

SCHOOL SPORT PARTNERSHIPS – THE FACTS

What are school sport partnerships?

There are 450 School Sport Partnerships (SSPs) covering every school in the country. Each partnership consists of a sports college or academy, secondary schools, primary schools and special schools, working together to develop PE and sport opportunities for young people. A typical partnership consists of a partnership development manager (PDM), a full-time role based at the hub school, supported by secondary school sport co-ordinators and primary school link teachers, positions which are given curriculum time for the role.

The impact of school sport partnerships on young people

In 2010 3.02m young people were involved in **inter-school competition** during the academic year; an increase of 1.63m young people since all school sport partnerships became operational in 2006.

In 2010 4.8m young people were involved in **intra-school competition** during the academic year; an increase of 1.15m young people since all school sport partnerships became operational in 2006.

In 2010 1.57m young people in years 1-13 were actively involved in sport **volunteering and leadership** over the academic year; an increase of 777,000 young people since 2007.

School to club links have multiplied from an average of 5.00 links per school in 2004 to 9.1 links last year, and 1.84m young people were participating in one or more community sports, dance or multi-skill **clubs with links to the school**, an increase of 600,000 young people since 2006.

SSPs work with students who haven't previously engaged in sport to identify source appropriate opportunities. As a result, in 2010 5.6m young people were **participating** in at least two hours of high quality PE and out of hour's school sport in a typical week, an improvement of 1.5m young people since all school sport partnerships became operational in 2006.

The benefit of school sport partnerships for schools

Achievement and attainment

In February 2010 there were 501 sports colleges and academies with a sport or sport-related specialism. Sports colleges continue to see an improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving five or more A*-Cs including English and Maths. In 2009 47% of pupils in sports colleges achieved this standard, up from 40% in 2006. The rate of improvement in sports colleges has been higher than the national average improvement over the last three years. From 2008 to 2009 this improvement was 2.54 percentage points, compared to a national average of 2.20. Sports colleges continue to be the fastest improving specialism.

Economies of Scale

Economies of scale e.g. on purchasing and service provision like coaches. It is easier and more effective to employ a coach to work for 30 hours per week across 5 schools than for 6 hours in one – experience shows we need a PDM to recruit, employ and effectively deploy coaches.

Attracting additional investment into schools

SSPs supplementing the budgets and resources of individual schools from external sources, creating shared opportunities for local youngsters to engage in a much wider range of new activity. For example, SSPs have levered additional funding of nearly £9m into coaching over the last two academic years.

A single point of contact for all local schools

SSPs provide a single point of contact for voluntary sports clubs (allowing volunteers and clubs to work with schools with the least amount of additional burdens) and NGBs (who find it easier to deliver programmes by communicating with 450 hubs rather than 22500 individual schools).

A single point of contact for all local schools

SSPs deliver training for non specialist primary teachers and assist non specialist primary teachers with delivery of PE and implementation of after school clubs

The threat to school sport partnerships

The government believes that school sport partnerships network is "neither affordable nor likely to be the best way to help schools achieve their potential in improving competitive sport". £162m of government funding to partnerships will end in March 2011 and although not abolishing the network, the government say that schools will have to financially support them themselves. However, aside from a pledge to invest £10m annually to support a "School Olympics," not one penny of the £162m is being devolved to schools; rather, it is being cut completely. With a massively reduced budget schools will be expected to deliver two hours of PE a week, as well as the improvements to competitive sport that the government is seeking.

Impact of reduced government support for school sport partnerships

- Personnel in schools will be reduced back to core PE staff. The priority for these teachers is the delivery of the physical education curriculum and while they may offer out of school sport it will be a much more limited offer and will lead to patchwork quilt provision across the country
- Delivery of intra school competition will retract rather than expand – School Sport Co-ordinators have driven recent growth.
- Local co-ordination of competitive sport (critical in establishing schedules etc) will be disparate and back in the hands of PE teachers whose time is limited and whose focus is on delivery of the curriculum. This will have a particular impact on those sports newer to the competitive cycle in schools (e.g. volleyball, badminton) but which are proving popular in engaging large numbers.
- Delivery of inter school competition may drop significantly –figures show how growth achieved in targeted competitions during the last school year.
- School sports partnerships currently provide a lot of opportunities for young volunteers to give back to their community. With the National Citizen Service due to roll out in pilot areas, a loss of this network will mean a lost opportunity for thousands of young volunteers.
- The "School Olympics" is part of a wider programme to create a legacy of sporting participation from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in London. *Most people's first experience of sport is at school and it is vital that we make it a good one.* Reducing the PE and sport infrastructure in schools is counter to that legacy pledge and reductions in capacity to provide competitive opportunities may impact upon the "School Olympics" and the legacy promise to inspire a generation of young people through sport.
- An increased emphasis on preventative, rather than curative health, will lead to increased funding at a local level, distributed by local Directors of Public Health. As a single contact for schools, School Sports Partnerships will be powerful advocate to local councils to support health programmes in schools. Without the School Sports Partnerships, local councils are likely to receive a large number of individual school applications for funding, not only increasing the administrative burden on both schools and local councils, but making evaluation of the funding much harder.
- Additional private sector money will be lost as companies turn away from a more disparate and complicated school sport landscape.
- Ensuring that PE is an enjoyable experience for young people means they are more likely to continue to take part in sport, even when it is no longer compulsory. This means more active and healthier individuals, reducing the cost on the National Health Service and being more productive at work.