The Youth Sport Trust believe it’s time to re-imagine why and how we teach PE.

Wednesday 20 September, 2023

The Youth Sport Trust believes that PE and sport play a fundamental role in the education and development of every child, and we know from more than 25 years of working with schools they make a significant contribution to young people’s wellbeing, engagement and learning. At a time of increasingly sedentary and online lifestyles, when poor mental health is on the increase, the 'Levelling the playing field: the physical education subject report' from OFSTED published today is much needed, but it’s results should be a matter of public concern.

We are alarmed, but not surprised to read that the amount of PE delivered in schools drops as children progress through their school career, with only around half of secondary schools allocating the same 2 hours of PE recommended by government to all year groups. **With only 47% of children achieving the Chief Medical officers recommended 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity every day and 2.2 million officially classed as inactive, the value and contribution of PE within the curriculum must be addressed.** If we want an active and healthier nation, PE must be focussed on helping young people firstly develop a positive relationship with - and then enjoyment of - one or more sports and activities.

As a charity we are very clear it is time for more fundamental change in the way we think about PE. The world children are growing up in today demands a focus on physical, social and emotional development. If there was ever a case for a subject being valued more for its contribution to learning across the curriculum, PE can make it. Equally, the gains that can be accrued from at least 2 hours a week of quality, purposeful and inclusive PE do not diminish with age and in fact they become more important as play and movement are gradually engineered out of children’s lives. **It is time to re-image the whole curriculum, giving PE a much greater role in supporting young people in their development.**

While this report paints a more positive picture in primary schools, reflecting what can also be done with both political will and investment through the Primary PE and Sport Premium, much of the return on that investment is being lost because of the neglect of the importance of PE in secondary schools.

Reference is made in the report to the importance of the breadth of activities offered within the PE curriculum. We are excited to see progress towards equal access in PE, with football being offered in nearly every school, a reflection of both the success of the Lionesses, but also the determination of the FA to drive growth through investment and a strategic approach. We are disappointed however, to see the lack of variety in the sports used as the vehicle to physically educate. Our 2023 Youth Summit concluded with a set of recommendations by and for young people reinforcing this point – young people want to be active and believe their voice can help inform choice and as a result, increase participation.

There are also very important refences in the report to the quality and experience of PE for the 80% of pupils identified as having Special Educational Needs who attend mainstream schools. We are pleased the report highlights the importance of ensuring staff are equipped and confident in inclusive practice. The Youth Sport Trust is proud to lead a consortium of organisations commissioned by the Department for Education under the banner of Inclusion 2024, to increase opportunities for disabled young people to enjoy PE, school sport and physical activity and have resources and support available to schools to assist. This is helping drive better outcomes for young people and is a reminder of what could be achieved with a more fundamental root and branch review initial teacher training and teacher development in PE – both have become squeezed in recent decades with inevitable impact.

The Youth Sport Trust welcomes this report and the focus it will bring to PE in schools, but we do believe it’s time to re-imagine the whole curriculum, and it’s time to re-imagine why and how we teach PE.

Related Sectors:

Charities & non-profits :: Children & Teenagers :: Education & Human Resources :: Government :: Sport ::

Related Keywords:

Education :: Schools :: PE :: Physical Activity :: Students :: Children :: Young People ::

Scan Me:

Company Contact:

Youth Sport Trust

T. 07825 065195
E. press@youthsporttrust.org
W. https://www.youthsporttrust.org/

View Online

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.youthsporttrust.pressat.co.uk