

'KNOW THE SCORE'

A Collection of Evidence to Support the
Impact of the Sports College Network

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Youth Sport Trust is a registered charity established in 1994 with one simple vision – to build a better future for all young people through PE and school sport.

Working with a range of partners, the YST aims to demonstrate ways in which PE and school sport can be used to support the improvement of schools, to build the confidence of young people and to create opportunities for more young people to participate in high quality PE and school sport.

The YST are involved with a range of programmes that encourage and inform children to engage in, and understand the value of, physical activity. We are committed to enhancing provision for young people to experience, and actively engage in, sporting opportunities beyond the school day and continuing our work to enhance school-club links.

In successfully carrying out this role we work closely with the network of Specialist Sport Colleges around the country. This paper sets out to explore:

- The evidence to support that sports colleges are increasing and widening opportunities for young people in PE and sport, and
- The evidence to support the wider benefits of PE and sport, such as the benefits to behaviour and community development.

It provides food for thought and will enable you to answer the question: ‘So what impact does a Specialist Sports College really have?’.

We hope that it will act as a catalyst for discussion and for developing thoughts and ideas that may be reflected upon and learned from in taking the success of the Sports College Network forward into the future.

2.0 SUMMARY

- Specialist Sports Colleges were introduced in 1996 with the first 11 being designated in 1997.
- A decade later there are 401 schools with a specialism in sport (including 359 designated specialist sports colleges).
- Sports Colleges are at the heart of the national strategy for PE, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) along with School Sport Partnerships and often house the hub sites of these partnerships and Partnership Development Managers.
- Their integral role to the national strategy has contributed to, not only a meeting of the target but surpassing it by a healthy margin. Four in every five pupils (80%) now participate in at least 2 hours of high quality PE and out of hours school sport in a typical week.
- Almost 2 in 3 pupils (60%) were successful in gaining a GCSE in PE at grade A*-C in 2006. Sports colleges have consistently performed at or above the national average for attainment of a good grade in PE.
- Sports Colleges offer a wide range of PE related qualifications enabling more opportunity to gain a qualification in the specialism.
- Over half of pupils (54%) were successful in gaining 5 good GCSE's (at least 5+ grades A*-C). This has been on a positive, upward trend and in the last year alone has risen by 5 percentage points.
- The rate of this improvement has been higher in specialist sports colleges when compared to other specialisms and the rise seen in the national average.
- All cohorts of sports colleges have seen improvements in their GCSE performance since becoming designated as a specialist sports college.

- The longer a sports college is designated the bigger the increase they see in their GCSE performance.
- Raising standards across the school, sports colleges use the specialism to transfer across to other curriculum subjects. It has proved particularly useful in establishing productive links to the core subjects of English, Maths and Science.
- In addition, many of the principles of teaching in the PE department are transferable across into other curriculum areas, using kinaesthetic learning for example or using more practical illustrations and activities in lessons.
- The specialism has been seen to be effective in understanding the learning styles of individuals and in tackling behavioural challenges.
- Sports colleges are using the positive personal values of sport to instill confidence and raise self-esteem among young people, leading to increases in educational attainment.
- The specialism has been used to tackle issues of inclusion and to re-engage those at risk of becoming disengaged. Innovative approaches to tackling inclusion are being developed.
- Changing attitudes toward PE and attendance has been successful through the use of models of teaching within the specialism:

“It makes you feel like you belong, like you’re needed.” – Pupil

- Sports Colleges have a more immediate community appeal than other specialist schools and are able to strengthen their links and transfer more readily into the community through their specialism.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Policy Context

In April 2000 the Government published its sports strategy: A Sporting Future for All, recognising the importance of sport in school and in young peoples' lives. This set out the Government's vision for widening participation for all children with the aim of creating a clear pathway from schools, into clubs and communities and ultimately to the world stage. Here it announced the intention to establish 600 School Sport Coordinators (SSCo) in communities of greatest need and linked to the network of Specialist Sports Colleges.

"It is in school where most of us get our first chance to try sport. It is here that children discover their talent and their potential. They need the chance to try a variety of sports, to see which they enjoy most. They need high quality teaching of basic skills. They need opportunities to compete at a level in line with where their ability has developed. They need clear pathways into taking part at club and national levels, with the right coaching and the right support at every stage"¹.

This document was subsequently refined into an action plan: The Government's Plan for Sport, published in 2001. In October 2002 the PE, School Sport and Club Links strategy, incorporating many of the actions proposed in this Government Plan for Sport, was initiated and this formed the keystone of a bridge being built from PE to lifelong participation in sport via out of school hours learning, interschool sport and school-club links.

Both of these Government documents made reference to the role of PE and sport in contributing to broader educational objectives such as whole school improvement, personal and social values such as self-discipline, leadership and teamwork, and development in the community.

¹ A Sporting Future for All, 2000

3.2 Specialist Sports Colleges

Building on the legacy of City Technology Colleges, the introduction of specialist sports colleges was announced in 1996, with the incoming Labour government in 1997 supporting the specialist schools initiative and its expansion. The same year saw the designation of the first specialist sports college. Ten years later and there are now 401² Specialist Sports Colleges, and 449 School Sport Partnerships comprising all schools in England.

The Specialist Schools Programme (SSP) helps schools, in partnership with private sector sponsors and supported by additional Government funding, to establish distinctive identities through their chosen specialisms and achieve their targets to raise standards.

Specialist schools have a focus on those subjects relating to their chosen specialism but must also meet the National Curriculum requirements and deliver a broad and balanced education to all pupils.

Any maintained secondary school in England can apply for specialist status in one of ten specialisms: arts, business & enterprise, engineering, humanities, languages, mathematics & computing, music, science, sports and technology.

Specialist Sports Colleges in particular, position PE and sport at the centre of the curriculum, using it as a vehicle to develop and improve learning opportunities for all.

3.2.1 The Vision

Sports Colleges are tasked with raising standards of achievement in physical education and sport for all their students across the ability range leading to whole school improvement.

² This figure includes 14 academies with a sports focus, 14 schools with a combined specialism including sport and 14 schools with sport as a second specialism.

They are focal points for promoting excellence in physical education and community sport, extending links between families of schools, sports bodies and communities, sharing resources, developing and spreading good practice, helping to provide a structure through which young people can progress to careers in sport and physical education. Sports Colleges increase participation in physical education and sport for all pre and post 16 year olds and develop the potential of talented performers.

3.2.2 The Challenges

Sports Colleges are expected to develop a visible Sports College character throughout the school and within their local community which inspires their students. Sports Colleges:

- Support the Government's aspiration for all young people to have two hours high quality PE per week within and outside the curriculum.
- Take an appropriate role in the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) Strategy.
- Develop the skills and understanding of teachers and make imaginative use of new technologies as a means of raising the quality of teaching and learning in PE.
- Extend provision and facilities to benefit all students of all sporting abilities, whilst also giving those with the greatest potential, opportunities to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Work with other schools and the wider community to develop and share good practice, facilities, human and other resources with a view to improving learning opportunities for all.
- Are involved in national initiatives (e.g. Step into Sport) and competitions that enrich provision in PE and sport for their own pupils and those in their partner schools.

3.3 Sports Colleges at the Heart of the National Strategy

The Government's first ever comprehensive national physical education, school sport and club links (PESSCL) strategy went live in April 2003, led jointly by the Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. It has the aim of enhancing the take up of sporting opportunities by 5 to 16 year-olds both within and beyond the curriculum by:

Increasing the percentage of schoolchildren who spend a minimum of 2 hours a week on high-quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75% by 2006 and 85% by 2008.

The longer term ambition, by 2010, is to offer all children at least 4 hours of sport every week, made up of:

- At least 2 hours of high-quality PE and sport at schools – with the expectation that this will be delivered totally within the curriculum, and
- An additional 2 or more hours beyond the school day delivered by a range of school, community and club providers.

As the core strands of the national strategy, Specialist Sports Colleges and School Sport Partnerships are at the heart of enhancing young people's opportunities to participate in a wide range of sports as well as raising the standards of teaching and learning of PE and school sport.

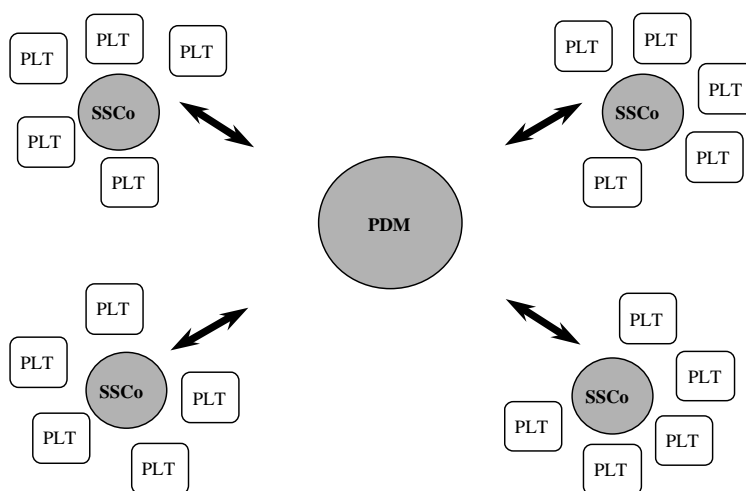
All specialist Sports Colleges are expected to play an appropriate role in implementing the PESSCL strategy. They do this through their school and community plans as well as by hosting a School Sport Partnership (as part of an LEA strategy) and building on links with other bodies associated with strategic developments in sport.

A typical School Sport Partnership will have:

- A Partnership Development Manager (PDM);
- up to eight School Sport Co-ordinators (SSCOs);
- 45 Primary and special school Link Teachers (PLTs).

The Partnership Development Manager (PDM) role is usually full-time and based within a Sports College. They manage the SSP and develop strategic links with key partners in sport and the wider community.

Figure 1: A typical SSSCo partnership model:



An SSSCo is based in a secondary school and concentrates on improving school sport opportunities, including out of hours school learning, intra and inter-school competition and club links, across a family of schools. While PLTs are based in primary and special schools and aim to improve the quantity and quality of PE and sport in their own schools.

The remaining 7 strands of the strategy are tools that the schools and partners draw on to work toward the 2010 ambition:

- Gifted and Talented;
- Step into Sport;
- Professional Development;
- Club Links;
- Sporting Playgrounds;
- QCA PESS investigation;
- Swimming.

3.4 **Making a Difference**

Comprehensive research is informing how the overall PSA target and how Sport Colleges are progressing. An ongoing programme of research has uncovered that Sports Colleges:

- outperform in their specialism
- improve whole school performance year on year
- improve whole school performance the longer they are designated as sports colleges
- use their specialism to:
 - Develop pupils' generic skills
 - Understand and respond to learning styles and behaviour
 - Impact upon underachieving pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning
 - Raise standards through inclusion
 - Target groups of young people and address inclusion
 - Engage with the community.

The remainder of this report goes on to present a collection of evidence to demonstrate the impact that Sports Colleges have had over the last decade by using both quantitative means and qualitative evidence and examples.

4.0 SURPASSING THE TARGET

As a core strand in the strategy, all Specialist Sports Colleges are expected to play an appropriate role in implementing the PESSCL strategy. They do this through their school and community plans as well as by hosting a School Sport Partnership and building on links with other bodies associated with strategic developments in sport.

The School Sport Survey is key in informing the progress and development of the PESSCL strategy. The first survey in 2003-04, found that already since the introduction of the network of Sports College and School Sports Partnerships, 62% of pupils were spending two hours in a typical week on high quality PE and school sport.

By 2005-06 this had risen to over 80%, surpassing the target set for that year of 75%.

Table 1: Progress Toward PSA Target

	Survey Year		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
% of pupils who participated in at least two hours of high quality PE and out of hours school sport in a typical week	62%	69%	80%

Source: School Sport Survey 2005-06; TNS

Not only do sports colleges have a key role to play in a School Sport Partnership, often acting as the hub site, but when isolating the results of the PESSCL survey for them alone, we find that they are by far more successful than the average in achieving the target number of hours. As many as 96% of pupils in sports colleges participated in the target number of hours PE and school sport in a typical week.

Looking to the future, the challenge for sports colleges now is to contribute to achieving 85% by 2008 and in meeting the 2010 ambition that is to offer all children at least 4 hours of sport every week.

5.0 IMPACT ON ATTAINMENT

5.1 Attainment in the Specialism of PE

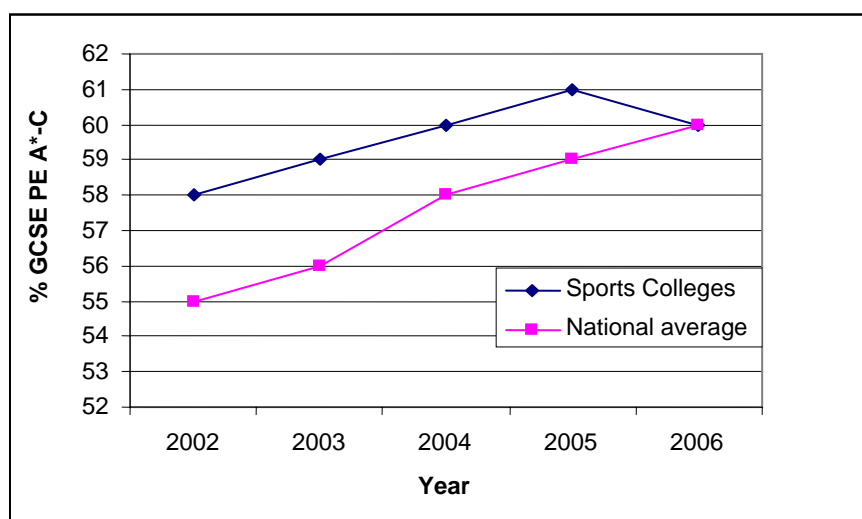
As discussed earlier, Sports Colleges are tasked with raising standards of achievement in physical education and sport for all their students across the ability range leading to whole school improvement. The aims and challenges of a sports college therefore includes the effect that the specialism is having on the attainment of its pupils. This attainment can best, and most reliably, be described in terms of GCSE attainment.

In other words, to understand the impact of sports colleges, it is possible to look at the proportion of pupils who perform well in the specialism, measured using GCSE PE and particularly attainment at a good grade of A*-C.

This data allows sports colleges to be singled out and analysed to look for trends in attainment.

In 2006, almost 2 in 3 pupils at a sports college (60%) were successful in gaining a PE GCSE at grade A*-C. On this measure sports colleges have consistently performed at or above the national average.

Figure 2: GCSE PE performance at Grades A*-C



Source: DfES/YST; Jan 2007

Table 2: GCSE PE performance at Grades A*-C

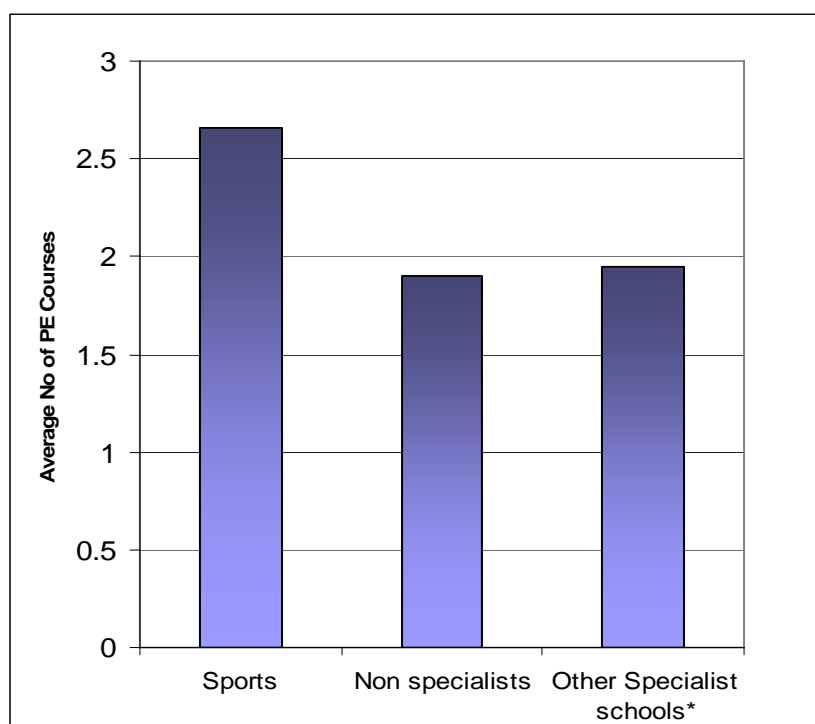
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Sports Colleges	58	59	60	61	60
National average	55	56	58	59	60

Source: DfES/YST; Jan 2007

Many Sports Colleges also offer their pupils a wide range of other PE related qualifications, such as the Level One Sports Leadership award, which enables pupils to attain a formal qualification in PE.

- Compared to non specialist and other Specialist Schools, Sports Colleges offer a wider range of PE qualifications other than GCSE PE.
- In Sports Colleges more pupils are taking alternative PE qualifications (see figure 3 below).
- The most frequent other PE qualifications offered in Sports Colleges are: Level 1 Sports Leadership award or Games Coaching award; BTEC First certificate in Sports Leadership; BTEC First Diploma in Sports Science; Short course GCSE PE.

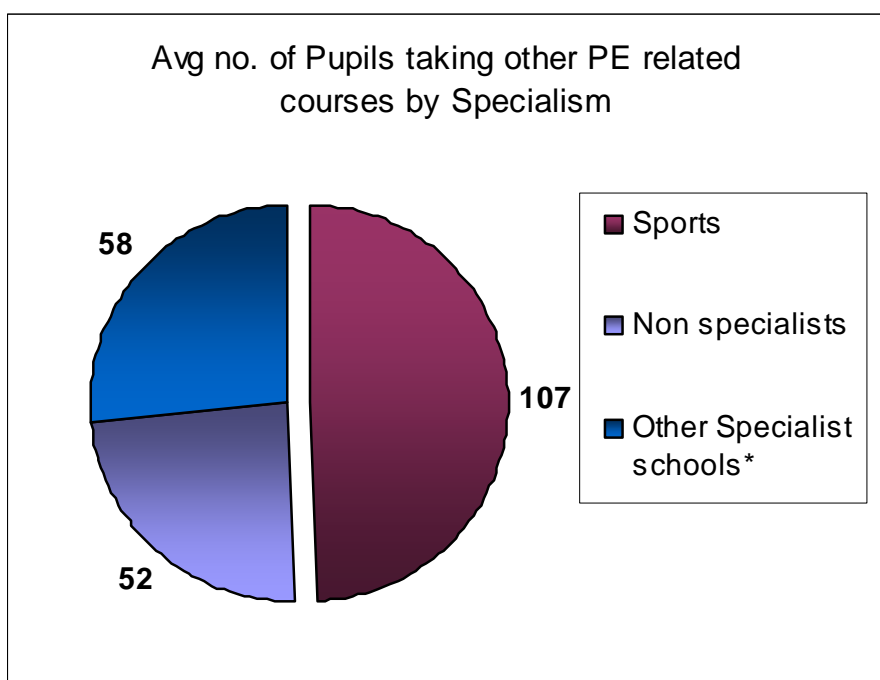
Figure 3: Range of PE qualifications taken by Specialism



*Figures include Arts, Business and Enterprise, Engineering, Humanities, Language, Maths and Computing, Music, Science and Technology Colleges.

Source: DfES/YST; Jan 2007

Figure 4: Pupils Taking Other PE Related Courses by Specialism



**Figures include Arts, Business and Enterprise, Engineering, Humanities, Language, Maths and Computing, Music, Science and Technology Colleges.
Source: DfES/YST; Jan 2007*

5.2 Impact of the Specialism on Whole School

A recent analysis undertaken by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) on behalf of the YST using pupil data from 2002-2005 revealed that Sports Colleges add value when compared to non-specialist schools, finding that both boys and girls attending a Sports College achieve more points (in terms of examination results) on average compared to pupils in non-specialist schools.

Published data on GCSE attainment confirms this when analysing specialist sports colleges versus other specialisms: Specialist Sports Colleges are performing better than non specialist schools in terms of achieving five or more GCSE grades at A*-C. In 2006, Sports Colleges on average achieved 5 percentage points higher than non specialist schools.

5.2.1 5+ GCSE A*-C

Using performance data again relating to the attainment of good GCSE's (ie 5+ A*-C), we can see the impact that sports colleges are having in using their specialism to impact on academic performance throughout the school.

Latest data shows that 54% of pupils in sports Colleges obtained 5 or more GCSE's at grades A*-C. Moreover, this has been on an upward trend with 5 percentage points even just since 2004.

Table 3: GCSE Performance at Grades A*-C

	Year		
	2004	2005	2006
Sports Colleges	49.0	51.9	54.2
National Average	53.7	56.3	58.5

Source: DfES/YST; Jan 2007

The rate of improvement on this measure has been higher in sports colleges compared to other specialist schools in both 2005 and 2006 – sports colleges improved their performance by larger margins than other specialist schools, non-specialist schools and exceeded the rise in the national average.

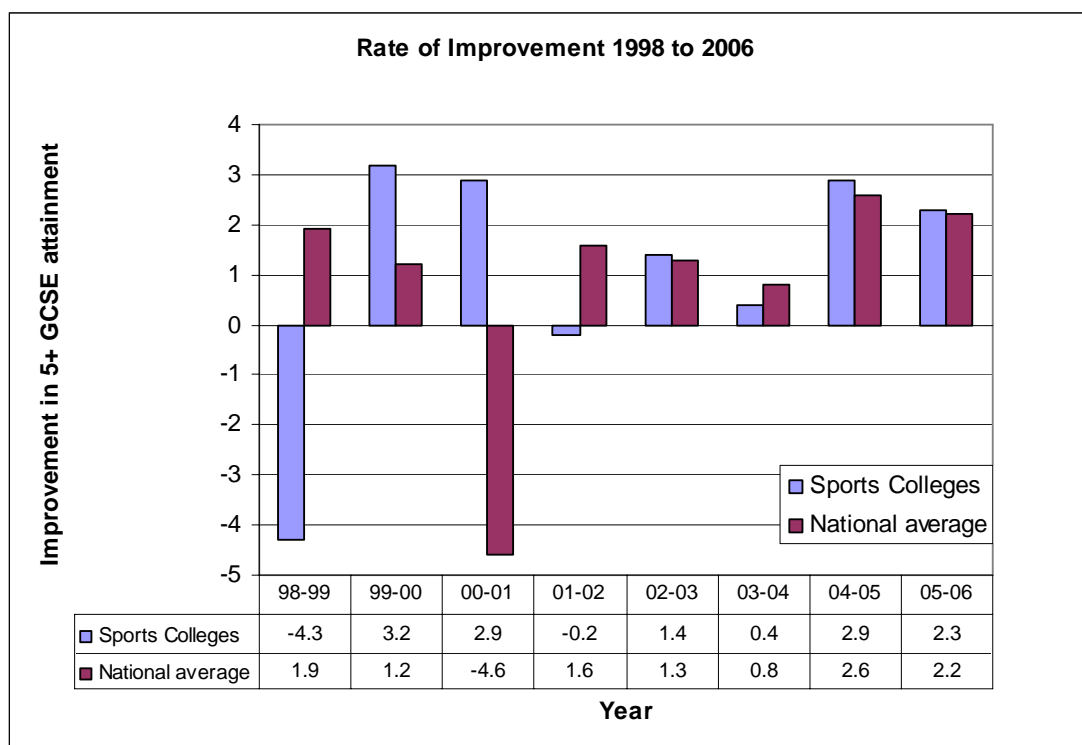
Table 4: Improvement Rates

	2005-06	2004-05
Sports Colleges	2.3	2.9
National average	2.2	2.6
Non-specialist schools	0.7	-0.3
Specialist schools*	1.4	2.1

* Including Sports Colleges

Source: DfES/YST; Jan 2007

Figure 5: Rate of Improvement, 1998 to 2006



Source: DfES/YST 2007

5.2.2 5+ GCSE A*-C Including English & Maths

The Government introduced a new measure into its league table data in 2006, showing the number of pupils achieving five GCSEs at A* to C including Maths and English rather than just those getting any five GCSEs at/or above a C grade. Encouragingly, increasing numbers of pupils in sports colleges are getting 5 good grades at GCSE that include Maths and English.

In 2006, 40% of pupils in sports colleges obtained 5 or more GCSE grades at A*-C that included English and Maths.

Table 5: GCSE Performance at Grades A*-C, including English & Maths

	Year	
	2005	2006
Sports Colleges	39.1	39.8
National Average	44.3	45.3

Source: DfES/YST; Jan 2007

5.2.3 Impact of Designation on Performance

Sports colleges show a marked upward trend in performance, measured again by the attainment of 5 good GCSE's, when analysed by the length of time they have been designated as a specialist sports college. Indeed, all cohorts of sports colleges have shown positive upward changes in their attainment rates since they became designated, with those designated the longest, seeing the largest improvement to their GCSE attainment rates.

Table 6: GCSE Attainment by Length of Designation

Cohort	No of yrs designated	5+ A*-C at Designation	5+ A*-C in 2006	Improvement since designation
1997	9	43.3	57.8	14.5
1998	8	38.2	52.0	13.8
1999	7	46.0	56.8	10.8
2000	6	46.5	59.1	12.5
2001	5	46.0	54.1	8.1
2002	4	43.8	54.8	11.0
2003	3	50.1	56.5	6.4
2004	2	45.5	51.3	5.8
2005	1	47.7	49.5	1.8

Source: DfES/YST; Jan 2007

6.0 REACHING FURTHER AFIELD

The impact of sports colleges is varied and far reaching. Earlier this report set out the vision and key challenges facing the sport college network and has gone on to look at the impact of the specialism on both PE and whole school attainment. Yet, the impact of sports colleges is much more than qualifications alone.

The contribution of sports colleges and the network of school sport partnerships is key to the success of the government's national strategy (PESSCL). It is this role that means Sports Colleges have a significant part to play in achievement of the School Sports Partnership policy objectives.

6.1 Impact on Education Objectives

The Sports College national surveys³ were intended to provide a comprehensive basis on which to assess the contribution that Specialist Sports Colleges collectively make to the achievement of the Government's education objectives and links to the delivery of the School Sport Partnership objectives.

The surveys took place in 2003 and 2004 and used a questionnaire divided into six sections. It was distributed to all Sports Colleges designated at the time of each survey.

Overall response rates were good in both 2003 and 2004 at 75%.

Findings to emerge confirmed the influence of sports colleges on all SSP policy objectives:

- Overall there is evidence of a continuing broadening of the academic, sports skills development, and leadership development opportunities available to pupils;

³ National Survey of Specialist Sports Colleges 2004; Loughborough University/YST

- Many new colleges offer a wide range of courses in their first year of designation and this range tended to increase steadily with the length of designation;
- There is clear commitment to inclusion and the systematic targeting of groups particularly the gifted and talented pupils, girls, low attaining pupils, and disaffected young people;
- Over 80% of colleges reported change in the range of activities available to pupils within the PE national curriculum. The most frequently mentioned examples were dance for boys, football and cricket for girls, followed by orienteering and other outdoor activities;
- Increased opportunities for pupils in partner primary and secondary schools;
- There has been a steady closing of the gap between boys and girls in the take up of GCSE PE although, at the time of the survey, girls' take up was still only 56% that of boys;
- 62% of colleges committed to provide opportunities for pupils to engage informally in physical activities;
- 97% of colleges committed to developing targeted out of hours activities;
- 97% of colleges committed to develop out of hours opportunities for pupils to pursue roles other than participant. The roles of leader, coach and official were developed by almost all colleges;
- Increased participation in community based sport and improved quality of community life;
- Community organisation partners cited the most important benefit of partnership was the opportunity to widen participation;

- Sports club partners value the benefits of association with the sports college - access to young people, creating opportunities to participate and access to facilities/equipment;
- Joint activity with sports club partners involved, most often, the shared use of facilities and/or equipment owned by the sports college and development activity focusing on participation opportunities and pathways for young people;
- The development of partnerships is one of the clear achievements of the sports colleges. Whether the focus was on joint activity with primary schools, sports partners, or secondary schools there was evidence of sustained commitment, activity and achievement.

6.2 Cross-Curricular and Whole School Impact

6.2.1 Cross Curricular Links

There are many examples to be found of sports colleges developing cross-curricular links between the specialism of PE and other subjects within the curriculum and on other social and attitudinal development. Evidence supporting this includes:

- There continue to be many examples of colleges developing cross-curricular links especially in relation to literacy, numeracy and citizenship. (Sports College National Survey 2004).
- “Sports College status has also been considerable in helping to raise standards, not just in sports, but across the school”. (Sports College National Survey 2004)
- Overall there is evidence of a continuing broadening of the academic and sports skills development available to pupils. (Sports College National Survey 2004).

- In Sports Colleges, increased numbers of pupils are taking sports leadership awards, such as CSLA and NGB coaching qualifications. (School Sport Partnerships Annual Monitoring and Evaluation 2005).

6.2.2 Attitude, Behaviour and Confidence

“Physical education lessons in particular generate enthusiasm and excellent attitudes from pupils and they are very proud of the school’s specialist status”⁴

According to a report from Northumbria University (2004) higher physical self-esteem may result from increased time involved in PE. The report investigated Ashington High Sports College, Northumberland, where pupils had three hours per week of physical education, compared to two hours in non-specialist schools. The school also runs a wide programme of sporting activities for its pupils during break times and lunchtime. The study undertaken at Ashington revealed that after just one academic year, Sports College pupils' confidence grew significantly, compared to those at a regular comprehensive school.

Extensive examples of the specialism impacting on pupil behaviour have been gathered through case study material from the Sport College network. The specialism allows the schools to identify behavioural problems, to target specific individuals and find solutions through sport and physical activity, helping to combat behavioural problems.

⁴ *Davenant Foundation School*, Ofsted report Nov 2002, page 11.

Showcase 1:

The challenge

What we wanted to do

The school sits in the centre of large housing area where there is a history of vandalism and nuisance calls to the police from young people on the estate. However, residents were very suspicious of the community policing initiative. Many of the school's ex-pupils live on the estate, one of whom is well known and respected by the local youths. He wanted to provide some activities for those with nothing to do, and to break down barriers to working with the police in making the surrounding area a better place in which to live.

Aims and Objectives

- Cut down on the amount of vandalism and police time wasted by nuisance calls.
- Provide sporting activities for the young people on the estate.
- Make use of the recently built VIDA centre on the schools campus.
- Support the ex-pupil in his drive to get young people off the street.
- Develop more positive relationships with the police and other agencies.

Meeting the challenge

What we did

The Sports College funded the ex-pupil to undertake training, provided office space and resources to start an activity club for local youths. The facilities and equipment were provided free of charge and sports competition league entries and training courses for interest youths were subsidised.

Impact

The difference this has made

- Police can demonstrate a drop in the number of nuisance calls and acts of vandalism, this in direct relationship to when the club is operating.
- Positive relationships with the police are being developed.
- Disaffected youths, once school refusers are coming back onto the school site engaging in meaningful physical activities.

Source: The School Sport Xchange/YST

Showcase 2:

'Active Lunchtimes'

An inclusive programme designed to combat bullying and improve behaviour, punctuality and attendance

"We know that lunchtime is a potentially difficult time for school, students and our community and the Active Lunchtimes programme is having a real impact upon the well being and success of our students ... It has changed the feel of the school at lunchtime ... and signifies our ongoing commitment to improving the facilities and environment for young people and our purposeful approach to tackling issues such as the emotional well being of our students and reducing the potential for bullying."

- Head Teacher

Why this project?

- There was a culture of inactivity and negative social interaction during lunchtimes.
- Punctuality and attendance was lower after lunch than in the mornings.
- The school was receiving thirty complaints in an average week from members of the local community about the anti-social behaviour of students outside school at lunchtime.

Aims

A change of culture at lunchtime using positive values to improve behaviour. In this way we hoped to prevent bullying and to improve attendance and punctuality in afternoon lessons.

Action

- Students completed questionnaires on their lunchtime experiences: 62% "have nothing to do"; 34% "are not happy"; 38% "do not feel safe".
- A survey showed that staff's feelings reflected those of the students and echoed the complaints from the community.
- Staff consulted and visited several primary schools in search of examples of good practice in lunchtime activities.
- Staff devised a structured programme of lunchtime activity which built on the activities found in feeder primary schools including a range of quiet, creative and sporting activities.
- Equipment was purchased and areas prepared, including covered seating areas, 'comfort zones', staging and basketball courts.
- PE teachers were trained and appointed as 'duty supervisors' to oversee the 'Active Lunchtimes' sessions and monitor health and safety.

- Successful JSLA students from years 10 and 11 were invited to apply to become 'Activity Leaders'. Successful leaders have since been rewarded for involvement with a letter of commendation to parents, a sports jacket and trips to a local activity centre each term.
- In the initial stages activities were limited to years 7 and 8. Years 9, 10 and 11 were included a short while later.

Results

- 75 Activity Leaders have been appointed and are successfully running activities.
- Over 3,000 students have accessed the Active Lunchtimes programme since its start.
- Over 200 students per week take part in the programme.
- Students' questionnaire results show the playground to be a safer environment since the start of the programme
- Heads of Year have reported reduced numbers of bullying incidences at lunchtime.
- There has been a noticeable improvement in year 7 and 8 attendance in the afternoon session since Active Lunchtimes was introduced.
- Year 8 punctuality in the afternoon session has also improved.
- The school receives fewer phone calls and complaints from the community complaining about student behaviour.

Source: The School Sport Xchange/YST; 2006

Further evidence of sports colleges impacting on behaviour and attitude are also evident throughout the following sections that look at research focusing on core subjects and individual schools and their specific challenges.

6.2.3 Core Subjects and the Specialism

More recently, research commissioned by the Youth Sport Trust has shown clear evidence of the specialism of PE being used to drive up standards in specifically the core subjects of English, Maths and Science.

This research reinforces that there are many reasons for focusing whole school improvement initiatives on core subjects. Firstly, the skills, knowledge and qualifications that core subjects develop are important to young people. In addition to building important life skills, the core subject qualifications are those that are highly valued by employers, Higher and Further Education

institutions. So, improving the performance of core subjects in a school can directly benefit the life chances of young people.

As if any further incentive were needed, the examination results of English, Maths and Science are included in school performance indicators that are a matter of public record. In 2006 it became regular practice that GCSE attainment would be measured in such a way that the accepted level of good attainment would be at least 5 GCSE's at grades A*-C and crucially, this is to include English and Maths.

These indicators are used in external monitoring of a school, for example by OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education), and to make judgements about a school's suitability for inclusion in other national initiatives, for example the High Performing Specialist Schools programme.

This research therefore was intended to reflect some of the work of the core subjects programme and the lessons that have been learnt by the Youth Sport Trust and schools participating in it. The schools showcased are from a wide range of regional, academic and social contexts and are all Sports Colleges or Academies with a focus on Sport. Some of them have been carrying out work in this area for many years and some have only just begun their journey of using the specialism across other subjects.

The research found that, if sport and Physical Education is of a high quality in a school, there are a number of ways it is being used to raise achievement in other subjects, including the core subjects, and are outlined below.

1. Using the **motivational and relevant contexts** of sport.

- Science departments are using sport contexts in a variety of topic areas to increase interest and engagement. For example: forces and movement in physics, materials and drug testing in chemistry, anatomy and physiology in biology
- English departments are increasing the use of sport-related non-fiction books, for example biographies of sports personalities and books that describe how to increase performance in specific sports. Some

schools are working in partnership with local libraries in order to achieve this.

- Mathematics departments are using sport facilities, pitches and spaces to develop geometry skills. Many schools are encouraging their pupils to physically investigate sporting areas of the school. This can be used to develop skills like measuring, calculating perimeters, circumferences etc, drawing to scale and calculating proportions.

2. Using the **positive personal values** of sport to raise achievement.

Developing values and building on them, including:

- Holding 'higher ambition conferences' to raise ambition and aspiration. Attendance of Year 11 throughout the conference period was 95%, compared to 84% beforehand. The last few weeks of term were described as having 'excellent behaviour and attendance' by the year head.
- Holding 'health, well being and achievement weeks' in which the student survey revealed that 71% of students believed the week had given them increased confidence in their ability to do well at school.
- Multiple strategies to instill confidence and self-belief led to increased attainment at GCSE: the result – not the predicted 13%, not even a predicted 38% but a resounding 42% 5+ A*-C GCSE grades.

3. Building on and benefiting from **generic skills** developed in physical education and sport. These include:

- Observation skills
- Analytical skills
- Evaluation skills
- Leadership and teamwork skills
- Communication skills
- Emotional/interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence
- Motor skills

Explicitly developing and building on these skills in a wider range of circumstances at school means that young people understand and value their ability in these areas. It can mean that they become able to relate

their use to other areas of the curriculum and to circumstances in real life, including in employment, where they are important. The research also argued that allowing students to demonstrate skills developed in one subject in another can lead to a higher level of confidence in subjects that a young person may not have experienced much success in previously. In short, many of these skills are necessary for good performance in other subjects and sports colleges are leading the way.

Example 1:

- Sports College A – developed a programme for targeted young people to improve their motor coordination skills in the belief that this would also have benefits to their overall achievement at school – the ‘Funfit’ programme.

The review of the pilot group of young people suggested that over the 6-8 week period: 40% of children improved their behaviour, 56% improved their organisation, 65% improved their concentration, 60% improved their handwriting and 51% improved their attainment.

Example 2:

- Sports College B - created a collaborative project with the overall aim to raise attainment in two subject areas by linking aspects of the course content of GCSE PE and GCSE English into one assessment.

The English Department would help PE to develop a common vocabulary for analysis - an area they felt their pupils lacked confidence and skill - and PE would provide stimulus materials created by pupils during PE lessons, which pupils consequently had ownership of, to create relevant, challenging and stimulating opportunities for pupils in both subjects.

In PE, students were able to produce a written piece of work demonstrating accurate analysis skills. They all achieved high scores in comparison to previous years and predictions. It was also easier for the teacher to assess, given the written nature of the evidence. Staff also felt that it had raised standards of delivery of GCSE PE by encouraging them to try innovative ideas.

The teacher assessment for English Speaking and Listening showed better performance against peers who were not involved in the project.

4. Building on successful **pedagogical approaches** used in physical education.

Sports colleges are transferring teaching pedagogies across the curriculum and using those that characterise high quality teaching in PE lessons, in teaching core subjects, including:

- mentoring and coaching techniques
- group and team work opportunities
- quality demonstrations
- practical learning opportunities
- competitive situations
- games-based activities for developing skills
- Non-threatening use of target setting and monitoring progress.

The sharing of good practice in PE departments and their pedagogies is taking place right across sports colleges for the development of the whole school. Techniques for whole school improvement included:

- Learning walks/learning style audits
- Introduction of Teaching & Learning co-ordinators
- Introduction of 'student consultants' to input to potential improvements in the learning environment and techniques.
- Introduction of video technology to classes other than just PE.

This has led to a wider variety of learning styles being used in the classroom and students that are more engaged in lessons, subsequently leading to higher achievement. Teachers also reported an improvement in classroom behaviour with more ownership and respect for the environment.

In summary, the research has pointed toward a number of impacts that sports colleges are having not just on PE as a subject itself but also on cross-curricular links to other subject areas and subsequently whole school improvement. It has shown:

- Increases in GCSE attainment
- Improved attitude toward learning
- Improved behaviour
- Increased confidence and self-belief
- Increased participation in lessons.

By way of further exemplifying the effect on core subjects is the following live example from a High School in Middlesex where they have used PE to influence other curriculum subjects.

Showcase 3:

Premier League – Key marginals monitoring scheme

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

What we wanted to do:

- Raise exam results - particularly target key marginal pupils using data tracking systems.
- Use the PE department and high performing motivated pupils to mentor these pupils in teams.
- Use the principles of sport and competition to motivate pupils.

What we did:

- Year 11 pupils take part in the 'premier league', where 30 key marginal pupils are identified and put into six teams of five.
- Attached to each team is a coach (an achieving student) and manager (member of staff with a sport background) to offer advice and motivate the team.
- Teams compete against each other and are monitored in core subjects and PE. Pupils are monitored in two subjects over a two week period.
- Pupils earn points in PE lessons and across other subjects in school. They are awarded points for effort in lessons and punctuality to registration.
- The 'championship' takes place for Year 8 and 9 pupils.

IMPACT

The difference it has made:

- Exam results are up by 15% (48%).
- Pupils say they now have a reason to come to school and a reason to try hard, when they were previously failing and at risk of exclusion.
- Pupils have found that when putting in extra effort they automatically improve their achievement.
- Predicted grades for some have lifted from D/E to B/C's.
- Staff have observed a real change in attitude and work ethic amongst these pupils.
- Pupils have said that because they know their managers and coaches are checking their progress weekly, they want to work hard so they don't let their team down.
- Young people especially boys love to compete.



6.2.4 Individual School Based Research

The Youth Sport Trust has been working with the Institute of Youth Sport in enabling sports colleges to measure and assess their impact at a local level. Sports colleges are given the opportunity to undertake a research project that clearly articulates the benefit of the specialism or that enables them to assess and improve practice for whole school improvement. The expertise of IYS ensures that the robustness and reliability of the research is maintained while introducing an element of independence to the approach.

The ability of PE and sport to improve pupil attitudes, behaviour and attendance in PE and across the whole school, particularly within School Sport Partnerships has been supported by this YST research and case studies. The explicit inclusion of attitudes and behaviour as a policy outcome of sports colleges is an indication that PE and sport has the capacity to extend into wider educational objectives and social settings.

These individual pieces of research collectively show that the specialism of sport is resulting in wider benefits to the whole school than just improvements to the PE department.

This research has provided evidence of sports colleges:

- Developing pupils' generic skills
- Understanding and responding to learning styles and behaviour of disengaged pupils in PE and science
- Impacting upon underachieving pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning, and performance in GCSE PE
- Raising standards through inclusion
- Engaging with the community.

Sports colleges have done this through a wide ranging set of techniques and have recorded the impacts outlined in the showcases below.

Showcase 4:

The introduction of a generic skills programme with subsequent testing of the programme to identify areas that worked well and other areas for development.

Method

- The programme included a range of activities that focused on speed, agility, quickness, balance and tactical understanding.
- Modified games equipment was provided to challenge at appropriate levels.
- Students took on greater responsibility and ownership of the tasks.
- Links between the programme activities and specific sports were clearly explained to pupils to enhance understanding.
- Pupils were encouraged to appraise their own and others' performance using assessment sheets and discussion.
- The success of the programme was evaluated via questionnaires, observation, monitoring and teacher assessment techniques.

Impact

By the end of the programme, pupils self-reported that they:

- Were less concerned about who they worked with
- Had increased confidence in their ability in PE
- were more satisfied with their performance in PE
- felt more confident to try new activities
- enjoyed PE lessons more

Table 7: Do you enjoy PE at your school?

	Before programme	At end of programme
Yes	67%	82%
Mostly	17%	12%
Sometimes	17%	6%
Never	0	0

Source: Pupils; School Based Research Project/YST; Nov 2006

Source: School Based Research Project/YST

Showcase 5:

Identifying Strategies to Re-engage Pupils by investigating the behaviour of disengaged pupils in PE and science lessons, examining the relationship between preferred learning styles and behaviour.

Method

- Target groups of pupils identified using staff questionnaires and discussion with primary liaison teachers
- Observation schedules introduced on 4 occasions in both science and PE lessons
- Pupils preferred learning styles identified using questionnaires of entire year group.

Impact

- Both the nature of the lesson and the subject of the lesson influenced pupil behaviour with the nature of the lesson apparently having a bigger impact on pupil behaviour.
- The school has been able to better understand ways in which their pupils will behave better and so learn better and to adapt teaching methods to these needs.
- The lessons to be learned from pupil experiences and behaviour in PE are to be taken forward in other settings.

Source: *School Based Research Project/YST*

Showcase 6:

Changing Attitudes and Raising Achievement through Sport Education. This research looked at the impact of the Sport Education model on pupils' behaviour and attitudes toward learning.

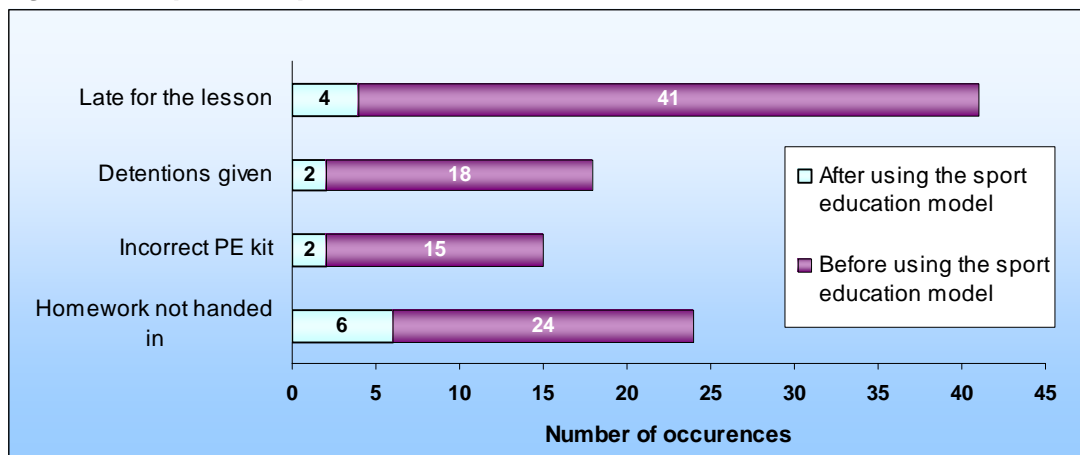
Method:

- Identifying the target group of pupils on the border of a predicted 'C' grade in GCSE PE.
- Team working was introduced and responsibilities assigned to pupils. Specific roles were introduced and team names were chosen to provide identity and belonging.
- Team sheets distributed at the start of a lesson listed the objectives for the lesson and enabled the recording of performance and acted as an evaluation tool.
- Punctuality revision quizzes introduced.
- Each pupil's attainment in the theory aspect of the course was assessed by written examination, pupils completed questionnaires, group interviews were held and team sheets and class registers provided additional evidence of behaviours.

Impact:

- All but one pupil achieved their predicted grade in the theory exam (grade C).
- Half the target group performed better than expected in this exam.
- Punctuality, homework and standards of behaviour improved substantially.
- Pupil interviews confirmed the Sport Education model has been associated with these changes:
 - *"It makes you feel like you belong, like you're needed."*
 - *"you stand up for your own role, you want to present it well."*
 - *"it gives you something to aim for."*
 - *"people were running to get to the lesson."*
 - *"people were more mature instead of just messing about, it makes your team more well behaved."*

Figure 6: Impact of Sport Education



Showcase 7:

Raising standards through inclusion, bring together special and mainstream students in an after school club to develop personal and social skills.

Method:

- Targeted special students worked alongside Year 6 students from a local primary school in a weekly after school club.
- The club was planned around PE and was extended to include other activities such as art, design and drama.
- Students divided into 3 small groups, undertaking different activities.
- Each term a new theme was selected by the students themselves.

Impact:

- Evaluation was undertaken using observation techniques and interviews with the mainstream primary school pupils.
- Mainstream students performed at a higher level in the club than in the classroom in the areas of interaction and independence.
- Mainstream students showed higher levels of attention in the classroom setting.
- Special students attained higher P levels in the areas of interaction and independence.
- A higher number of special students progressed at a faster rate in the club setting than the classroom.
- Teachers believed that the attitudes of the mainstream pupils had been positively changed and a more inclusive attitude fostered such that they viewed the special pupils as friends and were able to adapt their style of interaction to accommodate the students' disabilities.

Source: *School Based Research Project/YST*

Showcase 8:

Re-engaging with learning – targeting disaffected boys. This research aimed to tackle disruptive behaviour by the introduction of new strategies.

Method:

- Introduction of kinaesthetic learning, e.g. 'walking through the circulatory system carrying pink balls to represent the oxygenated blood cells and white balls to represent de-oxygenated blood'.
- Coupling this activity with handouts and notetaking.
- Introduction of end-of-term reward trips for completing targeted homework and practice examinations.
- Target setting ethos introduced to examinations and explanation of what pupils needed to do to achieve.
- Pupil observation was undertaken, questionnaires given to pupils and interviews undertaken with them.

Impact:

- Pupils demonstrated high levels of motivation.
- Pupils preferred learning styles were identified.
- Pupils were better focused in lessons.
- Belief that this new learning style helped them to remember information in exams.
- All pupils in the target group met their targets and achieved places on reward trips.
- Achievement at or beyond expected levels of attainment in GCSE PE.

Source: *School Based Research Project/YST*

6.2.5 Engagement with the Community

A study of the Specialist Schools Programme undertaken by the Institute of Education at the University of Warwick found that Sports Colleges have a more immediate community appeal than other specialist schools and were found to transfer more readily into community projects and initiatives.

- "Sports College status has further strengthened links with the community and provided an even wider range of opportunities for pupils and students". (Sports College National Survey 2004).
- "Increased participation in community based sport and improved quality of community life". (Sports College National Survey 2004).

Showcase 9:

Extending work with the community: Full Service – A School for the Community

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

What we wanted to do:

- We wanted to achieve a 'whole' school campus that is open 24/7 from 8:00am – 10:00pm 7 days a week, 363 days per year.
- Increase community involvement in physical activity/health and fitness development.
- Add width and depth to existing community involvement to improve pupil achievement, behaviour and attendance as well as improve health and well-being within communities behind and around the

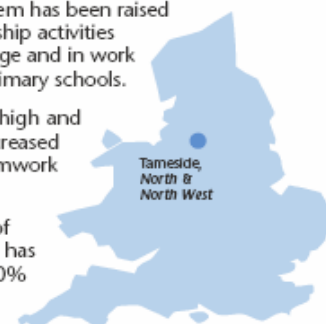
What we did:

- We had a starting point for the delivery of services e.g. health, support and guidance 'drop-in' services, prescriptive health/fitness activities, vocational adult and family learning, delivery of childcare
- The Sports College Development Plan funded the appointment of a Head of Sport Education and Community.
- The Full Service Management Team was formed using current existing expertise from within the school that enabled expertise to be targeted effectively.
- Developed and embedded staff development, coach education, sporting opportunities for the community to build in sustainability and realise the Community Development Plan.
- Joined together the Full Service Plan and the Sports College Community objectives and moved them on e.g. primary, secondary and community pupil leaders, Make Space projects, Young People's Community Forum.
- Worked alongside local and regional business related organisations, residents, local support and guidance agencies, health agencies and educational agencies.

IMPACT

The difference it has made:

- School and community partnerships are stronger, delivery and leadership are more effective e.g. community sports groups are encouraged to work developmentally with the college.
- Attendance has improved by 3.31% in two years, from 88% to 91.31%.
- Pupils' self-esteem has been raised through leadership activities within the college and in work with partner primary schools.
- Staff morale is high and evidence of increased 'joined up' teamwork is very evident.
- Extended use of school facilities has increased by 90% in one year.



Showcase 10:

Meeting Community Needs as a Sports College and Extended School

"We value both our Specialist Sports College status and our Extended School status extremely highly. We believe in offering opportunities and activities that can engage every child, parent and the local community, and can enable each student to be the best that they can be."
- Head Teacher

What we did:

- Embracing the Extended Schools agenda seemed the most natural thing following the schools designation as a Sports College and hub site for the School Sport Partnership.
- A statement of entitlement for the extended curriculum embraces both that of the Sports College, SSP and delivers on the varied menu of activities for Extended Schools.
- The sports specialism and Extended Schools complement each other across the full core offer eg:
- Swift and Easy Referral – The school nurse delivers lessons within PSHE on health, diet and nutrition, and sex education and also runs a health advice drop-in service.
- Variety of Activities – The PE department is able to offer a wide range of qualifications, developing an innovative curriculum and enabling each student to be entered for the most appropriate qualification.
- Parenting support – The school's "Parents in Partnership" group has provided an opportunity for parents to become more empowered within the school and five are now parent governors.

- Community use of facilities – The school provides a range of community sports, fitness and health workshops with the aim of developing target groups' knowledge of healthy lifestyles, involvement and participation in sporting activity, and understanding the benefits of learning as a family.

Impact:

- Since becoming a Sports College the school has been involved in a significant amount of community development leading to it becoming a Full Service Extended School in 2003,
- Sports College status has helped move the school's equalities agenda forward and the development of anti-racist strategies.
- The consistently high quality PE teaching is reflected in the attainment levels achieved by students which have increased year on year since gaining designation.
- The PE department is seen as the lead department within the school, providing a model of good practice to other staff and often leading whole school INSET.
- New facilities such as a dance studio and fitness suite have set the standard for the whole school in what can be expected of a professional working environment embracing the needs of the whole community and providing quality facilities for everyone.
- The school is now over-subscribed in all bands of ability and in 2005 was in the top 3% nationally for contextual value-added.
- The involvement of the community in the Extended Schools programme has helped the marketing of the school and successfully changed public perceptions of the school.

7.0 FUTURE CHALLENGES TO SPORTS COLLEGES

7.1 Maximising the benefits of PE and school sport across the whole school and the School Sport Partnership.

PE and school sport is making a real difference. The challenge is to ensure that the benefits outlined in this report are transferred across the whole school curriculum so that young people achieve to the best of their abilities. The challenge is to develop, support, research and promote quality practice in this area, and to ensure the skills and knowledge needed to make this happen are in place.

7.2 Focus on high quality PE and school sport within and outside the curriculum

Until now the Government's investment has focused largely on developing a national infrastructure for PE and school sport. Now the emphasis will centre on achieving high quality PE and sport, and this increasingly will focus on quality opportunities and increased participation outside of the school curriculum.

The focus on use of the 10 outcomes of high quality PE and sport published by DfES and DCMS in 2004 has become more important and sports schools will need to increase their use of these outcomes, the reporting of how well pupils demonstrate them, and using this information to change provision and approaches so that pupils improve.

7.3 Contributing to Future Government Targets

With the recent meeting, and surpassing, of the PSA target for 2006, the next milestone for sports colleges will be their contribution to raising participation levels to at least 85 per cent by 2008 and to enable all children to take part in four hours of sport a week by 2010.

As outlined by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, as well as meeting this target, immediate challenges for the future include work towards reaching those pupils who think sport is not for them, and to encourage more high quality sport and PE at Key Stage 4.

7.4 Development of community links

Through the Five Year Strategy , the Government have set a goal that every primary and secondary school will provide access to a range of “dawn to dusk” extended services by September 2010, with half of primary and a third of secondary schools offering these services by September 2008.

The introduction of the programme will fuel progress towards the 2010 ambition by founding relationships with key partners and linking schools with the community. Sport will form an important part of the extended service, and will include sport volunteering opportunities and provision of sports facilities. Sports Colleges are ideally placed to meet this challenge.

7.5 Creation of sustainable pathways, lifelong participation and sporting success

The Olympic Games undoubtedly provide opportunities to boost PE and school sport further, particularly the securing of the games in London 2012, engaging young people in sport and prompting lifelong involvement. Many pupils presently at school may have opportunities to get involved in the 2012 Olympics either as performers or volunteers.

One MP commented that “Staging the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in London will undoubtedly boost our national PE, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy. We can use the games to inspire children and young people to take up sport and lay the foundations for lifelong participation.” Sports Colleges will have an integral part to play in this.

8.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS

PE and school sport has progressed hugely since the first Specialist Sports Colleges were designated in 1997. The publication of A Sporting Future for All in 2000 announcing the intention to create a national infrastructure for PE and school sport and the extension to the PESSCL strategy in 2004 has transformed the environment in which PE and school sport operates.

It is a challenge to adapt and respond to such rapid development, but one that has been risen to well, not least of which is evidence by the surpassing of the PSA target for 2006 and the marked improvement in attainment by sports colleges.

As we move towards the 2010 ambition, developing links with external partners and the community, together with increasing opportunities to participate in PE and school sport outside of the school day, will become increasingly more significant.

The true inclusion of all pupils, particularly disabled and ethnic minority groups, needs to be considered and there is still much progress to be made to fully exploit the use of PE and school sport to positively influence whole school standards.

By 2012, we will have a national PE and school sport infrastructure, including a national competition framework, which will benefit the lives of all young people whilst supporting and developing talented performers to help generate national success at the London 2012 Olympic Games. The profile of PE and school sport has never been higher - we have a unique opportunity to influence the lives and futures of all young people in what many have described as the most exciting time for physical education and school sport.

It has been a decade since the introduction of the first Specialist Sports College and we hope that this report has begun to unearth the vast amount of work that has taken place in Sports Colleges around the country and the impact the network has had, not only in meeting policy objectives but in making a real difference to the lives of young people through sport.

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