The report evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of physical education in a small sample of primary and secondary schools between 2005 and 2008 and reports on the impact of the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links strategy.

- Part A focuses on physical education, and identifies good practice in achievement, provision and leadership.
- Part B discusses what needs to be tackled by providers of physical education as we move towards 2012 and beyond.

The survey suggests that physical education is showing an improving trend in standards, achievement, provision and leadership. Government funding from 2003 has placed a greater and sustained focus on physical education and school sport and this has paid dividends for large numbers of young people throughout England. Teachers in all phases, but particularly in primary schools, have benefited from increased opportunities for professional development which, in turn, have led to the improving trend in teaching and standards observed in the schools.

Pupils' achievement was good or outstanding in two thirds of the primary schools visited and just over three quarters of the secondary schools. Unvalidated teacher assessments show that standards in primary schools are now at expected levels for the majority of pupils; standards at Key Stage 3 have been rising steadily over the three-year survey period, although the proportion reaching the higher National Curriculum levels remains below that of other non-core subjects. Standards in GCSE and A level physical education have also been improving, with no attainment gap between boys and girls. The number of students taking GCSE and A level dance has increased, although this is still relatively low.

Many of the schools visited had increased curriculum time for physical education and the majority of the schools were providing the expected two hours, except at Key Stage 4, where provision in half the secondary schools visited fell short for some pupils. Primary pupils' participation in competitions and tournaments was greatly increasing the focus on physical activity as part of a healthy lifestyle.

The vast majority of young people spoken to by inspectors during the survey said they enjoyed physical education. Consequently, their engagement in lessons was positive and participation rates in extra-curricular activities were high. Young people have had increased opportunities to
undertake leadership roles and responsibilities in physical education. Students were also being given more opportunities to evaluate and give feedback on the provision, particularly in specialist sports colleges and their partnerships.

Editor's comments - [ This report is based on a three-year evaluation of physical education in 99 primary and 84 secondary schools in England. Evidence was drawn from focused subject survey visits by Her Majesty’s Inspectors and Additional Inspectors from September 2005 to July 2008.  ]  {tooltip}Reference this?{end-link}Woodhouse, C. (2012). This page title in italics . Retrieved date

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