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Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport



Department
of Health &
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School Sport and Activity Action Plan

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Introduction

All young people should have the opportunity to live healthy and active lives. As set out in our 2015 cross-government sport strategy *Sporting Future*¹, sport and physical activity improve our children's physical and mental wellbeing, and help them to develop important skills like teamwork and leadership.

A positive experience of sport and physical activity at a young age can build a lifetime habit of participation, and is central to meeting the government's ambitions for a world-class education system. Physical literacy (building physical competency alongside confidence, enjoyment, knowledge and understanding) and high quality, modern physical education (PE) lessons that engage boys and girls of different backgrounds and abilities should be a fundamental part of every child's school experience.

Ensuring young people have access to the right amount of daily activity can have wider benefits for pupils and schools, improving behaviour as well as enhancing learning and academic achievement. Sport has also been identified by the Department for Education as one of the five foundations for building character, helping young people develop resilience, determination and self-belief, and instilling values and virtues such as friendship and fair play. It can help children and young people to connect with their peers, tackling loneliness and social isolation and building stronger communities.

This action plan is a statement of intent, setting out a joint commitment from the Department for Education (DfE), Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), to ongoing collaboration at national level to ensure that sport and physical activity are an integral part of both the school day and after-school activities, so that all children have the opportunity to take part in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. We will publish further details on these commitments in an update to this action plan later in the year.

¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486622/Sporting_Future_ACCESSIBLE.pdf

The challenges

The importance of daily physical activity has been known for decades, but the challenge we face in a world of fast food and sedentary screentime has never been greater. One-third of children are overweight or obese by the time they leave primary school. Data from Sport England's Active Lives Children and Young People survey² ('Active Lives Children') show that only 17.5% of children meet the Chief Medical Officers' guidance³ for how much activity children should be doing (at least 60 minutes every day), and stubborn inequalities remain; children from some Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups and poorer backgrounds are less active, and so are girls. Shockingly, the gender gap starts at just five years old. Too many children are losing confidence, understanding and enjoyment of sport as they progress through secondary school, with activity levels decreasing throughout education.

Physical activity is a key part of developing a healthy lifestyle and plays an important role in maintaining a healthy weight. Chapter 2 of our *Childhood Obesity Plan*⁴ set a bold ambition to halve childhood obesity by 2030 and significantly reduce the gap in obesity between children from the most and least deprived areas by 2030. This plan will build on the measures set out in Chapter 2, by further supporting schools to create environments which encourage pupils to lead healthy, active lifestyles.

The importance of physical activity in promoting children and young people's mental wellbeing is equally clear; one in eight 5-to-19 year olds has at least one mental disorder⁵. Physical and mental health are inextricably linked; numerous studies confirm a positive association between physical activity and increased self-esteem, emotional wellbeing and future aspirations, and physical activity is also associated with lower levels of anxiety and depression. Active Lives Children data show us that children who are physically literate are happier, more resilient and more trusting of their peers, and we need to ensure that the importance of physical activity for mental wellbeing is recognised and understood by all young people.

A key driver of this plan is the need to ensure that all children and young people have access to at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. This is an important aim in itself, as part of the Chief Medical Officers' guidance on daily physical activity, but will also lead to important health, wellbeing and educational outcomes. This is an ambitious

² <https://www.sportengland.org/research/active-lives-survey/active-lives-children-and-young-people/>

³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/213739/dh_128144.pdf

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718903/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action-chapter-2.pdf

⁵ <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2017/2017>

goal given current levels of inactivity (32.9% of children and young people currently do less than 30 minutes of activity per day), and there are no quick-fixes, but we must take the first steps now to ensure that our children and young people develop healthy, active lifestyles and have the best chances in life.

A new, collaborative approach to benefit every child

The Department for Education, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and Department for Health and Social Care have committed to continuing collaboration on developing and delivering this plan. We are clear on the need to encourage children to develop a healthy relationship with exercise and build a habit of daily physical activity that will benefit them throughout their lives.

This collaborative approach reflects the fact that we cannot expect any single group or organisation - schools, parents, sports clubs or activity providers - to shoulder the responsibility for improving access to sport and activity on their own.

Schools play an important role in young people's lives, and it is important that they are supported to provide high quality, modern PE lessons that engage young people as well as opportunities for them to be active throughout the school day. We must ensure that teachers have the knowledge and skills they need to teach PE effectively, support primary schools to make use of PE specialists, help schools to protect PE time and build physical activity into the school day to help stem the drop-off in activity by older pupils.

Ofsted's new Inspection Framework, which will come into effect from September 2019, will give greater recognition to schools' work to support the personal development of pupils, such as the opportunities they have to learn about eating healthily and maintaining an active lifestyle. Inspectors will expect to see schools offering children a broad, balanced education, including opportunities to be active during the school day and through extra-curricular activities.

Government will work with Sport England to develop the actions further in consultation with sector experts such as the Youth Sport Trust, Active Partnerships, Association for Physical Education, the Sport and Recreation Alliance, ukactive and leading sport organisations (including National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs)), to ensure that the plan is focused on the right areas and builds the strongest possible case for a new, joined-up approach to sport and physical activity.

This must be supported by high quality clubs, competitions and activities outside school, which are easy to find and access. And the role of parents is crucial in encouraging and supporting children to develop healthy habits that will benefit them throughout their lives. Sport England is investing over £194 million (2016-21) of government and National Lottery funding into projects focused on improving children's capability and enjoyment of physical activity, including projects which directly support schools and parents to help young people get and stay active.

An updated version of this plan will be published later in the year, after the broader government spending review.

Cross-government working

The School Sport and Activity Action Plan will be an important part of the forthcoming government Youth Charter. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is developing the Youth Charter to connect work on young people across Whitehall, and bring together policy makers, young people, the youth sector and business to develop a ten year vision for young people.

The government's 25 Year Environment Plan⁶ highlights the importance of children playing and getting active outside and having contact with the natural world, for both their physical and mental wellbeing. That is why the Department for Education, Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Natural England are working together on a four year £10 million Children and Nature programme, which will help pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds to better access the natural environment, in order to support their mental health and wellbeing. A further campaign led by the Department for Education will build on this by encouraging young people to get out and enjoy the natural world over the summer.

Sport and physical activity also feed into other important cross-government priorities such as the ambitions to increase active travel through cycling and walking to school, as set out in the Department for Transport's statutory Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy⁷.

UK and the Home Nations

This plan applies to England only, as health, education and grassroots sport policy is devolved in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. But the fundamental principles (such as the importance of physical activity for physical and mental wellbeing) are universal, and we recognise the good work being done in the home nations, such as Scotland's *Physical Activity Delivery Plan*, the delivery of the Northern Ireland strategy *Sport Matters*, and *Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales*, a first step towards a cross-government approach to reduce obesity across Wales. We will continue to work with partners across the UK to ensure that all children and young people in the UK are supported to build active, healthy lifestyles.

⁶

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-investment-strategy>

Ambitions and delivery

Ambition

The government has three overarching ambitions for this plan:

1. All children and young people take part in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

To meet the Chief Medical Officers' guidance on physical activity, schools, parents and the sport sector must work together to ensure that children and young people have access to at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. As set out in the Childhood Obesity Plan, at least 30 minutes should take place in schools, and the remaining 30 outside the school day.

Through this plan, we will support schools to review their sport and physical activity provision and ensure that all pupils have access to sufficient opportunities to be active throughout the school day. We will work with the sport sector to ensure that parents can access high quality clubs and programmes to help young people reach sufficient levels of physical activity outside the school day.

2. Children and young people have the opportunity to realise developmental, character-building experiences through sport, competition and active pursuits.

Sport and physical activity can enrich young people's lives, and should be considered alongside other important activities like arts, culture, work and volunteering, to ensure young people have access to a variety of experiences. Sport is one of the Department for Education's five foundations for building character, and can help young people to develop skills such as confidence, self-belief, dedication and resilience. Sport also instils values and virtues such as friendship and fair play.

In an increasingly digital world, giving children and young people opportunities for face-to-face engagement with their peers in their own and other communities is vital in developing socially as well as tackling loneliness and social isolation. And volunteering through sport can help young people to give back and play a role in their communities.

3. All sport and physical activity provision for children and young people is designed around the principles of physical literacy, focuses on fun and enjoyment and aims to reach the least active.

Physical literacy is a core element of early learning and should be at the heart of all sport and physical activity for children and young people. All sport and physical activity provision for children and young people should be designed around the principles of physical literacy, focused on fun and enjoyment, and help young people (particularly girls and less active groups) to build confidence and develop a positive relationship with sport and physical activity.

Data from the Active Lives Children and Young People survey⁸ underline the importance of this principle, showing that the more of the five elements of physical literacy (enjoyment, confidence, competence, understanding and knowledge) children have, the more active they are. Physically literate children do twice as much activity as others, and children who have all five elements of physical literacy also report higher levels of happiness, social trust and resilience. Evidence from the 130,000 children and young people surveyed confirms that fun and enjoyment are the most influential factors in getting and keeping children active. This is an important message that should run through all sport and physical activity provision, within and outside schools.

Framework for success

The ambitions have been developed based on evidence gathered through consultation and meetings with a number of stakeholders across the sport and education sector. Our approach is informed by data from the Active Lives Children and Young People survey, which reflects the views of over 130,000 children and young people (aged 5-16) as well as teachers, and will also be an important part of measuring the impact of actions and commitments.

In order to ensure the action plan has tangible and demonstrable impact on children's activity levels, schools, sport providers and partners must work closely together towards clear, shared outcomes. In the updated version of this action plan we will set out a simple framework for how the actions in this plan deliver against the government's ambitions. We will carefully monitor delivery and impact of these actions to strengthen our understanding of what works and build the case for future interventions and policy.

A full table of actions is included at Annex A.

⁸ <https://www.sportengland.org/media/13851/active-lives-children-survey-2017-18-attitudes-report.pdf>

Actions and commitments

Collaboration: a joined-up sport and physical activity offer for young people

Trialling innovative new approaches

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

The government is committed to making a step-change on inactivity, and we believe that a collaborative approach holds the key to maximising the impact of existing opportunities. The evidence base is clear about the benefits of physical activity, but we need to trial new and innovative approaches to demonstrate what can have a truly transformative impact on children's activity levels and the resulting health, wellbeing and educational outcomes.

In September 2020 we will launch a series of regional pilots to trial new and innovative approaches to driving up activity levels, and particularly focus on engaging the least active. The pilots will aim to increase activity and sport participation by young people in their local area significantly (in school time and outside), as well as contributing to positive mental wellbeing and development of character and skills.

Schools in pilot areas will work with sport providers and local organisations to put in place a coordinated offer of sport, competition and activity in and outside schools. They will benefit from increased capacity in teaching schools specific to PE and sport to support increased training opportunities to support a high quality PE offer, and the best use of the PE and Sport Premium by primary schools. Schools will choose to take part and those selected will need to consider and build on the themes set out in the action plan, including making their facilities available outside the school day and a commitment to making sport and activity an integral part of the school day, including protecting PE time for all pupils.

We will design the pilots using insight from schools and key sector stakeholders. We envisage that these pilots will encourage partnerships between schools and providers to develop a local approach that tackles specific issues in their area, informed by evidence including data from the Active Lives Children and Young People survey, which will also be used to monitor results as part of a robust evaluation process. Successful approaches will be considered in the design of future interventions and policy.

The scale and structure of the pilots will be determined by funding decisions taken as part of the government's comprehensive spending review.

Empowering young people

Schools should ensure pupils have the opportunity to be active throughout the school day, in a way that engages and interests them. Sport England will provide £1 million funding to help empower girls and build their confidence, linked to *This Girl Can*. The Department for Education will provide up to £400,000 to give more young people the opportunity to volunteer in sport.

To reach the least active groups, we need to understand the specific barriers they face. It is important to reframe sport and physical activity as part of everyday life, rather than the preserve of 'sporty kids'. We know that it is important to include young people in the process of designing policies that affect them, and research has shown that incorporating the views of young people into the sport and activity offer can increase their engagement and participation. This approach can be particularly important for girls⁹, many of whom report negative experiences of sport at a young age which can leave them reluctant to take part in exercise later in life. Programmes like the Youth Sport Trust's *Girls Active*¹⁰ (funded by Sport England) aim to increase girls' engagement in physical activity by helping schools understand what motivates girls to take part, and empowering them to make changes to their sport and physical activity provision by including girls in consultation and leadership roles.

As part of the successful *This Girl Can*¹¹ campaign (which has inspired over 3.9 million women and girls to take steps to get active), Sport England will provide up to £1 million of National Lottery funding to develop a new digital resource for use in schools, to be launched in 2020. This will include a digital library of workout videos which can be used in PE lessons and elsewhere in the school day, particularly focused on reaching those girls who don't enjoy PE lessons.

We will encourage schools to include young people in the design of their sport offer by consulting with pupils directly or through 'sport leaders' and mentoring programmes, to ensure that they offer a range of activities that appeal to young people from different backgrounds. These types of schemes can be mutually beneficial, helping pupils to develop skills like leadership and self-efficacy, while supporting the school through volunteering; for example, encouraging other pupils to participate in active break times.

The Department for Education is also funding the Youth Sport Trust-led consortium project *Inclusion 2020*. This project aims to increase the opportunities for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to take part in high quality PE, sport and physical activity in schools. We will utilise the learning from this project and share

⁹ <https://www.womeninsport.org/research-and-advice/our-publications/research-and-insight/reframing-sport-for-teenage-girls-building-strong-foundations-for-their-futures/>

¹⁰ <https://www.youthsporttrust.org/girls-active>

¹¹ <http://www.thisgirlcan.co.uk/>

resources to break down barriers and support schools to help all pupils with SEND to take part in an activity or sport they enjoy.

The Department for Education will also invest up to £400,000 in 2019-20 to provide more opportunities for children and young people to take part in sport volunteering programmes, through an expansion of Sport England's Volunteer Leaders and Coaches programme, which is funded by the Department of Education and trains young people to support the School Games.

Raising awareness

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

Research¹² has found that the majority of UK adults (including teachers) are unaware of the amount of physical activity that children and young people should be doing every day. And parents often over-estimate the amount of exercise their children are doing at school, and therefore under-estimate the amount of activity that they should be doing out of school hours.

This is a fundamental issue that must be addressed. There is good work underway in many schools and local areas, as highlighted in Public Health England's *What Works in Schools and Colleges to Increase Physical Activity* guidance¹³. But we need to build on this to ensure that teachers, sport providers and parents have a clear and shared understanding of the appropriate levels of physical activity and are working together to ensure children and young people can access it.

Public Health England's work to improve healthy eating through the “5 a day” campaign will be familiar to parents, pupils and teachers across the country. Physical activity is as important to children's health as nutrition, and messages such as “at least 60 minutes a day” should become as recognisable as “5 a day”.

We will commit to raising awareness of the appropriate levels of physical activity for children and young people, which will align with the updated Chief Medical Officers' guidance, due in September 2019. This will include simple and clear messaging for parents and teachers to understand and remember, reinforced through sport and education channels/networks. We will work with partners across government and the

¹² <https://www.youthsporttrust.org/news/thousands-schools-mark-yst-national-school-sport-week-2019>

¹³ Updated version to be available shortly on gov.uk

sport, physical activity and education sectors to establish the best ways to raise awareness and the most effective messaging, and set out more detail in the update to this plan later in the year.

Actions within schools

Immediate action to support schools

The Department for Education will provide £2 million to improve coordination of PE training for teachers and help schools open up their facilities.

This will include providing £1.5 million to Sport England to boost the capacity of Active Partnerships across the country to help schools further open up their facilities after the school day and during school holidays. This will help young people to access sport and physical activity opportunities, and will particularly benefit those from less privileged backgrounds who often have less access to affordable, accessible sporting opportunities. Schools will also benefit from having a closer relationship with their local Active Partnership who can provide advice, guidance and support to help with their school sport needs. This new investment will complement the £9.1 million funding the Department for Education has already announced for summer holiday activities in 2019¹⁴, which will see around 50,000 disadvantaged children offered free meals and sports activities over the upcoming summer holidays.

The Department for Education will also provide £500,000 to test new approaches to improve the strategic direction and delivery of PE and school sport through the use of teaching schools. Selected designated teaching schools and newer teaching school hubs will be provided with funding to support primary schools to make best use of the Primary PE and Sport Premium, improve and co-ordinate access to high quality PE continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers, facilitate greater sharing of best practice between schools and support schools to deliver high quality PE lessons that engage all pupils.

However schools should not look to PE lessons alone to provide physical activity for pupils, but should explore options like lunchtime sports clubs, innovative activities such as active miles, and building in activity to classroom lessons. The journey to school also provides an opportunity to increase physical activity through cycling and walking. By making sport and exercise an integral part of pupils' daily routines, schools can increase the amount of time children spend being active, boosting their physical health, mental

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/free-meals-and-activities-for-50000-children-over-2019-summer-holidays>

wellbeing, character and resilience. Schools are encouraged to try out a range of options to see what works for their pupils.

Sporting bodies work closely with schools in providing sports clubs as well as educational resources, such as Arsenal FC's *Double Club*¹⁵, which harness the power of sport to help children develop skills like literacy, numeracy and languages. One of the most prominent is the Premier League's *Primary Stars*¹⁶ programme, which uses the power of football to inspire learning in primary school children in subjects like Maths and English as well as sport and teamwork, and aims to reach all primary schools in England and Wales by 2022. *Primary Stars* has encouraged clubs around the country to develop their own offers; outstanding clubs like Preston North End use the programme to reach thousands of local children, developing their physical literacy and supporting, educating and empowering them to make healthy lifestyle choices. We recognise the good practice being done by the sector, and will work with schools and sporting bodies to maximise the impact of these programmes and ensure that they benefit as many young people as possible.

High quality PE provision

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

The Department for Education is reviewing the content of Initial Teacher Training (ITT). This will include looking at how it links to the Early Career Framework to ensure that teachers have the right training and development to deliver high quality PE lessons. The Department will also ensure that development of teaching schools can support ongoing training for teachers to maintain the highest quality physical education.

We will work with schools, teaching unions and the Association for Physical Education to explore how further to support PE teachers and schools to deliver high quality PE lessons. This will include sharing examples of best practice from the many schools who have successfully engaged pupils by offering modern, engaging and fun PE and sport lessons.

This review will reflect learning from Sport England's £13.5 million National Lottery-funded investment into a training programme¹⁷ which helps PE teachers to foster positive attitudes to physical education among pupils. Working with the Department for Education, the Teaching Schools Council, the Youth Sport Trust, the Association for Physical

¹⁵ <https://www.arsenaldoubleclub.co.uk/>

¹⁶ <https://plprimarystars.com/>

¹⁷ <https://www.sportengland.org/our-work/children-and-young-people/secondary-teacher-training-programme/>

Education and the Activity Alliance, Sport England is offering free specialist training and mentoring to two teachers in every secondary school in England by 2021. The programme helps teachers to enhance their physical activity, physical education and school sports programmes to better meet the needs of all children, in particular, those learners who are less active. Already over 1,000 secondary schools have directly benefitted from the scheme, and by March 2021 Sport England will have trained 17,000 teachers across the country.

PE and Sport Premium for primary schools

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

The PE and Sport Premium was established to provide primary schools with funding (doubled to £320m per year in 2017) for additional and sustainable improvements to the quality of PE, physical activity and sport. It is allocated directly to schools so they have the flexibility to use it in the way that works best for their pupils.

The PE and Sport Premium survey¹⁸ highlighted the significant impact which the PE and Sport Premium has had in many primary schools across England. Positive outcomes reported by schools include increases in the level of competitive sport, increasing the proportion of children doing 30 minutes of activity each day, increases in teacher knowledge and confidence, and raising the profile of PE and sport in supporting whole-school improvement. However, we recognise that this is not always the case, and that there is more we can do to make sure that schools are using the funding appropriately and as effectively as possible.

A significant part of achieving this is to ensure that information about good practice and opportunities are easily accessible, and that schools, teachers and governors have access to support where needed. We will look at how best to build on existing support to ensure schools have a toolkit to support effective use of the PE and Sport Premium by primary schools. We will update national guidance to schools to reflect the ambitions and actions in this plan, to help schools to understand the outcomes they should be aiming for and ways they could try to reach them.

Health and relationships education

The Department for Education is providing up to £6 million support to schools to teach the new health and relationships curriculum.

¹⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-pe-and-sport-premium-survey>

Health and relationships education are being introduced as mandatory subjects in all state-funded schools from September 2020, alongside sex education in secondary schools. The importance of physical activity is set out in the new health education curriculum, and PE and sport can be used as a way of teaching other aspects of these subjects, such as modelling the characteristics of positive and respectful relationships with friends and team mates. The Department for Education is developing a programme of support for schools to provide high quality teaching in the new subjects, which will also look at how to link these subjects to the provision of physical activity and PE across the school day, and will be supported by up to £6 million funding in 2019-20. Further details of the support package will be confirmed in the updated action plan later in the year.

School swimming and water safety

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

Swimming and water safety is an important part of the primary PE curriculum. In 2018, government responded to the Swim Group's independent report on swimming and water safety in schools by taking forward several important actions. We have published national guidance encouraging primary schools to use their share of the £320 million PE and Sport Premium to fund additional swimming lessons and train teachers. Schools have welcomed new, free guidance packs published by Swim England, which aim to give teachers increased confidence and knowledge to teach and swimming and water safety lessons. And we have also worked with the Independent Schools Council to encourage partnerships between maintained and independent schools to share facilities, transport and expertise.

It is vital that all pupils learn to swim regardless of background or ability, but we know that not all children currently have this opportunity; Active Lives Children statistics show that only 42% of children from lower socio-economic backgrounds report they can swim 25m when they leave primary school, compared to 86% of children from more affluent families. We will work with Swim England and members of the independent Curriculum Swimming and Water Safety Review Group to identify areas where schools face additional barriers to provide high quality swimming and water safety lessons and provide further support to ensure all pupils learn how to swim and be safe in and around the water.

This will include the Department for Education-funded *Inclusion 2020* project, led by the Youth Sport Trust. We know that pupils with SEND often face additional challenges to access appropriate swimming facilities and support. The insights from these five local innovation SEND swimming and water safety partnerships will be shared widely to help schools and swimming providers to identify and overcome barriers to pupils with SEND taking part in high quality swimming and water safety lessons.

Healthy Schools Rating Scheme

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

Earlier in July 2019, the Department for Education published details of its healthy schools rating scheme. This scheme will celebrate the positive actions that schools are delivering in terms of healthy living, healthy eating and physical activity, and will support schools in identifying further actions that they can take in this area. Schools can engage in a voluntary self-assessment exercise and receive a rating based on questions on time spent on PE in school, food education, compliance with the mandatory school food standards, and the promotion of active travel for pupils' journeys to and from school. To achieve a gold or silver certificate, schools will have to provide at least 2 hours of PE time to all year groups each week, as well as meeting important nutrition and activity requirements.

Community and local sport

After-school clubs

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

Outside the school day, after-school clubs provide some of the best opportunities for children and young people to participate in sport and physical activity. Schools and providers will be encouraged to work in partnership to increase the provision of after-school sports opportunities, and ensure that pupils have access to a range of high quality opportunities that inspire them to get active.

As part of this, Sport England will invest £2 million to create 400 new ‘satellite clubs’ across the country to get more young people in disadvantaged areas active. The clubs, which target 14 to 19-year-olds, aim to bridge the gap between school, college and community sport. Already, the 6,500 active clubs in England have helped over half a million young people to get active, particularly girls, who make up 57% of participants. Satellite clubs offer 58 different sports (including multi-sport clubs) and 9% are specifically focused on inclusivity for young people with disabilities.

Many after-school clubs are based at local sports clubs and community facilities, but providers sometimes struggle to access appropriate facilities, which is why the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport monitors access to sports facilities and reports progress annually to Parliament. Being located on educational facilities is particularly beneficial, as children can easily access them after the school day. It can also be convenient for parents, aligning better with working hours than the school day often does, and being a safe and well-known location.

Schools and community facilities owners should work together to maximise the use of existing facilities, increasing the sporting opportunities available to young people. In 2019/20, this will be supported by the Department for Education’s £1.5 million investment into opening up school facilities through Active Partnerships. Sport England will also update its ‘Use Our School’ resource¹⁹, which provides guidance and support for schools on opening up facilities, including modelling potential financial benefits. We will set out more information on future steps in the updated version of this plan later in the year.

¹⁹ <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-and-planning/use-our-school/>

A strong and unified sport sector

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

The UK is a sporting nation, and our elite success has its foundation in the strong grassroots provision that encourages people of all ages and backgrounds to participate. There is a vast array of excellent sport and physical activity opportunities available to children and young people, such as the England and Wales Cricket Board's *All Stars*²⁰ programme for primary school children. However, the multitude and variety of sporting offers and opportunities can leave people confused about which is right for their child or school.

We need to ensure there is a clear, cohesive and high quality offer of sport and physical activity for children and young people outside the school day. Government and Sport England have worked with a group of leading sport providers and NGBs such as the Football Association, Basketball England, the England and Wales Cricket Board and England Netball who have committed to working with us to lead the way, working collaboratively to ensure their clubs and programmes are consistent and structured around physical literacy, and reaching priority groups. We will continue to support them as they spearhead this work, and encourage all sport and physical activity providers to follow in their footsteps, working collaboratively and sharing best practice.

The increasing digital expectations of society are an opportunity for the sport and physical activity sector to embrace digital transformation, in particular by making it easier for people to find and book physical activities in their local area. To support this aim, Sport England, in partnership with the Open Data Institute, has invested in *OpenActive*, a community-led initiative that provides support and advice to the sector, such as free open data courses, technical expertise and e-learning. Activity providers should open up their opportunity data, so that parents, teachers and young people can easily access information about classes and facilities near them to get active. This will maximise the reach and impact of their clubs and programmes, and also encourage innovation and the creation of new solutions to get more people active.

Sport England will also work with sport providers and partners like the Youth Sport Trust to create an online catalogue-style platform of quality-assured resources and offers which cover a broad range of activities. This will include information on clubs and programmes, material for coaches and young leaders, and resources to help teachers encourage physical activity throughout the school day. Having one recognisable platform as a first port-of-call will help teachers and parents to navigate the sporting landscape, and the

²⁰ <https://www.ecb.co.uk/play/all-stars>

creation of a simple, recognisable quality mark will provide reassurance that the club or programme is suitable and meeting important quality standards.

Competition and the School Games

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

Competition is a key element of sport, and is central to many sports and activities. Although competitive sport is not for everyone, it can help young people forge friendships and learn how to work as a team, and develop important skills like leadership, self-discipline and resilience. Research shows that competition should not be the sole or main focus for younger children, as they respond better to fun and collaborative approaches. But age-appropriate competition is a valuable part of the school offer, and every child should have the opportunity to try out and participate in competitive sports.

Many schools provide their own platforms for competitive sport, or organise local inter-school competitions, and we encourage those who do to continue. Schools should also explore the other options available to them, such as NGB-run school sport competitions and the government and Sport England's School Games programme, which provides events at local, regional and national levels.

The School Games is an important part of the UK's sporting legacy, set up as part of the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics, and reaching over 90% of schools in England. Funded by the Department of Health and Social Care, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Sport England, and delivered in schools by the Youth Sport Trust and Active Partnerships, the School Games exemplifies the collaborative approach set out in this action plan. Last year the network of local School Games Organisers facilitated 600 days of county festivals/finals delivered across England, delivered Change4Life Sports Clubs in schools, and helped schools to establish links with community clubs to improve the quality of sport and physical activity provision in their local areas.

In order to ensure a more coordinated competitive sport landscape, Sport England will work with the Youth Sport Trust and sporting bodies to build on the successful School Games programme and strengthen the existing links to the sport sector and major events such as the Commonwealth Games 2022.

We will also work with Sport England and sporting bodies to ensure that existing school sport competitions, such as the English Football League Trust's Kids Cup and Girls Cup) are better-aligned and set out a clear pathway of the competitive sporting opportunities for children and young people in and outside school. A new section within the School Games website will showcase the broader competitive sport offer available to young people, helping teachers and parents navigate the competition formats and find the right opportunities for young people to compete.

Measurement

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

Evidence and measurement are crucial to successful policy-making. This plan has been informed by evidence and consultation with a broad range of stakeholders; key sport and education stakeholders (including those referenced above), as well as diverse groups such as Women in Sport and Girlguiding UK.

The actions in this plan have been shaped by data from the Active Lives Children and Young People survey. The survey provides a world-leading approach to gathering data on how young people engage with sport and physical activity. Designed and delivered by Sport England and Ipsos MORI, the survey was established to report on the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's *Sporting Future* outcomes. The official statistics are drawn from a strict random sample, but schools are also able (and encouraged to) participate voluntarily, to gain insight into their pupils' engagement with sport and physical activity. More information on the survey, and how to participate voluntarily, can be found on Sport England's website²¹.

The survey will also be an important part of how we measure the impact of these actions. Government will carefully monitor delivery and impact of this plan (and the content of the updated plan published later in the year) to strengthen our understanding of what works and build the case for future interventions and policy. We will work to set targets for an increase in children's physical activity levels, with particular regard to girls' participation levels.

We will also build the evidence case on how embedding sport and physical activity into the school day can help with broader school outcomes, such as improved behaviour and attendance, reduction in pupil exclusions and increased academic attainment. This will include setting out the importance of maintaining physical activity levels through the transition from primary to secondary school. More detail on this will be set out in the updated version of the action plan, which will be published later in the year.

²¹ <https://www.sportengland.org/research/active-lives-survey/active-lives-children-and-young-people/>

ANNEX A: Summary of actions

Department	Commitment	Action
DfE and DCMS	Innovative pilots	Government will launch a series of regional pilots to trial new and innovative approaches to getting young people active as part of a coordinated offer of sport and activity.
DfE and DCMS	Empower young people	Schools should ensure pupils have the opportunity to be active throughout the school day, in a way that engages and interests them. Sport England will provide £1 million funding to help empower girls and build their confidence, linked to <i>This Girl Can</i> . The Department for Education will provide up to £400,000 to give more young people the opportunity to volunteer in sport.
DCMS, DfE and DHSC	Raising awareness	Government will raise awareness of the importance of physical activity for children and young people, and make messages such as “at least 60 minutes a day” as recognisable as “5 a day”.
DfE	Immediate action to support schools	DfE will provide £2 million to improve coordination of PE training for teachers and help schools open up their facilities.
DfE	High quality PE provision	The Department for Education will review teacher training to ensure it equips PE teachers to deliver high quality lessons.
DfE	PE and Sport Premium	The Department for Education will look at how to provide schools with access to a toolkit to support effective use of the PE and Sport Premium, and update national guidance to schools.
DfE	Health and relationships education	The Department for Education is providing up to £6m support to schools to teach the new health and relationships curriculum.
DfE and DCMS	Swimming and water safety	Government, schools and the sport sector will take further action to ensure all children leave primary school with vital swimming and water safety skills.

Department	Commitment	Action
DfE	Healthy Schools Rating Scheme	The Department for Education has launched a scheme to help schools rate their health and wellbeing provision, which includes guidance on appropriate levels of PE provision.
DCMS	After-school clubs	Schools and providers will work together to increase the provision of after-school sport opportunities, including 400 new Sport England satellite clubs.
DCMS	Strong and unified sport sector	The sport sector will work collaboratively to ensure that clubs and programmes are consistent, high quality and accessible, and open up and share their opportunity data with the digital marketplace.
DCMS	Competition and School Games	We will set out a clear pathway of competition, and strengthen the School Games, so that all young people can find the right opportunities to compete.
DCMS	Measurement	The impact of these actions will be measured and reviewed, to inform future policy. Government will work to set targets for increases in children and young people's activity levels.

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