

A Case for Effective Collaboration between Schools and External Providers In The Delivery Of Quality Physical Education and Sport Provision

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In March 2013, the Government announced a major new funding stream to support the delivery of Physical Education and School Sport (PESS) in primary schools. The most common use of the funding is up-skilling and training staff and recruiting sport coaches to work in schools. Initially the sport premium was allocated £159 million from 2013 – 2015, the funding has since been extended and a commitment has been made to the PESS premium to 2020.

Before the PESS premium, PE lessons were predominantly taught by the class teacher with external sport coaches used approximately 40% in schools. After the introduction of the premium, the use of coaches in schools has increased by approximately 50%, with the perceived impact on the quality of PE teaching seen as being better by 87% of schools.

The PE and sport premium: an investigation in primary schools – final report (DfE 2015) does not provide information about the state of PESS provision and standards at the start of the funding. The interesting factor is that an increase in the use of coaches in schools has seen significant feedback from schools, indicating an impact upon the quality of PE teaching. There are obviously other factors in place that contributed to this perceived improvement, however the DfE investigation was clear in the outcomes highlighted in their report.

Monitoring impact and the contribution of external school sport providers has to be a priority to ensure the best spending decisions in the future, if the quality of PE teaching is to be sustained and improved further. The question remains – when the funding ends, how will the investment quality, consistency and credibility in statutory curriculum provision be maintained?

Primary school and academy leaders will need to make informed spending decisions and be able to celebrate the impact and value for money of provision provided by external providers, and these financial decisions will only be effective if:

- There is a commitment to a partnership which is longer term.
- The school or academy is clear about the outcomes expected and impact on pupil learning progress and standards (including wider social, moral and health context).
- There is a close partnership between the school/academy and provider based on trust. Both partners recognise the importance of PESS, take joint responsibility and collaborate to ensure quality/improvement happens.
- There is ongoing dialogue between the partners to ensure it is clear how all children and groups are getting the best opportunities to achieve success – monitoring and evaluation takes place consistently, with the information being used to inform future collaborative and activity programme selection.

The Premier Education Group (PEG) base their relationship with schools on partnership and agreement about impact expectations linked to pupil enjoyment, progress and standards. Gaining trust with each individual and group of schools and academies underpins their work. They are a source of good quality provision and when up-skilled class teachers and subject coordinators move on, they are able to support partner schools/academies with skilled, credible quality staff. Working together as a collaborative partner with schools/academies does contribute to improved standards. Growing a strong relationship with staff, children and parents contributes to how programmes are implemented and impact on each child.

In a recent PEG **annual national review**, undertaken by an external Inspector, the following outcomes were evidenced -

The partnership and collaboration with schools has ensured; *'There is widespread confidence in the quality of teaching in curriculum delivery and in the care and support shown in extra-curricular provision. Pupils' enjoyment of participation, of competition, of the variety of opportunities and, above all, of being successful learners has been evident in all the schools the review team have visited. All schools have said they are getting good value for money'*.

The successful principles underpinning the positive review feedback and judgement made by the external inspector in a range of schools/academies across the country, has been achieved because of a long term strategy to ensure all Premier staff working with schools are skilled practitioners and effective leadership is at the heart of working with schools/academies -

'All headteachers and other school leaders who were interviewed during the review commented on the high quality of leadership provided by Area Leads. Such leadership was seen as the foundation of effective partnership professional relationships focussing on the individual school's needs and supporting increased consistency with school policy and practice'

To ensure we get partnership practice the best it can be for children, our leadership decisions need to be strategically based, clearly aligned to the difference to be made and the right people/partner to deliver the quality practice.

The grid below gives a brief insight into impact effectiveness principles (identified earlier) and PEG practice.

Effective collaborative partnership and informed spending decisions is based on	Premier Education Partnership Practice
Commitment to a partnership relationship which is longer term.	<i>Consistent staffing so that the same person delivers in school enabling them to build a strong rapport. Leaders create long term planning strategies alongside school leaders to maximise opportunities and impact.</i>
The school or academy is clear about the outcomes expected and impact on pupil learning progress and standards.	<i>Complete a bespoke provision 'impact table' upon commencement of work to outline what and how impact will be measured.</i>
A close partnership between the school/academy and provider based on trust and both partners recognise the importance of PESS and take joint responsibility and collaborate to ensure quality and improvement happens.	<i>Formal termly review meetings are backed up with regular quality assurance visits, these meetings will inform progress and create action plans where necessary. Activity professionals record all planning, attendance and attainment on the bespoke school portal, giving instant access to all data at all times for the school leaders and supporting informed strategic action plan to maximise pupil progress.</i>
Ongoing dialogue between the partners to ensure it is clear how all children and groups are getting the best opportunities to achieve and be successful – monitoring and evaluation takes place and is undertaken consistently with information used to inform future collaborative direction and activity programme selection.	<i>This is done via the bespoke online school portal and formal reviews. Activity Professionals can monitor which pupils are and are not accessing various areas of provision that allows them to create target groups and liaise with children to inform future planning and provision to enable maximum impact and increase participation & improve attitude towards PESS.</i>

Are you planning for impact and making informed choices about up-skilling staff, or recruiting partners who will enhance opportunities and contribute to pupil progress and standards? I hope you will base your decision on the value of Physical education and Sport and its impact on a child's development, their learning and well-being. Please also consider the value of the people who will deliver this impact, their accountability and ability to deliver this.

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