



**Office for Standards  
in Education**

# **Provision for gifted and talented pupils in physical education**

**2003–04**

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## Introduction

1. The Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) programme was launched in October 2002 and is run jointly by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS).
2. The overall objective, a joint DfES and DCMS public service target, is to ensure that by 2006, 75% of 5–16 year olds in England are spending a minimum of two hours each week on high-quality physical education (PE) and school sport, within and beyond the curriculum.
3. The PESSCL programme is being delivered through eight programmes which are summarised in the annex to this report. The gifted and talented programme began in schools in September 2003. It is dedicated to improving the range and quality of teaching, coaching and learning for pupils talented in sports in order to raise their attainment, aspirations, motivation and self-esteem. Nationally, the programme, which is being delivered by schools and the national governing bodies of sport, includes:
  - a talent support programme for School Sport Partnerships with support from a national faculty of trainers
  - local multi-skill academies to help identify potentially talented young performers
  - national performance camps for elite athletes, organised by national governing bodies
  - pilot development programmes to co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to talent development in local communities
  - web-based resources for teachers, coaches and parents
  - advice, guidance and training for teachers of talented pupils in PE, as part of the National Curriculum
  - a disability sport co-ordinator to develop support for talented disabled athletes, ensuring that the remainder of the project takes account of their needs
  - support for research in the development of talented children, and access to it for teachers and coaches
  - a school-based profiling and tracking system.
4. Sports colleges have a key role in co-ordinating and assisting their School Sport Partnerships to meet the PESSCL programme's objective of enhancing sports opportunities for all and to raise standards by improving the quality of provision in schools. It is intended that each sports college will set up a talent support programme as part of their School Sport Partnership. More specifically, schools receive training and funding to provide mentoring to gifted and talented pupils. At

the time of the visits, the PESSCL strategy did not offer national guidance on how schools might improve the quality of teaching to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils.

5. The DfES term 'gifted and talented' is used across all curriculum areas, not just PE and sport. 'Gifted' refers to those with high ability or potential in academic subjects and 'talented' to those with high ability or potential in expressive arts, music or sport. In the Ofsted guidance for the inspection of schools 'gifted' is taken to mean a broad range of achievement at a very high level, often accompanied by very well developed learning skills. 'Talented' is usually taken to refer to one or more specific talents, such as sport or music, and not necessarily across all areas of a pupil's learning. Issues of definition and identification are covered in this report.
6. This report seeks to identify the existing provision for talented pupils in PE and school sport in a sample of sports colleges, and to determine any early benefits of the talent support programme. The report evaluates:
  - the management of provision for talented pupils, including the identification of pupils
  - the range and quality of provision for gifted and talented pupils of school age
  - schools' ability to enhance links between school and community sports provision
  - the quality of teaching, coaching and learning in PE and school sport
  - the mentoring support available to young people.
7. The report covers the implementation of the national scheme in schools during 2003/04. Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and Additional Inspectors (AI) visited 39 specialist sports colleges, looking at the provision for talented pupils in PE and sport. The report also draws on additional evidence from HMI visits to School Sport Partnerships and Ofsted school inspections. HMI and AI held discussions with key personnel including headteachers, gifted and talented co-ordinators (whole school and PE department) and talented pupils. They also observed lessons in PE and after-school sport and read documentation that included schemes of work, assessment data and development plans.
8. As the programme is still in early stages, it is too soon to judge the overall impact of the programme. However, the data collected will provide a baseline for judging the quality of provision in a sample of schools receiving funding from the PESSCL strategy. It will also inform the next stage of programme development.
9. From 2004 to 2006, HMI will continue to monitor and report on the talent support programme in schools, drawing on a further sample of schools.

## Main findings

- The strategy has begun to have a positive impact on provision in schools by raising the profile of PE and school sport.
- Schools involved in the programme are enthusiastic about, and committed to, developing provision for talented pupils. However, implementation of the programme is at different stages in different schools and it is too soon to evaluate its overall impact on pupils' performance, motivation and self-esteem.
- Management and leadership of provision for talented pupils are good or better in just over half of the schools visited and satisfactory or better in the majority of schools.
- Where management is good, a detailed policy provides a clear rationale for provision and a shared sense of direction between whole-school and departmental policies. However, the quality of policies generally and the auditing of provision is patchy.
- Systems and criteria for identifying talented pupils are good or better in just over half of schools. However, the criteria used by schools for identifying talented pupils are too often not helpful in identifying those pupils who are underachieving.
- Monitoring and evaluation of provision are the weakest aspects of management. Few schools have a strategy for evaluating the effectiveness of resources deployed in the programme.
- Although the monitoring of teaching takes place as part of the general whole-school programme, schools rarely focus on specific aspects such as provision for higher attainers.
- All schools meet the minimum requirements of the National Curriculum. Most schools have not adapted schemes of work to give more attention to the needs of talented pupils.
- Over two-thirds of schools have developed extensive links with community providers. This extension of provision is helping pupils to develop their skills and gain experience in new contexts. Few schools evaluate the benefits of pupils' experiences to ensure continuity and progression in learning.
- Teaching is satisfactory or better in most lessons and good or better in three-fifths. Schools are increasingly grouping pupils according to ability and this is helping teachers to target pupils' needs more rigorously. Few unsatisfactory lessons were seen, but in a significant proportion of lessons where most pupils make satisfactory progress, insufficient attention was given to the needs of talented pupils.
- The use of assessment information to set challenging targets for talented pupils in lessons is the weakest part of teaching.

- Mentoring for talented young people is developing in most schools.

## Recommendations

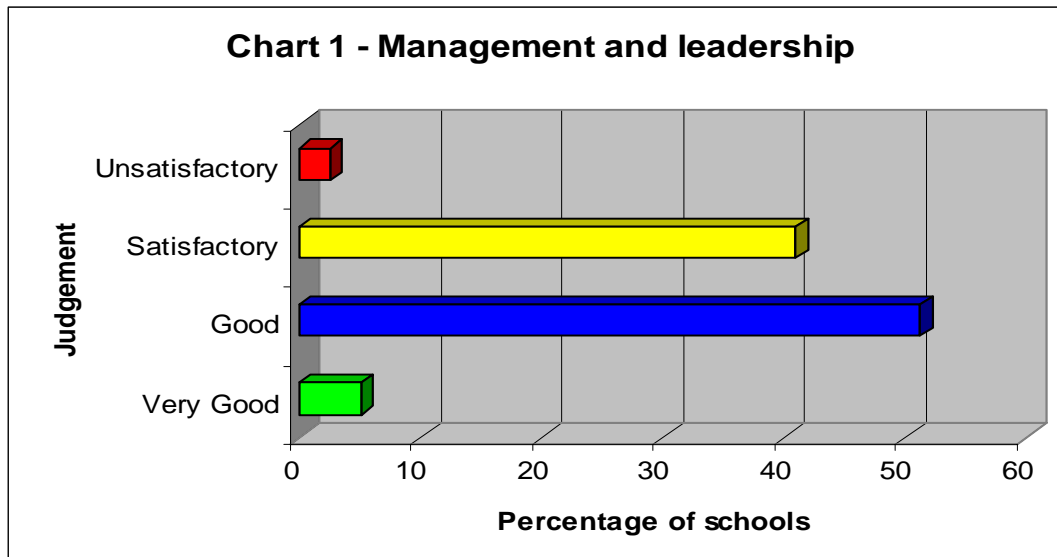
To improve provision for talented pupils, **key agencies** should:

- develop clearer criteria on the generic characteristics of talented performers to help teachers and coaches identify pupils with potential or who are underachieving
- provide more guidance on how schools should evaluate the impact of the resources deployed in the programme on improving provision and pupils' performance, motivation and self-esteem
- offer guidance on how schools might improve the quality of teaching to meet the needs of talented pupils.

To improve provision for talented pupils, **schools** should:

- use clearer criteria to identify talented pupils, particularly those who have potential or are underachieving
- give greater emphasis to the evaluation of provision for gifted and talented pupils and the impact of funding
- raise teachers' expectations of talented pupils to ensure that they pay greater attention to their needs
- make greater use of assessment information to establish challenging targets for talented pupils
- identify how the provision for talented pupils can be improved through modified schemes of work
- evaluate the benefits of links between curricular, extra-curricular and out-of-school provision on the continuity of pupils' learning.

## Part 1: Management and leadership



### Co-ordination and policy

10. The management and leadership of provision for talented pupils are good or better in just over half of the schools visited and satisfactory or better in the majority (chart 1). The majority of schools have a whole-school co-ordinator for gifted and talented pupils and a designated co-ordinator in PE, and their vision and commitment to improve provision for all pupils are crucial factors in ensuring that the needs of talented pupils are addressed.
11. The characteristics of schools and PE departments with good management and leadership include:
  - an ethos that celebrates success and achievement
  - strong partnerships with other schools and providers, with regular meetings, the sharing of resources and a programme of common events such as clubs for talented pupils
  - a designated school co-ordinator and departmental co-ordinators
  - effective links between the gifted and talented programme and other initiatives such as Excellence in Cities (EiC), the Key Stage 3 National Strategy, the PESSCL strategy including the Specialist School and School Sport Partnership programmes
  - auditing that takes account of pupils' sporting involvement within and beyond the curriculum



- provision for talented pupils in PE which is referred to in school development plans
- a policy that provides a clear rationale for provision and a shared sense of direction between whole-school and departmental policies
- development planning that identifies how and when targets will be achieved
- strategies for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision.

12. Although the majority of schools and PE departments visited have a policy on provision for talented pupils, the quality is patchy. The significance of a well-crafted policy is demonstrated by this example:

*The school has a clear policy for gifted and talented pupils. It has gone through several drafts and has been ratified by the school governors. It includes: a rationale and aims; arrangements for the organisation and implementation of the programme; identification and assessment of the pupils on the register; strategies for supporting talented pupils and the role of the gifted and talented pupil co-ordinator. It is a comprehensive and helpful guide to all staff. It is being used as a model by the local education authority for other schools in the county... All faculties are developing their own policy for gifted and talented pupils, based on the framework set by the whole-school policy. The PE policy has several good features, not least of which is the identification of characteristics of talented pupils in PE. The strategies identified in the PE policy...include providing opportunities for pupils to find creative solutions to challenges, take risks and cope with failure. Exciting and challenging extension work and alternative lessons to core PE are also included.*

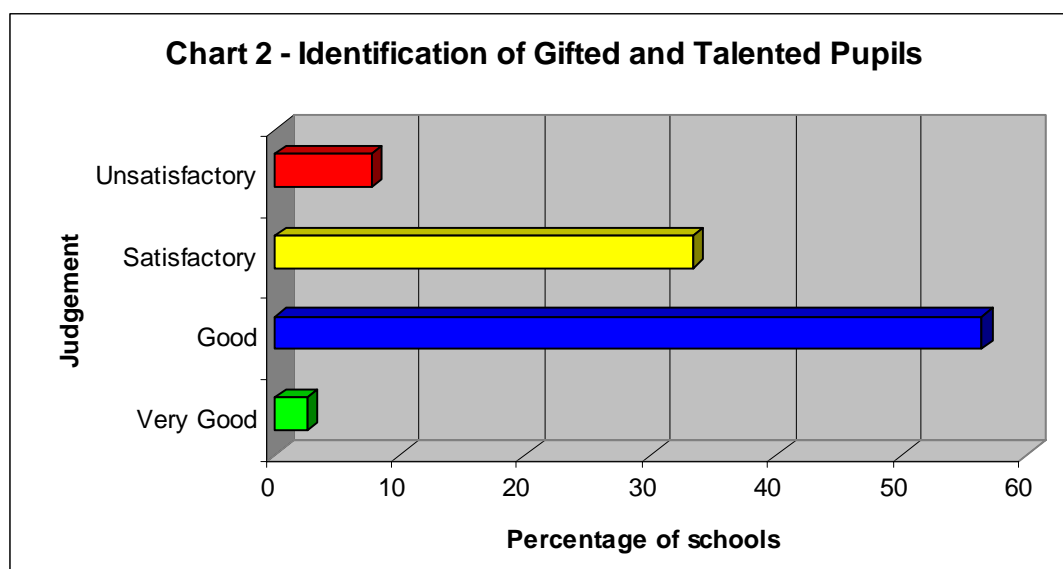
13. Other features apparent in the best policies include guidance on:

- adapting schemes of work, with guidance on the tailoring of provision
- strategies to develop learning materials that help to extend pupils
- curriculum enrichment
- mentoring for pupils
- how pupils can continue their sport in community clubs
- how the gifted and talented programme links with other programmes such as Specialist Sports Colleges, School Sport Partnerships, Key Stage 3 National Strategy and EiC provision.

14. Weaker policies often have worthwhile aims, but lack detailed guidance on how they might be achieved. Greater attention should be given to creating the conditions in which talented pupils might thrive. This includes consideration of teaching and learning styles that encourage the development of higher-level concepts, skills, knowledge and understanding.

## Identification of talented pupils

15. Systems and criteria used for identifying talented pupils are good or better in just over half of schools (Chart 2).



16. In the majority of schools, identification of talented pupils is based on national guidance and the auditing of pupils' performance at talent levels 1, 2 and 3; national, regional and school standard. This is not yet working as well as might be expected. There are inconsistencies in how the scheme is implemented so that, for example, in one school level 1 was associated with county standards and in another with national standards.
17. Some schools are using the levels to identify pupils who are already achieving highly in selected sports, with too little emphasis placed on identifying those pupils with potential for high achievement. Often this is where the levels are not accompanied by information for teachers on the generic characteristics of talented performers, to support the identification of pupils with potential.
18. In some schools where provision for talented pupils is well established, the register of talented pupils is used to organise mentoring, with support proportional to talent levels. In one school, for example, pupils working at the national standard received one-to-one mentoring while the ratio was 1:8 for those at the school standard.

19. In a minority of schools, PE departments have successfully established more fine-tuned identification scales, as in the following example:

*A particularly good feature of the policy is the range of criteria which the department use for the identification of talent. Rather than take the route of working at county, regional or national level, the staff have defined the qualities that teachers should look for which may indicate that a pupil is talented. These include:*

- *performing exceptionally well in one sport or to a good standard in many*
- *good spatial awareness*
- *good understanding of effort, such as weight and time*
- *skilful body management*
- *learning, understanding and adopting technical aspects of a sport very quickly*
- *making correct decisions in pressure situations and adapting their technique accordingly*
- *ability to work independently and with initiative.*

20. In some schools, where the sports partnership programme is well established, systems for identifying talented pupils are also being used in feeder primary schools.

21. In the schools where the national guidance is not being used, talented pupils are identified against the school's own agreed subject criteria, by use of professional judgement, or on the basis of primary school information. In most cases such criteria are insufficiently detailed and are rarely shared with pupils. In a small number of schools there are no established criteria. As a consequence, some pupils have been identified as good at football, for example, but there is little indication that they have potential or are talented.

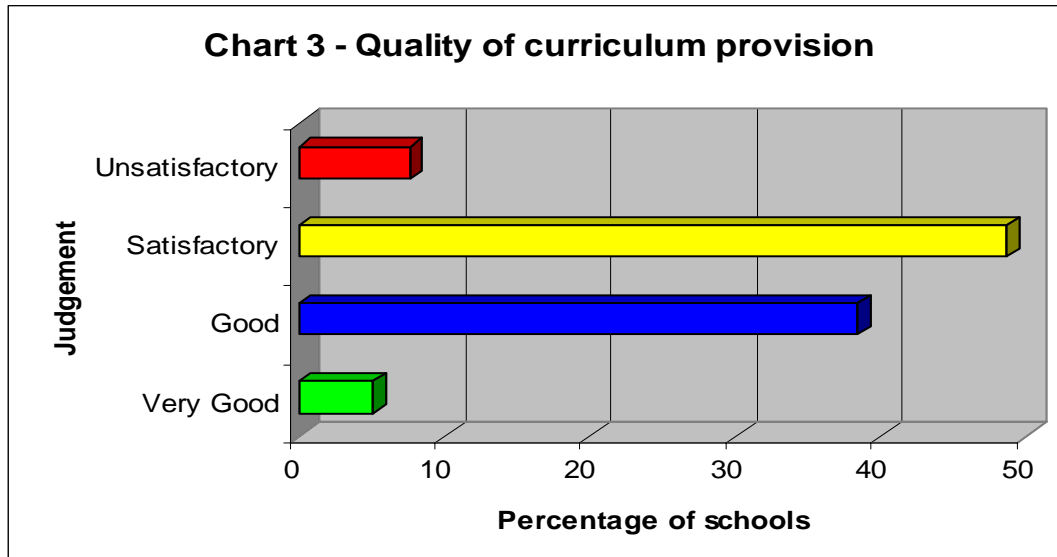
## **Monitoring and evaluation**

22. The monitoring and evaluation of the provision for talented pupils are the weakest parts of management. Some schools use data to set individual pupils targets for examination courses and these are helping to raise levels of attainment as well as providing evidence for evaluation. However, too often, examination grades are seen as the primary measure of outcome and greater consideration needs to be given to other measures. In particular, more needs to be done to evaluate the effects of provision on the specific achievements and aspirations of talented pupils. Some schools involved in the EiC initiative are using mentoring schemes and procedures for tracking pupils' progress which help to do this. Few schools

have a strategy for evaluating the effectiveness of the resources deployed in the programme.

23. Although the monitoring of teaching takes place as part of the general whole-school programme, schools rarely focus on specific aspects such as provision for higher attainers. Some PE departments have established systems including peer observation and the discussion of performance data. These are used well in some schools to identify good practice and areas for improvement. In one department, the knowledge and skills of three advanced skills teachers (ASTs) were used to help raise teachers' expectations and to improve the use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for learning. This contributed to a wider analysis of teaching and resulted in more regular opportunities for pupils to observe, analyse, coach and participate and to assess how well they are doing. In another school, the director of sport monitored the teaching of outside coaches because he was keen to ensure the carefully nurtured ethos in the department was promoted in the relationships coaches had with pupils. Such care is a rare exception.

## Part 2 School provision and links with community clubs



### The curriculum

24. Most schools are at an early stage of development in establishing curriculum provision to meet the particular learning needs of talented pupils. All PE departments satisfy the minimum requirements of the National Curriculum (chart 3), and some are raising the demands made of talented pupils, such as longer units of work. Only a minority of schools have adapted the curriculum to create more individualised programmes for talented pupils. For example, one school made time in one or two lessons in the week for pupils to receive individual tuition on specific aspects of training. In the best schools, provision for talented pupils is well matched to pupils' needs and is planned to ensure continuity and progression in learning; this includes across units of work and between curricular, extra-curricular and out-of-school provision.
25. Where schools are adapting the curriculum for talented pupils, however, it is having a positive effect on pupils' motivation and achievement, as in these examples:

*High-quality specialist coaching was introduced to help talented golfers to enhance the analysis of performance using information and communication technology. The curriculum arrangements were agreed to best meet the needs of the pupils, the school, and the club.*

*Talented pupils were fast tracked on a GCSE course starting in Year 9 and taking the examination by the end of Year 10. This did have*

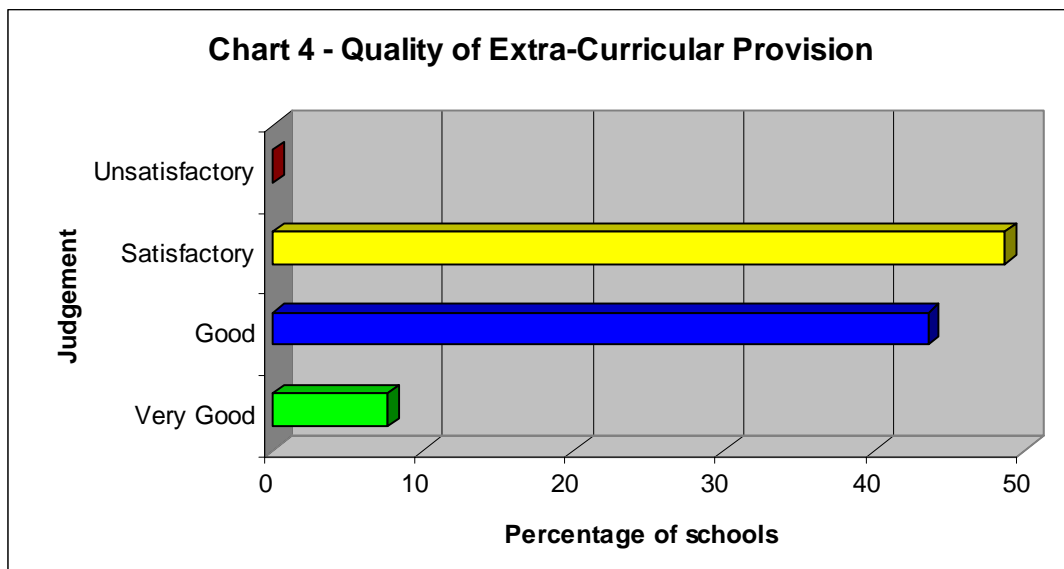
*consequences for the pupils' curriculum in other subjects and was not greeted enthusiastically by all. However, the ethos of rigour and purpose established in the examination groups ensured high-quality provision and a strong level of response from pupils.*

*Pupils were exempted from the core PE curriculum in Key Stage 4 to maintain their academic progress, given their considerable extra-curricular and out-of-school training commitments.*

26. In most schools, the PE curriculum is constructed around the selection of activities rather than the development of concepts, skills, knowledge and understanding as identified in the National Curriculum. A curriculum consisting of short units of work, of a half term or less, forestalls the identification of pupils with talent and the opportunity for them to work in depth. Even where units allow improved opportunities for sustained teaching and learning, continuity and progression are achieved in some activities more than others. Learning in games, for example, is generally better sustained than that in athletics, gymnastics, or dance. In some schools, dance has been placed in performing arts, and so receives a greater allocation of time across Key Stage 3, improving opportunities to sustain achievement.
27. Occasionally, the staffing of the curriculum disrupts continuity and progression as different teachers work with the same group for different lessons. Similarly, ten-day timetables can inhibit continuity when they allocate three lessons in one week and one lesson in the second week. Such arrangements can disrupt the continuity of learning and inhibit the progress of all pupils.
28. Although some teachers and co-ordinators have visited various websites offering guidance on developing provision for talented pupils, few schools are drawing sufficiently on guidance such as that provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) on working with gifted and talented pupils in PE. There is little evidence of the use of this guidance to challenge and plan for talented pupils, and often teachers are unaware of its existence. Until systematic steps are taken to plan for talented pupils, the impact of provision is likely to be limited.

### **Extra-curricular PE and sports**

29. The extra-curricular programme for talented pupils is satisfactory in all of the schools in this sample and good or better in just over half (chart 4).



30. Common characteristics of good practice include:

- breadth of provision, covering the full range of National Curriculum activities
- due consideration to the needs of different groups of pupils, including talented pupils
- clubs before school, during lunch hours and after school, which are helping to fit in with pupils' home arrangements
- opportunities for developmental and competitive work
- workshops on topics such as lifestyle management, performance planning, and diet and nutrition
- advanced classes for different sports, often making good use of specialist coaches to support teachers' expertise
- summer camps
- clubs for primary pupils, based in their own school and/or the secondary school.

31. The most effective provision also ensures pupils have additional opportunities to develop their theoretical work in PE in addition to their practical skills. For example:

*In one school, the extra-curricular provision is very wide ranging and seen as both a development and an extension to activities within the curriculum. Two sessions operate each evening (using the facilities that are available). Session 1 runs from 2.45pm to 4.05pm and session 2 from 4.05pm to 5.25pm. Transport is provided for some of these*

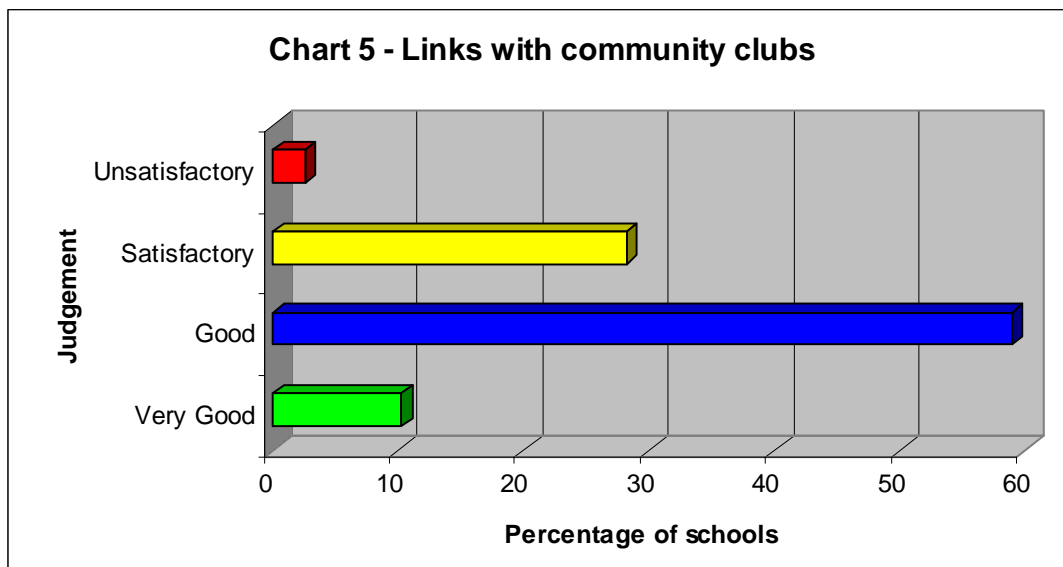
*activities to enable pupils to stay on after school. Some classes are also provided for Key Stage 2 pupils from the local family of feeder schools. They are not specifically for gifted and talented pupils but attract those that are interested and so helping towards early identification of talent. The basketball academy meets before and after school. A range of clubs beyond this develop higher-order skills and challenge pupils' understanding. These include, GCE A A/S Level/GNVQ and BTEC clubs, the ICT PE Club (which also meets before school), GCSE/A Level dance extension work, dance, contemporary ballet, swimming and tennis.*

32. The school sports partnerships have contributed greatly to improving school's extra-curricular clubs for primary pupils through termly festivals in a variety of sports. Sometimes these festivals for talented pupils involve work with local coaches, who encourage pupils to take part in activities outside school. Many talented pupils help to run these festivals by organising and leading groups and umpiring matches. This helps to develop their leadership skills and their understanding of the games.
33. Some schools are also using the school sport partnership programme to provide specialist support for talented pupils in their feeder primary schools. For example, one school gained £2,000 to fund a 'multi skills' coaching course for 35 Year 5 and 6 pupils held at the secondary school over nine weeks.
34. Where provision is no more than satisfactory, clubs are restricted to traditional games, with too few opportunities for individual games or creative/movement activities. Specific provision for talented pupils is limited to team training sessions, with little thought given to how these additional opportunities could provide more complex and challenging experiences.

### **Links with community clubs**

35. Over two-thirds of schools have developed good links with community providers to support out-of-hours provision for talented pupils (chart 5). This is helping pupils develop their skills and gain experience in new contexts. It also supports teachers' expertise by offering specialist coaching and extends the range of schools' facilities.





36. The positive characteristics of out-of-hours provision are:

- extensive networks of national governing body sports clubs, voluntary clubs and organisations, to provide pupils with information on clubs willing and able to help them develop their sporting skills
- a register or directory of provision with details to help pupils take up opportunities
- noticeboards and displays celebrating pupils' achievements
- opportunities linked with the school curriculum but also providing for other sports such as ice-skating, horse riding, martial arts, golf
- ongoing communication with coaches and adults other than teachers who work with pupils.

37. The identification of a nominated person to liaise with specific clubs or to co-ordinate provision was a significant factor in helping schools to improve out-of-hours opportunities. The following examples illustrate some of these characteristics:

*The PE department has produced a very good glossy brochure for distribution to all pupils (primary and secondary) and parents. It provides the full details needed by anyone to make contact with a club in the locality within a reasonable radius. It provides coaching times for different age groups. Out-of-school opportunities include athletics, badminton, cricket, dance, football, netball, rugby, swimming, tennis*

*and gymnastics. Some of these clubs are now reported to be full and to have waiting lists.*

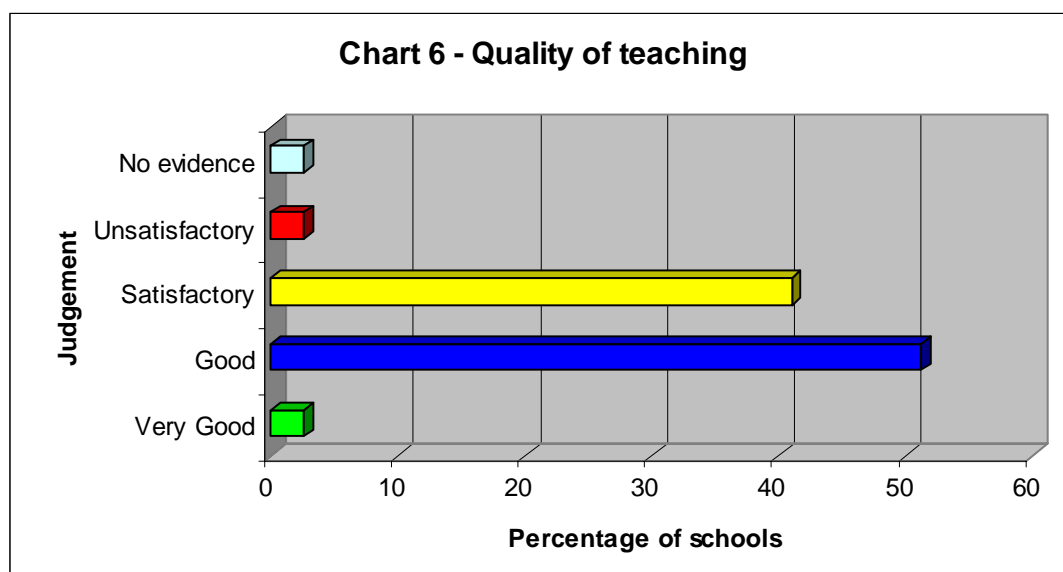
*The school has well-established links with a number of clubs including netball, tennis and badminton who use the school facilities, so offering an opportunity for closer relationships. School facilities are provided at agreed rates in some instances in return for coaching provided by the clubs. The school also has written agreements with a number of clubs. These agreements establish expectations for both parties relating, for example, to equal opportunities (race) and special educational needs. They commit clubs to:*

- provide qualified coaches*
- create pathways for pupils to achieve potential*
- be welcoming*
- organise appropriate competitions*
- keep the school informed*
- ensure the structure of any charging encourages participation*
- provide for a properly elected committee with a published constitution to run the club*
- agreed targets to recruit new members annually.*

38. A significant factor in developing these good out-of-hours links is the relationship between school PE staff and local providers. Staff usually had good knowledge of local contacts, which they exploited further as a result of sports college funding for community sports development work. For example, one school used the information they had on the standard at which the clubs operated to recommend appropriate clubs, considering the pupils' levels of talent. So, for example, two talented runners belonged to different clubs and had different coaches to suit their different needs. In this school, the strong links with local clubs have helped the school attract larger numbers of pupils outside its immediate catchment area because sports clubs are recommending that its junior members look to the opportunities at the sports college when selecting their secondary school.
39. In some instances, where links are very good, PE staff meet regularly with coaches to negotiate the balance between training and education. For example, in one school the PE co-ordinator for talented pupils planned time for making contact with coaches to discuss the progress and needs of talented pupils each term. Another school appointed a club coach development officer and established a club forum which improved communications between teachers and coaches and enabled a smooth transition from school to club. Where a number of clubs are based on the school campus, transition between school and participation in a club is easier.
40. Where links are less well developed, schools have only a general level of awareness of local clubs and what they provide. They direct pupils to local clubs via noticeboards and displays of information but offer no subsequent support. This is often because they have no established policy for gifted and talented

pupils. Few schools monitor pupils' experience in out-of-school clubs and consequently it is difficult to evaluate the benefits of pupils' experiences to ensure continuity and progression in learning.

## Part 3: Quality of teaching of physical education and school sport



### Teaching

41. The overall quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in most lessons seen and good or better in over half (chart 6).<sup>1</sup> In the best lessons, teachers carefully planned content so that warm-up activities were well linked to previous learning and the main activity. Planning was sufficiently detailed to incorporate a variety of teaching methods. These lessons provided structured opportunities for talented pupils to lead warm-up activities and observe and analyse each other's performances and give feedback. Lessons had a clear purpose and a lively pace, ensuring all pupils maintained high levels of activity. Such lessons catered well for all, including high attainers and put no ceiling on the performance of talented pupils, as in this example:

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<sup>1</sup> The term teaching is used to describe teaching, coaching and leading of curriculum and extra-curricular PE and school sport observed during the survey.

*In a Year 11 mixed ability basketball lesson, pupils were developing their understanding of how to use their dribbling skills in different situations to keep possession of the ball and to beat a defender. The teacher's very good subject knowledge ensured that pupils worked on techniques, tactics and rules of the game. Questioning and feedback helped pupils to think about **why** they were doing the practices set. This was highly successful in developing pupils' understanding of the principles of play as they discussed defensive play and keeping possession, not simply skills. Additionally, references were frequently made to other invasion games, encouraging pupils to see common principles across different games. Excellent demonstration, opportunities for practising and evaluating performance and evaluation skills, together with well-timed teacher intervention ensured good pace and challenge throughout the lesson. The teacher responded very well to the different levels of ability by adjusting tasks and the language and level of questions. In small-sided games, pupils were grouped by ability and different targets were given to each group. The teacher had very good relationships with the pupils, offering one-to-one and group feedback, highlighting areas and strategies for improvement. Pupils listened attentively and understood what they were trying to achieve. They were keen to do well and asked questions using subject vocabulary well. They made good progress and the standard of play was high.*

42. Other strategies used by teachers to meet the needs of talented pupils included:

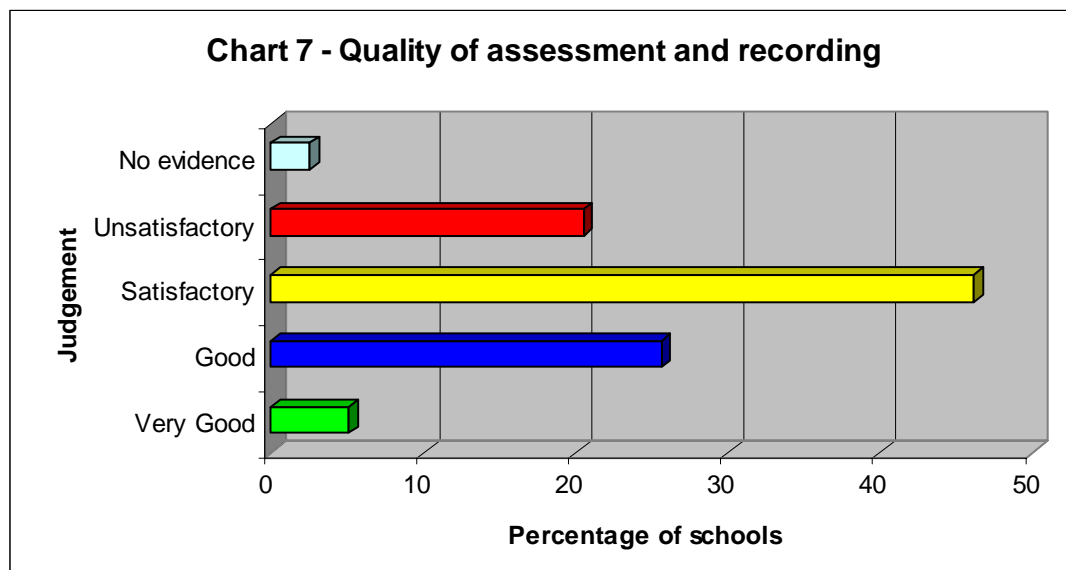
- the use of a variety of tasks involving discussion, brainstorming and thoughtful questioning that required exploration and explanation of concepts such as the principles of training or tactics in different games
- a good balance between information given by teachers and problem-solving and decision-making on the part of pupils
- flexibility shown by teachers in departing from planned content in order to explain further and/or take the pupils in a different direction, using a wide variety of practical activities
- different targets being set for higher-attaining pupils and in some instances, pupils grouped according to ability. Pupils respond well in these situations and make good progress
- talented pupils are given opportunities to lead other pupils providing them with a new challenge
- theoretical work supports practical learning
- ICT is used to sharpen performance, observation and evaluation skills.

43. Few unsatisfactory lessons were seen, but in a significant proportion of lessons where most pupils make satisfactory progress, insufficient attention was given to the needs of talented pupils, as in this example.

*In a Year 7 basketball lesson, all pupils performed the same activity, with the same outcome, for the same length of time, with the same quality of feedback provided by the teacher. The teacher is an experienced basketball coach, having been involved in high-level coaching at a national level. His style of teaching was command/task, in which he set the task, the pupils practised, and he stopped and commented on their performance before moving onto the next task. One talented pupil, however, led the warm up but this was not necessarily anything beyond what any child in the group could have done.*

44. In most schools, ordinary classroom practice does not sufficiently include strategies for developing talented pupils.

## Assessment



45. As for all pupils, it is important that the progress and attainment of talented pupils are assessed and recorded. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment in this sample of schools reflect the national picture. They are good or better in almost a third of schools, but unsatisfactory in one in five (chart 7). Where assessment procedures are good, teachers assess against learning outcomes for each unit of work, and for all four strands of the attainment target. They also make good use of their observations of pupils work to plan the next steps in pupils learning.

46. The following example shows how the progress of talented pupils can be supported by good assessment:

*The head of department uses his understanding of the National Curriculum to encourage staff to use a wide range of teaching styles, particularly those which require the pupils to make decisions for themselves. He has developed, with the department, systems for collecting and recording evidence of progress made against all four strands of the attainment target.*

*All school staff have received training in target-setting and assessment and the internal moderation of grades and levels has been undertaken across the department.*

*The school has established links with feeder primary schools and assessment information on pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 is transferred electronically from 75% of the schools. All are expected to be involved by next year.*

*The school makes good use of technology in recording evidence for assessment, either on video or on digital camera. The department has acquired performance analysis software, which is used by pupils in the sixth form and GCSE classes in their analysis of technique. Gifted and talented pupils use it to place a world-class performance alongside their own, so that they can appreciate more accurately where their own technique is less effective.*

*Pupils are expected to contribute to their own assessment as part of normal teaching and learning. Examination pupils in Key Stage 4 and sixth form have a more sophisticated approach and are very much involved in their own assessment.*

*In lessons, teachers make accurate observations of pupils' work and give feedback that helps them to improve their work. Questions are focused and responses used to check pupils' knowledge and understanding. They involve pupils in assessing their own work and use the information to set new targets. This information is used to plan future opportunities for pupils to consolidate, refine and extend the quality of their work.*

## **Mentoring**

47. Gifted and talented pupils are subject to particular pressures in improving their performance to high levels while at the same time meeting the demands of examinations, coursework and a life beyond school. The success of mentoring programmes in contributing to attainment and inclusion has been noted in an earlier report on the effect of the Excellence in Cities (EiC) and Education Action Zone (EAZ) programmes. In PE and school sport, mentoring support is offered for talented young people.

48. Almost three quarters of schools visited have a mentoring programme in place for talented pupils in PE, although they are at various stages of development as illustrated in the following examples:

*Five staff have recently been trained in the Junior Athlete Education (JAE) programme (3 PE and 2 other). The JAE thinking currently dominates the department's identification of talented pupils and a development plan has been drawn up for implementation of the programme including the identification of mentors and plans to involve parents.*

*The school has its own well-established mentoring programme which has now been running for 4 years. It aims to help young sports people and those who influence them, to plan ahead to ensure their sport, schoolwork, social and family lives remain in balance. Young athletes and their parents receive support through a series of workshops and individual guidance is offered through a mentoring programme that provides talented pupils with appropriate contact with coaches. The system is well supported by school staff nationally trained to deliver the workshops and offer mentor support. The model has been extended to partner schools through funding provided in the Building Bridges project. Pupils on the register speak highly of the support they have received and how it has helped them to plan and manage their day-to-day life.*

49. The numbers of pupils benefiting from a mentoring programme also varies from school to school. For example, in one school the top five talented pupils playing representative sport at county level equivalent or above are allocated mentors. In another, only sixth form pupils playing representative sport have mentors but all pupils on the talent register attend workshops on lifestyle management and how to plan their time to meet the demands of school work and sports training.
50. However, since the programme is at various stages of development in different schools, and in many schools is only just being introduced, the overall impact on performance, motivation and self-esteem is difficult to gauge at this stage.
51. Teachers who are involved as mentors see their role as one of support for talented pupils in maintaining a balance between social life, academic achievement and improving sporting performance. The benefits for the student are evident in this example:

*Those pupils on the gifted and talented register have a mentor whom they select themselves. It is not necessarily a member of the PE department, but anyone on the staff. The mentor holds the pupil's achievement profile on which are recorded their main sport and level of achievement, together with their commitments both in and out of school, contact details of their coach and club and important competition dates. There is no formal role for the mentor and no regular, planned contact,*

*but they are there to act as troubleshooters and to negotiate with other members of staff over time off or extended deadlines for coursework. It works well... These pupils join up with those from a partner secondary school for the Junior Athlete Education programme. Here pupils of all ages, representing many different sports and activities have, the opportunity to meet each other and to discuss matters of concern to them, as well as working through the workshop materials provided by the programme organisers.*

52. Pupils welcomed any such support they received, particularly in negotiating timings for the submission of homework where they had very full out-of-school commitments.
53. Where mentoring schemes are more advanced, talented pupils have individual education plans and these are being used to set targets as part of a whole-school system of monitoring pupils' attainment.

*Each mentor has an individual sport and education plan (ISEP) that sets long-, medium- and short-term targets that have been agreed with the coach, parent, mentor, PE staff and pupils themselves. The plan is reviewed at a meeting at six-monthly intervals.*

*Alex is in Year 9. He is a breaststroke swimmer who hopes to achieve the qualification time that will provide him with a place in the National Age Group Squad. His longer-term aim is to compete and win his own National Age Group championship. He aspires to achieve GCSE and A Level grades that will allow him to take a sports science degree at university. His ISEP identifies the concerns around meeting homework deadlines while following an intensive training programme. Following discussion, strategies have been devised by his mentor that allow him to participate in 05.00am training on two mornings each week and to make all parties aware of competition schedules. Alex is appreciative of the efforts that have been made on his behalf and this has increased his confidence and determination to meet both his education and sport targets.*

54. Some mentoring schemes insufficiently develop those qualities that might enhance performance. In some of the schools there was no mentoring programme at all. In these circumstances, talented pupils managed the extensive demands on their time themselves. For example, in one school with pupils talented in a range of sports including football, sailing, show jumping and golf, the pupils organised competing demands on their time very well. Even the youngest managed to balance the competing demands of homework, training and competing schedules. Older pupils had made sensible decisions, such as the temporary suspension of sports to concentrate on examinations, or the negotiation of a day's extension for a piece of coursework to allow attendance at an international competition. However, there is a danger that, without support or



intervention, pupils may underachieve or drop out under the pressure to devote so much time to sport.

55. Mentoring can also be very important in helping talented pupils deal with disappointment. In one school, the influence of rugby is significant with five players in Key Stage 4 signed up with professional clubs. These experiences for pupils can be exciting but also difficult, particularly when a pupil is dropped from the books. While the school is sympathetic to this scenario, it has yet to consider a formal support mechanism to let these pupils down gently. The recently introduced mentor system is expected to be of help in providing support for pupils facing this situation. In another school, the training programme for talented swimmers is so intensive that coaches recommend pupils take time off from training during the non-competitive months in order to rest and recuperate.
56. In some schools, parents of talented pupils have attended training courses that are designed to help them support their children in managing their busy lifestyles.

## Annex A: Background

The national strategy for PE, School Sport and Club Links was implemented in April 2003. The DfES and DCMS are jointly responsible for its implementation and the government is investing £459 million. The overall aim – a joint DfES/DCMS Public Service Agreement target – is to increase the percentage of 5- to 16-year-old school children in England who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high-quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75% by 2006.

*Learning through PE and Sport* (DfES/DCMS March 2003 available from [www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe)) provides a guide to the strategy which brings together eight distinct but interrelated strands:

- the Specialist Sports College programme
- the School Sport Partnerships programme
- national PE and School Sport professional development
- the Step into Sport programme
- action to create better links between schools and sports clubs
- targeted support for gifted and talented young athletes
- to enhance swimming opportunities
- the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's PE and school sport investigation.

There are currently 222 School Sport Partnerships across England. The first 31 partnerships (phase 1) started up in September 2000 and increased in size in September 2003. They now involve 244 secondary schools and 1,535 primary/special schools. The 14 phase 2 partnerships began in April 2001, and will increase in size in September 2004, and currently involve 64 secondary schools and 336 primary/special schools. There are 35 phase 3 partnerships which were implemented in September 2001 and will again increase in size in September 2004. Phase 3 involves 181 secondary schools and 916 primary/special schools. Phase 4 partnerships began in March 2002. There are 20 partnerships involving 133 secondary schools and 627 primary/special schools. Schools in phases 1 to 4 cover 74 local authority areas.

The results of the first annual PE, School Sport and Club Links survey were published in April 2004. To read the full report visit [www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe). The headline results of the survey show that:

- 62% – rising to over 80% in Key Stage 3 – of pupils in schools within a School Sport Partnership are spending at least two hours in a typical week on high-quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum.
- 33% of pupils from Years 4–11 in schools within a School Sport Partnership were involved in inter-school sports competition during the last academic year.

- Each school within a School Sport Partnership provides an average of more than 14 different sports, increasing to 19 at secondary.
- 19% of pupils from schools within a School Sport Partnership are participating in a sports club with links to the school.
- Across Years 10–11, 10% of pupils from schools within a School Sport Partnership are actively involved in sports volunteering and leadership.

As part of the targeted support for gifted and talented young athletes, 142 sports colleges received funding of up to £2,000 to implement the talented support programme by March 2004. The programme is currently being implemented by 112 schools. In each of these schools at least one teacher has attended national training for the mentoring programme.

National governing bodies of sport have organised 131 performance camps in a range of sports including: athletics, netball, gymnastics, tennis, cricket, football and rugby.

The DfES is also developing national guidance on a quality standard, which is intended to help schools recognise and develop a good quality talent support programme.

## Annex B

### The schools visited in this survey

Abraham Guest High School, Wigan LEA  
Alderman Smith School, Warwickshire LEA  
Arrow Vale Community High School, Worcestershire LEA  
Ashton-on-Mersey School, Trafford LEA  
Astley Sports College and Community High School, Tameside LEA  
Burleigh Community College, Leicestershire LEA  
Chesterfield High School, Sefton LEA  
Churchill Community College, North Tyneside LEA  
Cirencester Kingshill High School, Gloucestershire LEA  
Collegiate High School Sports College, Blackpool LEA  
Copleston High School, Suffolk LEA  
Daynecourt School Specialist Sports College, Nottinghamshire LEA  
Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre, Durham LEA  
Ernest Bevin College, Wandsworth LEA  
Failsworth School, Oldham LEA  
Great Baddow High School, Essex LEA  
Harris School, Warwickshire LEA  
John Spence Community High School, North Tyneside LEA  
King Alfred's Community & Sports College, Oxfordshire LEA  
Mark Hall School, Essex LEA  
Oakbank School, Bradford LEA  
Perins School, Hampshire LEA  
Pickering High School Sports College, Kingston Upon Hull LEA  
Plymstock School, Plymouth LEA  
Sandbach High School and Sixth Form College, Cheshire LEA  
St Thomas More RC School, Haringey LEA  
The Cavendish School, Hertfordshire LEA  
The Coseley School, Dudley LEA  
The Deanes School, Essex LEA  
The Hayesbrook School, Kent LEA  
The Lakelands School and Sports College, Shropshire LEA  
The Manor School, Nottinghamshire LEA  
The Streetly School, Walsall LEA  
The Winston Churchill School, Surrey LEA  
Thurstable School, Essex LEA  
Whickham School, Gateshead LEA  
Willenhall School Sports College, Walsall LEA  
Wood Green High School College of Sport, Sandwell LEA  
Wright Robinson Sports College, Manchester LEA

#### Pilot study:

Blue Coat School, Cheshire LEA  
Ninestiles School, Birmingham LEA