

PE and sport premium: an investigation in primary schools

In March 2013 the Government announced a major new funding initiative to support the delivery of physical education (PE) and sport in primary schools.

This cross-government funding is provided by the Department for Education, with contributions from the Department of Health and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. The PE and sport premium will provide over £150 million per year for the academic years 2013/14 to 2015/16.

The PE and sport premium is paid directly to primary schools and is ring-fenced to spend on improving the quality of PE and sport provision for all their pupils. The fund goes directly to primary school headteachers who can use it however they want, to provide PE and sporting activities for pupils.

In 2013/14 all primary schools in England with 17 or more primary-aged pupils received a lump sum of £8,000 plus a premium of £5 per pupil. Smaller schools with fewer than 17 pupils received £500 per pupil.

Nearly all schools (99%) have started to spend the PE and sport premium allocation, with most having started implementing changes before the end of the Autumn 2013/14 term.

How the premium is performing

New research has been conducted to assess the performance to-date of the premium. A total of 586 interviews were carried out in primary schools between April and July 2014. Telephone and web surveys of schools were conducted with the headteacher or another member of staff responsible for making decisions about PE spending and provision, such as the PE co-ordinator.

The research has shown the government's £150 million a year PE and sport premium is helping to improve primary school sports provision.

The vast majority of schools (91%) reported that due to the funding there had been an increase in the quality of PE teaching, with the remaining 9 per cent reporting it had stayed the same.

How is the premium being used?

Schools have used the money to recruit more PE teachers and sports specialists to improve the quality of lessons or after-school clubs, buy new equipment, offer a wider selection of sports and free after-school clubs.

Eighty-six per cent of schools reported using the premium to up skill and train existing staff. Changes reported by more than two thirds of schools included buying new equipment (76%), providing more extra-curricular activities (74%), and employing a new sports coach (67%).

Plans to use the 2014/15 PE and sport premium

The majority of schools (70%) said they had already started planning how they were going to use the second year of PE and sport premium funding. A minority (14%) reported that they had already committed to spending some of the second year's funding. Sixteen per cent of schools had not got to the stage of planning how to use next year's funding yet.

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The key decision/budget holders for the premium

The survey asked who the key members of staff involved in the decisions about how to spend the premium. It found that they key decision makers were:

- 1) headteachers (97%),
- 2) other teachers (73%), and
- 3) members of the senior management/leadership team (71%).
- 4) Governors (54%) and
- 5) the School Sports Partnership (44%) were also commonly involved in this process.

In addition, pupils were involved in the decision making in 33 per cent of schools, and parents/carers were involved in 10 per cent of schools.

Sixty-eight per cent of schools reported accessing information from the School Sport Partnership to help inform their spending; other common sources included head/teachers in other primary schools (55%), the local authority (51%), and the Department for Education (45%).

Further findings

The findings also include:

- 96% of schools reported improvements in pupils' physical fitness, 93% saw improvements in behaviour, and 96% thought the funding had contributed to a healthier lifestyle for pupils
- the proportion of schools using specialist PE teachers in lessons rose from 22% to 54%
- schools with a high proportion of free school meals (FSM) pupils were more likely to report improvements - 51% of schools with more than a quarter of FSM pupils reported an increase in available facilities compared to 39% of schools with the lowest level of FSM
- 84% of schools reported an increase in pupil engagement with PE during school time and 83% saw an increase in participation in after-school clubs
- around three quarters of schools used the premium to buy new equipment (76%) or provide more after-school sports clubs (74%)
- more than two thirds of schools (67%) increased the number of sports offered during lessons with 77% increasing the sports on offer during after-school clubs
- 63% of schools had increased the amount of competitive sport they play with other schools
- a third of schools used the premium to reduce the costs of after schools clubs while a fifth made some clubs completely free to attend

The [full report](#) is available on GOV.UK.