

Anonymous NPS2 – Written evidence (NPS0033)

I've answered questions 1 and 2, details below. In summary, I believe that much greater emphasis must be put on sport in schools and that funding must be made available for sport in school and for clubs / groups to support this and widen participation.

1. How can local delivery, including funding structures, of sport and recreation be improved to ensure that people of all ages and abilities are able to lead an active lifestyle? For example, how successfully do local authorities and other bodies such as Active Partnerships, Leisure Trusts, local sports clubs and charities work together, and how might coordination be improved?

From my viewpoint there is very little coordination or working together between these agencies. The coordination comes top down from the (eg. Hockey and netball) national bodies. The focus from these national bodies seems to be on pathways through the sport to Elite level, offering provision at various levels. However, there is no funding for clubs to provide local provision of 'reach out' to try and broaden the base of sports. Provision of such activities relies on (already stretched) volunteers and any costs (eg. venue hire) have to be self-funded by the activity, meaning that participants have to fund the provision themselves by paying an attendance fee (or similar). Funding needs to be made available to local clubs and organisations to help enable delivery into the community (especially schools).

2. How can children and young people be encouraged to participate in sport and recreation both at school and outside school, and lead an active lifestyle? If possible, share examples of success stories and good practice, and challenges faced.

Sport needs to be accessible to children for them to both want and actually take part in it. As such school has to lead the way in forming habits and capturing the imagination. In my view there is a large state / private school split in sports provision with children in private schools having more hours of sport provided in school, better facilities and a greater range of activities available to them. My daughter is in year 10 and has 1 hour of sport at her state school with one after school club. By comparison her peers at private schools receive much more 'in school' sport provision and many more out of school clubs. A breadth of activities is required so that children can find the one that is right for them and that they enjoy. Again, the provision in state schools is very narrow, limited by facilities and staff. The first step to address these issues is that sport must be taken more seriously as part of private school curricula.

If a child can be hooked into sport via school then to further their participation and encourage it into adult life the provision needs to pass to clubs and community groups. School sports partnerships provided a good way to integrate clubs and schools: bringing clubs in to schools to provide coaching and putting in place pathways from school to clubs if children want to continue. Sadly, this is no longer in place. Many clubs have little funding to provide this kind of integration.

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