

Report summary

School Sport Partnerships

School Sport Partnerships (SSPs) are one strand of the previous government's Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links strategy launched in 2002. Since 2006, all schools in England have been part of an SSP. They are a family of secondary, primary and special schools working together to increase the quality and quantity of PE and sports opportunities for young people. They are managed by a Partnership Development Manager who is funded centrally and employed directly by schools, usually a sports college. The SSP funds a School Sport Coordinator in each secondary school and a Primary Link Teacher in each primary and special school, as shown in Annex A of the full report.

In October 2010, the Department for Education informed the Youth Sport Trust that ring-fenced funding for SSPs would not be continued after March 2011 in order to allow schools to concentrate on competitive school sport. Schools were free to continue to work in partnership to deliver school sport if they wished, but they were not required to do so. The Department for Education confirmed that it would pay SSPs for the full school year to the end of the summer term 2011 to ensure that the partnerships and their service could continue until the end of the academic year.

In December 2010, the Department confirmed that every secondary school would receive funding up to the end of 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.

This good practice survey has been carried out so that schools and their partners can learn the lessons of School Sport Partnerships, and apply them in this new environment.

Key findings

The visits undertaken to School Sport Partnerships as part of this small-scale survey of good practice indicate that:

- Collaborative planning across a number of schools and at a strategic level is increasing the capacity of individual schools to improve the quality and quantity of PE and sport.
- The 12 partnerships visited are effecting beneficial changes in PE and sport for learners and their communities. In line with findings in the most recent Ofsted PE report, this is most notable in primary schools, but increasingly so in secondary schools. Collaborative planning at a strategic level is increasing the capacity of schools to improve the quality and quantity of PE and sport.
- In the vast majority of SSPs, pupils participate in an ever-increasing range of PE and sports activities. Better coordination of what pupils are learning in PE lessons and the activities provided for them after school and in local clubs is promoting continuity and reinforcing learning.
- SSPs can contribute to improvements made in other subjects and aid pupils' transition from primary and secondary school. The values of the 2012 Olympics are being used to stimulate pupils' interest in learning and motivation to boost their academic achievement.
- Growing numbers of pupils of all ages train to become young leaders and are helping to run clubs and competitions for others. SSPs provide a wealth of opportunities for young leaders to organise, officiate and support in sport which is having a beneficial impact on their personal organisation, attitudes and behaviour towards others.
- Partnership Development Managers foster good relations between partners and promote effective teamwork among staff. They have a unique knowledge and understanding of local and national organisations, the resources available and the roles that teachers, coaches and volunteers play in providing a coordinated, cohesive and coherent approach to increasing participation and raising standards in PE and sport. They work with other Partnership Development Managers to train and support staff in other SSPs.
- SSPs strengthen the pathways from school into community sports clubs. Where these do not exist, SSPs help to create them by liaising with personnel from sports clubs on behalf of schools and by providing resources to employ specialist coaches to complement existing provision in schools and to enable more pupils to participate and compete. Activities are designed to include pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or are at risk of disengaging from PE and sport.
- SSPs play a leading role in the professional development of teachers, often leading staff training across local authorities and providing a regular forum for PE

teachers. They train volunteers to gain awards in leadership and sport and get them to deliver after-school clubs.

- After-school clubs, competitions, festivals and events involving large numbers of young people capture the interest of local communities and give PE and sport a high profile. Achievement in sport is celebrated in these schools.

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