



HM Government

School Sport and Activity Action Plan

Update

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Department for Education working with Department for Culture, Media and Sport and
Department for Health and Social Care

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Ministerial foreword

High quality physical education (PE) and sport are a vital part of what makes a great school. Physical activity has a wide range of benefits to pupil health and wellbeing, and the best schools acknowledge that – far from being an ‘either-or’ decision – sport and academic achievement go hand in hand. I have seen first hand how the culture and ethos of a school can be transformed when PE and sport are at its heart. The Government wants this for all schools and for all pupils.

This action plan sets out how we intend to support senior leaders and teachers to provide high quality PE and sport for at least two hours a week, complemented by a wide range of extra-curricular sport and competitive opportunities. It is important that every pupil benefits from this, and the Government encourages equal access to sport for girls and boys.

The Government is committed to working closely with schools to identify and promote excellent practice across the system. Later this year, the Government will publish non-statutory PE and sport guidance to support schools to learn from best practice across both the state and independent sectors. For example, some schools have appointed a Director of Sport or Athletic Director whose role is to establish PE and sport as part of the school’s culture and to make connections with local and national sport organisations – as well as national governing bodies such as the Football Association and the Lawn Tennis Association.

Despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, good progress has been made in delivering on the actions set out in the 2019 School Sport and Activity Action Plan. This updated plan, underpinned by the over £600m Primary PE and Sport Premium funding over the next two academic years, sets out an ambitious vision for our schools – and forms an important component of the Government’s long-term strategy for sport in the UK. I encourage all school leaders to use it to help all pupils to start their life-long love of sport and exercise.

The Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP, Minister for School Standards.
Department for Education

I fully support the priorities outlined in this refresh of the School Sport and Activity Action Plan, which sits alongside my Department's Sport Strategy. As Minister for Sport, I am passionate about building a healthier nation by tackling high levels of inactivity and the key to this is engaging young people.

My ambition is to help children into a lifetime of sport from a young age, whilst supporting the sport sector to be welcoming to all. A passion and enjoyment of physical activity developed during childhood, including at school, can go a long way to create a positive foundation from which a lifetime of physical activity can flourish. No matter where you live, there should be excellent participation opportunities both inside and outside of school and high quality facilities to support this.

I want to ensure that children have the best chance for an active life, particularly those from under-represented groups. Part of that includes being given opportunities to compete and excel, part of it is nurturing the habit of being up and active. We are proud to fund the School Games Organiser Programme, which is vital in providing these opportunities, and identifying key partners to help support children and coalesce around a shared focus on physical activity.

I am committed to making sport and physical activity more inclusive and welcoming for all so that everyone can have confidence that there is a place for them in sport. Whilst we were overjoyed to see the Lionesses storm to victory in the Euros last year, we are not just interested in supporting the next generation of elite sportspeople, we want everyone to enjoy their experience of being active, in whatever form that takes.

The Rt Hon Stuart Andrew MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Sport, Gambling and Civil Society and Minister for Equalities.

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

We are committed to helping children have an active start in life, which is why I welcome the new School Sport and Activity Action Plan. Led by the Department for Education, in partnership with my own department and my colleagues in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the joint plan helps to pave the way for increased activity levels in our children and young people through renewed investment and a raft of educational initiatives, so they can experience the health and social benefits of regular sport and physical activity– both physically and mentally.

The UK Chief Medical Officers recommend that children and young people should engage in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week and those with disabilities should engage in 20 minutes of physical activity a day. Currently 30.1% of children and young people (2.2m) are classed as less active, achieving less than an average of 30 minutes a day.

The evidence is clear, regular physical activity is beneficial for health. In children and young people, it helps to promote development of healthy muscles and bones and provides a boost to mental health and wellbeing and builds confidence to engage with physical activity throughout their lives.

Activity levels in children are on the rise and our goal is to help this increase continue. This plan, by supporting schools to improve the quality of their PE provision and make strides in equal access to sport and physical activity, will encourage children, regardless of sex or background, to develop healthy physical activity habits, whilst having fun at the same time.

Neil O'Brien, Minister for Primary Care and Public Health
Department for Health and Social Care

Introduction

PE and sport have always been central to what schools do and are a key part of a school's identity. Where schools provide high quality PE and pupils play sport, they equip pupils to continue that participation into their later lives. This goes beyond the immediate benefits of improved attainment, mental wellbeing and personal development¹²³⁴.

The Active Lives Children and Young People's Survey provides detailed insight into the amount, frequency and type of sport and physical activity undertaken by children. The most recent data was published in December 2022 and shows that the proportion of children who are active has increased by 2.6% compared to the academic year 2020/21, bringing activity levels back in line with those seen pre-pandemic⁵. Despite this encouraging increase, the evidence also tells us that stubborn inequalities persist. We know that not all groups of children currently access and experience the benefits of sport and exercise with differences by age, ethnicity, sex, disability and socio-economic group⁶⁷⁸⁹. Girls' equality has been brought into sharp focus by the Lionesses' European Championship 2022 win and their campaign to ensure girls and boys have the same opportunities to take part in high quality PE and for every girl in England to be able to play football at school. This is why, now more than ever, a longer-term, cross-government approach is needed that works alongside schools and the school sport sector.

¹ [Guidance to increase physical activity among children and young people in schools and colleges \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

² [Extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

³ [Physical activity | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)

⁴ ¹¹ Kuzik, Nicholas, Bruno G. G. da Costa, Yeongho Hwang, Simone J. J. M. Verswijveren, Scott Rollo, Mark S. Tremblay, Stacey Bélanger, et al. 'School-Related Sedentary Behaviours and Indicators of Health and Well-Being among Children and Youth: A Systematic Review'. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition & Physical Activity* 19, no. 1 (5 April 2022): 1–32. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12966-022-01258-4>.

⁵ [Active Lives Children and Young People Survey - Academic year 2021-22 \(sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com\)](#)

⁶ Collings, Paul J., Sufyan A. Dogra, Silvia Costa, Daniel D. Bingham, and Sally E. Barber. 'Objectively-Measured Sedentary Time and Physical Activity in a Bi-Ethnic Sample of Young Children: Variation by Socio-Demographic, Temporal and Perinatal Factors'. *BMC Public Health* 20, no. 1 (28 January 2020): 109. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-8132-z>.

⁷ Bingham, Daniel D., Andy Daly-Smith, Jennifer Hall, Amanda Seims, Sufyan A. Dogra, Stuart J. Fairclough, Mildred Ajebon, et al. 'Covid-19 Lockdown: Ethnic Differences in Children's Self-Reported Physical Activity and the Importance of Leaving the Home Environment; a Longitudinal and Cross-Sectional Study from the Born in Bradford Birth Cohort Study'. *The International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* 18, no. 1 (6 September 2021): 117. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12966-021-01183-y>.

⁸ Tackling Teenage Disengagement (2022), Women in Sport [Tackling-Teenage-Disengagement-March-2022.pdf \(womeninsport.org\)](#)

⁹ Active Lives Children and Young People Survey - Academic year 2021-22 (sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com)

A new focus for PE and sport

The 2019 School Sport and Activity Action Plan set out a cross-Government commitment to collaborate at a national level to ensure that PE and sport are an integral part of both the school day and after-school activities¹⁰. Good progress has been made in delivering on the actions set out in the 2019 plan even with the additional challenge of a global pandemic. Annex A sets out the specific actions.

More schools have opened their sport facilities outside of the core school day, new resources and training have been developed and delivered, and extra-curricular clubs for pupils have been made available. This has happened alongside continued funding for the Primary PE and Sport Premium and School Games Organiser network.

The update focuses on further work to improve the quality of PE and school sport provision, ensuring equality of access to sport, increasing the number of children playing sport in school and meeting curriculum expectations, including for swimming and water safety. The action plan will not sit in isolation. The Government's new sport strategy will set the long-term strategy for sport in the UK and focus on addressing inactivity levels at all ages and making the sport sector more sustainable. The strategy will set out plans to achieve a step-change in activity levels, particularly in children and young people. This action plan supports that aim by ensuring children have increased opportunities to play sport and take physical exercise during their time in school.

Monitoring and evaluation

To help ensure the School Sport and Activity Action Plan delivers on its aims, it is important to understand how the actions we set out in this document are delivered and affect the quality of PE and sport in schools.

To this end, the Department for Education will explore the current provision of PE and sport in schools in England, and how this is impacted by Government programmes. The research will specifically consider the Primary PE and Sport Premium and Opening School Facilities programme, to improve our understanding of what works, for whom and in which contexts. Findings from the research will be used to inform future policy development and decision-making on how best to meet the Government's aims.

¹⁰ [School sport and activity action plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414222/school-sport-and-activity-action-plan-2019-2021.pdf)

High quality PE and sport for all pupils

The Government recognises PE and sport as being integral to what makes an excellent school, with dedicated time in the curriculum ensuring all pupils experience the benefits of regular physical exercise. This is why we are encouraging all schools to deliver a minimum of 2 hours' PE time during the school day every week alongside equal access to sport for girls and boys.

Non-statutory guidance

We will publish non-statutory PE and sport guidance by the end of 2023. We will look at what schools offer through their timetabled lessons and through their extra-curricular sport. With support from national governing bodies and other sporting organisations, the Government will identify schools that offer equal access for girls to sport during the school day and additional extracurricular activities highlighting how schools deliver 2 hours of PE a week and equal access for girls to PE and school sport. We will look at independent schools and the best examples in the state sector as a comparison. This guidance will include detailed case-studies outlining examples of good practice, to help support teachers and senior leaders to deliver good PE and sport in schools.

Future PE and sport for all schools

As set out in the schools white paper published by Government in March 2022, a new arm's length curriculum body, Oak National Academy (Oak), has been established. Oak will work with teachers across the country giving them and their pupils access to free, optional, and adaptable high-quality digital curriculum resources, including for PE.

Oak will work closely with its curriculum partners and subject expert groups to create full curriculum packages that align with the national curriculum and are informed by best practice and non-statutory guidance.

Primary PE and Sport Premium

The Government has confirmed that the Primary PE and Sport Premium will continue for academic years 2023/24 and 2024/25 with a total of over £600m across the two years, with funding provided by the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care.

At an individual school level, we want to use the Primary PE and Sport Premium as a focus for improved local accountability and leadership of PE and sport in primary schools. Significant dedicated funding has made a difference but there is potential for schools to

use it better¹¹. We want to improve oversight of the premium and give schools more tools to understand how to use this grant more effectively.

To support schools to make changes we will publish updated guidance and conditions of grant in summer 2023 to steer schools towards the most effective uses of the premium, drawing on the experience of the schools who use their premium well.

To improve accountability of the premium, we are introducing a new digital tool for schools to report on spending of their allocation of the premium. The digital tool will be made available from summer 2024 with an expectation for schools to trial completing this tool at the end of the 2023/24 academic year. For the 2024/25 academic year, completion of the digital tool will be required through the conditions of grant for all schools in receipt of the premium. Further information on the digital tool will be provided in the updated PE premium guidance published this summer.

In addition to this we will promote the use of a planning, reporting and evaluation template created by the Youth Sport Trust and Association for PE. This will be for schools to complete alongside the digital tool and will provide opportunities for schools to plan their premium spend to effectively deliver the premium objectives, be more transparent with their premium spend and will offer the opportunity for schools to record more information to support the data submitted through the digital tool. There will still be a requirement for schools to publish this template or a similar report on their website.

Governors supporting effective use of the PE and sport premium

At Arundel Church of England Primary school, Governors have an essential role in ensuring that the PE and Sport Premium is used well. Governors act as a critical friend ensuring the premium spending plan is linked to our school improvement plan. We have a dedicated Governor to oversee the PE and Sport Premium spending plan and ensure suitable monitoring and impact measurement is in place. We have also found it invaluable for the lead Governor to have discussions with Senior Leaders, PE staff and our sports coach. Together, we generate ideas for how the funding could best be used, as well as to ensure the school website is displaying accurate information regarding the funding.

Andrew Simpson, Headteacher, Arundel CofE primary school

¹¹ [The PE and sport premium: an investigation in primary schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Swimming and water safety as a key life skill

Swimming and water safety is included in the primary PE national curriculum. All pupils should be taught to swim and how to be safe in and around water during their time in primary school, which can be usefully reinforced at secondary school.

All pupils should also be taught practical water safety techniques in a pool, such as how to float, tread water, signal for help and exit from deep water. This can be complemented by classroom-based lessons that go further and cover aspects such as cold water shock, beach flags or the dangers of rip currents. The Department for Education has been working closely with the National Water Safety Forum to support the development and launch of a new water safety education framework and water safety resources for Key Stages 1-3. These were made available for schools during Drowning Prevention Week 2022 and are accessible on the Royal Life Saving Society UK's website¹². In 2022 over 314,000 school children took part in Drowning Prevention Week. The Department will continue to support Drowning Prevention Week in 2023. New water safety lesson resources for primary schools will be available which add to the wide range of resources for 3 to 16 year olds.

The Department will continue to work closely with Swim England. We will help increase schools' awareness of the refreshed School Swimming and Water Safety Charter, which is now free for schools to access from Swim England's website¹³. The charter provides schools with a range of lesson plans, awards, guidance documents, templates and certificates to help improve the quality of swimming and water safety lessons and raise attainment. We will also use the findings from planned insight work from Swim England on school swimming and water safety attainment and the opportunities to improve provision to help primary schools provide swimming and water safety lessons to all their pupils.

A central hub on the Swim England website for school swimming and water safety is also available for all schools, swimming teachers and pool operators to ensure their swimming programmes are fully inclusive for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities¹⁴. The hub hosts resources created through Inclusion 2024, funded by the Department for Education, including practical case studies from schools, a self-assessment tool and an adapted swimming awards scheme.

The new non-statutory PE and sport guidance will include a focus on ensuring that primary schools are supported to overcome the common barriers which can exist to the delivery of curriculum swimming and water safety to pupils. The PE and sport premium

¹² [Secondary School Water Education Resources | Royal Life Saving Society UK \(RLSS UK \)](#)

¹³ [School Swimming and Water Safety Charter - Swim England School Swimming](#)

¹⁴ [Inclusion 2020 | Increasing participation in school sport \(swimming.org\)](#)

can also be used to provide top up swimming and water safety lessons to pupils who are not able to meet the national curriculum requirements after core PE lessons.

Extra-curricular sport and competition

Finding the right sport for every child to ignite their interest and start a life-long love of sport is important. Playing sport as part of a school team or representing the school in individual sports can be rewarding for pupils and builds a special cultural connection to the school. The pupils taking part in extracurricular school sport will build rapport with the teachers delivering the opportunities which can have positive impacts on pupil behaviour during the core school day.

The national curriculum for PE introduces pupils to competitive sport in their timetabled PE lessons. Further competitive opportunities should be made available through intra school competitions and competitions against other schools. Schools should strive to choreograph competition that is fair with considerations of evenly matching pupils based on their ability, physical strength, and stage of development in the respective sport.

By exposing pupils to competitive sport and physical activities through PE and extracurricular sport, schools can support them to learn about fairness, respect and develop their social skills and resilience when coping with winning and losing.

In the Department for Education's Parent, Pupil and Learner Panel¹⁵, secondary school pupils were asked about the availability of, and their participation in, team sports during their previous school year (September 2021 to July 2022). Responses given by year 7 pupils reflect their final year of primary education. Three quarters (73%) of pupils had the opportunity to take part in team sports provided by their school outside of their usual classes, such as at break times or after school. The sport most widely available in these situations was football (58%), followed by basketball (30%) and netball (28%). Three in five (58%) pupils took part in a team sport provided by their school outside of class where they had the opportunity. Pupils who were less likely to have participated in team sports provided by the school included pupils eligible for free school meals (55% compared with 59% of pupils not eligible), pupils with SEN (48% compared with 60% of pupils without SEN), and female pupils (52% compared with 64% of male pupils).

Schools should connect into the local, regional, and national competitive structures that already exist. Where local competitive opportunities do not exist, schools need to create the most effective opportunities using contacts within multi academy trusts, through local Active Partnerships or within local authorities. If not already doing so, schools should be part of the School Games network¹⁶ and be engaged with their local Active Partnership¹⁷. The schools that are part of these networks should review the opportunities for

¹⁵ [Parent, Pupil and Learner Panel 22/23 Recruitment wave 1 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

¹⁶ [Your School Games - Your School Games](#)

¹⁷ [Home | Active Partnerships](#)

competition they are offering to pupils in years 10 and 11. Competitive sport and physical activity should be used as a complementary strategy in preparing pupils for their exams.

The School Games

Established in 2010, the School Games remains at the heart of school sport competition with over 85% of schools registered to take part. School PE and sport leads should familiarise themselves with the School Games website which can support teachers to navigate the different national governing bodies' information on individual sports. Pupils can take part in competitions in over 40 sports at intra-school, inter-school and regional level including inclusive, modified versions of the sports.

Supporting schools to make best use of their facilities

School facilities provide pupils with some of their first experiences of accessing sport and physical activity. Pupils can participate in a wide variety of sports in a safe, familiar setting which can support them to lead a lifetime of playing sport and being physically active.

Through the Active Lives Children and Young People's survey we know that in the academic year 2021/22, 66% of all state-maintained schools made at least some of their facilities available for community sport-related use¹⁸. State secondary schools were more likely than primary schools to open their facilities for wider community use (91% of secondary schools compared with 47% primary schools).

The Department has recently procured the services of Active Partnerships who are leading a consortium of ukactive, Youth Sport Trust and StreetGames to deliver phase three of the Opening School Facilities programme. Up to £57m will be available until March 2025 to support up to 1350 schools to open their sport facilities in the mornings, evenings, weekends and during school holidays. Figure 1 below shows a map of England with the location of schools involved in the programme as of May 2023, with schools involved across all 43 Active Partnerships in England.

The funding aims to support schools to establish a sustainable model of opening their sport facilities beyond their usual operating hours. Active Partnerships, through their 43 local networks, will target schools where opening their facilities can reach the most inactive pupils and community users. They will provide expert guidance, advice and one-to-one bespoke support to establish the school facility as a key community asset in helping people to be active. As a result of this intervention pupils and wider community

¹⁸ [ALS CYP 21-22 Tables 42-44 School data..xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

users will be able to access sport in a convenient, safe and familiar location.

Figure 1: Map of England with schools participating in Opening School Facilities programme marked (as of May 2023)



New opportunities for cricket outside of the school day

Heathfield Junior School has established a strong working relationship with their local Active Partnership (London Sport) to create opportunities for pupils to play cricket on the school site after school time and during the holidays. Through strong pupil voice the school and London Sport have identified that there is high demand for cricket to be played. Active Partnerships have been able to connect the school into local and national cricketing infrastructures which are supporting the school to become a hub for cricket in the community. In phase three of the Opening School Facilities programme Heathfield Junior School will be a club venue for the local cricket team - Hampton Wick Royal Cricket Club. Using the school site in this way is supporting the school to provide extracurricular opportunities to those pupils who are least active.

Heathfield Junior School, Twickenham

Active Partnerships will work with schools to enable them to increase the range of

sporting opportunities made available to pupils and their families outside of the regular school day. For example, a school might use the funding to purchase equipment or a specialist tutor to enable them to provide a new opportunity for their pupils.

The Opening School Facilities programme will support the most inactive young people to access facilities that will enable them to play sport and take physical exercise. By opening school sport facilities, including swimming pools, disparities in access to opportunities seen between socio-economic groups will begin to be tackled through the programme.

At the end of the programme in March 2025, Active Partnerships and consortium partners will publish a practical guide with details of how schools can effectively use their sport facilities to increase the participation rates of some of the most inactive groups. The guidance will show how a wide range of schools with different characteristics managed to effectively open their sporting facilities beyond normal hours to provide pupils and wider community users with access to more sport and physical exercise.

National Governing Bodies' support for schools

National Governing Bodies of sport and other school sport organisations are an integral part of the school sport landscape. They provide diverse and broad programmes, competitions, and resources to help all pupils find a sport they love. This goes beyond the core school day, with National Governing Bodies of sport well-placed to connect children and young people to engaging opportunities in their communities. We know, however, that not all schools find navigating this provision easy. We will work to review the provision available to schools with an aim of condensing this into an easy to understand and accessible offer for schools to engage with and use more widely. As part of the Opening School Facilities programme we are expecting Active Partnerships to connect schools to National Governing Bodies of sport who have a key role to play in supporting schools to deliver high quality PE and extra-curricular provision.

Partnering with National Governing Bodies

United Learning has partnered with the Rugby Football Union to recruit two rugby specialist roles who work across its schools. With one specialist based in the north and the other in the south, each works closely with a group of four academies per year on rotation. As part of their work, they provide in-lesson Continuing Professional Development support for teachers and twilight INSET. This enables local PE departments to learn together and share their own expertise. The specialists also provide extra-curricular coaching to students and opportunities for children who would not otherwise have access to the sport to take part in different formats of rugby, including XRugby7s and The Touch Union. In their wider role, the specialists coordinate links with and exit routes into local rugby clubs, liaising with School Games Organisers to ensure that students can develop their skills through local competitions

and festivals. Evidence of the early success of this work is particularly evident at Salford City Academy and Irlam and Cadishead Academy.

Shaun Dowling, Director of Sport, United Learning

The Holiday Activities and Food Programme

The Holiday Activities and Food programme provides disadvantaged children in England with enriching activities and healthy meals over the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays. Following the programme's expansion in 2021, all local authorities in England are delivering the programme in schools and community venues with funding from the Department for Education of £200m a year. In summer 2022, the programme reached over 685,000 children and young people in England, including over 475,000 children in receipt of free school meals.

The sport sector is playing a key role in supporting more children to take part in sport and exercise in Holiday Activity and Food clubs including The Daily Mile, Lawn Tennis Association, Dallagio Rugby Works, English Football League, the Football Association and England and Wales Cricket Board. These organisations have delivered sport sessions in clubs and community facilities, shared resources and provided tickets to major sporting events, like the Women's European Championship and the Rugby League World Cup.

The Department for Transport has provided £500,000 to support Bikeability projects through the Holiday Activities and Food programme in Summer 2022. This funding enabled thousands more children to learn how to cycle and helped them gain the confidence and skills needed to ride on modern roads, and how to maintain their bicycles.

In 2023, the Department for Education will be continuing to engage with organisations to help facilitate strong local partnerships and expand these partnerships. This includes a new partnership with the Royal Life Saving Society and Swim England to provide more opportunities for children to learn how to swim and be safe in and around water.

Active travel to and from school

The journey to and from school provides opportunities for children and young people to be more active. Based on 2021 travel data, under half of children and young people are regularly walking (43%) or cycling (3%) to school¹⁹. This is despite in the 5 years from

¹⁹ [Cycling, motorcycling, school travel, concessionary travel and road safety - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cycling-motorcycling-school-travel-concessionary-travel-and-road-safety)

2015 to 2019, the average distance to school for 5 to 16 year olds being 2.4 miles²⁰. Many schools are already making progress in this area by encouraging active travel initiatives locally, but we recognise that more support is needed to change this picture nationally.

Following the publication of the Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, the Department for Education is committed to supporting the Department for Transport in delivering initiatives to increase active and safe travel to school such as Walk to School Outreach, School Streets and Bikeability. Such initiatives improve health and wellbeing, reduce carbon emissions from the school commute and improve air quality.

The Department for Transport and the Bikeability Trust have a joint ambition to offer Bikeability to every child in England. The programme has already helped over 4 million children in schools and community settings to learn to cycle safely. Bikeability is mainly delivered in primary schools (but is also available for older children) in the core school day. Bikeability delivers a progressive age and development stage programme to give children the skills and confidence to cycle independently on the road by the end of primary school. Inclusive delivery for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities is part of the programme.

The Bikeability Trust is developing specific training aimed at primary school staff, so that more children can take part in on-road training by the time they reach Year 5.

Active Travel Ambassadors

Active Travel Ambassadors are helping pupils at our school to follow in their peers' footsteps and walk to school. The Ambassadors support the delivery of the walk to school challenge from Living Streets (part of the Department for Transport-funded Walk to School Outreach programme). Ambassadors promote the benefits of being active to their classmates and help them record their journeys to school and award badges.

We previously had issues with parking and congestion around the school gates, with 72% of pupils arriving by private vehicle. But since introducing the programme in February 2022, we have been able to significantly reduce congestion around the school gates, with pupils advocating the importance of active travel to other students. After six months, 83% of pupils reported making an active journey compared to a baseline of 28% in January 2022⁴⁴.

Nick Long, Headteacher at Crossley Fields Junior and Infant School, Kirklees

²⁰ [Travel to school - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures \(ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/travel-to-school)

Securing equal access to PE and sport opportunities

Girls' participation in PE and sport

The women's national sports teams are achieving success at an elite level in a wide range of sports. Recently we have seen England women's teams in football, rugby union, rugby league, cricket and hockey enjoy success on the world stage in their respective sports. Elite sporting events like the Women's European Championship 2022, and Commonwealth Games being held on home soil have inspired girls and shown them that sport can be for them. That is why we have committed to work with our elite sportswomen to promote participation and support schools to provide equitable opportunities to take part in PE and sport and physical activity.

In the Parent, Pupil and Learner Panel (PPLP)²¹ covering the 2021/22 academic year, pupils in Years 7 to 11 were asked whether different types of team sports were available to them during PE lessons²². Girls were significantly less likely than boys to report that football, basketball, cricket and rugby were available to them during PE lessons. By contrast, girls were more likely to report that rounders, netball, badminton, dance, gymnastics and volleyball were available in their PE lessons than boys.

During extracurricular time, boys stated they had more opportunity to take part in team sports compared with girls (77% compared with 69%). Similar to within PE lessons, girls were significantly less likely than boys to report that football, basketball, cricket and rugby were available to them outside of their usual classes. When asked why they did not take part in team sport during extracurricular time, girls were more likely to say that it was because they do other activities or don't feel comfortable playing team sports.

The Football Association launched the Inspiring Positive Change strategy in 2020 which set out to achieve equal football access for all girls in school, PE lessons, lunchtimes and after school. Among the primary schools surveyed as part of the most recent update to this strategy (published in November 2022), the FA reported that 75% were offering equal access to football for girls in PE lessons. In comparison, the secondary schools surveyed by the FA reported that 41% of schools reported offering equal access to football.

It is right that schools should continue to decide which sports they offer so that they can meet the needs of their pupils. Schools will often separate sporting experiences for boys and girls on the grounds of safety and fairness, but they should take the time to reflect on how this affects girls and boys accessing the same sports equally.

²¹ [Parent, Pupil and Learner Panel 22/23 Recruitment wave 1 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

²² As pupils were reporting on the previous academic year, this meant that Year 7 pupils were reporting on their experiences of Year 6

Our expectation is that the starting point for schools should be to give girls and boys access to the same sports where they are wanted. Schools should take an approach which maximises participation and use of the resources available to ensure exposure to a range of different types of sport. While it would be counterproductive for a school to close down a successful girls' programme in one sport simply to meet a rigid policy of offering the same sport to all, they should consider how to offer the widest range of opportunities, linking with local and national sporting bodies where possible.

When a school is deciding on the sports and physical activities that will make up its PE curriculum and extracurricular activities, we expect that the equality of access to those sports should be as prominent in the decision-making process as the availability of resources, student engagement, the culture and traditions of the school, the local sporting infrastructure and teachers' subject knowledge.

The updated School Games Mark will recognise and reward schools who can demonstrate they provide voice, choice, and equal opportunity to young people.

Leading the movement for girls' football

Vandyke Upper School is leading the movement towards equal access to football for girls in their area as a Barclays Girls' Football School Partnership.

The PE department completed a comprehensive review of their curriculum and created a new timetable providing girls and boys in each year group a half term block of football within core PE, of which every pupil receives a minimum of 2 hours of core PE per week. The school's extra-curricular offer provides 15 hours per week of after-school clubs and fixtures, running two to three clubs per night.

As a partnership area, the school shares its learning and promotes training opportunities for both teachers and girls through the Barclays Game On programme. They engage youth voice, through their Barclays Game Changer who influences provision and pathways. The partnership includes five local football clubs, each offering equal access and three with bespoke junior girls' sections.

Stewart Seymour, Barclays Girls' Football School Partnership Strategic Lead
Lee Turney, Head of PE, Vandyke Upper School, Bedfordshire

Award scheme for equal access

The School Games Mark is a Government-funded award scheme administered by the Youth Sport Trust, that rewards schools for their commitment to the development of school sport across the school. The Department for Education and Department for Culture Media and Sport are collaborating with the Youth Sport Trust to add equality

criteria to the School Games Mark which will cover curricular and extracurricular sport provision.

In the 2021/22 academic year around 8000 schools engaged with the School Games Mark. From September 2023 equality criteria will be phased into the award scheme and made mandatory from September 2024, and schools will be awarded either Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum. YST will publish the data annually on how many schools are achieving the award. Schools will be recognised for showing intent to improve their equal access to PE and sport and they will achieve higher awards when they are able to evidence that they have delivered sport equally to pupils matching the demand from the pupils to the opportunities offered during school PE time and extracurricular activities.

The Department for Education and Department for Culture, Media and Sport will collaborate with Youth Sport Trust and national governing bodies to use the annual National School Sport Week to recognise schools that offer a minimum of 2 hours PE and equal access to sports during the school day and additional extracurricular activities. We will communicate how they are making this practice available, to inform all schools on how they can achieve it despite wider pressures.

Leadership opportunities for girls

Providing more opportunities for pupils to take part in leadership and volunteering is important as engaging in volunteering may help to realise a range of benefits, such as increased confidence, resilience and overall wellbeing⁵⁹. The Department for Education are funding SLQ, a leadership qualifications awarding body, up to 2024 to deliver a specific programme to provide girls with the skills and confidence to overcome some of the known barriers to their continued participation in competitive sport⁶². The 'Your:Time' programme⁶³ supports girls in schools to inspire, encourage and lead their peers to take part in competitive sport. Your:Time Leaders (aged 14-16) are trained by SLQ to identify and address the personal barriers and negative perceptions of competitive sport among girls. They then go on to identify what their female peers recognise as engaging competitive sports opportunities and lead events and competitions to provide new and engaging opportunities for female participants. In the programme's first year over 500 young leaders and over 2,300 participants took part. Outcomes from the programme's second year will be shared in autumn 2023 followed by the outcomes for the 3-year programme in academic year 2024/25.

Participation in PE and sport for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

New physical activity guidelines for disabled children and disabled young people have been published. These guidelines are the first of their kind and are clear that children with disabilities benefit from physical activity as much as non-disabled children. The four UK Chief Medical Officers recommend a minimum of 120 to 180 minutes of mostly aerobic

physical activity per week, which equates to at least 20 minutes per day²³. More specifically, the available evidence also suggests that to maintain good health, it is important for disabled children and young people to do challenging strength and balance-focused activities on average 3 times per week. An infographic and video have been co-produced with disabled children and their families to help communicate and promote the new guidelines^{24,25}.

We are providing £300,000 a year up to March 2024 for the Youth Sport Trust-led consortium to deliver the Inclusion 2024 programme. This programme aims to increase and improve the opportunities for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities to engage and participate in PE, sport and physical activity. The national network of 50 Lead Inclusion Schools in this programme continue to support teachers to be more inclusive through high quality advice, training and guidance, particularly related to the new national knowledge platform which is now available for schools to access²⁶. This new platform is created in partnership with Activity Alliance and designed to support teachers responsible for PE and sport to engage more pupils with SEND. An independent evaluation will be published in autumn 2024.

Diverse PE and sport provision for pupils with SEND

Our aim at Chadsgrove School is to improve pupils' wellbeing and prepare them for life beyond school. All of the pupils have physical disabilities as well as learning difficulties. Physical activity is an essential part of the school day and all pupils take part in two PE lessons a week. One of these is a swimming/hydrotherapy lesson. The PE curriculum is broad and balanced and pupils take part in activities including gymnastics, outdoor and adventurous activities, target games, Motor Activity Training Programme, athletics and dance.

Pupils with profound multiple learning difficulties have time out of their wheelchairs every day where they focus on movement and one of these lessons takes place in the multi sensory room.

Pupil voice is used to decide what extra-curricular clubs we offer. Pupils like to attend a wide variety of clubs which include Boccia, Wheelchair Basketball, New Age Kurling, Dance, Boxercise, Yoga and Tai Chi and Cup Stacking.

²³ [Physical activity in disabled children and disabled young people: evidence review - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/evidence-reviews/physical-activity-in-disabled-children-and-disabled-young-people)

²⁴ [UK Chief Medical Officers' physical activity guidelines for disabled children and disabled young people: infographic \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/evidence-reviews/physical-activity-guidelines-for-disabled-children-and-disabled-young-people)

²⁵ [Physical Activity Guidelines for Disabled Children & Young People: UK Chief Medical Officers' - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

²⁶ <https://education.activityalliance.org.uk>

Our aim was to enable pupils to take part in 30 minutes of exercise a day through a wide variety of activities, interventions and extra-curricular activities, most pupils now take part in 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

Carina Taylor, Lead for PE, Chadsgrove School, Bromsgrove

Summary of actions

High quality PE and sport for all pupils

By the **end of 2023** the DfE will publish **non-statutory guidance** to help primary and secondary schools deal with the issues they face in providing high quality PE and sport, including a focus on girls' equal access and at least 2 hours of PE and sport a week.

In **summer 2023** the DfE will publish **updated guidance on the Primary PE and Sport Premium**, alongside a refreshed tool from the Association for Physical Education and Youth Sport Trust to help schools plan, report and evaluate the use of their premium.

The Department will continue to support **Drowning Prevention Week in June 2024**. New water safety lesson resources for primary schools will be available.

In **summer 2024** the new **digital reporting tool** for the PE premium will become available for schools to use.

In **academic year 2024/25** all schools in receipt of the PE premium will be required to complete the **digital tool** to report on their premium spend.

Extra-curricular sport and competition

At the end of the **Opening School Facilities** programme in **March 2025**, Active Partnerships and consortium partners will publish a **practical guide** with details of how schools can effectively use their sport facilities to increase the participation rates of some of the most inactive groups.

In **autumn 2023** the refreshed **School Games Mark** will be made available to schools.

At the end of the programme in **March 2025**, Active Partnerships and consortium partners will publish a **guide with advice** on how schools can effectively use their sport facilities to increase the participation rates of some of the most inactive groups.

Sport activities will continue to be provided through the **Holiday Activity and Food programme in Easter, summer and winter school holidays**. We will celebrate new partnerships between the swimming and water safety providers and HAF clubs in the summer holidays.

DfE and DCMS will collaborate with the Youth Sport Trust and national governing bodies to use the **annual National School Sport Week to recognise schools** that offer a minimum of 2 hours PE and equal access to sports during curriculum time and additional extracurricular activities.

Securing equal access to PE and sport opportunities

Outcomes from the **Your:Time leadership programme** second year of delivery will be shared in **autumn 2023**. The overall outcomes for the 3-year programme will be shared in **academic year 2024/25**.

An independent evaluation of the **Inclusion 2024** grant will be published in **autumn 2024**.

Annex A – Update on 2019 School Sport and Activity Action Plan

Innovative pilots

Action: Government will launch a series of regional pilots to trial new and innovative approaches to getting young people active as part of a coordinated offer of sport and activity.

Update: The local approach has been utilised through programmes of work, such as our funding of Active Partnerships to work directly with local sport providers and schools to provide increased access to school sport facilities. Availability of new funding from the manifesto and impact of COVID-19 on deliverability in 20-21 has resulted in this action not being taken forward as originally intended.

Empowering young people

Action: Schools should ensure pupils have the opportunity to be active throughout the school day, in a way that engages and interests them.

Sport England will provide £1 million funding to help empower girls and build their confidence, linked to *This Girl Can*.

The Department for Education will provide up to £400,000 to give more young people the opportunity to volunteer in sport.

Update: Sport England has invested £1.5m of National Lottery funding into the creation of a new digital teaching resource, as part of its [This Girl Can](#) campaign, to help teachers engage the least active female students aged 13-16. [Studio You](#) has been co-created with teenage girls and PE teachers, and with input from organisations such as the Association for Physical Education, Exercise, Movement and Dance UK, Diverse Educators and Activity Alliance.

Studio You is free for teachers across England and features lessons in a range of non-traditional disciplines such as yoga, boxing, Pilates and dance which are accessible for students of all abilities. Since its launch in September 2021, over 1500 (approx. 45%) of secondary schools in England have registered with the platform. After a single term's use, the majority of teachers surveyed reported that Studio You has helped them to engage with students that are less active than their peers (68%) and engage with students who have previously been resistant to PE lessons (63%).

DfE has provided £300,000 to boost the Volunteer Leaders and Coaches programme, with a focus on recruiting young people from less affluent backgrounds. This programme has been completed with 10,155 volunteering hours delivered by 2,763 young people.

Raising awareness

Action: Government will raise awareness of the importance of physical activity for children and young people, and make messages such as “at least 60 minutes a day” as recognisable as “5 a day”.

Update: Updated UK CMO guidelines for children’s physical activity were published in September 2019 and new physical activity guidelines for disabled children and disabled young people were published in April 2022.

A guide on how to communicate the UK CMOs’ physical activity guidelines to professionals and practitioners who are key in enabling people to lead active lives was published in 2023. Setting out consistent messages it aims to support communications with stakeholders within and outside the health sector, including the education sector.

OHID’s 10-minute shake-up campaign in partnership with Disney has had a strong impact on children’s physical activity levels. The campaign breaks down the recommended hour of daily activity into short bursts by promoting a wide range of children’s games inspired by Disney, Pixar and Marvel, and also encourages children to explore sports they might like via the Better Health Families website. The campaign saw more than 2.2 million 10 Minute Shake Up games packs delivered to children through schools and HAF providers in summer 2022. 15% of parents of 4-11 year olds said their children were more active because of 10 Minute Shake Up, equating to an estimated 844,000 children being more active than they would have otherwise been as a result of the activity.

We have worked with sector organisations on an ongoing programme of communications activity, which raises the profile of physical activity. This has included sport week in *Rediscover Summer* in 2021, National School Sport Week, Drowning Prevention Week and utilising the inspiration of major events like The Women’s Euros, the Commonwealth Games and the Olympics and Paralympics.

Immediate action to support schools

Action: DfE will provide £2 million to improve co-ordination of PE training for teachers and help schools open their facilities.

Update: DfE delivered on this commitment to fund £500,000 to allow nine teaching schools to test new ways to support schools to deliver high quality PE, improve and co-ordinate the PE CPD for teachers and support primary schools to maximise their PE and sport premium funding.

The DfE have used £11.7m to fund the first two phases of the Opening School Facilities programme which had to pivot to support schools in reopening their sport facilities as we emerged from the pandemic. In phase 2 alone, the funding created opportunities for over 284,000 young people to be active in over 60 types of sports and activities. Phase 3 of the programme is currently underway with additional funding of up to £57m.

High quality PE provision

Action: The Department for Education will review teacher training to ensure it equips PE teachers to deliver high quality lessons.

Update: A new framework of core content for Initial Teacher Training (ITT) was published in November 2019 which sets out a minimum entitlement for all trainee teachers. In September 2021 the early career framework was implemented, entitling early career teachers to a further 2 years of development support and training.

In December 2021 we announced a set of reforms to ITT which will be centred around a new set of 'Quality

PE and Sport Premium

Action: The Department for Education will look at how to provide schools with access to a toolkit to support effective use of the PE and Sport Premium and update national guidance to schools.

Update: The PE premium has been confirmed until the end of academic year 2024/25. We continue to work with stakeholders to provide guidance and support to schools on the most effective use of their premium funding.

Health and relationships education

Action: DfE is providing up to £6m support to schools to teach the new health and relationships curriculum.

Update: A new Physical Health and Fitness module was launched in November 2020 to support teachers to deliver the new health and relationships curriculum. The module covers practical training materials for primary and secondary schools to use to train staff to teach about physical health and fitness with key knowledge and facts on active and healthy lifestyles, the benefits of physical activity on mental wellbeing and the risks of an inactive lifestyle.

Swimming and water safety

Action: Government, schools and the sport sector will take further action to ensure all children leave primary school with vital swimming and water safety skills.

Update: New virtual water safety lessons from Oak National Academy are available to all schools. The Department has provided an additional £10.1m to improve use of school sport facilities, including swimming pools. New resources to support children with SEND learning to swim and knowing how to be safe in and around the water have been developed through the Department's Inclusion grants, led by the Youth Sport Trust. These resources are available on Swim England's inclusion hub.

The Government has been working closely with the National Water Safety Forum to support the development and launch of a new framework and water safety resources for Key Stages 1-3.

These were made available for schools to access free of charge during Drowning Prevention Week 2022 and are accessible on the Royal Life Saving Society UK's website.

Healthy Schools Rating Scheme

Action: The Department for Education has launched a scheme to help schools rate their health and wellbeing provision, which includes guidance on appropriate levels of PE provision.

Update: The Healthy Schools Rating Scheme was launched in 2019, and is available to all schools participating in the Active Lives Children and Young People survey.

After-school clubs

Action: Schools and providers will work together to increase the provision of after-school sport opportunities, including 400 new Sport England satellite clubs.

Update: Sport England has established 1,100 new satellite clubs with over 40% being based on a school or college site. Almost half of the satellite clubs were established in the 30% most deprived areas in England and attracted nearly 19,000 participants, 50% were female, 28% were from ethnic minority groups and 14% reported having a disability.

Strong and unified sport sector

Action: The sport sector will work collaboratively to ensure that clubs and programmes are consistent, high quality and accessible, and open up and share their opportunity data with the digital marketplace.

Update: Online 'Active Recovery Hub' launched in April 2021 on the School Games website. It includes hundreds of resources and activities from over 40 sport organisations.

Competition and the School Games

Action: We will set out a clear pathway of competition, and strengthen the School Games, so that all young people can find the right opportunities to compete.

Update: Funding for the School Games Organiser network is confirmed until the end of academic year 2024/25.

Measurement

Action: The impact of these actions will be measured and reviewed, to inform future policy. Government will work to set targets for increases in children and young people's activity levels.

Update: Funded programmes have been subject to proportionate evaluation and monitoring. The Active Lives Children and Young People's Survey provides Government with detailed and robust data on children's activity levels and engagement with sport.



HM Government

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