
Introduction

"(The) key to understanding policy change is not where the idea came from, but what made it take hold and grow" (Kingdon, 1995, p. 72).

The belief in the capacity of sport to positively develop both the individual and society has not been lost on UK governments. Most recently the thoughts, words and actions which comprise sport policy in the UK have focused on young people (Collins, 2010). The statutory requirement to attend school between the ages of 5 and 16 years, has afforded policy-makers the opportunity to shape the initial experiences of this priority and ‘captive’ group with the intention of encouraging habitual, lifelong participation in sport and physical activity through and beyond the school and extra-curriculum (Cale, 2000; Houlihan, 2000; Roberts, 1996).

Although it could be argued that the catalyst for UK government interest and involvement in youth sport began 50 years ago with the revelation of a 'gap' between sporting participation in school and adulthood (Wolfenden, 1960), which led to the formation of the Advisory Sports Council (later GB Sports Council) in 1965 (Houlihan & White, 2002); this review is concerned with how and why the sport policy of the most recent generation of Conservative and Labour administrations has shaped the status of physical education (PE) and examines the somewhat blurred relationships with sport.

The value of sport - an end in itself or a means to an end?
The significance of sport and through it physical activity, to a person and to society is immense. The benefits of sport in improving skill and the capacity and effectiveness to perform as an individual or team in competition and numerous associated social advantages are proposed by those in sport (Central Council of Physical Recreation - CCPR, 2002). However, Bailey (2005) argued that the evidence for specific social gains was either compelling or tenuous, while the Department for Culture, Media and Sport - DCMS/ Strategy Unit (2002) acknowledged that success was dependent on how opportunities were utilised and the contribution of other measures. Coalter (2007) added that sport's social value was based on 'assumptions'; citing the lack of understanding of the concept and practice of sport and the less than robust research and associated evidence to date. Meanwhile Kay (2009) pointed out that sport's social benefits have been extrapolated from beyond the evidence-base, but that the absence of effective research does not deny sport's definite or prospective value.

In acknowledging that necessary and specific conditions need to be in place, Coalter (2007) argues the social value of participation in sport takes many forms. These include improvements in health (DCMS/ Department of Health - DoH, 2005) and education (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority - QCA, 2009). The social inclusion of traditionally alienated groups, including; women and girls, people with a disability, ethnic minorities and those affected by poverty, a factor considered by Collins and Kay (2003) to be the principal cause of social exclusion. Community cohesion (Delaney & Keaney, 2005) and citizenship (Elley & Kirk, 2002) can also be strengthened, while sport is also believed to facilitate a reduction in crime and anti social behaviour through diversionary activities and character building (Nichols, 2007).

Beyond taking part in sport, the associated benefits embrace the emotional ties and 'feel good factor' associated with the competitive successes of athletes, teams and clubs (Bergsgard, Houlihan, Mangset, Nedland and Rommetvedt, 2007) and with worldwide prestige acquired through success in international elite level sport and the hosting of mega events, facilitated in no small part by the media (Hoye, Nicholson, & Houlihan, 2010) also recognised; sport can be used to demonstrate a country's independence, ideological superiority, identity and unity (Houlihan, 1997). In monetary terms, sport has the potential to add value to the economy and regenerate communities (Sport Industry Research Centre, 2010). Money is also used as a tool to control sport, with Hoye et al (2010), arguing that in return for government funding, national sports organisations have been required to comply with the wishes of their paymaster and be fit-for-purpose.

Briefly therefore, the claims for benefits at individual and social levels have been undergoing a more thorough review by policy makers, but such underlying beliefs were clearly influential in the development of sport policy from the 1980s. It was also recognised that the participation and engagement in sport was not uniform and sport policy reflected a concern for increasing rates of participation and increasing success (Houlihan & White, 2002).
Conceptualising sports development

Successive UK governments spurred on by prevalent political principles, socio-economic and cultural pressures and the technological context; have, according to Houlihan (2005), been compelled to provide, promote, regulate, manipulate and exploit sport as it became increasingly more salient to their policy objectives. In fact Grix (2010a) argued that to understand sport is to understand British politics. Green (2006) concluded that as the power of sport to positively influence non-sporting issues was recognised, policy initiatives switched from providing benefits 'for sport' to extricating benefits 'from sport'.

For Houlihan (1997) and Bergsgard et al (2007), the involvement by government demonstrated the multi-dimensional value and power of sport to the individual and society, entangled as it is in a web of associated policy agendas designed to develop sport for sport sake and sport for good. Of significance here is the concept of policy spill over (John 1998; Parsons, 1995), whereby the benefits of sport can impact positively on other agendas. With the borders of sports policy notably 'porous' (Bell, 2004), it is inextricably linked to the concept of sport development, the purpose and outcomes of which are "to initiate and manage a process of structural change in order to create pathways of opportunities for all individuals to achieve their potential through and in sport" (Skills Active, 2005). In essence, sports development is about "getting more people involved in sport" (Bloyce & Smith, 2010, p.8), enshrined under the principle of 'sport for all' which commits to providing equality of provision and opportunity, underpinned by the concepts of equity and sound ethical practise (Council of Europe - CoE, 2001).

Defining and analysing policy and policy processes

For Green (2010, p.147) policy is "a statement of intent regarding achieving, maintaining, modifying or changing something". Context was added by Jenkins (as cited in Houlihan, 1997,
A set of interrelated decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where these decisions should, in principle, be within the power of these actors to achieve.

In reflecting Jenkins interpretation, the Cabinet Office (1999) also stressed the importance of ideology, aspirations and deeds in their understanding of policy-making as: "the process by which governments translate their political vision into programmes and actions to deliver outcomes - desired changes in the real world" (p. 15). In other words, moving from an undesirable state-of-affairs to the way things should be.

Motivated by the need to simplify understanding and structure an otherwise complex social phenomenon, the policy process can be portrayed in linear terms, as a four-stage cycle of inter-dependent and inter-related components. According to the Strategic Policy Making Team (SPMT, 1999) of the Cabinet Office, this featured a logical sequence involving social change, a responsive government intent on finding an informed remedy, implementation of the solution and ascertaining the extent of its effectiveness. An earlier nine-stage model proposed by Hogwood and Gunn (1984) would take up to 10 years to complete, but has been criticised as being over simplistic (Houlihan, 1997).

In stressing the importance of ‘feedback’, where by subsequent stage activity influences the choices made at preceding stages, John (1998) noted how the greater the presence and intricacy of feedback, the less linear these models become. According to John therefore, policy-making should be seen as on-going, with stages often occurring concurrently through a continuous learning process.

However, it is also accepted that rational decision-making models do not occur in a vacuum, as a number of influences, such as: political inter-action, personal interests and sudden or emerging events or problems will shape the evolution of policy (SPMT, 1999), as has been found in sport and PE (Houlihan, 2005). Thus, in order to understand how PE and school sport policy is formed it is important to first identify the chief influences and processes which might either 'constrain' or 'cause' government action (John, 1998).
According to Bramham (2008), ideas which form an ideology, is a particular interpretation of how society functions, its problems, what needs to be undertaken to improve it and how it should be managed.

Interest groups are the second key influence, with Benson (as cited in Houlihan, 2005) characterizing four types: those that demand or consume policy outputs; those that provide or deliver policy services; and those that give direct or indirect support. It is important to note that in addition to having individual concerns, these groups or policy communities might also have common issues to unite on, for example: age, gender, disability, ethnicity, a particular sport, coaching or volunteering.

Third and according to John (1998), institutional arrangements involve government departments who apportion power and responsibility to organisations and individuals and formalise rules and norms of behaviour. Through the allocation of resources, the framework of organisational structure from national to local level is set and is dependent (Houlihan 2005; Bergsgard et al 2007).

Finally, as knowledgeable, skilled and influential drivers for change and action, significant individuals have a fundamental role in shaping the form and content of explicit issue-led policy and act largely independently of other concerns. Assuming the role as a ‘policy entrepreneur’ (Kingdon 1995), such individuals ignite and compel movement across a particular agenda.

The Multiple Streams Framework (MSF)

According to Houlihan and Green (2006), the MSF (Kingdon, 1995) is the analytical model to best explain the evolution and nature of PE and school sport (PESS) policy. For Kingdon, the formation of policy is the consequence of three chiefly independent yet interacting processes or streams, namely: ‘problems’, ‘policies’ and ‘politics’.
Problems are interpreted as such through the context of an actor's value-laden agenda, are public concerns in need of attention. Such problems can include poor participation rates in sport, the obesity epidemic, school standards, disaffected youth or underachievement by elite athletes and teams on the world stage.

Policies make-up the second stream and are according to Kingdon, knowledge-based solutions for change supported by policy entrepreneurs, self-motivated individual specialists who advocate and stimulate agreed activity in the sector through a combination of persuasion and diffusion.

Finally the political stream, which operates independently from the other two streams and goes beyond the simplistic 'exercise of power' (Worsley, 1964 as cited in Talbot, 2007). It encapsulates the attitudes and views of the public, alliance-led campaigns and governance. It also accommodates changes in priorities and personnel, the jurisdiction of organisations and the achievement of consensus through bargaining to protect existing or add to benefits (Kingdon, 1995).

The circumstances under which these streams coalesce can occur gradually or suddenly. For an idea to catch fire and become politicised, requires what Kingdon describes as a 'policy window'; a moment in time when a compelling problem, crisis or occurrence transpires through which potential opportunities emerge. For example, a swing in public opinion, an up or down-turn in the economy, comprehensive spending review, a new government, a new discovery or enhanced knowledge.

As identified above, sport policy has been based on two agendas: sport for sport and sport for good or as Houlihan and White (2002) neatly conceptualised it: the 'development of sport and development through sport'. The following sections will address policy change by successive governments using the MSF as a backdrop.
Conservative policy for physical education and school sport

At the root of New Right ideology, a hybrid of Conservatism and Liberalism (Richards & Smith, 2002), was a conviction that the intervention of the state was "inefficient, ineffective and led to dependence on the state rather than encouraging responsibility and self reliance" (Bramham, 2008, p. 17-18). Describing how people blamed society for their problems, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher commented in *Women’s Own* magazine on 31 October 1987:

> there is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women, and there are families.....People have got the entitlements too much in mind, without the obligations. There's no such thing as entitlement, unless someone has first met an obligation.

New Right politics featured competitive individualism, self determination and personal accountability through freedom to choose, a robust and influential nation state of which citizens should be proud, lower taxes and a deregulated market for products and services. The founding stones of the commercial sector were to the fore, namely: demand and supply, efficiency, maximised profit and reduced costs, customer care, accountability and pay based on performance (Bramham, 2008; Richards & Smith, 2002).

As with other sectors of the economy, the provision of central and local government subsidies to provide welfare-related sporting opportunities was deemed wasteful and a hindrance to maximising individual potential. Distracted by what it perceived as more important issues, such as privatising certain services and curtailting the power of the trade unions and with Margaret Thatcher having no personal sporting interest; the Conservatives essentially treated sport with 'benign neglect' in the 1980s (Bergsgard, et al, 2007). Sport's custodianship was left to the commercial and in particular voluntary sector providers; while the sports development role of local authorities (LA) was left to make use of the new facilities (Houlihan & White, 2002). However, it was through PE and the introduction of the Education Reform Act (ERA) in 1988, that the New Right's influence finally enveloped sport.
The New Right influence on physical education

Born out of the New Right's ideology and for Penney and Evans (1999), the ERA of 1988 was about solving the nation's socio-economic problems through demand and supply. State schools were required to become more efficient and accountable and compete for pupils through a process of open enrolment. This was coupled with associated resources, based on assessments of schools' market value as determined by their performance on a league table and measured through National Curriculum Standard Assessment Tests. Under Local Management of Schools, it was the head teacher and Board of Governors' responsibility, rather than the local education authority (LEA) - whose remit was to oversee and support the implementation of the National Curriculum, to have the freedom to make decisions and allocate the school's devolved budget and thereby take responsibility for its performance, good or bad. The ERA also permitted schools to retain the income generated from the use of their facilities outside of school hours, so reinforcing the concept of schools as independent business concerns. In addition, schools were also given the choice of opting out of LEA control by receiving their funding directly from government as Grant Maintained Schools.

The National Curriculum for PE (NCPE) was introduced in 1992 and put the emphasis on practice as opposed to study, but which seemed to contradict the Department for Education and Science (DES, 1991) who viewed PE as a child-focused learning process to develop physical competence, with sport concerned with the activity itself. The School Sport Forum (SSF - 1988) provided further context viewing PE as compulsory, teacher-led and featuring participation and quality for all. In contrast, the SSF characterised sport as a voluntary, sport development-centred and performance-based product, driven by coaches, through competition and featuring the achievement of excellence by the few. Nonetheless and in demonstrating how education or developing people relates to sport, Murdoch (1990) cited the reinforcement model. She argued that PE was about augmenting one's knowledge, understanding, skill and self esteem through a diverse array of learning experiences, including sport. The key was to marry-up teaching expertise and a considered selection of sports in order to maximise learning and the holistic development of the child.

With McNamee (2009) claiming that PE should be about the acquisition of a range and depth of 'practical knowledge' and with the Association for Physical Education believing the subject was
about "learning to move and moving to learn" (2011): Murdoch (1990) also highlighted the sequence model, in which PE was viewed as preparing young people for sport, but which the latter was undertaken as an extra-curricular or post-school leisure activity, including opportunities to lead, coach and officiate. The success of this model was dependent on a joined-up approach involving the providers of PE and sport who clearly understood and practised their distinct roles.

As well as delighting the national governing body of sport (NGB) lobbyists, the centralised and prescriptive NCPE also had the support of the health advocates, who had been concerned by the poor levels of health-related fitness and worrying obesity levels (Kirk, 2005). Despite more flexible alternatives being suggested by PE professional advisors (Penney & Evans, 1999; Flintoff, 2008) for balancing the cognitive and practical elements (Houlihan, 2000); the government was unwilling to relent too much in championing their PE ethos of skill development and competition. The minimal input of PE specialists permitted by the government in advising on the NCPE was in contrast to the weighty contribution received from the sport and elite level representatives and reflected government's steadfast approach; a scenario replicated in subsequent NCPE revisions (Green, 2008).

For the New Right administration, PE had the capability to put the "Great back into Britain and in socialisation and social control" (Penney & Evans, 1999, p. 3). This claim was made despite PE’s status as a foundation rather than a core subject within the National Curriculum, a situation which appeared to undermine the subject’s significance. The status of the subject was also reflected in its late implementation in the National Curriculum and subsequent scramble for the limited curriculum time and resources available (Flintoff, 2003). A by-product of the government giving greater autonomy to schools, was the relinquishing of legislative power to dictate how much time was to be devoted to any National Curriculum subject.

A major shift in sport policy

A notable swing to an increasingly involved Conservative Government, took place under the pro-sport Prime Minister John Major (Houlihan, 2000; Houlihan & Green, 2006; Bergsgard et al., 2007). Despite the overriding sporting ethos of PE, he was convinced that the teaching of
competitive sport in schools was in worrying decline; a point later refuted by Roberts (1996). In the policy document *Sport: Raising the Game*, the emphasis was on expanding sport in the NCPE, through compulsory participation in competitive team games. Linked here, was the belief that once set, the nature and type of physical activity practised by children, endures into adulthood (Puhl, Greaves, Hoyt & Baranowski, 1990).

The prioritisation of sport over PE was underpinned by John Major's ambition to:

> put sport back at the heart of weekly life in every school. To re-establish sport as one of the great pillars of education alongside the academic, the vocational and the moral. It should never have been relegated to be just one part of one subject in the curriculum. For complete education, we need all of those four pillars of school life to be strong (Department for National Heritage - DNH, 1995, p. 2).

The anticipated benefits would include improved health and the acquisition of skills, ultimately leading to international sporting success. The policy also pursued excellence by financially supporting NGBs and proposing the creation of a centralised British Academy of Sport (DNH, 1995). Through this policy, the government appeared to effectively turn its back on community sport, with the LAs left with the responsibility for legitimising and resourcing mass participation (Houlihan & White, 2002).

Despite evidence to the contrary which saw participation trends favouring individual activities which were essentially non-competitive and fitness-based (Green, 2008), it was unsurprising that the revision of the NCPE in 1995 was viewed almost entirely in terms of acquiring and improving skills to perform in (competitive team) sports (Penney & Evans, 1999). For Kay (1996), the evolving social construct of the NCPE entrenched the character building virtues of the New Right, such as: 'leadership', 'self discipline', 'responsibility', 'team work', 'health determination', 'ability', 'effort', 'loyalty', 'conformity to rules' and 'good behaviour'.

Towards the end of the Major administration, the GB Sports Council was given responsibility for distributing National Lottery funding to benefit sport and this would become the chief resource which underpinned both policy-related capital and revenue programmes (Houlihan & White, 2002) and the effectiveness of sports development across the board (Jackson & Bramham, 2008). In the supposedly 'arms-length' role of the agency, the English Sports Council (ESC - one by-product of the re-structuring of the GB Sports Council) could largely dictate the who, what, why, where, when and how of opportunity provision and through which prioritised NGBs
were obliged to both modernise and professionalise. This period clearly demonstrated how the government began to realise the wider value of sport, so much so that it contradicted its own New Right ideology by increasing rather than decreasing State control and to adopting a proactive rather than reactive position.

In addition to the dominant political dogma, the drive of the Prime Minister, the reform of the NCPE and launch of the National Lottery, the mid 1990s witnessed the creation of a policy window with the fusion of significant interest group activity.

The rise of the Youth Sport Trust (YST)

When established in 1994, the founding mission of the independent charity the YST was to "develop and implement quality sports programmes for all young people aged 4 to 18 years in school and in the community" (YST, 1996, p.3). With its school sport philosophy which reflected that of John Major, then subsequently adopted by Labour after 1997; the appeal of political autonomy and that of the policy entrepreneurship of the YST's first chief executive Sue Campbell to government, can be understood (Houlihan & White, 2002). Motivated perhaps by the perception that the Sports Council was not entirely effective in the youth sport domain, concentrating as it was on performance-level sport (Collins, 2010) and the fragmented nature of the PE lobby, the Trust began to fill the vacuum (Houlihan & Green, 2006). It was also suggested the YST was set up with government support (Green, 2008). As the government did not request, commission or provide initial funding (although they were to be afforded considerable resources later), this 'support' can only be interpreted as providing no opposition. The charity began as an interest group by successfully developing and implementing initiatives which became integrated within the Sports Council's Lottery funded National Junior Sport Programme (NJSP). Initiated in 1995, the NJSP endeavoured to successfully coordinate the range of initiatives and providers (Houlihan & White, 2002) in order to establish an effective grounding for young people in sport and so contribute to the pathway of opportunities which linked the school to success in international sport (DNH, 1996). Through such initiatives as TOP Play and BT Top, the YST sought to instigate and develop predominantly sports skills through the provision of teaching materials, equipment and training for primary teachers. By providing these much needed resources, together with the TOP Club initiative to help establish junior sections in sports clubs for 11-18 year olds; the YST gained favour with the government.
Commenting on these developments, Houlihan (2000) noted that the design and substance of the NCPE was being shaped externally by the Trust through coaching templates and award schemes. Together with the involvement of NGBs and their developmental resources, sport was increasingly influencing and becoming engrained in the primary PE curriculum and school sport (Flintoff, 2005; Green, 2008; Thorpe, 1996).

Flintoff (2005), Houlihan and Green (2006) and Green (2008) all noted the growing pre-eminence of the YST and this might be explained in the belief that the extent of an organisation's power correlates directly with its capacity to dictate the political programme and whose influence is a by-product of the evolution of the policy area in question (King, 2009). As Grant (1995, p.125) queried: "Are groups responding to an agenda and policy opportunities created by government, or do groups themselves bring about changes in government policy which in turn give them new opportunities to exert influence"?

The language used in the NJSP also reflected the marginalisation of PE, with other initiatives as exemplars. The Coaching for Teachers scheme and the Sportsmark and Sportsmark Gold awards, introduced to denote the amount and quality of a school's PE and sport provision, measured in particular by success in engaging young people in extra-curricular competitive sport (Green, 2008).

The importance of expanding out-of-hours sport was also recognised by the Conservative government and supported by the CCPR and major NGBs, who were concerned at the foundation status of PE being reflected in diminishing curriculum time and influence of the PE profession (Hoye et al, 2010). In recognising that such awards did raise the status of PE and its teachers within the school, Flintoff (2003) and Green (2008) also noted the value of the awards as a marketing tool to attract pupils; a clear resonance with the New Right tenets of choice and quality. In this instance, however, it might be suggested that due to its cultural significance, it was sport rather than PE that dominated the promotion by the schools.

Additional examples of semantics were also evident in helping to determine the social status and ongoing superiority and dominance of sport over PE. The definition of sport accepted by government and its national sports organisation partners since 1993, is: "Sport means all forms of physical activity" (CoE, 2001). A later example at the highest level was provided by the Communities and Local Government Department (2008), who actually cited PE, but saw it as part of sport. The significance of discourse was stressed by Foucault (as cited by Penney & Evans, 1999), who believed that what is or not communicated, results in certain interests and values being deliberately purveyed until a dominant course of action emerges as policy text.
The arrival of the Labour government

Under the leadership of Tony Blair, the re-branded New Labour - a mix of liberalism and social reformism - was swept to power in 1997 after convincing voters that it stood for progressive politics, featuring modernisation and social inclusion (Bergsgard et al, 2007; Green, 2007) and had distanced itself from its socialist roots and the influence of the trade unions (Bramham, 2008).

The Modernising Government White Paper (Cabinet Office, 1999) outlined their intentions. to champion strategic and joined-up government to achieve goals, emphasizing closer working between departments based on cross-cutting agendas and the development of existing and new alliances by agencies in the public, commercial and voluntary sectors. Power would be devolved to empower individuals and organisations, with local communities assuming a leadership role to help make people's lives better. More choice was to be provided to support those most in need and areas of under provision through a transition from equality, considered by Talbot (1990) to be restrictive, unworkable and ineffective; to social inclusion.

Prioritising education and sport

In 1997, Tony Blair's election manifesto viewed people as the supreme asset and pledged that quality education would be the priority to fulfil individual potential (as it would for the Party's two further terms in office). Within this context, school sport and not PE was seen as underpinning the broadening of participation and for distinguishing and sustaining sporting excellence (as cited in Dale, 2000). On the face of it, the manifesto re-affirmed the commitment expressed in Sport: Raising the Game to high level performance and international success, but, in stressing the importance of
'participation', there appeared to be a clear desire for sport involvement for the masses and a resonance with this theme penned in *England, the sporting nation* (ESC, 1997).

However, the 'sport for all' philosophy could be interpreted as the way of increasing the likelihood that more talented performers would emerge. For Penney (1999), the change in government did not see a change in attitude to PE, as it was still considered by the politicians and the media to be about developing international sporting excellence rather than education.

Building on the report of Policy Action Team 10 (DCMS, 1999) which purportedly ratified the social importance of sport and founded on *fairness* through the elimination of disadvantage and discrimination; *A Sporting Future for All* (DCMS, 2000), aspired to provide accessible opportunities for every member of society to either 'play', 'lead' and/or 'manage' sport. Notwithstanding, the principal thrust of the policy document was sport for sport, with particular regard to young people and the role of schools in developing the elite-level framework (Bergsgard et al, 2007). In his foreword, Tony Blair, considered by Houlihan and Green (2006) to be a key driver, made it clear that sport within education was the dominant area of interest:

> 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 (DCMS, 2000, p. 2).

This centrality of sport featured the improvement of school sports facilities and local networks of schools raising standards and disseminating good practise in PESS through increased opportunities during and after school, coaching and competition (DCMS, 2000). For Houlihan and White (2002), Flintoff (2003) and King (2009), the success of the YST and the influence of Sue Campbell on government directives, meant that *A Sporting Future for All* placed sport in education at the hub of sports development policy. Whist improving provision in terms of facilities and equipment to foster effective teaching and learning was laudable; it remained worrying, nonetheless, to acknowledge that there was no accepted industry standard as to what represented an appropriate number or quality of physical resources (Green, 2008).
With comparing the Conservative Government's Sport: Raising the Game and New Labour's election manifesto and A Sporting Future for All; it is apparent that policy-making is evolutionary and developmental. It might be argued, therefore, that there is no such thing as a pure or original policy. "Policy development is a process that simultaneously is shaped by, occurs in and at the same time further defines the policy context" (Penney, 2008, p.36). Bloyce and Smith (2010) concur, believing that at conception all policies are issue-led, but then tend to evolve and change as a consequence of dominant human and institutional interaction and self interest. Through a process of slippage, what is eventually implemented is an adaption of the original policy (Green, 2008).

This final point was exemplified by further revisions to the NCPE in 2000 and 2008. Despite PE teachers being afforded more flexibility to integrate a wider choice of fitness-based physical activities to combat the burgeoning problem of obesity (DoH, 2002; Green, 2008); New Labour's ideology seemed to extrapolate the New Right's commitment to performance sport (Penney, 2001 & 2006; Flintoff, 2005). Hoye et al (2010) concluded that although present day PE accommodates the twin priorities of elitism and universalism, the weighting was very much in favour of the former. For Penney (1999) the writing was already on the wall, as the innate themes of PE including understanding the body's 'sensory and aesthetic qualities', together with 'spiritual', 'moral', 'social' and 'cultural' learning (Department for Education and Employment - DfEE/ QCA, 1999), were all but excluded.

The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted - 2005a, b) also concurred that PE was sport-based and commented that this was also true of extra-curricular or out of school hours provision. They also concluded that the primary and secondary PE curriculum over-emphasized games and in so doing, teachers failed to effectively cater for pupils of varying abilities. As a result, those pupils not motivated by team games and who favoured alternative activities, were underachieving by not being able to meet their individual needs.

The NCPE was also accused of being gender biased, exemplified by the dominance of competitive team games played predominantly by boys, the teaching practices of PE staff and the lack of guidance on inclusion (Penney, 2002). Regarding young people's experiences of PE, Dyson (2006) noted how PE teachersfavoured an elite minority of the more competent male pupils by stressing winning through competition rather than learning and fun for everyone.
Highlighting how sport had come to dominate the curriculum, Green (2008) concluded that "although PE is presented as different from sport, for many PE teachers, they appear virtually synonymous" (p. 19). Green also noted the same was true for pupils, with PE deemed to be 'recreational' in nature rather than having an educational 'purpose' and 'value'. Of relevance here is Kirk's (2004) observation that PE is not just delineated by the written policy text, but by its practise. In both cases it seems, sport was ascendant.

According to the substitution model (Murdoch, 1990), it can be argued that PE is sport, a particular consequence of familiar sports dominating the curriculum, a lack of clear and differentiated aims and with a successful PE programme determined by the achievement of school teams. Of course this scenario rendered meaningless the intention of PE "to promote the exploration of individual potential and that all children are given equal opportunity to participate at their own levels" (Talbot, 1990, p. 102).

The delivery framework

In committing to education and whole school improvement (WSI), namely attendance, behaviour and achievement; New Labour introduced sport in 1997 as one of 10 subjects in the specialist schools programme (DfEE, 1998) and it was through the centrality of Specialist Sport Colleges (SSC) that the government's PESS policy was to be managed and delivered.

Developed by the YST, indicating their increased significance to government, via a contract with the education department (Green, 2008), over 400 SSCs were eventually established across England. Acting as local hubs, SSCs aimed to increase participation and strategically develop and resource excellence in PE and sport through alliances of school sport partnerships (SSP) and community sports organisations (Department for Children, Schools & Families - DCSF, 2009; YST, 2009). Of significance also, was the creation by the ESC of the Lottery-funded county sports partnerships (CSP), to take responsibility for organising sport at a sub regional level to "link national strategy and local delivery"; especially with regards coaches, clubs and volunteers (Sport England, 2009). The underpinning philosophy was to widen the inclusion of stakeholders, such as LAs and NGBs, in order to enhance democracy and ownership and to better inform the policy process (Houlihan & Lindsey, 2008).
Although to some extent, each SSP was a product of its own specific situation, the conventional partnership model placed a SSC at the centre, which hosted a full time partnership development manager (PDM) supported by Exchequer and Lottery funding. Up to 8 secondary schools surrounded the SSC, with each staffed by a part time school sports coordinator (SSCo) to synchronise developments in their own school and with the part-time primary link teachers (PLT) in up to five feeder primary schools (Figure 1). In 2006, competition managers were appointed to lead the development of competitive opportunities within SSPs and based on frameworks established by NGBs.

![Figure 1](image-url)  
*Figure 1. Suggested SSP model (Department for Education and Skills - DfES/ DCMS, 2003).*
This framework was not new. Based on her study of the work of the SSF (1988), an integrative model for PE and sport was proposed by Murdoch (1990). Here the needs of each pupil would be met via strategic local partnerships across primary and secondary education providing continuity and progressive opportunities both in and out of school. An increasingly self confident youngster would be transitioned from play to more complex tasks and specific sports. Teachers and coaches would work together with NGBs to design more child-friendly versions of their sport and support would be provided to identify and develop talent; a shared responsibility for assimilating the experiences of each pupil. This would result in "A blend of school and club experiences that has a planned, combined focus - a programme negotiated by pupil, club and teacher - will avoid confusion and fragmentation of experience for the pupil" (Murdoch, 1990, p. 74). It should also be pointed out that the SSP framework essentially replicated the primary-secondary cluster development model suggested by Shenton (1997), which was founded on PE teachers 'creating and managing' a coordinated pathway of transitional and progressive opportunities with community and national partners. A case of the YST being fundamentally influenced by the PE lobby as they recognised their community role would be served by this integration.

A rising status for physical education and sport under New Labour

The cross-cutting and seminal policy document Game Plan (DCMS/ Strategy Unit, 2002) also specified the importance of servicing the sporting and social needs of young people, as this group continued to enjoy precedence under New Labour (Green, 2007). Game Plan announced the launch of the PE and School Sport Club Links (PESSCL) strategy (DfES/ DCMS, 2003), an integration of new and existing opportunities provided by the YST, Sport England and other agencies through the NJSP and the initiatives referenced in A Sporting Future for All.
In Flintoff's view (2003), this government interest and commitment helped raise the status of PE and sport in schools and provided the catalyst for de-marginalising PE teachers and integrating them into the mainstream of school decision-making.

With government having no power to dictate how much time was allocated by schools to the NCPE or sport, New Labour took the decision not seen before, to articulate in explicit terms, the
expected delivery outcomes of its policy through the joint DfES and DCMS Public Service Agreement (PSA) of 2004:

Enhance the take-up of sporting opportunities by 5 to 16-year-olds so that the percentage of school children in England who spend a minimum of two hours each week in high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum increases from (an estimated) 25% in 2002 to 75% by 2006 and to 85% by 2008 (DCMS, 2009).

Of interest to this early statement of PESS volume, was its later resonance with 81% of the British public, who clearly valued a compulsory 2 hour policy (Faculty of Public Health, 2010). With the 2012 Olympic Games acting as a catalyst, the 2 hour aspiration was quickly superseded, with all 5-16 year olds to be involved in a minimum of 4 hours of PE and sport per week, with at least 2 hours available through the curriculum and the remainder accessed as after school, club and community opportunities (DfES/DCMS, 2006).

Although clearly taking a lead from the previous Conservative administration, New Labour had not only further elevated the status of youth sport through its commitment to precedent education and young people more generally (DfES, 2004; DfES, 2005), but it had also adopted a very hands-on approach by entrusting resources from across government to re-construct the means by which schools and communities coordinated a specified range of developmental initiatives.

The 5 Hour Offer (5HO) for physical education and sport

Following the 2 and 4 hour offers made previously, PSA 22 committed to "deliver a successful Olympic Games and Paralympic Games with a sustainable legacy and get more children and young people taking part in high quality PE and sport" (HM Government, 2007, p.1). The planned "creation of a world-class system for PE and sport" (p.6) was founded on the aspiration to provide 5 hours of quality PE and sporting opportunities for all 5-16 year olds available through the bridging of school, club and community settings. The fact that 3 hours sat outside the NCPE would appear to suggest that there was no spare capacity available for its delivery in a school curriculum setting and also emphasized the importance of engaging young people in
activities they are not compelled to do. Macdonald (2002), Penney (2008) and Kirk and Macdonald (2009) also suggested that the use of non school settings was important as young people possess multiple identities and they need to learn in and across a diverse range of situations and locations. This also reflected in part, Bernstein's (1990) view that the curriculum requires the 'school' and 'home' as 'sites of acquisition.' Of significance, therefore, is taking sport to the young person and fitting into their lives and accounting for their socio-economic profile and preferences.

It should also be noted that although there was evidence to indicate that something needed to be done about PE and sport generally (Houlihan & Green, 2006), there was no evidence to underpin the need for 5 hours specifically. A perplexing state of affairs considering the Chief Medical Officer's minimum recommendation of at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous level physical activity per day for young people (DoH, 2004).

According to the DCSF, DCMS, Sport England and YST (2009), as depicted in Figure 2, young people were divided into three broad groups, each of which required diverse and more personalised services in order to maintain or increase their involvement. It was also recognised that further classification or market segmentation, such as by gender, ethnicity, ability, deprivation and weight; had their own implications for attitudes to sport and the extent to which individuals are motivated to take up sport-related opportunities or not (Sport England, 2011a). With PE and sport needing to offer a differentiated service of valued opportunities to mirror the inherent diversity of young people; Steve Grainger, chief executive of the YST, stipulated that the young person had to be put at the 'heart of everything' served by a national and local alliance (as cited in Hayman, 2008).
Towards 5 hours of PE and sport for all young people

1. Two hours per week of high quality physical education for all young people
2. Appropriate competitive sport, access to quality coaching and progression to quality clubs
3. Alternative activities and traditional sports presented differently, linked to quality community provision
4. Encouraging active lifestyles
5. Supporting active lifestyles

- Sustaining and challenging the already engaged
- Fully engaging the partially engaged
- Engaging those not yet engaged

**Notes:**

- **1:** Two hours per week of high quality physical education for all young people
- **2:** Appropriate competitive sport, access to quality coaching and progression to quality clubs
- **3:** Alternative activities and traditional sports presented differently, linked to quality community provision
- **4:** Encouraging active lifestyles
- **5:** Supporting active lifestyles

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