "delight" in response to the revised approach and the additional Government funding made available for SSPs. The association commented that it believed that once direct Government funding comes to an end local funding for SSPs would prove to be successful.[22]

The Youth Sport Trust (YTS) also welcomed the Government's new approach. The Chair of the YST, Baroness Sue Campbell, said she was "absolutely delighted" and commented that the provided level of investment would allow children to continue to have opportunities to take part in sport.[23]

2.4 PE Teacher Release Funding

In May 2011 the DfE wrote to all Partnership Development Managers (PDMs) providing further detail regarding the new "PE Teacher Release Funding" scheme announced in December. The letter repeated the Government's commitment to funding the release of a PE teacher from every secondary school for one day a week until 2013. It detailed which schools would be eligible for funding:

> All state maintained secondary schools and Academies; middle-deemed secondary schools and special schools (including non-maintained schools; and pupil referral units with secondary aged pupils.
>
> Level of funding: this will be a fixed, flat-rate grant of £7,600 per school, per academic year. (There will be no additional London weighting or 'on costs'.) Schools can choose to use their own budgets to increase the amount of time spent on this role, if they wish.
>
> Funding period: funding will be for two academic years 2011/12 and 2012/13.[24]

It also provided more information about the aims of the scheme, and stated that PE teachers being released could help create sustainable intra-and inter-school competition and involve volunteers to lead more competitive sport.[25]

The funding is not ring-fenced. A PQ response in December 2011 set out the following:

> **Clive Efford**: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what guidance he has given to schools regarding the release of PE teachers to organise sport in primary schools; and if he will make a statement.
>
> **Tim Loughton**: [holding answer 22 November 2011]: The Department informed schools of the purpose of the funding for PE teacher release on 15 July 2011. The information below was communicated to all eligible schools who were told that funding will be for the two academic years 2011/12 and 2012/13.""The PE teacher release funding is not ring-fenced. The Department encouraged schools to use the funding to release secondary PE teachers from timetable for one day a week: to provide specialist PE and sport support to local primary schools and within their own school; to embed good practice; and to provide more competitive sport for all pupils, including the School Games.""These PE teachers can:""help schools to create sustainable school sport competition, both within and between schools, involving all pupils;""help schools to involve their staff, parents, local people and young leaders and volunteers to lead competitive sport; and""help schools to engage in sport pupils who are less active or

[22] afPE's response to the Government announcement regarding funding for School Sports Partnerships afPE Press release 20 December 2010
[23] New funding provides lifeline for school sport YST Press release 20 December 2010
[24] PE Teacher Release Funding, Letter from DfE 20 May 2011
[25] PE Teacher Release Funding, Letter from DfE 20 May 2011

> who do not have equal access or opportunity to compete (e.g. pupils with disabilities)"."Schools were advised that they should, plan on the basis that funding will end by August 2013. They should seek to embed the work that the released PE teachers do within their school and with local primary schools into their core provision.[26]

2.5 Youth Sport Strategy

The announcement of the youth sport strategy, aimed at encouraging young people into playing sport throughout their lives, by Jeremy Hunt on 10 January 2012 set out the following:

> Every secondary school in England is set to host a community sports club, as part of a new strategy to encourage young people to play sport for life, Culture Secretary Jeremy Hunt announced today.
>
> The move is a key part of a £1 billion, five-year youth and community sport strategy published today that will deliver on Lord Coe's 2012 Games bid promise to inspire a generation to get involved in sport.
>
> The strategy, to be delivered by Sport England, will see new school-based sports clubs established with links to one or more sports' national governing bodies. Expert coaches will run sessions to help create strong ties between schools and local sports clubs already in existence in their area. Football has pledged that 2,000 of their clubs will be linked to secondary schools by 2017, rugby union 1,300 clubs, cricket, 1,250 clubs and rugby league and tennis 1,000 clubs each.
>
> Also, for the first time, funding will be made available to open up school sport facilities for wider public use. Three-quarters of sports halls and artificial pitches and a third of swimming pools in England are located on school sites and £10 million of funding will enable communities to make the most of these local sporting assets.
>
> £100 million will be invested in creating the clubs and tackling the drop-off in sports participation that can happen when young people leave school. Of this, £50 million will be invested to boost sport provision at further education colleges and universities.
>
> The funding will also provide a full-time sports professional for at least 150 further education colleges, to drive forward innovative sports provision.
>
> Around £450 million will go to sports governing bodies between 2013 and 2017 for their 'whole sport plans.' Around 60 per cent will benefit young people aged 14 – 25 so that sports are completely focussed on helping to drive a sporting habit for life. The remaining 40 per cent will be aimed at the rest of the population. Funding to governing bodies will be on a payments-by-results basis with sports that fail to deliver putting their public funding at risk.

A PQ response in March 2012 set out the progress that had been made on the strategy since its announcement:

> **Hugh Robertson**: The Department is working with Sport England on implementing the Youth Sport Strategy published in January 2012. This work includes helping national governing bodies (NGBs) to develop their plans to increase participation and retention, particularly of young people, in sport. The NGBs will formally submit their plans alongside their bids for funding, in May. Final award offers will be made in January and activity will commence in April 2013. Sport England is also working with the Further

[26] HC Deb 20 Dec 2011 537 c1232-3W

> Education sector to identify 150 further education colleges that will benefit from a College Sport Maker, with the first grants likely to be in place by the autumn. An important element of the new strategy is to increase the community access to sports facilities on school premises. Sport England published new guidance for schools wishing to open their facilities on 2 March and will be making £10 million available to schools to help with process. Sport England is also working with the Local Government Associations and Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association to develop plans to enable local authorities, community groups and other partner to bid for matched funding to increase and sustain participation in sport. It expects to test how best to invest during the final quarter 2012-13.[27]

2.6 School Sports Partnerships assessment

Since the Education Secretary's proposals, a report was published by Ofsted in June 2011: *School Sport Partnerships: A survey of good practice*. This "small-scale survey" assessed the impact of School Sport Partnerships by visiting twelve partnerships. The report was made with the Education Secretary's October and December announcements in mind, and was intended to help schools learn the lessons of SSPs and apply them in this "new environment".

The report found that SSPs had a beneficial effect on PE and sport and allowed schools to improve the quality and quantity of PE and sport they provided. Benefits were seen most clearly in primary schools but increasingly so in secondary schools. SSPs were improving the link between schools and sports clubs. Partnership Development Managers were also found to work effectively with partners, increasing PE participation and raising standards.[28]

For further analysis of Ofsted's report, see "Axed - but Ofsted says strategy to boost sport take-up was a winner," *Times Educational Supplement*, 1 July 2011.

3 The School Games

On 28 June 2010, the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport announced plans for a national Olympic and Paralympic-style sports competition for schools. The proposed competition is now known as the School Games and is to be funded by £14 million from the Department for Health,[29] and £35.5 million of Lottery money to 2014/15.[30]

In the statement, Jeremy Hunt said he wanted the School Games to "boost" the promotion of competitive sport in schools and that the initiative would be a key part of the 2012 Olympic sporting legacy. The first competition is set to begin in September 2011 with the finals taking place in May 2012 at the Olympic Park, although the stated ambition is for the scheme to continue past 2012:

> A new Olympic and Paralympic-style sports competition for young people across England was announced today by Culture Secretary Jeremy Hunt and Education Secretary Michael Gove.
>
> Up to £10 million of lottery funding, distributed by Sport England, will create a new sports league structure for primary and secondary schools culminating in an inaugural national final to be held in the run up to the London Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012.

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[27] HC Deb 7 Mar 2012 541 c779W
[28] Ofsted, *School Sport Partnerships: A survey of good practice*, June 2011
[29] Andrew Lansley announces up to £20 million to help school pupils be more active DoH Press Release 21 December 2010
[30] HC Deb 14 March 2011 c 55W

> The competition is a key part of the Government's plans for a lasting sporting legacy from hosting the London 2012 Games and to maximise the sporting opportunities available to all.
>
> Schools will compete against each other in leagues at a local level from 2011 with winning athletes and teams qualifying for up to 60 county finals.
>
> The most talented young athletes will then be selected for the national finals. Schools will also be encouraged to host in-house Olympic-style sports days so that children of all abilities have the opportunity to compete. There will be a Paralympic element at every level of the competition for young people with disabilities.
>
> The ambition is for the competition to continue after 2012.
>
> Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport Jeremy Hunt said:
>
> "I want to give a real boost to competitive sport in schools using the power of hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games to encourage young people – whatever age or ability – to take part in this new competition.
>
> "Competitive sport – whether you win or lose – teaches young people great lessons for life. It encourages teamwork, dedication and striving to be the best that you can be. This will be a key part of our drive to leave a real lasting sports legacy from London's games."[31]

In December 2010, more information about the School Games initiative was provided in the report: *Plans for the Legacy from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games*. The report states that the Youth Sport Trust, Sport England and other partners will lead the development of the School Games.[32]

In a speech in February 2011, the Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport Secretary confirmed the Government's commitment to funding the delivery of the new School Games and reiterated the intention for the School Games to continue past 2012 as part of the broader promotion of competitive sport in schools.

He also announced that the Government would be publishing prospectuses for schools, detailing how they can get involved in the School Games (now published). Further details were provided in a DCMS press notice:

> In a speech to the 2011 Sports Colleges Conference in Telford earlier today, Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport set out his vision for the new School Games tournament, and called on Head Teachers to get behind the competition.
>
> Speaking at the Youth Sport Trust conference, Mr Hunt also paid tribute to teachers and coaches all over the country for their "extraordinary commitment and dedication over the years towards getting more children and young people to play competitive sport".
>
> "I want to harness the energy, enthusiasm and commitment you have shown over many years to help move school sport to the next level in this critical year of opportunity", said Mr Hunt.

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[31] Olympic-style Sports Competition for Young People launched as part of 2012 Legacy DCMS Press Release 28 June 2010

[32] DCMS, *Plans for the Legacy from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games*, December 2010, p3

> During the speech the Secretary of State also talked about the partnership between DCMS, Department of Health, Department for Education and Sport England, who are all contributing to make the School Games a success, and pay for hundreds of new School Games Organisers.
>
> "Sport is a vital part of a healthy childhood, said Health Secretary Andrew Lansley. "It helps in the drive against child obesity and competitive school sport offers a wide range of benefits like better self esteem, confidence and social skills. That is why we have got behind the School Games by providing up to £20 million of funding over the next two years. It will help foster strong links between schools and encourage greater uptake."
>
> A legacy for 2012
>
> The School Games tournament – inspired by the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics – will give every child the opportunity take part and compete.
>
> As part of the offer:
>
> 500 schools across nine regions will pilot an annual School Games Day: a 'finals' day stemming from a programme of intra-school competition which will offer disabled children as many opportunities as non-disabled children
>
> a rolling programme of leagues and tournaments will promote more competition between schools at a town or district level
>
> up to 60 new, county or city-level 'Festivals of Sport' will showcase the best of local competitive sport in the inter-school finals
>
> the most talented young sports people will have the chance to represent their schools in a high-profile, national event
>
> In the spring Government will publish a prospectus for schools – setting out exactly how teachers and coaches can get involved in the School Games, including registering online.[33]

The new School Games are set to replace the current Sainsbury's UK School Games from 2011. The difference between the two was explained an answer to a Parliamentary Question:

> **Hugh Robertson:** [27408] Unlike the UK School Games, the Olympic and Paralympic-style School Sports Competition will be based on school and not regional participation. It will not be a single event catering for only our most talented young athletes, but a package of events and activities across England, inspiring a generation of young people to compete in sport. The aim is to ensure all children get an opportunity to participate in competitive sport, not just elite athletes. The national level event in 2012 will build on the good work that has been achieved through the UK School Games, as a showcase for our most talented youngsters to compete against each other, on behalf of their schools.[34]

The School Games website opened in March 2011 allowing schools to register their interest, and a number of pilot schemes are currently taking place before the launch of the new School Games in September 2011.

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[33] Jeremy Hunt sets out plans for School Games, DCMS New Story 9 February 2011
[34] HC Deb 7 December 2010 c 231W

The School Games are planned to take place over a full school year with four levels of competition and culminating in a national event in May 2012. The primary and secondary school prospectuses are available on the website and provide greater detail about the competition as well as setting out the planned structure of the games, see below:

> **Level 1**: Intra-school competition, culminating in a School Games day
>
> **Level 2**: Regular inter-school competition between schools at a local level
>
> **Level 3**: Annual county/area culmination of inter-school competitions – School Games Festivals
>
> **Level 4**: National multi-sport event[35]

In an answer to a Parliamentary Question the Minister for Sport and Olympics outlined how the impact of the new School Games will be measured:

> **Mr Jim Cunningham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport what plans he has to assess the outcomes of the School Olympics; and what criteria he will use to conduct that assessment. [55652]
>
> **Hugh Robertson:** The outcomes of the School Games will be assessed in two ways. The School Games website will record the number of schools taking part; the number of sports being played; and the number of young people taking part in intra and inter school competition. Secondly, Sport England will be carrying out a full impact evaluation of the School Games over four years. An independent research organisation will be commissioned to carry out the evaluation (managed by Sport England). Further details will be announced in the autumn.[36]

4 School National Curriculum Review

The Government announced a comprehensive review of the National Curriculum on 20 January 2011. The DfE press release the day the Review was launched built upon what was said about the Government's new approach to Physical Education in the schools white paper, *The Importance of Teaching* (at 4.28), and provided a brief outline of the Government's vision for a "slimmed down" curriculum for sport in schools. The remit for the review makes it clear that the Government intends to maintain Physical Education as a compulsory National Curriculum subject.[37] Whether the current minimum target of at least two hours of high quality PE and school sport every week for pupils aged 5 to 16 is maintained will be revealed when the review is completed in September 2012.

> 15. Children need access to high quality physical education. Physical education will, therefore, also remain a compulsory part of the National Curriculum at all four key stages and the first phase of the review will advise ministers on a much simplified and less prescriptive programme of study. This is also for introduction in 2013. It is proposed the revised curriculum for physical education will set out a clearer expectation that all pupils should play competitive sport, and will retain the expectation that all children learn to swim. The Government will also consider whether there would be merit in providing some form of guidance to schools about the allocation of time to outdoor physical activities. These considerations will be informed by the outcomes of the review.[38]

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[35] DCMS et al, *Your 2012 School Games,* 2011, p 3
[36] HC Deb 18 May 2011 528 c 233W
[37] Repeating what was said in the White Paper
[38] National Curriculum review launched DfE Press Notice 20 January 2011

The Youth Sport Trust's initial response to the announced review was as follows:

> The Department for Education has confirmed that physical education (PE) will remain a compulsory subject at school as it announced a major review of the National Curriculum in England.
>
> It is proposed that a revised curriculum for PE will set out a clearer expectation that all pupils should play competitive sport, and will retain the expectation that all children learn to swim.
>
> The Government will also consider whether there would be merit in providing some form of guidance to schools about the allocation of time to outdoor physical activities; these considerations will be informed by the outcomes of the review.
>
> This news has been welcomed by the Youth Sport Trust, an organisation that is focused on building a brighter future for young people through PE and sport.
>
> Chief Executive of the Youth Sport Trust, Steve Grainger, said:
>
> "The quality and quantity of PE and school sport that is now being offered in schools has improved vastly in recent years. Ensuring it remains a vital part of the curriculum will allow young people to continue to enjoy the many benefits that sport and physical education can bring."[39]

An answer to a Parliamentary Question in June 2011 emphasises that the Government's aim is to increase the levels of competitive sport in the National Curriculum:

> **Yasmin Qureshi:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of future levels of competitive sport *(a)* within and *(b)* between schools; and if he will make a statement. [60228]
>
> **Tim Loughton:** The Department is reviewing the National Curriculum programme of study for physical education to make clear that competitive sport is an integral part of the rounded education that every child in maintained schools should receive. Subject to the outcome of the review and necessary parliamentary approval, this should ensure that all pupils aged five to 16 will play competitive sport, without exception. The Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport, my right hon. Friend the Member for South West Surrey (Mr Hunt), is also creating the new School Games as a further way of encouraging schools to provide more competitive sport. Through a mix of intra-school, inter-school and county-level competitions, every young person will have the chance to take part. To ensure this is possible the Government are creating a number of School Games Organisers who will promote competitions.[40]

The initial timetable for the National Curriculum Review indicated that the new Physical Education programme would be made available to schools by September 2012, to be implemented in September 2013.[41] However, the timetable for the review has been revised "to allow for more radical reform of both curriculum and qualifications." The new curriculum for all subjects will now be introduced in 2014.[42]

The curriculum review's Expert Panel published a report on The Framework for the National Curriculum in December 2011. The report did not propose changes regarding physical education from the position noted in the PQ response above.

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[39] PE to stay at the heart of school life YST News January 2011
[40] HC Deb 28 June 2011 c 763-4W
[41] HC Deb 28 February 2011 c 258W
[42] Department for Education, National Curriculum update, 15 February 2012

4.1 Some responses

Brief extracts from some other responses to the National Curriculum Review's Call for Evidence are noted below.

In response to the review afPE said that the PE curriculum should remain "broad and balanced". In reply to the question of how the PE National Curriculum should be "slimmed down", the afPE said it should only be slimmed down in presentation not content, commenting that if the PE curriculum were significantly slimmed down there would be a danger of it only providing an inhibitive and narrow experience for pupils.

The afPE said that core subjects should remain statutory and that the National Curriculum should provide a minimum amount of time to be spent on these subjects. It believed that the current PE two hour benchmark was useful and successful.

On the subject of competitive sport, the afPE drew attention to worldwide research that has recognised both the beneficial and detrimental effects that increased competition can have, and emphasised that effective competition can only be achieved through a basis of high quality Physical Education. They mentioned that many teachers feel that competition is already covered at Key stages 3 and 4, and that expecting all pupils in a large school to experience regular inter and intra school competition was unrealistic.

The afPE also suggested that swimming should be compulsory for the first two Key stages.[43]

In their reply, the Youth Sport Trust said that they believed the current two hours target for PE curriculum time should be maintained, and referred to a recent review of global policy in schools in which all the countries reviewed provided PE time targets.

Commenting on what they believed were essential elements of PE, the YST stated that intra- and inter-school competition should be encouraged by the curriculum and that access to regular competitive sport was important to individual development.

They commented that high quality Physical Education was essential for developing the necessary skills and confidence to participate effectively in competitive sport. Expanding on this, they said a curriculum should therefore "seek to build physical literacy" before putting the skills into practice in a sporting context.[44]

Sportscoach UK also suggested that swimming should be compulsory in Key stages 1 and 2. It also stated that the PE curriculum should be "broad and balanced" and that only high quality Physical Education can provide the basis for effective competition. They drew attention to the potential for competition to have beneficial and detrimental effects and said any competition must be appropriate and effectively integrated into the programme of study.

[43] National Curriculum Review: Response from afPE
[44] National Curriculum Review: Youth Sport Trust response