

## The Use of Sports Coaches in Schools

**The introduction of the Primary PE and Sport Premium by the department for Education last year provides a wonderful opportunity to create a step change in the wellbeing and achievement of pupils, not just participation levels in Physical Education and Sport.**

**The aim of the PE and Sport Premium is:**

*A measurable and sustained improvement in school PE and sport, underpinned by high-quality teaching that increases participation levels in physical activity, and leads to healthier pupils who are more engaged across the whole curriculum. This will be our legacy to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.*

**The following objectives have been set for the programme:**

- 1. To improve the quality of existing PE teaching through continuing professional development in PE for generalists, so that all primary pupils improve their health, skills and physical literacy, and have broader exposure to a range of sports.*
- 2. To increase participation levels in competitive sport and healthy activity of pupils, and maintain these into adolescence.*
- 3. To increase the quality of initial teacher training in PE and sport, and to promote PE specialisation in primary level workforce.*
- 4. Schools understand and value the benefits of high quality PE and sport, including its use as tool for whole school improvement.*

In order to maximise this funding it is important that schools make informed decisions about where and how to invest it so it delivers these objectives and makes a contribution to the wider school development plan.

**The article has been prepared to support Governors and school leaders in the appropriate recruitment and deployment of sports coaches where they are being brought in through the Primary PE and Sport Premium.**

*Qualified and suitably trained coaches can make a valuable contribution to improving the quality and range of school sport offered in school, but what is their role in supporting curriculum learning and extra curricular sport? Importantly what process should a school go through in selecting the appropriate coaches to work in their schools?*

From recent DfE and Ofsted surveys into the impact of the Primary PE and School Sport Premium (DfE, 2014) see footnote 1, we know that the investment has allowed many schools to increase their provision of PE and School Sport through the employment of specialist coaches:

Seventy per cent of schools reported making changes to who delivered curricular PE lessons as a result of the funding. Of those who had made changes to their **curricular** PE staffing, the use of external sport coaches had increased from 37 per cent to 82 per cent of schools

Sixty-four per cent of schools reported making changes to who delivered their **extra-curricular** PE and sport as a result of the premium. Of those who had, the use of external sport coaches had increased from 56 per cent to 91 per cent of schools.

### **Three key messages for school leaders and governors:**

- **Unlike teaching, coaching is sport specific. A Level 2 Coach (who meets the minimum standards for deployment) will hold a coaching qualification for each sport they are qualified to deliver.: just because they are called coaches they are not qualified to do all sport**
- **Coaching and teaching are fundamentally different, as is School Sport and Physical Education: coaches should therefore not be used to replace teachers in the delivery of the Physical Education curriculum . This is also not a sustainable use of the Primary PE and Sport Premium**
- **Where coaches are recruited through the Primary PE and Sport Premium schools should make very clear the objectives they are delivering against and review impact accordingly**

### **Starting Point – Self Review**

It is important that schools review their current PE and school sport provision in order to identify what the key priorities are in terms of improving PE and school sport for *all* pupils. To support schools guidance can be found in the Ofsted Inspection Framework, National Curriculum for PE, and the [Physical Literacy Framework](http://www.youthsporttrust.org/media/5174173/yst_ss_plframework.pdf) [http://www.youthsporttrust.org/media/5174173/yst\\_ss\\_plframework.pdf](http://www.youthsporttrust.org/media/5174173/yst_ss_plframework.pdf). This will support schools' understanding of what they should be providing in Physical Education, physical activity, school sport and competitive school sport as well as ensuring teachers and coaches are working towards outstanding delivery. **A review tool to support you** here can be found on ([www.youthsporttrust.org/membership](http://www.youthsporttrust.org/membership)) This process may identify areas in both curriculum PE and extra curricular sport as priorities and schools may consider that the deployment of a coach is one solution to meet this need to enhance or improve provision. One size does not fit all and the deployment of the right coaches in the right contexts in both these areas is crucial to achieving the desired impact. Schools should consider the overall effectiveness and sustainability of this intervention and investment – will there be a lasting legacy in the school for young people and staff?

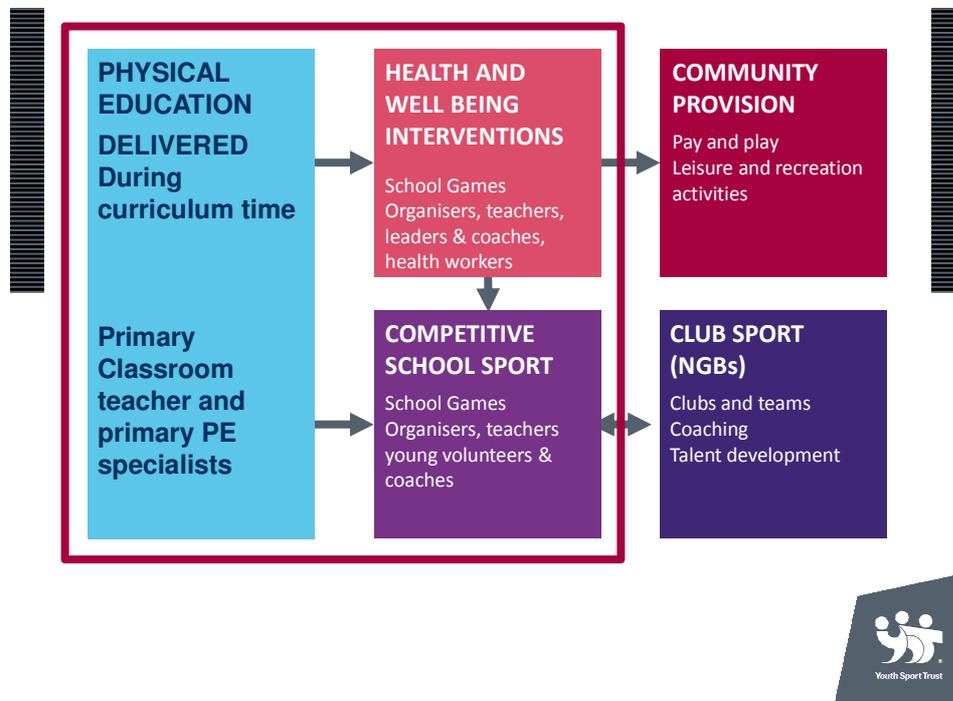
### **High Quality PE Teaching, High Quality Coaching**

PE and school sport have very different outcomes and these must be at the forefront when considering whether to use a coach.

High quality physical education delivery will develop all young people's physical literacy in order for them to engage in lifelong participation; young people will make progress in, and understand how to move effectively, they will then go on to achieve their potential in a variety of activities. Good PE delivery focuses on learning and will develop the whole child physically, socially, morally, culturally and spiritually and young people will understand the importance of being safe and feeling safe.

High quality sports coaching will improve sport specific skills in children through increased opportunities in school and in the wider community; will provide better physical, technical, tactical

and mental understanding of a range sports; will develop wider life skills through sport which builds from the PE lesson i.e. communication, teamwork, fairplay and leadership and should be age and stage appropriate provision.



***Youth Sport Trust model showing the difference between Physical Education, Health & Wellbeing and School Sport and wider community sport provision. The red line denotes activity which is led and managed by the school.***

### **Teacher and Coach – working together**

The teachers’ role is to ensure the child makes significant progress and achievement. It is therefore vital that a teacher is upskilled and supported and not replaced or displaced by coaches. Although Youth Sport Trust do not advocate coaches delivering National Curriculum PE independently (as PE is fundamentally different to coaching the techniques and tactics of sport), we do however, recognise that suitably experienced coaches working alongside classroom teachers can be a way of building confidence and knowledge of teachers in specific sports. The practice of a coach working alongside a teacher can help develop the teachers’ confidence and competence within a particular area of activity and can provide children with an exciting and engaging PE experience utilising the skills of both the teacher and coach working together. The benefits can be reciprocal with the coach learning from the skills of the class teacher through, for example, larger group organisation, how to promote positive behaviours, safe environments and how to build upon prior learning. This partnership can allow improvements to be embedded within the school PE curriculum for the future.

## **Benefits of high quality coaches for schools**

There are many benefits to using coaches within the school environment, especially coaches who are part of the local sporting community, particularly local community sports clubs. They can provide that essential transition from the school environment to the club environment and be the friendly face a young person sees when they make that first step beyond school. National Governing Bodies of Sport, sports professionals and coaches can, and do, make a significant contribution to school sport which should provide the extension and enrichment from the PE curriculum (but not replace it). Coaches used in extra-curricular school sport can enrich a schools' programme through offering a wider range of activities, they can enable young people by developing their skills and competence in a particular sport and they can extend youngsters by improving performance and preparing them for competition. In some cases coaches can fulfil other on-teaching roles within the school and can provide powerful role models for children.

## **Employment and deployment of coaches – nationally recognised minimum standards**

If schools decide to employ coaches it is important that the coach is suitably qualified in the areas of activity in which they are to support. A level 2 football qualification does not enable the coach to deliver curriculum gymnastics. Your local County Sports Partnership will have a database of coaches or can provide advice and guidance on how to find a suitably qualified coach.

If a coach is deployed to deliver independently in extra curricular time there are minimum standards that they are expected to meet. A helpful poster with key questions and considerations can be found here (short link needed)

[http://www.youthsporttrust.org/media/13153715/yst\\_1933\\_maximising\\_the\\_primary\\_sport\\_premium\\_poster\\_two\\_final\\_artwork.pdf](http://www.youthsporttrust.org/media/13153715/yst_1933_maximising_the_primary_sport_premium_poster_two_final_artwork.pdf) This can also be found on [www.sportscoachuk.org/schools](http://www.sportscoachuk.org/schools).

Coaches should be over 18 years of age, hold a minimum UK Coaching Certificate Level 2 qualification specific to the activity area, including safeguarding and protecting children training, have appropriate insurance and have undertaken appropriate welfare safety checks. Coaches should have a sound understanding of what safe practice in PE and sport looks like. Therefore coaches can develop pupils' understanding of being safe, and feeling safe in physical activity.

## **Induction, monitoring and evaluation**

When a school is satisfied that the coach they are looking to work with has met these criteria it is important to consider their experience and whether it is recent and relevant to the school environment in which they are expected to support in. It is important that the coach has the necessary skill set. Working alongside a teacher in curriculum delivery requires a different skill set to leading a single sport in extra curricular clubs. It is advisable to observe the coach working with the children in the school to see if they are suitable and can deliver the activities required to the necessary standard .

Once recruited the coach should go through an appropriate induction process by the school, to be thoroughly prepared and comfortable in the environment and the young people they will be working with. Schools must ensure that they have a system in place to regularly monitor and evaluate the coaches provision.

### **A Good practice example - Bedgove Infant School.**

#### **Primary PE and Sport Premium Aims :**

- Improve the confidence and competence of teachers delivering PE.
- Improve the impact on pupils by ensuring that high quality PE is taught and by enabling all children to benefit from opportunities to participate in physical activity.
- Increase subject knowledge of teachers e.g. those who followed the postgraduate routes where P.E training limited and to update subject knowledge for more experienced teachers with respect to the new curriculum.s:

#### **Action Plan for investment:**

- All teachers in the school(12) accessing support as CPD
- We are developing a skills-based curriculum.
- An external sport specialist is employed who focuses on multi skills delivery from foundation stage through to the end of key stage1.
- Specialist is not QTS, but teachers work together with him in respect of pedagogy and he works with the teachers on knowledge and understanding of the skills and progressions.
- Specialist works on a rotation through the teaching staff to deliver PE lessons alongside the teacher.
- Team teaching of activities and reciprocal feedback
- Joint assessment between teacher and specialist of pupils.

#### **Impact being monitored and tracked**

- Improved confidence of staff in planning an appropriate PE lesson and improved competency in delivering to children including being able to stretch the most able and support the less able children.
- Now seeing regular High Quality PE being delivered through co delivery method.

- Majority of teachers engaged in the programme
- Teachers have a knowledge bank of ideas to use in each PE Lesson
- Increased confidence reported from all staff in a questionnaire
- The variety of sports offered for out of hours clubs increased from 6 to 10.
- Club links are being pursued within many sporting areas including rugby, football, karate, Zumba. We also have links in other areas where parents coach for or support local clubs

**Headteacher quote:**

“The children have access to a wider variety of sports and sequences of regular, high quality PE lessons, delivered by a sport’s coach, that clearly build on children’s skills and those of the teachers, who observe and are learning alongside the children. Training in isolation can never be as effective as peer learning in a real life context. The PE funding has enabled ‘on the job learning’ with immediate benefits to a much wider audience.”

Footnote 1 Full report : *PE and sport premium – an investigation in primary schools. Year 1 interim report*, Department for Education, September 2014; [www.gov.uk/government/publications/pe-and-sport-premium-an-investigation-in-primary-schools](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pe-and-sport-premium-an-investigation-in-primary-schools).)

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*(This article may help those schools who are trying, amongst other objectives, to make the best use of the Primary School Sports Premium. It should be noted that the Coaching Certificate Level 2 is not age specific so that it covers the needs of both primary and secondary schools – schools may wish to consider individuals’ experience in school settings in the selection process. We are grateful both to Kate who produced this article and to Alison Oliver, Managing Director of the Youth Sports Trust who arranged its production for us)*