



School sport partnerships

A survey of good practice

Ofsted has evaluated the government's Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy since 2003. In 2005/06, HMI visited 15 primary schools and 12 secondary schools in 16 school sport partnerships. This small-scale survey was designed to identify good practice and to help partnerships, schools and clubs to analyse their provision.

Of particular interest to:

Schools, local authorities and the for Education and Skills

Age group

All

Published

October 2006

Reference no.

HMI 2518

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Document reference number: HMI 2518

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Executive summary

Ofsted has evaluated the government's Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy since 2003 and has published reports on its strengths, weaknesses and impact.¹ A key finding of the last report was that, while some schools were using the programme effectively, many had yet to benefit. This small-scale survey was designed to identify and illustrate good practice and to help partnerships, schools and clubs to analyse their provision.

In the spring of 2006, Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) visited 15 primary and 12 secondary schools in 16 school sport partnerships. The inspections focused on the overall effectiveness of provision in physical education (PE), but they paid particular attention to the relationship between timetabled provision and extra-curricular sporting activities within and beyond the school; the links with other schools, local clubs and other sporting bodies, and the impact of the school sport partnership programme, particularly where it was improving provision for pupils.

Overwhelmingly, the commitment and communication skills of subject leaders, partnership development managers, school sport coordinators and primary link teachers ensured that schools' and partnerships' priorities were managed effectively. The support of headteachers and a strategic overview from the local authority were also influential. The schools that showed the greatest gains from their involvement in the programme had put it high on their priorities for development.

Almost all pupils in the primary schools visited were achieving at or above the nationally expected standard in most aspects of PE. Schools believed that, because of their involvement in the programme, standards in PE had improved, usually in one or more aspects which had been previously not as strong, such as gymnastics or dance. Pupils were at or above the nationally expected standard in swimming at the end of Year 6 because schools used their own learner swimming pool well or ensured that pupils had regular swimming lessons locally. In several of the primary schools, pupils benefited from additional daily physical activity which involved short, regular periods of exercise to music and helped them to understand the importance of daily exercise. The programme was encouraging pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to take part in all lessons and club activities.

In secondary schools, an important outcome for pupils was the promotion of leadership opportunities. In addition, new activities during lessons or sports activities at lunchtimes helped to reduce inappropriate behaviour; good

¹ *The physical education, school sport and club links strategy (HMI 2397)*, Ofsted, 2005; *The school sport partnerships programme (HMI 2150)*, Ofsted, 2004; *The school sport coordinator programme (HMI 1586)*, Ofsted, 2003.

provision was beginning to attract pupils previously disenchanted by PE and sport.

Good teaching was observed in both primary and secondary schools, often associated with the greater confidence of teachers gained from training, including observation of demonstration lessons. Good use of information and communications technology (ICT) was observed, both to demonstrate teaching points and to help pupils evaluate their own performance. Fewer examples were seen of good assessment practice, which remains a weaker aspect of teaching.

There were important strengths in the PE curricula of most primary schools and half of the secondary schools, including greater consistency, better planning and a good balance of activities. In most of the secondary schools where the curriculum was less secure, there was nevertheless demonstrable benefit from involvement in the programme.

In primary and secondary schools, many more sports activities were available during lunchtimes and after school, increasing participation by pupils of all abilities. Pupils had greater opportunities to play sport outside school through schools' strong links with local sports clubs and sports coaches in the community. Schools reported that the improved provision had helped to motivate pupils, raise their self-esteem and contribute to their personal development. It was particularly encouraging that some disaffected pupils were now motivated to become involved in PE and sport, as was shown from feedback from the pupils and from direct observation of the initiatives introduced to tackle disaffection and low esteem.

Key findings

- ❑ The school sport partnership programme was helping to improve the quality of provision in physical education and school sport, particularly in primary schools.
- ❑ In almost all cases, good communication between the primary subject leader, the partnership development manager, the school sports coordinator and the primary link teacher ensured that schools' and the partnership's priorities were managed effectively.
- ❑ Teachers were aware of the ten outcomes of high quality PE and school sport, and were striving to meet them.²
- ❑ PE contributed positively to pupils' personal development and well-being. Schools ensured that, wherever possible, all pupils were included in PE and sports activities. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities were encouraged to take part in all lessons and club activities.

² The 10 outcomes are listed on page 3 of *High quality PE and sport for young people*, DfES/DCMS, 2004.

- ❑ Almost all the schools visited organised at least two hours of PE and sport, within and beyond the curriculum.
- ❑ The schools involved in the programme had improved the quality and range of learning within PE and extra-curricular activities.
- ❑ Schools had developed strong links with local sports clubs and sports coaches in the community, giving pupils many more opportunities to play sport outside school.
- ❑ The quality of leadership and management was good or better in all the primary schools visited. The sport partnership programme had enabled subject leaders to influence their colleagues' teaching and improve provision. However, the programme had less influence on improving the leadership and management of physical education in the secondary schools visited.
- ❑ Although the visits focused on good practice, issues emerged in some schools that need to be addressed:
 - support for the programme, and its impact, were not as strong in secondary schools as in primary schools
 - the time allocated at Key Stage 4 was often insufficient
 - few of the schools assessed pupils systematically to record their progress and achievement. As a consequence the evaluation of standards was inconsistent and judgements were often too generous.

Recommendations

To further increase its impact and effectiveness, those with national responsibility for the school sport partnership programme should provide further guidance for schools on how to use more effectively the programme's 10 outcomes for high quality PE and school sport alongside the National Curriculum to show clearly what pupils should know, understand and be able to do across different key stages.

All schools in partnerships should continue to improve their collection of assessment information to ensure a more accurate picture of pupils' standards and achievement.

Secondary schools in partnerships should further improve their provision to ensure that two hours of high quality PE and school sport are available to all pupils; and work more closely with partnerships managers and school sport co-ordinators to maximise the impact of the programme for all pupils.

Features of good practice

Standards and achievement in primary schools

1. In all the schools visited, standards were at expected levels in most aspects of PE and higher in some. Schools believed that, because of their involvement in the programme, standards in PE had improved, usually in one or more aspects which had been previously not as strong, such as gymnastics or dance.
2. Almost all the pupils were leaving primary school achieving at or above the nationally expected standard in swimming.³ This was because schools used their own learner swimming pool well or ensured that pupils had regular swimming lessons at a local pool. Many pupils also benefited from swimming lessons organised by enthusiastic parents.
3. Most schools provided equally for the four aspects of PE.⁴ In almost all cases, children made good progress in their physical development in the Foundation Stage and this continued in most aspects of PE until the end of Key Stage 2. In a school where standards and achievement were good, the inspector recorded:

In Key Stage 2, pupils' standards are above average and they achieve well. Their practical performances are above average. They show good levels of knowledge and understanding about health and fitness and how activities should be evaluated and may be improved.

In a games lesson, Year 6 pupils passed and received effectively in attack and defensive situations and began to respond to changing situations in the games. In gymnastics, standards were above average overall; for a minority of pupils, standards were very high. In a gymnastics lesson, Year 4 pupils performed fluent sequences, showing variations in speed and pathways, using apparatus. Their skills of observation were above average and they were able to help their partners to improve their sequences.

Assessment records reflected similar standards in other aspects: for example, almost all pupils are able to swim by the end of Year 5. They enjoy their lessons and almost all make good progress across the four aspects.

³ Pupils should be able to: pace themselves in floating and swimming challenges related to speed, distance and personal survival; swim unaided for a sustained period of time over a distance of 25 metres; use recognised arm and leg actions, lying on their front and back; use a range of recognised strokes and personal survival skills.

⁴ The four aspects in the National Curriculum are: acquiring and developing skills; selecting and applying skills, tactics and compositional ideas; evaluating and improving performance; knowledge and understanding of fitness and health.

4. In another school, the good progress of Year 2 pupils was described as follows:

Year 2 pupils showed that they had acquired and developed skills and were able to apply them in short sequences. Most pupils had good body control and coordination. They showed a range of skills by balancing on the floor and apparatus. They were able to explain the principle of balances and how to aim for body tension.

5. One school's participation in the programme had improved standards to such an extent that the partner secondary school enhanced its curriculum to match better the higher levels of attainment of the pupils entering Year 7.
6. Pupils' personal development was good overall in most of the schools visited and was enhanced significantly by their involvement in PE and school sport. Schools referred to positive attitudes to school, good attendance, high levels of motivation and improved self-esteem as important outcomes. Most pupils knew the expectations for safe and healthy participation in PE and sport, and some of the schools visited had linked this very well to their work on achieving a 'healthy schools' award.
7. The following example illustrates the positive impact on pupils' personal development:

PE and school sport are making a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. Attitudes and behaviour in the lessons observed were good. All the children talked to said they enjoyed PE and sports, and welcomed the many opportunities to take part in extra-curricular clubs and inter-school sports competitions. They know why it is important to stay fit and healthy. They appreciate that playing games can improve their teamwork and co-operation skills and they enjoy having the chance to express themselves. Key Stage 2 pupils know about their PE targets and they enjoy taking part in sport outside school. Older pupils appreciate the chance to take responsibility and were looking forward to becoming playground buddies. They have a good understanding of how to be an effective play-leader.

Standards and achievement in secondary schools

8. Standards in the secondary schools visited varied across the different areas of activity but, overall, were almost always at the expected level or better. Standards were almost always better in Key Stage 3 than Key Stage 4. The following illustrates where the programme was making a difference in one school where standards and pupils' progress were good:

Pupils reached good standards with well above average results in PE in Key Stage 3 assessments and at GCSE. This was important since

the majority of them had joined the school with standards at or below the national average. A sizeable minority of pupils were talented and highly skilled performers, who had attained district, regional and national representative standards in a range of activities. They were developing an increasingly sophisticated knowledge and understanding of skills, tactics and compositional ideas, and how to select and apply these in realistic settings. They were confident and cooperated well. Their levels of creativity were impressive and they had an aesthetic appreciation of their own and other pupils' performance. Discussions revealed their excellent understanding of what it meant to be healthy; they were increasingly aware of how to prepare for and recover from exercise and the benefits of regular exercise and good hygiene.

9. One of the major successes of the programme was the promotion of leadership opportunities for pupils. Many of them gained additional awards, such as the Sports Leaders UK level 1 award, or met the requirements of leadership units within a number of the examination specifications.

In one school, a pupil leader in Year 10 took responsibility for a rugby session and showed her secure knowledge, planning and organising skills. She set up the equipment and resources and showed her leadership by briefing her assistants about their role and then explaining the learning aims and objectives to the group. This was followed by a pulse-raising activity and a sequential stretch – all led by the pupil leader. A focus on drills for ball handling skills became progressively more challenging and finished with a conditioned game during which she encouraged her peers to apply the skills they had just been practising.⁵ A cool down and peer assessment activity, designed to discover the extent to which the aims of the session had been met, concluded the lesson effectively.

10. In the great majority of the schools visited, most pupils showed positive attitudes towards PE and school sport:

Pupils' prompt arrival at lessons and good standards of kit showed their enjoyment of and satisfaction with PE. Their attitudes and behaviour were excellent when working in small groups and in open discussions with teachers: their willingness to question them showed they respected staff and felt at ease in the environment. Pupils showed leadership skills: they led warm-ups and acted as play leaders; talented and able pupils worked with less able pupils.

⁵ A conditioned game is one which is not played to the full rules and limits what the players can do in order to concentrate on a particular aspect.

11. Schools reported that improved provision for PE and sport had helped to raise pupils' levels of motivation and self-esteem. In several of the secondary schools visited, new activities during lessons or sports activities at lunchtimes were helping to reduce inappropriate behaviour.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning in primary schools

12. The programme helped the schools visited to improve teaching and learning in PE. The training modules undertaken by the primary link teacher were often shared successfully with school staff, and training which focused on a particular aspect, such as dance or gymnastics, helped to improve teachers' subject knowledge. They also benefited from support from sports coordinators and visiting coaches who demonstrated effective teaching of aspects of PE where staff felt less certain.

13. The quality of PE lessons was almost always good or better, as in this example:

A gymnastics lesson in Year 2, taught by the subject leader, was good, with some outstanding features. She used ICT very well at the start of the lesson to illustrate what the pupils should be aiming for in their performances. She emphasised vocabulary well and encouraged pupils to talk about their responses. She assessed their movements throughout the lesson and drew attention to those who reached the quality she was expecting. Her own and pupils' demonstrations illustrated teaching points. They were encouraged to assess their performances and talk about how they could be improved. This good teaching led to high achievement.

14. The most common contributory factors in good teaching were:

- a clear focus on specific learning objectives
- well-planned use of resources
- the chance for pupils to develop their skills in all four aspects of the programme of study
- effective use of ICT to illustrate what pupils should aim for
- pupils' demonstration and discussion, using appropriate vocabulary.

15. Since the previous survey, the effective use of ICT to support teaching and learning has increased in the primary schools involved in the programme. More teachers were using interactive whiteboards to illustrate teaching points and show good practice before lessons began. Digital cameras were used effectively to record outcomes and stimulate pupils' discussion and evaluation at the end of lessons. This example shows some of the benefits of ICT use for learning in PE.

A very positive feature of the teaching in a junior school was the use of ICT, which had improved as a result of the school's involvement with the programme. At the start of a Year 4 lesson, pupils were motivated by seeing the recorded work of older pupils. During the lesson, sophisticated software enabled pupils to see an immediate recording of their performances. As well as encouraging them, it enabled them to develop their evaluation skills well.

The same ICT techniques were used very effectively in an indoor games lesson with Year 3 pupils. They learned quickly how to strike a ball using a tennis racquet. The immediate feedback from the computer recording gave them good insights into how they needed to move their feet in order to prepare to play a forehand shot. Learning about how to improve progressed well and their evaluative skills were sharpened.

16. Although teachers' assessment of pupils' PE was satisfactory or better in most of the schools, it was the least effective aspect of schools' practice. In some partnerships, however, there were signs of improvements in day to day and longer-term assessment, as in this example.

In one school, teachers assessed pupils' performances through observation and questioning. They also made it clear to pupils what they would be learning and the outcomes which were expected. This was particularly effective in a Year 2 lesson where the criteria for success were explained to pupils before they began the activities. Effective and systematic records showed clearly whether pupils had met, exceeded or fallen short of the levels expected for their age. Evidence of their achievements was stored electronically; other evidence was displayed in photographs around the school. Reports to parents indicated clearly what their children had achieved in PE. The partner secondary school received useful records of the pupils' National Curriculum levels and their achievements in PE and sport.

Teaching and learning in secondary schools

17. The most common features of good lessons were:
- clear learning objectives, which were discussed with pupils at the start of the lesson and revisited during it
 - effective mental and physical activities to start the lesson that were linked appropriately to the main part of the lesson and helped to settle and focus pupils' attention on learning: they prepared their bodies through a range of pulse-raising and mobilisation activities
 - effective use of a range of different tasks to ensure a purposeful and inclusive ethos for learning, which resulted in positive working relationships between pupils and the teacher
 - high levels of activity, the maintenance of pace, well-judged choice of teaching approaches and effective use of time.

18. These features were evident in the following example of teaching and learning basketball skills:

The changing rooms were networked and contained screens so that the teacher was able to show edited clips to illustrate teaching points. A basketball lesson started in the changing room with video clips of lay ups, slam dunks, set shots and drives to the basket on a loop. Questions drew key technical aspects of skills acquisition from pupils which led into an introduction to the lesson's aims and objectives.

The pupils moved into a well-equipped sports hall and immediately into warm-up activities involving everyone with a ball free shooting into designated baskets. Revision of dribbling skills from one side of the court to the other at speed, changing hands and direction as they moved, was refined into a series of relay drills with differing challenges as they crossed the court. Mobilisation exercise consisted of working the ball around the body, through the legs, pivoting and leaping, extending and landing.

Good knowledge of the pupils' ability was used to set them a series of tasks, which allowed the most able to extend themselves, whilst also encouraging the less able to experience some success. For example, a shooting drill for lower ability pupils involved static shooting with a smaller ball and lower net from a short distance whilst the most able had to dribble, stop and perform a jump shot with a player defending the basket.

The teacher's deep subject knowledge and experience enabled him to communicate confidently and expertly: complex skills were broken down into accessible segments, with a strong emphasis on correct technique and the quality of movements. The teacher's empathy put the pupils at ease. They responded well to praise and authoritative feedback which helped to create positive relationships and productive learning.

19. As reported previously, the quality and use of assessment continue to be the weakest part of teaching and learning. However, schools recognised the need to use assessment better when planning new learning and to link aims, objectives and assessment more closely, and some had devised good assessment procedures, as in the following example.

In one school, assessment procedures were good because processes for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress were systematic and thoughtful. They incorporated diagnostic, formative and summative elements, which focused on attainment and achievement.

Pupils were assessed at the end of a unit of work and parents were reported to annually. Teachers maintained records of progress for

individual pupils against National Curriculum levels and their planning included learning objectives which were observable and measurable. Discussions with pupils showed their secure understanding of their levels of attainment and a good awareness of how well they were progressing. Assessment for learning was at the heart of this school's practice: effective evaluation, feedback, peer assessment and self-assessment informed learners about their progress and helped in setting targets for improvement.

The curriculum

Primary schools

20. Primary schools in the programme had benefited substantially from the opportunity to focus specifically on improving provision for PE and on involving pupils in sport. A number of the primary schools visited had improved what was already good provision.

Physical education and school sport enjoyed a high profile in a school which later became involved in the PESSCL strategy. The school sport partnership programme helped to improve this further. The subject leader worked well with the partnership development manager and school sports co-ordinator to create new opportunities for pupils and teachers. Additional resources extended the range of activities for pupils and provided staff with good professional development in areas such as dance and gymnastics. Additional time for the subject leader's role helped her to provide well-structured curriculum support.

21. Teachers in primary schools were enthusiastic about the programme and committed to its success. The confidence of staff who taught PE increased in the schools visited and they had become much more aware of the ten outcomes of high quality PE and school sport. Posters depicting the ten outcomes alongside other sports information and photographs of pupils' achievements helped to ensure the high profile of PE and sport within the school community.
22. Many schools had improved their curriculum as a result of the partnership programme. Good practice included:
- reorganising the weekly timetable to create more time and securing two hours of PE for all pupils
 - revisions to schemes of work to ensure greater consistency and balance
 - a good mixture of published, local authority and school plans as the basis of the teaching programme for each aspect of PE
 - the primary link tutor use of the audit and action planning processes to evaluate the suitability of the PE curriculum and set priorities for improvement.

23. In several of the schools visited, pupils were benefiting from additional daily physical activity as part of 'take ten', 'huff and puff' or 'wake-up and shake-up' sessions which involved pupils exercising to music for 10–15 minutes a day or every other day. This activity was well established as part of a normal routine and helped pupils to understand the importance of regular exercise. In several instances, Year 6 pupils were leading the sessions and planning their own routines to music.
24. Pupils' participation in a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities had been extended appreciably in the partnership schools. Many more sports activities were available to pupils during lunchtimes and after school. Most of the activities were traditional sports, but schools were involving more pupils across a wider age-range. Many of the clubs were led by community coaches and adults other than teachers, as well as primary school staff. In some cases, junior and community sports leaders helped with organising and managing the activities. Sports competitions, festivals and galas were regularly organised for primary schools in the programme. Links with community clubs were strong and, in many schools, local sports clubs provided additional sporting activities for children outside school. Contacts between clubs and schools were becoming more common and helped to ensure a consistent ethos and expectations.
25. Many schools had used partnership funding to improve PE resources. Most schools had the necessary accommodation and resources to develop the high quality PE programme to which they aspired. However, some schools still had limited playground space and inadequate indoor accommodation; in these circumstances, they did very well to provide good quality PE and sport programmes. Two schools used the partnership programme to improve provision significantly.

One school provided a much wider range of extra-curricular opportunities that included golf, cricket, rugby and football. Many of the activities were supported by specialist clubs and community coaches. The number of pupils participating in these activities increased substantially and, following taster sessions, many went on to attend local clubs. The number of pupils attending the junior section of a local cricket club increased sharply.

One school included all aspects of the PE curriculum within well-organised provision. All pupils took part in the recommended two hours of PE and school sport each week. Teachers based their own planning on the local authority's scheme of work, and a well-constructed curriculum map outlined the aspects of PE to be taught each term. A very good extra-curricular programme included sports activities which were well attended. The lunchtime play programme involved playground leaders, trained lunchtime supervisors and sport partnership staff. Facilities at the nearby schools widened opportunities for older children. Links with local community sports clubs were developed successfully and the sport partnership coaches

supported a range of activities regularly. The school was involved in a number of inter-school tournaments; the subject leader organised intra-school competitions. Success in sports competitions in recent years had boosted pupils' confidence and rewarded the school for investing in improving provision.

Secondary schools

26. Ten of the 12 secondary schools used their involvement in the sports partnership programme to improve the quality of the curriculum. Nevertheless, only six of the 12 were judged to have good curriculum provision overall.
27. Good secondary school provision included:
 - at least two hours of PE within and outside the curriculum
 - a broad and balanced curriculum, sufficiently flexible to incorporate more aesthetic and individual opportunities to meet the wider needs of all learners
 - targets for learners
 - good use of new resources to support the introduction of further activities
 - effective use of community coaches to stimulate participation and provide progression routes for talented learners, as well as for others simply wishing to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding.
28. These schools also developed a curriculum map and schemes of work, with common assessment frameworks across the partnership which promoted good continuity in transfers between schools.
29. Many of these good features were exemplified at one school which had used the programme to enhance curricular and extra-curricular provision to good effect.

The curriculum was broad and balanced and provided pupils with an excellent range of physical, mental and social challenges. It incorporated a combination of games activities and a range of more aesthetic opportunities (for example, dance and gymnastics) for pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. The core time allocation at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 exceeded the recommended two hours. Accredited leadership opportunities and examination courses, including those in traditional academic and vocational pathways, were provided. Programmes of study were planned well and showed good progression, related to pupils' ability rather than their age.
30. Good provision was often tailored to attract pupils previously uninterested in or disenchanted by sport. An increasing number of leisure-based clubs and contemporary sporting activities was helping to encourage more

pupils to become involved in PE and sport. One school's approach is illustrated in the example below.

The school's leadership team became concerned about falling standards of behaviour and an increase in incidents during break and lunchtimes. A scheme was introduced, using a range of PE and sporting activities as a vehicle for endorsing appropriate behaviour and engaging pupils constructively. Semi-structured, peer-supervised activities were provided, as well as the opportunity for pupils to develop leadership skills through sport. A qualified play-leader co-ordinated and managed the programme. The school also trained a group of its senior pupils to lead individual activities. An early evaluation showed a dramatic reduction in the number of incidents and a discernible improvement in the atmosphere and ethos at social times.

31. By establishing very good links with primary schools in the partnership, one school had begun to collect information about pupils' ability across different areas of activity and their attitudes and enthusiasm for PE. They were using these baseline assessments to plan work for pupils entering Year 7.
32. Ten of the schools visited were offering good extra-curricular programmes; the sport partnership programme had helped to increase the number and diversity of opportunities for pupils to participate in out-of-hours PE and sport-related activities through a range of festivals, talent identification camps, multi-skills clubs, courses for gifted and talented pupils, and coach education schemes. This had undoubtedly increased participation for pupils of all abilities and the take-up of new activities in many schools, particularly at Key Stage 3. In most cases, this improvement was based on an already firm foundation, reflecting the vision and commitment of teachers and subject leaders.
33. In several instances, local authority advisers for PE ensured extra-curricular provision was linked to a local strategy to enhance opportunities across all schools.
34. A number of the partnerships had strengthened their community links and, increasingly, schools were collaborating with local clubs, sports development units and other schools to widen opportunities. Two of the secondary schools visited had added swimming to their development plans, so ensuring all pupils within the partnership could swim at least the recommended 25 metres by the end of Year 7.

Leadership and management

Primary schools

35. Leadership and management of PE were good or better in all the primary schools visited. Many subject leaders were subject specialists, some of whom had been appointed specifically to raise the profile of PE and sport. Their commitment, drive and infectious enthusiasm was inspiring staff and pupils, encouraging them to participate fully in the changes that were taking place. In all the schools visited, headteachers supported the subject leaders fully to ensure the sports partnership programme was implemented successfully.

36. The following illustrates the impact of very good leadership and management by one subject leader:

The subject leader was fully committed to improving provision. Her enthusiasm and skills as a leader ensured the department was well organised with a clear development plan, a well thought out curriculum and simple procedures for assessing pupils' work. She involved teachers, coaches and play leaders in defining the policy statement for PE and sport, and they agreed any priorities for improvement. Her regular written evaluations set out what had been achieved and gave her and the staff a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in provision and the standards achieved. She led by example and her willingness to experiment helped teachers and coaches to be more creative and try out new approaches, such as using ICT to support assessment. The impact of her work was good: pupils' enjoyment of and participation in PE and sport increased significantly. The strong commitment to the sport partnership programme helped the school make many important improvements. She established very good links with the partnership and the family of schools, and deployed the support from the sports coordinator and visiting coaches very effectively. Attractive displays around the school provided evidence of pupils' successful participation in PE and sport.

37. The programme had given subject leaders a greater influence on their colleagues' work. They used their additional time effectively to attend meetings of primary link tutors and training, and to lead and manage improvements in their own schools. Training, led by the subject leaders, improved teachers' subject knowledge, planning and assessment. This was ensuring greater consistency and quality in the teaching of PE, often stimulated by team teaching or by demonstration lessons by the subject leader or school sports coordinator.
38. The following example illustrates how one school used the time and resources allocated to the programme very effectively to improve provision.

The 12 days provided by the sport partnership programme were used very effectively. For example, the school raised standards in dance by allowing each teacher to work with the school sports coordinator from the local secondary school who demonstrated teaching and guided improvements. The additional funding provided time for the subject leader to attend professional development days, learn from and disseminate good practice, and review provision. Links with other primary schools and the local secondary school that made up the 'family' were strengthened. The range of activities, festivals and competitions was widened further and the subject leader used external coaches and ancillary staff astutely to complement an already strong programme. Buying additional resources supported activities such as the playtime 'huff and puff' club.

39. In almost all cases, subject leaders worked effectively with the partnership development managers and school sports coordinators to create new opportunities for pupils and to lead good quality professional development. Good communication between the partnership development manager, the school sports coordinator and the primary link tutor ensured that both the school's and the partnership's priorities were managed effectively. Schools' action plans were matched well with partnership development plans to make sure the targets of the school sport partnership programme and improvement priorities were met.
40. Since the last report, schools' self-evaluation of the quality of provision in PE has improved. Their involvement in the programme has helped them to establish good systems for audit and improvement planning, as in the following example.

All staff were involved in an innovative approach to self-review, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum, including PE. At a staff meeting, all members of staff recorded, without discussion, a rating for the subject on a scale of 1–4, identifying particular strengths, areas of progress, frustrations and where they thought they needed more support. The collated results provided a set of improvement priorities. Some of these could be tackled immediately; others needed longer-term work and inclusion in subject development plans.

Overall PE achieved the second highest rating for all curriculum subjects. The headteacher confirmed that this would not have been the case a few years previously: 'PE was a 'lip-service' subject it; it would have been very low in the ratings'. Much of the improvement was attributed to the time and training from the sports partnership programme.

Some of the schools were also beginning to evaluate the impact of their PE and sport programmes on the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters agenda.

41. Schools involved in the programme for at least two years were able to discern longer term benefits as they built on existing provision, transforming the scope and quality of PE and sport in primary schools pupils.

One school's three-year involvement in a sports partnership had improved provision significantly. It engaged very well with the school sports programme. The primary link tutor's enthusiasm and commitment, and her ability to introduce and secure improvements, were vital to success. A comprehensive and well-constructed partnership development plan mapped out the main improvement priorities and defined tight success criteria. The school priorities matched the overall partnership plans well. The development manager and sports coordinator improved provision through training primary teachers and supporting the setting up and running of sports clubs and tournaments. The subject leader had guidance on writing action plans, a PE policy and bids for funding, as well as setting up effective systems for planning, assessment and recording. Very good programmes helped to ensure that all pupils participated and, where necessary, were supported to overcome low attainment and problems of access to PE. The extra-curricular programme of clubs and tournaments was very good. Better school club links and the deployment of community coaches also raised pupils' participation in sport extensively.

Secondary schools

42. In almost all the secondary schools visited, regular representation at meetings of small groups of schools, and better networking through authority-wide PE forums, benefited leaders and managers of PE departments. More collaborative work increased the opportunities for schools to share good practice.
43. In several schools, leaders and managers were seeking to improve provision by obtaining pupils' views through short discussions, sports councils and questionnaires, as in this example.

One school followed up pupils' responses to a questionnaire. Poor participation and attendance rates were identified and a group of pupils were selected for a pilot scheme. They were asked why they didn't like PE and which sort of activities might interest them. They did not like some of the more traditional team-based games activities and what they perceived as the highly structured and dictatorial style of some teaching. The school introduced a number of new activities, including golf, martial arts and cycling, and the cohort was tracked

over a term. Attendance and participation rates improved. The scheme's success prompted the school to redesign its curriculum to enable all Key Stage 4 pupils to experience new activities.

44. Several sports coordinators and partnership development managers led or supported bespoke training for staff in primary and secondary schools. This increased the confidence of less experienced staff to teach better lessons, and to monitor and evaluate their work in PE.
45. Such benefits notwithstanding, in some of the secondary schools involvement in the programme was judged to have had little impact on the leadership and management of PE. This was usually because the department had a tradition of independence and was unreceptive to new ways of working.

Notes

Ofsted has evaluated the government's Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy since 2003 and has published reports on its impact. This survey was designed to identify and illustrate good practice and to help partnerships, schools and clubs to analyse their own provision.

In the spring of 2006, Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) visited 15 primary and 12 secondary schools in 16 school sport partnerships, selected through the Department for Education and Skills' (DfES) database on the survey or on the recommendation of local authority advisers or partnership development managers. Each school had been identified as having some features of good practice. The schools included a wide geographical sample, schools of various size, in urban and rural communities.

The visits by HMI focused on the overall effectiveness of provision in PE. They paid particular attention to the relationship between timetabled provision and extra-curricular sporting activities within and beyond the school, as well as the links with other schools, local clubs and other sporting bodies. They also evaluated the impact of the school sport partnership programme, particularly where it was improving provision.

In particular, the survey sought to answer the following questions:

- How effective is the overall provision for physical education and sport?
- How well do learners achieve?
- How good is the overall personal development and well-being of learners?
- How effective is the quality and use of assessment?
- How well do the curriculum, programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners, promote creativity and contribute to enjoyment of learning?
- How well are learners guided and supported?
- How accurate is the institution's self-evaluation in subject?
- How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?
- How effective is the school in helping to raise the achievement of specific groups in this subject?
- How effective is the school sport partnership programme of the PESSCL strategy on raising standards and improving the quality of provision in the physical education and school sport?

Inspectors observed teaching, including some extra-curricular clubs. They held discussions with small groups of pupils, programme managers, school sports coordinators, subject leaders, and adults other than teachers who were leading activities. Policies, schemes of work, and pupils' work were scrutinised.

The survey was supplemented by evidence from Ofsted's inspections of physical education in 30 primary and 30 secondary schools during 2005-06.

Further information

Surveys by Ofsted

The physical education, school sport and club links strategy (HMI 2397), Ofsted, 2005.

Outdoor education: aspects of good practice (HMI 2151), Ofsted, 2004.

Provision for gifted and talented pupils in physical education 2003–2004 (HMI 2149), 2004.

The School Sport Co-ordinator partnership programme: Evaluation of phases 3 and 4 2003/04 (HMI 2150), Ofsted, 2004.

Primary Subject Reports 2002/03 Physical Education (HMI 2000), Ofsted, 2004.

Secondary Subject Reports 2002/03 Physical Education (HMI 1988), Ofsted, 2004.

The School Sport Co-ordinator programme: Evaluation of Phases 1 and 2 2001–2003 (HMI 1586), Ofsted, 2003.

Good assessment practice in physical education (HMI 1481), Ofsted, 2003.

National guidance

Learning through PE and sport: a guide to the PE, school sport and club links strategy, DfES/DCMS, 2003.

www.dfes.gov.uk/pess

www.culture.gov.uk

High quality PE and sport for young people: a guide to recognising and achieving high quality PE and sport in schools and clubs, DfES/DCMS, 2004.

www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe

This gives information about physical education and school sport.

Annex

Schools visited for this survey

School

Barnby Road Primary School
 Belle Vue Junior School
 Bishop Perowne C of E College
 Braeburn Infant & Nursery School
 Cowley Language College
 Crosland Moor Junior School
 Freethorpe Community Primary School
 Graham School Science College
 Hunnyhill Primary School
 John Hellins Primary School
 Kingsbrook School
 Kitbridge Middle School (deemed secondary)
 North Walney Primary School
 Parkview Nursery School
 Queen's Park C of E URC Primary School
 Riccall Community Primary School
 Scissett Middle School (deemed secondary)
 Sherburn High School
 Science College
 St Aidan's County High School Specialist
 Sports College
 St James C of E Primary School
 St Margaret's Community Primary School
 St Mary's RC High School Specialist
 Science College
 Stourport-on-Severn, Burlish Park First School
 The Dukeries College
 The Kings of Wessex Community School
 Ward Green Primary School
 Willowgarth High School

Local authority

Nottinghamshire
 Cumbria
 Worcestershire
 North Yorkshire
 St Helens
 Kirklees
 Norfolk
 North Yorkshire
 Isle of Wight
 Northamptonshire
 Northamptonshire
 Isle of Wight
 Cumbria
 Cumbria
 St Helens
 North Yorkshire
 Kirklees
 North Yorkshire

 Cumbria

 Herefordshire
 Suffolk
 Herefordshire

 Worcestershire
 Nottinghamshire
 Somerset
 Barnsley
 Barnsley