The Routledge Handbook of Primary Physical Education goes further than any other book in exploring the specific theoretical and practical components of teaching PE at the primary or elementary school level. As the most comprehensive review of theory, research and practice in primary PE yet published, it represents an essential evidence-based guide for all students, researchers and practitioners working in this area.

Written by a team of leading international primary PE specialists from academic and practitioner backgrounds, this handbook examines the three discourses that dominate contemporary PE: health, education and sport. With case studies from twelve countries, including the UK, United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Spain and South Korea, it provides a truly international perspective on key themes and issues such as:

- primary PE pedagogy, policy and curriculum development
- assessment and standards
- child development
- diversity and inclusion
- teacher training and professional development.

Offering an unprecedented wealth of material, this handbook is an invaluable reference for any undergraduate or postgraduate degree programme in primary physical education or any primary teacher training course with a physical education element.

Gerald Griggs is Head of Academics at UCFB Etihad Campus, UK. Gerald has been passionate about primary physical education for over two decades, originally training as a primary teacher with a specialism in physical education, before teaching in primary schools across the UK. Since moving into higher education, he has published and presented widely on primary physical education and the sociology of sport.

Kirsten Petrie is Senior Lecturer in physical education, sports studies and teacher education at The University of Waikato, Aotearoa New Zealand. Kirsten has published and presented increasingly widely on health and physical education in primary schools on matters relating to teacher development, curriculum and policy and the impact of external providers. Her research demonstrates a commitment to innovative and collaborative research with colleagues in university and school settings, with a view to actively changing policy and practice.
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CONTRIBUTORS

Denise Atkins, AUT University, New Zealand
Dr Denise Atkins is a Senior Lecturer (HPE) and academic development advisor in the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences at AUT University. She is a recipient of the Vice Chancellor’s Excellence in Teaching Award and undertakes research in the fields of health education, physical education, play, pedagogy, curriculum and children’s voice. As a previous senior advisor with the Ministry of Education Denise has worked in partnership with the Ministry of Health and SportNZ and was responsible for implementing a nationwide Physical Activity Initiative from 2005–2007.

Richard Blair, Brunel University, UK
Dr Richard Blair is the programme leader for physical education and youth sport at Brunel University London. His scholarly and research interests involve understanding how a range of adults, including teachers, coaches and parent volunteers, interpret their role of working with children and young people to support their physical education. Richard has taught across a range of programmes, including competence-based degrees, both primary and secondary initial teacher education, and discipline-based degrees, including physical education, physical activity, health and youth sport.

Lisette Burrows, University of Otago, New Zealand
Lisette Burrows is Professor in the School of Physical Education, Sport and Exercise Sciences at the University of Otago, New Zealand. She has been researching and teaching health and physical education pedagogy for over 20 years. Her research draws on poststructural theoretical tools and insights from the sociology of education, sociology of youth, curriculum studies and cultural studies’ perspectives to explore the place and meaning of physical culture and health in young people’s lives.

Nicola Carse, University of Edinburgh, UK
Nicola Carse received an MA (honours) in political studies from the University of Aberdeen in 1999. Following her initial degree she undertook a Postgraduate Certificate in Primary Education at the University of Edinburgh. After graduating from the PGCE Nicola worked as a primary school teacher for eight years, where she developed an interest in environmental education and physical education. Whilst teaching she completed the Postgraduate Certificate in Primary
Physical Education at the University of Edinburgh and then progressed to undertake a PhD at the University of Edinburgh. Since 2012 Nicola has worked as a lecturer at the University of Strathclyde, before joining the University of Edinburgh in August 2015 in the role of Lecturer in primary education.

Heddwen Davies, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, UK
Heddwen Davies has been a head teacher of four primary schools with outstanding practice recognised in ESTYN inspections. She is currently a Senior Lecturer at the University of Wales Trinity St Davids with responsibility for leading the Expressive Arts and Physical Education on the B.A. Education with QTS and Primary PGCE degree courses. She is currently researching the delivery of primary physical education in primary schools in Wales.

Maree Dinan Thompson, James Cook University, Australia
Maree Dinan Thompson is Associate Professor in HPE curriculum at James Cook University, North Queensland, Australia. Maree has been engaged in health and physical education curriculum research and policy development for over twenty years. She has acted in advisory and writer roles for national, state and education systems, including ACARA and QCAA. Her recent research on assessment in PE called for in-depth studies, including student and teacher voice, to build assessment literacy capacities.

Gunn Engelsrud, Norwegian School of Sport Sciences and Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway
Gunn Engelsrud is Professor of health science in the Department of Physical Education and Pedagogy at The Norwegian School of Sport Sciences. She was Head of the Department from 2008–2016. Gunn Engelsrud is educated both as a physiotherapist and as a physical education teacher and has a PhD from the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Oslo. She has a particular expertise in qualitative research, phenomenology, body appreciation, dance and exploratory movement, gender and diversity. Her main areas in research concern fundamental problems and questions related to those subjects. She tutors PhD students and works with several interdisciplinary research projects.

Luis M. García-López, University of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain
Dr. Luis M. García López is an Associate Professor of physical education teacher education in the Faculty of Education at the Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha. He gained his BSc in physical education from INEF-Madrid (Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, 1997) and his PhD in Sports Science from the Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha in 2004. After three years as a secondary education teacher, he started working at the University of Castilla-La Mancha. He also teaches in different postgraduate and master’s courses. His main research lines are teaching games for understanding and the development of personal and social responsibility through sport. At the moment he is head of the Music, Arts Education and Physical Education Department of the UCLM. Dr. García López has developed a parallel work of coaching that has enriched his research work. His collaboration with Albacete Balompié S.A.D. deserves special mention, where as well as coaching he has participated in the training of coaches and relations with parents. He volunteers in training programs with children and adults at risk of social exclusion.

Robyne Garrett, University of South Australia, Australia
Robyne Garrett teaches in the areas of physical education, dance and coaching methodologies. Her research interests include health and physical education teacher training and pedagogy,
gender and physical activity, dance, mobility and ageing, pedagogies for justice and wellbeing of university students. She leads a project titled ‘Provision of creative and body based learning professional development program’. She has published in the *Handbook of Physical Education Pedagogies*, *European Physical Education Review*, *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, *Asia-Pacific Journal of Health*, *Sport Physical Education* and *International Journal of Inclusive Education*.

**Gerald Griggs, UCFB Etihad Campus, UK**

Gerald Griggs is Head of Academics at UCFB Etihad Campus, UK. Gerald has been passionate about primary physical education for over two decades, originally training as a primary teacher with a specialism in physical education, before teaching in primary schools across the UK. Since moving into higher education, he has published and presented widely on primary physical education and the sociology of sport.

**David Gutiérrez, University of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain**

Dr. David Gutiérrez is an Associate Professor of physical education teacher education in the Faculty of Education at Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha. He obtained his BS in physical education from INEF de Madrid (Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, 1997) and his PhD in Sport Sciences from Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha. His current research focuses on training and professional development of physical education teachers and model-based physical education, especially in game-based approaches and the sport education model. Dr. Gutiérrez has been a member of the AIESEP since 2006 and of the Teaching Games for Understanding Special Interest Group since 2012. David is currently chair of this international organization, whose mission is to promote and support game-based approaches to teaching and coaching.

**Helen Ives, University of Bedfordshire, UK**

Dr Helen Ives has a background that spans the public, private and voluntary sectors: leading a national governing body and positions with Sport England as well as six years as a Partnership Development Manager in schools. This latter role focused on improving the quality and quantity of physical education in primary, secondary and special schools. Helen is currently a Senior Lecturer at the University of Bedfordshire, and her focus of study is the transmission, transformation and realisation of physical education and sport policy in schools.

**Mike Jess, University of Edinburgh, UK**

Mike Jess is Senior Lecturer in the Institute of Sport, Physical Education and Health Sciences. He is Director of the Developmental Physical Education Group (DPEG), a group of teacher educators, teachers and researchers whose focus is innovation in primary physical education curriculum, pedagogy, professional learning and policy. His personal interests focus on the relationship between complexity thinking, ecological perspectives and practice and, more recently, how self-study and practitioner inquiry can support long-term professional learning. He was previously joint director of the Scottish Primary Physical Education Project, a £6 million project set up to help over 1,000 primary teachers across Scotland develop a specialism in physical education. He is an honoured member of the Association for Physical Education.

**Jeanne Keay, Leeds Beckett University, UK**

Jeanne Keay is PVC at Leeds Beckett University, UK. Her research centres around physical education, CPD and communities of practice.
**Contributors**

**Kate Kernaghan, Leamington Primary School, New Zealand**
Kate Kernaghan is a new entrant teacher at Leamington Primary. In her second year as a generalist teacher Kate draws on her experiences of the teaching as inquiry approach, explored in her MTchlN, to inform her understanding and practices of physical education, alongside the seven other learning areas she is responsible for teaching.

**Ermis Kyriakides, University of Cyprus, Cyprus**
Ermis Kyriakides holds a PhD in physical education from the Department of Education of the University of Cyprus. His research interests lie in the field of teaching effectiveness in physical education in primary schools. He is interested in exploring how teacher behaviours, and especially teaching practices (both generic and content specific), can influence student learning in physical education.

**Julia Lawrence, University of Hull, UK**
Dr Julia Lawrence is Senior Lecturer and Head of the Teacher Education Subject Group at the University of Hull. Having trained as a teacher of physical education, Julia taught in secondary schools before embarking on a career in higher education. Her research and scholarly activity focuses on teacher training and education, mentoring and physical education. She has published core texts for both primary and secondary teachers. This has enabled her to deliver teaching and continuing professional development activities nationally and internationally.

**Okseon Lee, Seoul National University, Korea**
Okseon Lee is Associate Professor in the Department of Physical Education at Seoul National University, South Korea.

**Petter Erik Leirhaug, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway**
Petter E. Leirhaug, PhD, is an Associate Professor at the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences in the Faculty of Education, Culture and Sport. His teaching and research interests revolve around teacher education, assessment, student learning and curriculum development in physical education and in outdoor education.

**Vegard Fusche Moe, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway**
Vegard Fusche Moe, PhD, is an Associate Professor at the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences in the Faculty of Education, Culture and Sport. His research and teaching interests in education are on topics like embodied learning, movement and cognition, practical knowledge and reflective practice.

**Alberto Moreno-Doña, University of Valparaíso, Chile**
Alberto Moreno Doña holds a PhD in education from the University of Granada (Spain) and a Magíster (Postgraduate studies) in Latin-American studies (philosophy specialization) from the University of La Serena, Chile. In 2002 he graduated as a PE teacher from the University of Valencia, Spain. He currently works as Associate Professor in the Faculty of Pre-School Education at the University of Valparaíso, Chile. He has published many articles in domestic and international journals. His last book, published by Ediciones JUNJI (2016), is titled *Educación y Caos: del insípido orden escolar al sabroso desorden educativo* (Education and Chaos: From the Dull School Order to the Flavorful Educational Disorder). He currently is the main researcher in the project (Nº. 1170019) financed by the Fondo Nacional de Investigación Científica y Tecnológica de
Chile (Chilean National Fund for Scientific and Technological Research): ‘El mapa escolar como “epistemicidio” de lo educativo: comprensión de la escuela desde los márgenes’ (School map as “epistemicide” of educational knowledge: comprehension of the school from the margins). His interest areas are decolonial critical education, child education and complexity sciences, narrative methodologies in educational research and PE didactics.

Dierdre Ni Chronin, Mary Immaculate College, Ireland
Dierdre Ni Chronin is a physical education teacher educator at the elementary level at Mary Immaculate College in Ireland. Her current research is focused on the promotion of meaningful physical education experiences for children and young people.

Melissa Parker, University of Limerick, Ireland
Melissa Parker is a Lecturer in the Physical Education and Sport Sciences Department at the University of Limerick and Professor Emeritus in the School of Sport and Exercise Science at the University of Northern Colorado. She teaches undergraduate and post-graduate courses in physical education teaching and learning and outdoor education. Her scholarly interest areas include accessing teacher and student voice and the professional learning of teachers and teacher educators. Missy is co-author of two textbooks, Children Moving with George Graham and Shirley Holt/Hale and Serving Underserved Youth through Physical Activity: Toward a Model of University-Community Collaboration with Hellison, Cutforth, Kallusky, Martinek, and Stiehl, and over fifty peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. She is a recipient of the Metzler-Freedman Exemplary Paper of the Year Award from the Journal of Teaching in Physical Education, a Research Fellow in the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) America, and an International Fellow in the National Academy of Kinesiology. She likes best to be remembered for teaching children and youth physical education.

Kevin Patton, California State University, USA
Kevin Patton is a Professor in the Department of Kinesiology at California State University, Chico. He teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in physical education methods, assessment, trends and issues and reading/understanding research. Stemming from his commitment and concern for quality physical education, his scholarly interests include teacher education, teacher and student voice, teachers’ continuing professional development and teacher educators’ professional learning. He is a recipient of the Metzler-Freedman Exemplary Paper of the Year Award from the Journal of Teaching in Physical Education, the Exemplary Research Paper Award from the Research on Learning and Instruction in Physical Education AERA Special Interest Group and is a Research Fellow in the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) America. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his wife, Andrea, and three sons (Nathan, Dillon, and Brian), traveling the world and playing golf with friends.

Dawn Penney, Edith Cowan University, Australia
Dawn Penney is a Professorial Research Fellow in the School of Education at Edith Cowan University, Western Australia. She is currently leading research project developments addressing quality and equity in health and physical education, physical activity and sport. Dawn has worked with government agencies, curriculum authorities, schools and sport organisations in collaborative research and evaluation projects addressing policy and curriculum development in health and physical education, and the provision of physical activity and sport for young people. Dawn’s experience beyond universities includes sport development and coach education.
Contributors

Kirsten Petrie, University of Waikato, New Zealand
Kirsten Petrie is Senior Lecturer in physical education, sports studies and teacher education at The University of Waikato, Aotearoa New Zealand. Kirsten has published and presented increasingly widely on health and physical education in primary schools on matters relating to teacher development, curriculum and policy and the impact of external providers. Her research demonstrates a commitment to innovative and collaborative research with colleagues in university and school settings, with a view to actively changing policy and practice.

Angela Pickard, Canterbury Christ Church University, UK
Dr Angela Pickard is a Reader in dance education at Canterbury Christ Church University. She has performed, created, taught and presented dance locally, nationally and internationally in her roles as dancer, choreographer, teacher, advisor, consultant, academic and researcher. Angela has taught a range of ages and stages: toddlers, primary, secondary, further education, novice adults, older dancers, student teachers and practicing teachers. She authored Teaching Physical Education Creatively in 2014 with Patricia Maude. She has worked with young talented dancers at London Contemporary Dance School, Northern Ballet Theatre, The Royal Ballet School and Trinity Laban Conservatoire as part of her work ‘Investigating Talented Dancers’ and ‘Investigating Widening Participation in Dance.’ Angela’s research interests place the corporeal body as central to the examination. She is particularly concerned with the relationship between body and identity in dance and how social worlds shape human bodies. Her single-authored book, Ballet Body Narratives: Pain, Pleasure and Perfection in Embodied Identity, was published in 2015 by Peter Lang. She is also Editor in Chief for the journal Research in Dance Education.

Darren Powell, Auckland University, New Zealand
Formerly a primary school teacher, Darren Powell is a Lecturer in health education in the Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland. His research focuses on the relationships between health and education, in particular, the ways in which corporations and charities are re-inventing themselves as ‘part of the solution’ to obesity. Darren draws on ethnographic methods in order to better understand how children make sense of the various attempts to make them ‘healthy’.

Paul Rainer, University of South Wales, UK
Paul Rainer is Academic Manager of Sports Coaching within the Faculty of Life Sciences and Education in the School of Health, Sport and Professional Practice at the University of South Wales.

Laura Suominen, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway
Laura Suominen is a PhD student at the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences in the Faculty of Education, Culture and Sport. Her doctoral thesis is about variation of children’s movement in school. Her research and teaching interests revolve around physical education and physical activity in school and affective and relational aspects of movement.

Niki Tsangaridou, University of Cyprus, Cyprus
Niki Tsangaridou is a Professor in the Department of Education at the University of Cyprus. Her research interests revolve around instructional and curriculum analysis, quality of instruction, teachers’ reflection, knowledge, and beliefs, teacher education, field experiences and learning to teach. Dr. Tsangaridou has published extensively on teaching and teacher education in physical
education and made numerous presentations on teacher education topics at international conferences and professional workshops.

**Nalda Wainwright, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, UK**
Dr. Nalda Wainwright is director of the Wales Institute for Physical Literacy at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. She is a Principal Lecturer in the School of Sport Health and Outdoor Education and Programme Director for the MA Physical Education, Sport and Physical Literacy. She is a member of the Canadian Sport for Life Physical Literacy Research Group, chair of the National Physical Literacy Project for School Research Group, strategic lead for the regional Welsh Government Physical Literacy Schools project and an expert panel member for the development of the Australian Physical Literacy Standard.

**Gavin Ward, University of Wolverhampton, UK**
Gavin Ward is Senior Lecturer in physical education at the University of Wolverhampton. Prior to this he taught physical education across Key Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4, including 6th form, for fourteen years at a range of educational institutions, serving contrasting communities both in the UK and abroad. Before joining the University of Wolverhampton, Gavin worked as a Partnership Development Manager, commencing the strategic and operational creation of the East Shropshire School Sport Partnership and the implementation of the PESSCL and later PESSYP strategies. Gavin’s research interests lie within the exploration of primary school pedagogy, in particular, the cultural construction of movement culture.

**Alison Wrench, University of South Australia, Australia**
Alison Wrench, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer in health and physical education in the School of Education at the University of South Australia. Her research interests include socially critical pedagogies, identity work and gender issues related to health and physical education and physical activity more generally. Recent research projects include critical practitioner inquiry into pedagogical redesign for enhanced engagement and educational outcomes for marginalised students. This work builds on previous investigations of interrelationships between pre-service teacher subjectivities, socio-critical orientations and body-based pedagogical practices. She has published in *Teacher Socialization in Physical Education, Sport Education and Society, Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy, Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport Physical Education and International Journal of Inclusive Education.*
1

INTRODUCTION

Gerald Griggs and Kirsten Petrie

Introduction

Given the time constraints for many professionals engaged within physical education and perhaps more broadly still, primary education (also known as elementary education), there is little wonder that many seek quick and practical solutions in their day-to-day lives. Unfortunately, many practitioners and, sadly, student practitioners fail to understand issues far beyond the immediate world in which they find themselves. This can be due to a range of reasons such as time, effort, interest or complexity. However, with the increased expectations placed on trainees moving towards a post-graduate-level profession and renewed research interests across the globe into elementary or primary-level physical education, it is of increased importance that a book such as the Routledge Handbook of Primary Physical Education provides a secure theoretical underpinning to those studying the subject area.

Many involved in professional practice concern themselves with current policy documents such as a national curriculum for physical education, but their engagements remain at an operational level rather than at a critical one. By routing the everyday documents and the everyday issues such as teaching to a broader, connected landscape, this book will offer a deeper understanding for practitioners working at all levels. Importantly as an edited global text, it will also seek to add further context by bringing together a congregation of all the talents of those consistently writing, speaking and specialising in the delivery of primary physical education with trainees, teachers and outside agencies.

Part I: The nature and purpose of the primary physical education discourse

This book is written in cascading chapters as issues that emerge in earlier sections become increasingly situated as the book develops. Following this introduction, the first section of the book concerns itself with "The nature and purpose of the primary physical education discourse".

Across the world, most, if not all, of the major discourses surrounding and affecting primary physical education are located within the fields of health, sport and education. However, from country to country and from era to era the dominance of one field compared to another can vary. The key explanation for this variation is that at any one time a culture becomes seduced by
different texts and narratives, and thus the power balance shifts, resulting in what sociologists may
call a hegemonic relationship. This section is deconstructed into separate chapters of health, sport
and education to examine in detail the complex factors at play upon primary physical education.

Concerning the impact of health, in Chapter 2, Darren Powell provides a critical examination
of some of the key tensions, arguments and problems that arise when primary physical education
and contemporary notions of health become bedfellows. Here crucial ideologies and discourses
of health that frame primary physical education are outlined, with a particular focus on the role
of ‘new public health’, ‘healthism’ and the attempt to make individuals responsible for their own
health. This is followed by a closer interrogation of the childhood obesity ‘crisis’ and the ways in
which physical education is positioned as both a cause of and solution to obesity.

In Chapter 3, Gavin Ward explains that the language and actions of sport are enduring histor-
cical features of primary physical education. Discourses concerning national sporting success and
promoting long-term adult participation though competence in sport has become an increasing
preoccupation within the subject. For primary-aged pupils, this involves very distant, long-term
goals and overlooks immediate and ongoing understandings of different sports and physical
activities. These experiences and concerns are not limited to physical education lessons and con-
tinue well beyond the school gates. Increasingly, research is drawing attention to the limitations
of practices which attempt to reproduce those associated with sport and competing discourses
within primary physical education. Despite claims of equality of opportunity and supporting
those willing to make an effort, these practices have been argued to reproduce divisions between
those who enjoy and benefit from their physical education experiences and those who lose out.

In Chapter 4, Gerald Griggs explains that there have been significant influences upon primary
education and upon physical education that have served to shape the inclusion and delivery of
physical education within educational settings. It is evident that wider socio-cultural factors can
come to influence a subject area, and thus explanations are offered as to how physical education
has become positioned within wider ideas of education and against neighbouring sectors, leading
to highly contested terrains of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Part II: Educational policy and curriculum

The second section of this book concerns ‘Educational policy and curriculum’, focusing on
issues at the fore of contemporary developments and debates in education globally which have
a significant impact upon the learning and learners within primary school physical education.

In Chapter 5, Dawn Penney and Maree Dinan Thompson critically explore historical and
contemporary ‘drivers’ of curriculum in primary physical education. Drawing on theoretical
perspectives developed in curriculum studies literature in education, education policy studies
and physical education, the chapter explores developments in official curriculum policy, in the
enacted curriculum and in the spaces and networks that connect political and professional arenas.
In doing so, the chapter aims to bring to the fore the complexity of curriculum processes ‘in’ and
affecting primary physical education. At the same time, the intention is to provide concepts and
frameworks that can help extend understanding of why and how official policy and curriculum
practices are driven in particular directions.

In recent years research has shown that physical education in primary schools is increasingly
being taught by people other than the class teacher, typically non-professionals who have coaching
qualifications from national governing bodies and specialise in aspects of youth sport. In Chapter
6, Richard Blair considers the opportunities, issues and challenges faced by primary schools and
the range of different adults who take responsibility for the delivery of primary school physical
education curriculums and programmes of extra-curricular school sport or physical activity. The
discussion is located within the broader concept of the alignment and strategic fit of three groups of adults, qualified teachers who are not necessarily specialists in physical education, but in child development and pedagogy; adults who are not qualified teachers, but specialists in youth sport or children’s physical activity; and other adults who have a link to physical activity, movement or youth sport either professionally or as a volunteer.

Chapter 7 reflects that although assessment and standards are issues at the fore of contemporary developments and debates in education globally, they have received relatively little attention across research and professional communities associated with primary physical education. In this chapter, Maree Dinan Thompson and Dawn Penney draw on research from mainstream education and physical education to address developments in primary physical education that are linked to assessment and standards, as well as broader developments that are affecting policy and practice and thus, present opportunities and challenges for teachers, teacher educators and other professionals working in primary physical education.

Part III: Learning and learners

The third section of this book concerns ‘Learning and learners’, focusing on pupils, teachers as learners and the broader pedagogical approaches and issues that support teaching and learning in primary school physical education.

In contemporary times, too, few would question the idea that physical education can and does contribute to the development of the ‘whole’ child, and this is the focus of Chapter 8 written by Lisette Burrows. There is no question that physical education, at least at the level of rhetoric, is about much more than ‘physical’ development. It is geared towards producing whole, balanced and well-rounded citizens. There is also little question that physical education’s claims to develop the ‘whole’ of a ‘child’ have been helpful in terms of justifying the subject’s existence in schools, boosting its status and arguments for greater curriculum time. What is questioned in this chapter is what developmental thinking and practice do. That is, when we think in developmental terms and commit ourselves to developing the ‘whole’ of the pupils we teach, what kinds of consequences, both positive and negative, emerge for children, for teachers and for teaching/learning in primary physical education?

In Chapter 9, Niki Tsangaridou and Ermis Kyriakides remind us that research over the last several decades has confirmed the critical role of the teacher in student learning and acknowledges that one of the most significant ways to improve student learning is the quality of teaching. Many scholars have suggested that a key issue to achieve this is to enhance teacher education programs so as to educate high-quality teachers for schools, but the global picture here is somewhat mixed. Major historical discourses within teacher education are presented here, along with the major characteristics of quality teacher education programs. Key considerations provide insightful recommendations for further research.

Global concerns are regularly voiced about the quality of the physical education experiences received by primary school-aged children when delivered by generalist teachers. However, given that generalist class teachers are responsible for the delivery of primary physical education in many countries, significant progress is unlikely to be made until issues around the motivation, confidence and competence of those who teach primary physical education are addressed. Therefore, although it is acknowledged that significant quality improvement in primary physical education will involve an integrated process across the cultural, material-economic and socio-political arenas, the focus here in Chapter 10 by Mike Jess, Nicola Carse and Jeanne Keay is on the need to find effective ways that support the professional development of generalist class teachers in their teaching of primary physical education.
The growth in alternative routes into teacher education has resulted in an increase in the range of staff acting as teacher educators. In addition, teacher educators are no longer solely focused on initial teacher education and training. Their role extends to support the facilitation of training and development opportunities across teachers’ professional journeys. In Chapter 11 Julia Lawrence provides an overview of the role of the modern teacher educator within the context of primary physical education, offering advice on supporting beginner teachers and other colleagues through their early professional development. In addition, ideas concerning personal reflection and professional development are considered.

Alison Wrench and Robyne Garrett explain in Chapter 12 how physical education has an important part to play in improving educational outcomes, justice and inclusion in the primary sector. In attempting to understand the nature and meaning of physical education from the perspectives of marginalised students, socio-critical pedagogical orientations are addressed. To further develop key ideas, cultural, educational and pedagogical perspectives for students in relation to gender, disability, ethnicity and indigeneity are considered. A greater understanding of these perspectives reveals an intersectionality of categories of marginalisation which makes the case for inclusive pedagogical practices.

Frequent questions and interactions with primary teachers indicate recurring concerns about the lack of explicit learning embedded in primary school physical education and how many have become focused upon specific sports, games or fitness-based activities. Such activities appear to dominate planning for physical education in primary school, but also appear inadvertently to limit young people in their responses and limit their potential learning. In Chapter 13, Kirsten Petrie and Kate Kernaghan ask, ‘What do we need to do as teachers of physical education to remedy this situation and change the responses of students?’ Light is shone on how we might enhance learning by rethinking practice.

Often overlooked in educational texts, Paul Rainer examines the topic of transition, specifically the significance of the transition from primary to secondary schooling. Research has indicated that this transition is one of the most difficult in pupils’ educational careers and represents a ‘key rite of passage’ in young people’s lives. Such a period is complex and multi-dimensional, resulting in a number of social, personal and physical challenges. The focus of Chapter 14 recognises that physical education presents a unique landscape for young people which can affect them socially, physically, emotionally and psychologically and affect their long-term future physical activity experiences, both positively and negatively.

In Chapter 15 Angela Pickard argues that teaching physical education is itself a creative act, rather akin to a creative performance that is based on expertise, structure and facilitation. The notion of creativity has a long history related to educational provision and can relate to ideas of playfulness, exploration, problem-solving, purposefulness and artistic and imaginative invention. However, although global policies have continued to highlight the significance of the promotion of creativity and creative thinking in all education levels for the benefit of modern economies and societies, anxiety remains among educators that creativity is being stifled because of the expansion of performativity policies used by governments to raise standards in schools.

Part IV: Primary PE in the global context

In this section, Chapters 16–27 follow the same format. The focus of these chapters is to provide an overview of primary/elementary school physical education in twelve different countries. As discourses associated with physical education were explored in Part I and broader education concepts associated with learners and learning have been addressed in Part II, authors of the ‘country’ chapters will not be further explaining these concepts, but references to early chapters
Introduction

are signalled where relevant. In the global context each chapter includes the rationale for physical education, frequency of delivery, details of what actually gets delivered, nature of delivery, teacher preparation and on-going support and an outline of assessment practices and focus. Contributions from the different countries across the world and their authors are as follows: Helen Ives (England); Nicola Carse, Mike Jess and Jeanne Keay (Scotland); Dierdre Ni Chronin (Eire); Nalda Wainwright and Heddwen Davies (Wales); Okseon Lee (South Korea); Melissa Parker and Kevin Patton (United States); Maree Dinan Thompson (Australia); Kirsten Petrie and Denise Atkins (New Zealand); Luis Miguel García-Lopez and David Gutiérrez (Spain); Ermis Kyriakides and Niki Tsangaridou (Cyprus); Laura Suominen, Gunn Engelsrud, Vegard Fusche Moe and Petter Erik Leirhaug (Norway); and Alberto Moreno-Doña (Chile).

The final chapter offers an opportunity to reflect upon this text as a whole, and we hope that you find many different and potentially new reference points within the Routledge Handbook of Primary Physical Education.
PART I

The nature and purpose of the primary physical education discourse
Introduction

It is almost impossible to separate primary physical education from the notion of ‘health’. From policies to pedagogies to curricula, primary school PE is persistently positioned as a field that will, in numerous ways, enable students to live healthier lives. As the first line of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) document *Quality physical education – guidelines for policy-makers* asserts: “sport and physical education are essential to youth, to healthy lives” (UNESCO, 2015: 4). However, the ‘marriage’ between PE and health is not necessarily a straightforward, or even happy, relationship.

In this chapter I provide a critical examination of some of the key tensions, arguments and problems that arise when primary PE and contemporary notions of health become bedfellows. I begin by outlining some of the crucial ideologies and discourses of health that frame primary PE, with a particular focus on the role of ‘new public health’, ‘healthism’, and the attempt to make individuals responsible for their own health. This is followed by a closer interrogation of the childhood obesity ‘crisis’ and the ways in which PE is positioned as both a cause of and solution to obesity – a re-imagining of PE based on uncertain evidence about the health benefits of physical activity and the (in)ability of PE teachers to make children more active, less fat, or ‘healthy’. Finally, I endeavour to shed light on some of the ways in which the relationship between primary PE and health may actually, albeit unintentionally, be ‘unhealthy’ for some children and the field of primary PE. After all, if primary PE promises to improve the health of young people, then teachers, researchers, and policy-makers also have a responsibility to ensure that the fundamental principle of health ethics is taken seriously: *primum non nocere* – first, do no harm.

The HOPE of primary PE

A number of authors have described the ways in which primary PE, and the field of PE in general, has come to be dominated by discourses of health. Michael Gard and Jan Wright (200: 535), for instance, argued that “since its inception as part of the school curriculum in the English speaking world, school physical education has always been associated with the improvement of ‘health’”. For more than a century PE has been employed as a means to shape ‘healthy’ citizens, often in response to concerns about children’s bodies and (im)morality, as well as the real or
perceived threat of war (for discussions, see Tinning, Macdonald, Wright & Hickey, 2001). Since the early 1970s a “new health consciousness” (Tinning, 2010: 169) began to heavily influence physical education in primary schools, both as a reaction to a perceived increase in cardiovascular diseases and the idea (but not necessarily the ‘truth’) that modern, more sedentary lifestyles were to blame (see also Gard & Wright, 2001). As Richard Tinning and colleagues pointed out it, was during this time that the notion of ‘healthy lifestyles’ became a key focal point for physical education in schools, in particular the role of physical (in)activity and its connection to improved health (Tinning et al., 2001). Gard and Wright (2001: 536) also argued that the connection between (ill) health and (in)activity, albeit uncertain, “provided the means to argue for an approach to physical education that focused on addressing the problem”. By positioning PE (and primary PE teachers) as part of the solution to children’s allegedly unhealthy lifestyles – and future ill health – the field of PE attempted (and continues its attempts) to secure legitimacy as a ‘worthy’ subject area.

Physical education programmes, curriculum innovations, and conceptualisations that focus on the ‘healthy lifestyle’ aspects of physical education and physical activity have been seen in a number of countries under a variety of names. For instance, the Daily Physical Education (DPE) Programme was developed and implemented to create fitter and healthier primary school children in South Australia (see Tinning & Kirk, 1991). In Spain, Health-Based Physical Education (HBPE) became the focal point (Velert & Devis, 1995). In the United Kingdom the terms Health Related Fitness (HRF) and Health Related Exercise (HRE) have been used in schools (Cale & Harris, 2009), and more recently a Health Optimizing Physical Education (HOPE) model (Metzler, McKenzie, van der Mars, Barrett-Williams & Ellis, 2013: 42) has been proposed in the United States as a direct attempt to make students “acquire knowledge and skills for lifelong participation in physical activity for optimal health benefits”.

Tinning (2010: 169) grouped these types of PE practices under the banner of Health Oriented Physical Education, or HOPE (not to be confused with Metzler et al.’s version of HOPE – for a critical reflection, see Landi, Fitzpatrick & McGlashan, 2016). Tinning described HOPE as an acronymic pun, arguing “that these programs and initiatives are based on hope rather than a sound understanding of the significance of context in all educational endeavours”. HOPE programmes ‘hope’ to get all children to live physically active and healthy ‘lifestyles’ for life. However, whether primary school PE is an effective or even appropriate place to make children ‘healthy’ is contested.

**Healthism, (new) public health, and primary PE**

Before examining the disparate ways in which PE is understood as a panacea to children’s unhealthy lifestyles and fat bodies, it is important to look at some of the key ideologies and discourses that underpin HOPE. As mentioned previously, one of the main reasons PE is fused to ‘health’ is the long-held belief that schools are key sites to make children healthier (for detailed discussion, see Gard & Pluim, 2014). The alignment between the interests of public education and public health is not only historical, but also demonstrated in contemporary contexts by “the ease and regularity with which the work of schools and teachers is assumed by others to be an instrument of public health policy” (Gard & Pluim, 2014: 5). Further to this, no matter what the agenda of public health – to make young people more active, less fat, better decision-makers, use contraception, or not use drugs – schools are continually re-positioned as appropriate places to improve children’s bodies, attitudes, and lifestyles. As Stewart Trost (2006: 183) argues, schools “are uniquely situated to address the epidemic of obesity and sedentary behaviour plaguing our youth”. Fundamental to the connection between health and education is the *new public health*. 
Petersen and Lupton (1996: ix) coined the phrase “new public health” to describe the shift in Western societies to make everyone ultimately responsible for their health through attention to their individual lifestyle choices. Specific ‘populations’ that are deemed to be risky or a threat to public health are targeted for specific interventions and strategies. There is perhaps no more targeted population than children (possibly with the exception of fat people) who are constantly deemed as ‘at risk’ of ill health (both now and in the future), are malleable to ‘being educated’ about health risks in order to develop healthy lifestyle ‘habits’, and critically, are a ‘captive audience’ for public health and public education policy-makers and practitioners. Public health discourses heavily influence current primary PE curricula and practices, especially those that target childhood obesity (Tinning, 2010). The discourses of new public health ensure that children are increasingly monitored, measured, judged, instructed, and shaped by a range of ‘experts’ in order to ‘teach’ children how they should live their lives and manage their own (and others’) ‘unhealthy’ bodies and behaviours.

This ‘new’ version of public health that has helped to re-define health as both an individual’s right and their responsibility is underpinned by the ideology of healthism. Robert Crawford (1980), in his influential article ‘Healthism and the medicalization of everyday life’, used the term ‘healthism’ to demonstrate the contradictions in individualistic understandings of health and public health promotion. He defined healthism as:

the preoccupation with personal health as a primary – often the primary – focus for the definition and achievement of well-being; a goal which is to be attained primarily through the modification of life styles . . . The etiology of disease may be seen as complex, but healthism treats individual behaviour, attitudes, and emotions as the relevant symptoms needing attention.

*(Crawford, 1980: 368)*

A key tenet of healthism (and neoliberalism for that matter) is that individuals not only could take more responsibility and care for their bodies, behaviours, and health, but that everyone should. This is not to say that people who emphasise individual responsibility for health completely ignore broader determinants of (ill) health, such as the environment or politics, but they do attempt to replace the responsibility for managing (un)healthy behaviours as lying “within the realm of individual choice” (Crawford, 1980: 368).

In this way, healthism fosters a continued de-politicisation and therefore undermining of the social effort to improve health and well-being. . . . healthism functions as dominant ideology, contributing to the protection of the social order from the examination, critique, and restructuring which would threaten those who benefit from the malaise, misery, and death of others.

*(Crawford, 1980: 368–369)*

Not only might healthism disguise the social forces and processes that “systematically encourage unhealthy behaviour, often for private advantage” (p. 368), but also shift the responsibility and blame for ill health onto individuals, including children. As LeBesco (2011: 156) further argues: “Health as a responsibility, rather than a right, repositions subjects as at fault if they are deemed to be unhealthy, particularly if they had the information about how to achieve health. (As if it were that formulaic.)”. In other words, healthism encourages a ‘blame-the-victim’ understanding of ill health. Healthism-based HOPE in the primary school does the same.
The dominance of individualistic, victim-blaming approaches to health within physical education policies and practices has been the subject of numerous critiques (e.g. Fitzpatrick & Tinning, 2014; Gard & Wright, 2001; Hokowhitu, 2014; Johns, 2005; Kirk, 2006). Writing almost thirty years ago, Kirk and Colquhoun (1989: 427) drew on Crawford’s insights into healthism to argue that physical education teachers produced and consumed the ‘culture’ of healthism by positioning health-based physical education as a solution to students’ unhealthy (i.e. sedentary, junk food consuming) lifestyles. Although there has been a proliferation of primary PE practices that reinforce the ‘new public health’—encouraging young people to obsessively monitor their bodies, manage risks, be seen to be healthy (by exercising, dieting, and being thin), and taking responsibility—the key point here is that public health imperatives are re-positioned as problems for public education to take responsibility for and to solve. This “‘give it to schools’ reflex” (Gard & Pluim, 2014: 5) exhibited by public health organisations and various actors may be well meaning, but the negative impact it has on primary schools, teachers, and children seems to be rarely considered.

One significant impact of the intertwining of public health and public education is that the meaning of primary PE is muddied, especially when “we fail to differentiate between teaching about health and trying to make children ‘healthy’” (Gard & Leahy, 2009: 183). Even though healthism “may not completely dominate the ideologies and activities of the gamut of groups and individuals” involved in public health, public education, and hybridizations of the two, it is an ideology that “is present in all of them” (Crawford, 1980: 368):

> As an ideology which promotes heightened health awareness, along with personal control and change, [healthism] may prove beneficial for those who adopt a more health-promoting life style. But it may in the process also serve the illusion that we can as individuals control our existence, and that taking personal action to improve health will somehow satisfy the longing for a much more varied complex of needs.

(Crawford, 1980: 368)

The idea that ‘teaching’ children to make more responsible choices is a fitting antidote to fat bodies and unhealthy lives is endemic in primary PE policies and practices. However, the linking of PE with healthism is problematic. One useful context to examine the difficult relationship between HOPE and healthism in primary schools is the current ‘war on obesity’.

**Primary PE and the ‘hope’ of fighting childhood obesity**

Similar to the ways in which conflict has been positioned as a means to legitimize and inform primary PE over the last century, so, too, has the ‘war on obesity’ and the desire to create healthy, non-fat citizens. With the current moral and medical panics about the ‘obesity epidemic’, PE is frequently promoted as a key cause of and solution to obesity, inactivity, non-communicable diseases, and death:

> The provision of physical education is in decline across all world regions. Rising levels of physical inactivity, along with the substantial associated disease risk, have been described as a pandemic by WHO . . . physical education is the entry-point for lifelong participation in physical activity. Globally, many of the major causes of death connect to non-communicable diseases (NCDs) associated with physical inactivity, such as obesity, heart disease, stroke, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, and diabetes. Indeed, between 6 and 10% of all deaths, from NCDs, can be attributed to physical inactivity.

(UNESCO, 2015: 6)
Primary physical education and health

There are, however, significant critiques of the idea that schools and school-based interventions, including primary PE, are effective sites to ‘fight’ childhood obesity. For example, researchers have provided evidence that a number of school-based anti-obesity interventions have failed to make children significantly healthier, more active, or less fat (e.g. Flegal, Tabak & Ogden, 2006; Harris, Kuramoto, Schulzer & Retallack, 2009). Gard (2011: 84) contests the appropriateness of schools to fight obesity by demonstrating that school-based interventions “have a long and virtually unbroken record of failure in affecting children’s body weight”. Harris and colleagues’ (2009: 723) systematic review and meta-analysis of the effect of school-based physical activity interventions on body mass index (BMI) concluded that “school-based physical activity interventions did not improve BMI. Therefore, such interventions are unlikely to have a significant effect on the increasing prevalence of childhood obesity”. Likewise, Brown and Summerbell’s (2008: 138) systematic review of the effectiveness of school-based interventions that focused on changing physical activity levels, dietary intake, and weight outcomes reported that:

There is insufficient evidence to assess the effectiveness of dietary interventions to prevent obesity in school children or the relative effectiveness of diet vs. PA interventions. School-based interventions to increase PA and reduce sedentary behaviour may help children to maintain a healthy weight but the results are inconsistent and short-term.

Despite the apparent failures of school-based anti-obesity interventions designed, conducted, and evaluated by obesity, nutrition, and physical activity researchers, there remains an unwavering belief that PE should play a vital part. For example, out of the twenty-two initiatives proposed as part of New Zealand’s Childhood obesity plan (Ministry of Health, 2016) eight focus on the role of schools, with the majority of those targeting primary schools. Gordon (2014, para. 6–10) also argues that:

It would seem sensible, when considering the implications of New Zealand’s growing lifestyle-related problems, to place a greater emphasis on [the health and physical education] learning area, especially in primary schools where many of our lifestyle habits are developed . . . Quality education offers a major opportunity towards developing a healthy society. While the investment in health and physical education in primary schools will not have an immediate and measurable result, it will have a long term impact in the future.

Similarly, Trost (2006: 165) asserts that the “scientific basis” for the argument that PE should be used as a weapon against obesity is that “it is intuitively sensible to promote an active lifestyle for children as a preventive health measure”. At the same time, however, Trost also admits that there is “relatively weak evidence linking childhood physical activity with long-term health outcomes” (165). This second point is critical. Whereas biomedical scientists, doctors, educators, government agencies, political leaders, journalists, and members of the public often claim certainty in their knowledge of the relationship between PE, physical activity, health, and the body, the weakness and uncertainty of evidence have led a number of PE scholars to contest the notion that PE should be employed to improve children’s health and/or make them less fat (for detailed discussions on the relationship between schools, physical education, obesity, and health, see Evans et al., 2008; Gard, 2011; Gard & Pluim, 2014; Gard & Wright, 2005).

Although physical activity and fitness are generally regarded as important for adults to achieve positive health outcomes, the evidence for children lacks strength and certainty. For instance, in Jos Twisk’s (2001) critical review of physical activity guidelines for children, he acknowledges
the associations between physical activity and health in adults, but concludes that, with regard to children, “the scientific evidence on which these [physical activity] guidelines are based is rather weak” (617). He states, furthermore, that “there is only marginal evidence of a relationship between physical activity during youth and health status during youth, and there is hardly any evidence of a particular shape of that relationship” (623, my emphasis).

Gard and Wright (2005: 542) demonstrate how some researchers leap from uncertainty and “self-confessed lack of evidence” to certainty in the relationship between physical activity, fitness, health, and fatness in children. Gard (2008: 497) also describes how the health benefits of physical activity represent “a cherished cultural belief rather than an object for dry scientific conjecture” (p. 497). Twisk (2001: 625), for instance, states, “there is only marginal evidence that physical activity is beneficial for health during childhood and adolescence”, yet goes on to conclude that “the value of physical activity guidelines for public health purposes is beyond doubt [my emphasis]”.

The point here is not to claim that physical activity has no benefit to children, but to challenge the assumption that PE will, with certainty, make children more active, less fat, and ultimately ‘healthier’. As Trost (2006: 172) argues, physical education programmes should prepare “students for a lifetime of regular physical activity”. I am certain that many readers and authors of this handbook would wholeheartedly agree with this statement; that the point and purpose of primary PE is to make children physically active – both now and in the future. However, the assumption that primary PE should or even can do this successfully is contested and uncertain.

Gard and Wright (2005: 143) argue that the ‘cherished belief’ about PE is a misconception that plagues many within the physical education profession itself. This misconception is the idea that physical education can ‘programme’ children to be physically active throughout their adult life in the same way we might programme computer to perform certain functions . . . There is no magic here that physical education performs, transforming otherwise inactive people into regular, lifelong exercisers.

This misconception that primary PE ought to be a ‘silver bullet solution’ to various public health crises is not benign. As a number of PE scholars have argued, the increasingly blurred boundaries between PE and health have the potential to cause ‘harm’ to students, teachers, and the field of primary PE.

Doing more harm than good?

Mary O’Sullivan (2004: 397) notes that there “is no doubt that physical education has caught the attention of legislatures, school boards, principals, and parents with promises that we can and should make significant contributions to children’s physical fitness and healthy lifestyles”. But is the ‘significant contribution’ a harmless one? Cale and Harris (2011: 1) report that a growing number of PE researchers “feel that the discourse surrounding obesity and some of the reports, messages, policies and measures being taken to tackle it are misleading, misguided and could do more harm than good”. There is a growing corpus of research that questions the use of primary PE to ‘make kids healthy’ on the basis that it may be ‘dangerous’ to children.

John Evans (2003: 87), for example, warns that many of the claims made by obesity researchers “are at best over-exaggerated, at worst unfounded and, ironically, if translated uncritically in schools could damage the educational interests and health of children and young people”. Dominant obesity discourses and attempts to ‘erase’ the scientific uncertainty of assumed relationships between health, the body, and fatness are also “ethically problematic, not least because it may
result in size discrimination, and rather ironically, propel some people towards a state of ill-health through disordered relationships with the body and food” (Rich & Evans, 2005: 342). Many authors share this concern that the acceptance of certain health discourses by physical education (and physical educators) has an effect on children and the general public that is “detrimental rather than productive of health” (Gard & Wright, 2001: 537). For instance, Lisette Burrows and Jan Wright (2004: 91) express concern “that the identities constructed for children within contemporary panics around childhood obesity especially, are ‘dangerous’ ones”.

Burrows, Wright, and colleagues have demonstrated with clarity the ways in which discourses of obesity and ‘healthy lifestyles’ frame how children are talked about, how children talk about themselves and their bodies (Burrows, 2008; Burrows & Wright, 2004; Burrows, Wright & McCormack, 2009; Wright & Burrows, 2004), and how health-driven PE practices are “taken up in particular ways in the lives of children who find themselves targets of these practices” (Burrows, 2010a: 237). Many children in these studies expressed an understanding of health as being inextricably linked with body size, shape, and weight. My own research with primary school children has also demonstrated how children understood PE practices, such as aerobics and cross-country running, as directly relating to corporeal appearance: being thin, getting skinny, forming ‘big muscles’, and/or avoiding fatness. Children talked about ‘not being fat’ and/or ‘being skinny’ as evidence of good health in itself (see Powell & Fitzpatrick, 2015).

Concerns about the potential ‘danger’ of certain PE and schooling practices is exemplified in the research of John Evans, Emma Rich, and colleagues (Evans, Rich & Davies, 2004; Evans, Rich, Davies & Allwood, 2008; Rich, Holroyd & Evans, 2004). They have illuminated how schools and teachers had assisted the reproduction of discourses of health as primarily a ‘corporeal condition’ demonstrated by the “powerful ways” in which discourses of physical activity, health, and body size “endorsed outside schools is taken up within school cultures and can have a powerful bearing on [an] individual’s developing sense of well-being and self” (Evans et al., 2008: 399). There is also an apprehension that the identities constructed by PE policies, pedagogies, and practices that draw on dominant health discourses and ideologies may lead to other potentially ‘unhealthy’ practices in the quest to be ‘healthy’ (i.e. not fat) – especially disordered eating and disordered exercising (Evans et al., 2008; Gard & Wright, 2001; Tinning & Glasby, 2002). These concerns are not new. Burrows (2008: 14) warned that the obsession with children’s obesity and spawned practices to reduce obesity in children “can lead to impoverished engagement with physical culture”, whilst Tinning (1985: 171) pointed to the irony “that forms of activity which project such a ‘healthy’ image relating to body shape and exercise are also part of the problem”.

A critical element to this problem is how ‘health’ is framed in HOPE. There are clearly diverse perspectives of what health ‘means’ that are “linked to particular value systems, world views and socio-political, economic and cultural contexts” (Wright & Burrows, 2004: 216). However, when primary PE is underpinned by a Westernised, biomedical, instrumental view of health that positions children’s lifestyles (and lives) as a risk to be managed (see Johns, 2005), ‘other’ understandings of health (and, for that matter, PE) may be marginalised, altered, or silenced altogether. For instance, New Zealand’s health and PE curriculum incorporates hauora, a Māori notion of holistic health that encompasses physical, social, mental and emotional, and spiritual dimensions of well-being (for a critical examination of hauora and its inclusion in the health and PE curriculum, see Hokowhitu, 2004). However, despite hauora being an underlying concept of the curriculum since 1999, researchers have consistently demonstrated two key tensions: (a) PE programmes continue to exclude Māori health (and movement) customs, perspectives, and practices (see Hokowhitu, 2004, 2014) and (b) primary school children’s understanding of health continues to be dominated by biomedical perspectives that focus on the physical: eating the ‘right’ food, avoiding the ‘junk’ food, exercising,
and not being fat (e.g. Burrows, 2008; Powell & Fitzpatrick, 2015). In other words, important cultural perspectives of health, well-being, and movement – especially those that do not align well with, or may even contradict, biomedical and individualistic understandings of health – are ‘othered’, marginalised, and become invisible in primary PE.

**Conclusions: primary PE and the cult of health**

Mikael Quennerstedt (2008) argues that we should not simply throw the baby out with the bathwater, but look for new philosophical perspectives to connect health with movement, rather than relying on pathogenic, biomedical, and Westernised approaches that promise to solve the ‘crises’ of childhood obesity and its assumed cause: unhealthy lifestyles. In a similar vein, I do not claim that the failure of primary PE to increase physical activity or prevent obesity means there should be no debate about the role of schools in improving children’s health. To the contrary, it is the uncertainty of the evidence that means there is a dire need for further critical examination and to promote debate about what is happening to children in primary schools in the name of ‘health’. Furthermore, I am not arguing here that physical activity or PE has no positive benefits to children’s ‘health’. Indeed, I strongly believe that diverse forms of movement – whether it be expressing yourself through dance, taking risks in parkour, sharing traditional games with peers, or ‘building castles in the sand’ (Burrows, 2010b) – offer enormous opportunities to help develop young people’s knowledge and understanding of health, self, and others.

However, if the critiques of primary PE, physical activity, healthism, and the ‘war on obesity’ have any merit whatsoever, then it is imperative to ask critical questions relating to primary PE policies and practices. Who has the most to gain and the most to lose from HOPE in primary schools? What are the obvious and hidden ‘dangers’ of promoting a one-size-fits-all version of health that excludes ‘other’ perspectives? What is the impact on students when the complex and powerful social, cultural, historical (e.g. colonization), economic, and political determinants of children’s health are subdued and children become solely and morally responsible for their health by making the ‘right’ healthy lifestyle choices? And, as Quennerstedt (2008: 278) prompts us to ask, what are the alternative ways of knowing about health and its connections to physical activity and PE: “the relationship between physical education and health in terms of learning, empowerment, self-understanding or joy in movement as potential health resources in physical activities”?

Aside from reflecting on some of the questions posed earlier, what can primary PE teachers and researchers do? I propose one key action is for those involved in primary PE to search for opportunities to actually challenge and resist primary PE policies, curricula, and practices that draw on dominant notions of health, fitness, and fatness, especially those that function as ‘truths’, seemingly unable to be discounted or refuted. In this way, Tinning’s (1985: 13) provocative argument about PE and the ‘cult of slenderness’ is germane:

> perhaps ignorance is a legitimate excuse for some, but the silence of those not ignorant is morally far more reprehensible. Submission to authority may well explain some of the silence but perhaps the protection of vested interest is a more appropriate explanation. Clearly it is difficult to accurately determine such reasons, however, it is equally clear that our profession should speak out loudly against the negative manifestations of the cult of slenderness. To remain mute is to implicitly support such practices and is tantamount to being immorally bankrupt profession, a profession without a social conscious.

Educators can act on Tinning’s ‘call to arms’ by consciously and conspicuously ‘speaking back and speaking up’ to forms of HOPE that are underpinned by the ‘cult of health’. If we do not, then we...
face the danger that primary PE becomes simply an avenue for children to be ‘exercised’ via mile runs, boot camps, ‘fat laps’ (see Leahy & Harrison, 2003), exergames, fitness circuits, aerobics, and cross-country (see Powell & Fitzpatrick, 2015); that PE is reduced to a form of physical activity that is essentially valued for its ability to “burn lots of calories, an idea that surely derives from the vision of the body as a machine, rather than a serious consideration with the social, cultural and emotional lives of children” (Gard & Wright, 2005: 122), and critically, that the educative purpose and potential of primary PE may be obscured, even lost.

References


Darren Powell


Introduction

The language and actions of sport are enduring historical features of primary physical education (Jess, McEvilly & Carse, 2016). Although this chapter will draw primarily from examples of primary physical education in the UK, research which reports from other parts of the world suggest that the issues I will raise here are global in nature (Hardman & Marshall, 2006). In England, for example, discourses concerning national sporting success, combating sedentary lifestyles and reducing obesity are now prominent within primary physical education (Griggs, 2015; Petrie, 2016). Indeed, promoting health and long-term adult participation through competence in sport has become an increasing preoccupation within the subject (cf. DfEE/QCA, 1999; DfE, 2013; Larsson & Redelius, 2008; Svendsen & Svendsen, 2016). For primary-aged pupils this involves very distant, long-term goals and overlooks their immediate and ongoing understandings of different sports and physical activities (Ward, 2016). These experiences and concerns are not limited to physical education lessons and continue well beyond the school gates. Increasingly, research is drawing attention to the limitations of practices which attempt to reproduce those associated with sport and health within primary physical education (Ward & Quennerstedt, 2014, 2015). Despite claims of equality of opportunity and supporting those willing to make an effort, these practices have been argued to reproduce divisions between those who enjoy and benefit from their physical education experiences and those who lose out (Kirk, 2010).

Traditional competitive sport is essentially exclusive in its nature by its delineation of particular bodies, forms of human endeavour and conceptions of success. For those whose competencies are valued by sport, the prevailing practices of physical education permit the accrual of success (Hay & lisahunter, 2006). Conversely, for others physical education can be a limiting, contradictory and sometimes humiliating aspect of their compulsory schooling (Garrett & Wrench, 2007). When physical education reproduces the exclusivity of sport, particular tensions are created for a subject that is tasked with operating within educational values of equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion. In this chapter I aim to consider some of these tensions and attempt to develop a rationale for the potential offered by reconceptualising the subject as a part of movement culture (Crum, 1993). From this perspective primary physical education lessons become joint spaces of knowledge construction, constituting their own movement cultures. Such a position helps to recognise the many different ways people realise human movement and enables pedagogy to be...
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concerned with the development of critical consumers, and importantly, creators of movement culture (Crum, 1993). In this way the immediate and ongoing understandings of sports which pupils develop both within and beyond the school gates can be recognised, rather than distant, long-term adult goals (Ward, 2014).

Problematising performing at sports

Whether it is delivering test results or offering other forms of cultural capital, all subjects have to earn their place on school curricula (Tinning, 2012). In primary physical education this capital is primarily about developing the required physical fitness, skills and psychological attributes to participate in sports (DfE, 2013). For classroom subjects the nature of this cultural capital has been readily defined through the existence of agreed bodies of knowledge, such as mathematics, science and English. For physical education, sport, as a prominent part of cultural life, has become its subject matter (Kirk, 2001). As a result physical education and sport are considered one of the same. It is the practices of sport which have thus had a historical and highly influential role in the construction of pedagogical practices in physical education (Petrie, 2016; Svendsen & Svendsen, 2016). Bodily performance obtained through training and the development of character have consequently come to dominate knowledge construction within the subject (Evans, Davies & Rich, 2009; Walseth, Aartun & Engelsrud, 2015). This convenient home for physiological and psychological discourses has been legitimated by the prevalence of dualistic understandings of knowledge (Quay, 2014; Stolz, 2014). These place the education of the mind as quantifiably more important than physical exertions in the school hall and playground. Despite contemporary concerns about childhood inactivity and obesity, pupil attainment in the classroom continues to educationally out-trump the cultural capital traditionally offered by sport (Sloan, 2010). The education and development of intellect are consequently left to more serious classroom-based subjects (Ennis, 2006; Griggs, 2015; Kirk, 2010). Although competencies in sports are considered useful, they have played a historically peripheral supporting role in the broader schooling of pupils (Carr, 1997).

In aiming to achieve these utilitarian ends, physical education has drawn predominantly from psychology and biomechanics to analyse both sports and child development (cf. Gallahue & Ozmun, 2006). In doing so, the primary age range has become identified as the window of receptiveness to learn key movement skills (Platovet et al., 2016). This follows a historical tradition extending back to the early 20th century. In this period physical education consisted of physical training, constituted through drills from Swedish and German gymnastics (Kirk, 2010). Such schools of thought persist within the subject and now argue that by developing individual competency in motor skills, pupils develop self-confidence. It is argued that this in turn, increases the likelihood of continued engagement in physical activity (Bryant, Duncan & Birch, 2013; Kalaja, Jaakkola, Liukkonen & Digelidis, 2011). The first building block in this motor competence has been conceptualised into the accrual of Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS), e.g. catching, throwing, running and jumping (Steps PD, 2004; Gallahue & Donnelly, 2003). These are believed to be the necessary core skills of mainstream sporting activities. Their mastery is therefore considered a significant determinate of participation in organised sport (Jefferson-Buchanan, 2016; van Beurden et al., 2003).

Research into this field of primary physical education has aimed to prove causal relationships between pupils completing specialised FMS programmes, their increased motor proficiency and their increased probability in participating in sports (cf. Bremer & Cairney, 2016). The positioning of this research draws from a hierarchical approach to human development (Silcock, 2013). As a result a logical and at first rational order of stages of physical and psychological
milestones is produced, and as a consequence, the body and mind become separate domains to be trained. However, the many different human meanings derived from participation in sports become reduced to techniques to be mastered and habits of mind to be developed (Stolz, 2014). These reductionist positions commit what Sicilia-Camacho and Brown (2008: 99) refer to as the “de-personification and de-subjectification of the learning and teaching process.” It implies that meaningfulness obtained through participation in these sports is limited when these physical and psychological skills are not re-enacted proficiently. However, meaningfulness can actually be obtained in many different ways, such as being with friends or experiencing your body in a different way beyond everyday routines (Stolz, 2014). Skilfulness is one aspect of this meaningfulness and develops over a prolonged period through ongoing experiences. These are not necessarily limited to sport and physical education contexts. Indeed, learning to be skilful is rarely a linear and uniform process (Millar et al., 2016; Smith, 2016; Tinning, 2015). Therefore, what at first seems a logical and rational approach to physical education actually ignores the fact that pupils are already in the world and are accruing many different ways of obtaining meaning from physical activities. Reductionist approaches to learning in primary physical education unfortunately act to limit our understanding and responses to the often complex and multifaceted development of human beings. Therefore, rationalising the need to practice overarm throwing to 5-year-olds because it is essential to play rounders is more problematic than at first it might seem.

Sports skills privilege particular ways of moving which are a function of intersections between gender, class and ethnicity (Azzarito & Solomon, 2005). Normalising human action into FMS ignores the human materialities of learning, the different desires, interests and identities pupils explore in day-to-day learning (Larsson & Quennerstedt, 2012). In committing to the utilitarian ends of learning FMS, pupils are essentially being disciplined to move in particular gendered, classed and raced ways of moving in order to fit into similarly socioculturally defined sports (Kirk, 1999). As a consequence certain types of bodies become desirable for particular sports, in particular, mesomorphic, powerful, slim and flexible bodies (Wright, 2000). Bodies not meeting such criteria or not fitting normalised ways of moving can become labelled as unsporting and even considered a risk to poor health (Quennerstedt, 2008; Webb, Quennerstedt & Öhman, 2008; Wrench & Garrett, 2015).

Privileging the subject matter of FMS commits primary pupils to mastering normalised, adult ways of moving. This commitment positions pupils as ‘unknowing’ and deficient by placing sport skills ahead of pupils’ immediate ongoing concerns (Larsson & Quennerstedt, 2012). Although these concerns might involve developing skilfulness, the latter may actually involve many other dimensions; for example, being skilful at navigating the social challenges of playing a game or adapting rules to make an activity inclusive by matching the sociocultural and environmental context in which it is being played. In tasking itself with preparing young pupils for a very distant adult future, primary physical education actually risks overlooking the many other possible experiences pupils can explore by doing different sports and variations of these sports. Rather than supporting teachers to ‘be with’ their pupils during their exploration of ongoing immediate experiences of sports, these reductionist positions on learning and knowledge ‘leap in’ for and ‘leap ahead’ of pupils (Quay, 2014). When placed into neo-liberalised economies of curricula delivery by corporate agents, such approaches to primary physical education become particularly problematic (Evans & Davies, 2015). These ‘bought-in’ services often reinforce very narrow ways pupils can come to understand themselves and others by packaging these hierarchical and reductionist practices of sport into physical education curricula (Evans, 2014; Smith, 2013). When placed into schools that are founded upon educational values of equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion, the presence of these discourses creates serious tensions within the subject (Ward & Quennerstedt, 2014, 2015).
Finding a place for education while participating in sports

In order to navigate tensions between education and the narrow performativity of sport, government and professional bodies predominantly return to Arnold’s (1979) seminal theorising of ‘education’ within physical education (cf. AfPE, 2008). This is conceptualised as education ‘about’, ‘through’ and ‘in’ movement. However, in exploring this theorising, Whitehead (2013) suggests that Arnold’s framework is not as sound as it might initially seem. When claims are made that physical education educates ‘about’ movement, Whitehead (2013) argues it is “grandiose” to suggest that such propositional knowledge (Parry, 1998) in all its complexity is effectively “presented, understood and learnt” (p. 27). Similarly, Whitehead (2013) voices concerns when considering the claim that the subject can have an illustrative role for wider educational learning or education ‘through’ movement. This mode of learning essentially reinforces instrumentalism of the subject by reducing it as a means to an end. Whitehead (2013: 31) thus concludes that education ‘in’ movement provides the strongest platform. However, this is not in Arnold’s form as initiation into culturally relevant activities. Rather, it is the aspect of “nurturing individual potential” that Whitehead (2013) aims to identify the subject’s unique contribution to education. Larsson and Quennerstedt (2012) suggest such a position shifts our view towards a phenomenological field of understanding human movement in which humans and their world are considered a unified ‘whole’. This approach aims to dissolve boundaries between cognition, emotion, the body and the environment and in doing so overcome the limitations created by reductionist and hierarchical approaches to human movement. Physical education, particularly in the form of ‘play’, thus becomes located in a unique position of supporting a celebration of our bodily place in the world. Whitehead builds upon this position to create her argument for reconceptualising physical education as ‘physical literacy’ (Whitehead, 2001, 2005, 2007, 2013).

Is physical literacy a solution?

In adopting a monist position, physical literacy aims to reunite the separation of mind and body in order to realise the essential value of physical education (Sprake & Walker, 2015; Whitehead, 2013). To achieve this unification, Whitehead (2013) articulates the universal importance of interaction with the environment through movement, as an embodied aspect of our humanity which must never be overlooked or denied. However, Larsson and Quennerstedt (2012) argue such an approach is limited to an exclusively philosophical understanding of human movement. Physical literacy becomes less useful because it simply swaps a dualist position (mind/body) with a monist (unified whole) position. Monist or phenomenological theorising of the body foregrounds humans ahead of sociocultural influence, rather than being “mutually entangled in a simultaneous process” (Larsson & Quennerstedt, 2012: 294). By doing so “physical literacy does not break free from a notion of a pre- or non-discursive commonly shared body” (Larsson & Quennerstedt, 2012: 294). Developing physically literate pupils requires the development of competence and efficiency in moving (Whitehead, 2013). As a consequence, the debate spirals back to the tensions created when dominant ways of moving are privileged (Larsson & Quennerstedt, 2012; Barad, 2003; Colebrook, 2000). Research into the consequences of privileging patriarchal ways of moving consistently reveals the dangers created by objectifying particular bodily discourses within physical education practices (Evans et al., 2009). This research helps to shed light upon the role of physical education as a site of ‘meaning making’ that has consequences beyond failing to learn how to throw overarm or jump. It also helps us to understand physical education as a site of “recognition, rejection and despair among teachers, peers and friends” (Evans et al., 2009: 402).
Navigating the sport–physical education interface

When working with diverse classes of pupils, providing equality of opportunity whilst also reproducing the tradition practices of competitive sport produces significant tensions for primary physical education (Ward & Quennerstedt, 2014, 2015). As a result the subject has bumped and bashed pupils into its subject material – sometimes faithfully reproducing sport practices and at other times rejecting competition and performativity in favour of child-centred educational ideology (Paul, 1996; Quay, 2014). Such a testing relationship has created an interface between physical education and sport that is characterised by a mixture of conflation, pedagogical ambiguity and friction (Nyberg & Larsson, 2014). For example, in the UK the recent iteration of the National Curriculum for Primary Physical Education (NCPPE) calls for schools to teach competitive sports, particularly team games (DfE, 2013). Transforming this subject matter into inclusive learning experiences for large classes of young, rapidly developing pupils, all with varying experiences and abilities, creates a substantial challenge to the expertise of non-specialist teachers. Indeed, those in the secondary sector who are classed as subject specialists have yet to achieve widespread success in negotiating this challenge (Kirk, 2010). As a consequence, for some pupils the subject has become a place in which they struggle to negotiate their teachers’ construction of what it is to be successful (Hay & lisahunter, 2006; Ward & Quennerstedt, 2014, 2015). What is required is a means to navigate this contested and ambiguous space between sport and physical education in order to support a more coherent exploration of sport as educational subject matter (Ward, 2014).

Pope (2011) suggests that rather than retreating to educational definitions of physical education, the solution will emerge by examining how the interface can help produce mutually supportive pedagogic relationships. Indeed, the subject matter of sport and all the tensions it brings cannot be swept aside. The practices of sport are all pervading within the subject, and it is the medium that children experience outside the school gates and bring into their lessons (Kirk, 2010). With this in mind, the recent excitement and growth in academic theorising and research has pointed to the potential of pedagogical models. It is believed that these might be the means to build the supportive relationships between sport and physical education. This debate has championed, for example, the potential of tactical games models, sport education and cooperative education to generate more empowered and engaged learners (cf. Casey, 2014). Unfortunately, their value to primary physical education remains questionable, given the very limited initial teacher education (ITE) and the lack of confidence to teach the subject that has been reported by recent research (Blair & Capel, 2011; Harris, Cale & Musson, 2012; Jones & Green, 2015; Tsangaridou, 2014). Pedagogical models require significant expertise that challenges even experienced and specialist teachers of the subject (Harvey, Cushion & Sammon, 2015; Stolz & Pill, 2016). The picture does not become any brighter when limited and limiting continuing professional learning opportunities in primary physical education are the norm. These are often characterised by quick-fix approaches in very short, one-off, workshops delivered by perceived, rather than actual, experts (Armour & Duncombe, 2004; Petrie, 2016). Additionally, relying upon sports coaches, who have been subcontracted to deliver physical education in primary schools, and who are not required to demonstrate anything other than basic instructional behaviours, does not seem a realistic expectation. Pedagogical models, thus, do not appear to offer a silver bullet to the problematic tensions between educational activity on the one hand and the performativity of sport on the other.

Tinning (2012) argues that no utopian pedagogical practice exists and teaching in physical education will be contingent upon the realities of school facilities and class sizes. Recognition of the complex ecology of pedagogical practices and knowledge construction within the everyday
realities of primary physical education are gradually emerging within research literature (cf. Jess, Keay & Carse, 2016; Petrie, 2016; Ward & Quennerstedt, 2014, 2015). These studies aim to challenge ‘common sense’ or ‘folk theories’ of learning (Davis & Sumara, 2002, 2003; Hagar & Hodkinson, 2009) that appear to accompany the practices of sport. In doing so, such approaches are beginning to highlight the complex interactions between individuals, tasks and environments. These perspectives are revealing what actually might be being learnt other than the outcomes prescribed by the teacher or curriculum (cf. Quennerstedt, Almqvist & Öhman, 2011; Ward & Quennerstedt, 2014, 2015). More organic understandings of knowledge within physical education recognise how pupils and teachers collaboratively negotiate sociocultural meanings within lessons. In consequence, they offer an alternative way to consider the integration of sport and physical education, without relying upon wholesale control of teacher training and professional development practices. In adopting non-linear perspectives of knowledge construction, these approaches help to open up the many possibilities that the subject matter of sport can offer school-aged pupils. Crum (1993) proposes an example of one such approach by conceptualising physical education and sport as ‘movement culture’. In doing so, he offers a potentially useful means to achieve a secure and coherent position of integration for physical education and sport. Rather than focussing on long-term adult objectives or specific competencies, Crum (1993) approaches the subject from the possibilities different movement cultures offer knowledge construction. This avoids viewing pupils as objects to be ‘done to’ or as subordinate to the subject matter of sport. Knowledge from this perspective thus becomes an ongoing practical activity that occurs within and across school, family and other sociocultural boundaries.

The possibilities of movement culture

Movement culture is a common umbrella term within the German and Dutch languages which refers to the set of movement actions and interactions created by participants in sport, play, dance or other fitness activities. Movement culture “refers to the way in which a social group deals with the need and desire for movement beyond labour or maintaining life” and thus encompasses all leisure actions in which the human movement is the ‘essence’ (Crum, 1993: 341). Kirk (1999: 65) proposes a revival of the term ‘physical culture’ to help provide greater historical continuity when analysing the ‘embeddedness’ of the maintenance, representation and regulation of the body in various cultural practices. However, Kirk’s (1999) historical analysis of physical culture tends to privilege relations between social structures and the body, which depersonalises the embodied cultural construction of meanings. Crum (1993) seeks a more organic position in which meanings generated from participating in sports are negotiated collaboratively. Rather than following a logically ordered pattern, these meanings are generated in more ambiguous ways, shaped through the sociocultural contexts in which they occur. Crum (1993) thus rejects the term ‘physical’, arguing that it has the potential to invoke mind–body dualisms and shifts attention away from the sociocultural construction of movement culture. The creation and maintenance of movement cultures transcends institutional structures such as schools. This helps us to recognise that primary physical education is not an exclusive space for learning. Pupils learn through different ongoing contexts, and these experiences are thus brought into and out of physical education (Banks, 1993). When viewed in this way physical education practices become considered as mutual cultural parts of a consistently changing landscape in which “people realise and experience important values, such as recreation, health, adventure, excitement, togetherness, performance, and self-realisation” (Crum, 1993: 134). People act in different ways to achieve this realization, and these actions are integral to different purposes and motivations. As a result different types of movement cultures can be created; for example, Crum (1992) identifies different ‘sports’: elite
sport, competitive club sport, recreation sport, fitness sport, risk and adventure sport, lust sport and cosmetic sport.

Crum (1993) argues that as broader cultural landscapes change, so does the landscape of movement culture. It is the sociocultural positioning of movement culture that helps physical education to be reflective of the diversity of movement practices relative to different times and spaces and integral to changes in cultural norms and values. This postmodern position is developed by Crum (1995) using the concepts of postmodernity, individualisation and rediscovery of the body. He uses these to contextualise the relations between changes in society and cultural implications for the meaning of human movement to school pupils. He argues that a shift towards postmodern values and the “craving for self-realisation, the trend to individualization and the rediscovery of the body . . . have led to a ‘sportification’ of society” (Crum, 1995: 1). Within this he suggests there has been an internal differentiation of sport which has shifted a homogeneous sport system to a heterogeneous movement culture (c.f. Green, Smith & Roberts, 2005). Crum (1995: 122) concludes that this change means “movement-cultural sub-systems develop beside each other as different shops with different assortments and different internal rules for different clients, who have different needs and expectations”. Crum (1995) suggests that such change is fully evident within sport, which acts as a readily accessible “medium for the experience and training of self-determination and self-realisation . . . irrespective of their sex, age, social class and level of education” (Crum, 1995: 119). Young people seek and thrive within new kinds of institutions in which authority, and allegiance, must be constantly renegotiated, re-established and earned (Holland & Thomson, 1999).

The research field has questioned the contribution of physical education in relation to the many utilitarian tasks it has all too readily accepted (Bailey et al., 2009; Kirk, 2010). For example, Thorburn and MacAllister (2013: 463) argue practices framed as ‘exercise-as-useful, movement-as-understood and activity-as-enjoyed’ “have failed to resource students with enhanced meaningful experiences”. Crum (1995) similarly suggests that the subject does not necessarily prepare young people to become active creators and consumers of varied forms of physical activity and sports. Movement culture thus becomes a potentially valuable position from which to reconsider subject matter and pedagogy within primary physical education. Crum (1993) tasks physical education with embracing contemporary cultural shifts in sports engagement and participation, encapsulating learning with a “utility value for the movement culture outside the school [maximising] its potential to qualify youngsters for an emancipated, satisfying and lasting participation” (Crum, 1995: 116). The subject is thus challenged to embrace the wholeness of the ongoing immediacy of pupils’ engagement with physical activity. It is this aspect of knowledge construction that focuses our attention upon building rich and emancipating opportunities to explore and create movement cultures. Whilst the normativity of sport practices can define particular movement cultures, these have all too often become the long-term aim of physical education (Kirk, 2010; Griggs & Ward, 2012; Ward, 2012a). Rather than the wholesale rejection of these practices, the position of movement culture encourages us to consider the meeting of subject matter and pupils so that immediacy is not subordinated to long-term adult aims. This immediacy can be employed to build towards long-term participation, with the former being mutually supportive to the latter.

When approached in this way, primary physical education is given a licence to generate its own movement cultures, shaped by the pupils and their own experiences of movement culture. It is here that the teacher becomes a mediator to support critical engagement with these experiences, questioning taken-for-granted assumptions, in particular, the hierarchical and reductionist ‘logic’ that often dominates subject matter, such as that which accompanies FMS. Calls for primary physical education in the UK to focus on competition can thus be explored in a more
critical way (DfE, 2013). For example, there are many different ways competition can be created, beyond the binary models that often dominate physical education (Harvey & O’Donovan, 2013). Viewing sports as movement culture also creates the opportunity to challenge, rethink and re-create physical education experiences through more sophisticated pedagogical relationships with sport.

Learning as action with movement culture

In order to achieve continuity between the individual, social, physical and wider social contexts, Crum (1993) draws from an experiential, cultural position of knowledge construction. One such theory which has many parallels with this position is Dewey and Bentley’s (1949/1991) conceptualisation of learning as a transactional process which, in turn, provides the basis of Dewey’s (1916/1988) understanding of education as ‘occupation’. This theorising of education as occupation is not based upon conceptions of occupation as vocational education and training. Rather it conceptualises an experiential understanding of knowledge construction framed by our epistemological engagement with ongoing experiences (Quay, 2014). Dewey (1916/1988) argues education is not a destination but an activity of the present. It is not about preparation for a remote adult future but is tied to human growth rooted in “a constant reorganising or reconstructing of experience” (Dewey, 1916/1988: 185). Education via occupation is therefore concerned with education for ways of being that are significant for and genuine to young people in the here and now of their immediate existence. These interests can be developed pragmatically through exploration of doing and knowing aligned to an occupation in which knowledge construction occurs through ongoing transactions. According to Dewey and Bentley (1949/1991) transactions have a reciprocal relationship within which an individual acts that in turn lead to changes in the environment which continue to affect the activities of the individual. It is these transactions which characterise experience. Dewey and Bentley (1949/1991) therefore argue that learning should not be regarded as something which exists in the mind but as a collection of experiences or relations in certain events. From this perspective learning is considered a social construction, an integral part of a physical world which embraces cognitively and emotionally active human beings (Wickman & Östman, 2002). Knowledge becomes a construction which is not only in the mind but is also re-constructed and relived as we experience and live in the world (Biesta, 2014).

Moore (2011) contends viewing knowledge in this way changes it from ‘what is’, to the realm of ‘possibilities’. In other words knowledge shifts from being a noun to an action or ‘knowing’. This position avoids issues created by normalising of human movement, such as through FMS. Privileging FMS as a subject matter immediately creates an unknowing child (a pupil who does not measure up) or a knowing child (a pupil who can reproduce these skills). Education as occupation shifts our view to pupils’ immediate experiences of subject matter and to recognising their interests or ‘knowings’ of movement cultures (Quay, 2014). These become a medium through which the teacher can direct their pedagogical work. There is a danger that such an approach can slip towards more instrumental concerns by reverting to Arnold’s (1979) argument of physical education as initiation into culturally significant activities. However, adopting a transactional position on learning in movement culture avoids such risks because particular forms of movement as certainties or a pre-discursive body devoid of gender, class or race are not privileged.

That is not to say pupils’ interests will never reflect dominant social cultural discourses, such as some boys being interested solely in football. Rather than ignoring these preferences, the pedagogical challenge created by movement culture is to utilise them to explore the many possibilities playing football and other games can offer. Crum (1993) does suggest the need to develop
‘movement competencies’; however, this does not imply the objectification of ways of moving. Rather it aligns with a pragmatic understanding of the development of pupils’ capacity to explore different possibilities. These enable them to understand different human concerns and meanings generated by human movement. For example, pupils might learn to complete formal ways of rolling in gymnastics, not as an objectified ends, but as a means to explore what it is to roll in these ways and what possibilities they offer.

**Exploring occupations within movement culture**

In order to explore these possibilities, Crum (1993: 243) identifies four key interdependent strands of learning as a means to guide “arranging ways of doing and knowing” (Quay, 2014: 195):

- **Technomotor** – learning to solve the technical motor problems presented by moving in context.
- **Sociomotor** – learning to solve the social problems presented by moving and playing with and against others.
- **Cognitive/reflective** – learning to understand how to become more effective at solving movement problems through understanding the patterns and processes inherently involved.
- **Affective** – development of a positive bond with exercise, movement, play and sport.

Gagné (2004) asserts that although there are limitations to distinguishing domains of learning, such as those proposed by Crum (1993), there are three key benefits to doing so. First, this delineation enables the identification of specific curricula areas in which different instructional strategies may be employed, such as the use of repetitive drills or mini-games to develop technical proficiency (technomotor strand). Second, developing learning domains supports an understanding of the relationship between instructional strategies within different curricula areas, for example, the use of problem-based learning to develop an understanding of why similar body positions and movements are useful in different contexts (cognitive/reflective stand). Third, they provide a focus for assessing learning outcomes and thus avoid assumptions, for example, that technical proficiency corresponds to comprehension of potential relationships between tactical problems presented by contrasting types of games.

By utilising Bloom’s (1956) psychomotor, cognitive and socio-affective domains, Crum (1993) places learning processes at the forefront of the subject. Crum (1993) argues there is a balancing act to be achieved here. The risk of decontextualising learning needs to be balanced by keeping physical education at a safe distance from competitive sport to focus attention on learning within these domains and maintaining elements of fun, celebration, competition and achievement which intra- and inter-school sport can offer. The interdependent strands of learning serve to provide a useful guide to the possible arrangement of knowing and doing in order to support pupils in becoming critical consumers and creators of movement cultures. By not objectifying skills and activities, the door is opened to the exploration of the social making of movement culture – in particular, an appreciation that rules can and should be changed to support learning and enjoyment. By doing so, pupils are empowered to change the conventions and rules which govern different sports and physical activities to support their own particular concerns and pursuits (Crum, 1993). Crum (1995) suggests that in this way learning becomes focused upon the process of solving movement problems in different contexts. Subject matter thus becomes positioned within pupils’ immediate experiences rather than as a distant aim of adult participation.

Categorising learning processes provides the teacher with a framework to generate an overview of how particular curricula subject matter can generate different learning possibilities. In
Moving beyond sport

Turning, a robust rationale for selecting instructional strategies and assessment outcomes can then be generated. The delineation of learning strands, however, does not transfer into the physical education lesson. The interdependent nature of learning domains means that the use of particular instructional tools or the focus on particular learning processes will inherently demand learning from different domains. For example, when teaching gymnastics, Crum’s (1993) strands of learning may support a teacher in deciding to focus upon technomotor and affective learning processes. The teacher may decide, therefore, to use a particular pedagogical approach to support pupils in the achievement of learning outcomes connected to coaching, team managing and officiating. Preparing for and competing in a class competition in gymnastics will also implicitly demand, for example, understanding the sequencing of actions. This may be developed and performed in groups and would involve sociomotor and cognitive/reflective learning.

Putting a theory of practice to work

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 provide an example of the potential of Crum’s learning strands to support the exploration of some traditional subject matter in primary physical education (Ward, 2014). Contrasting activity areas have been chosen to demonstrate the usefulness of such an approach by drawing from Best’s (1978) ‘purposive’ and ‘aesthetic’ sports to reveal underlying possibilities for their exploration. Purposive sports include competitive games and athletic activities (Davis, 2007). These activities have clearly defined objectives; however, the manner in which these are achieved within the rules is unimportant. In contrast, aesthetic sports such as gymnastics have aims in which the means to achieve them are implicit and cannot be distinguished (Best, 1978). The frameworks presented utilise Crum’s (1993) strands of learning and an additional axis of developmental phases. The latter axis is drawn from motor skill theorising of child development (c.f. Gallahue & Donnelly, 2003) in order to place the potential of this position into prevailing medicalised ways of viewing child development. They are used with the proviso that not all children develop according to a universal time frame and merely to show progression in complexity.

Table 3.1 exemplifies the possible direction experiences may take when analysing the subject matter of games. A similar process has been completed in Table 3.2 for gymnastic activities. Both aim to exemplify the value each learning strand contributes to mapping a breadth of potential learning possibilities. The games framework in Table 3.1 is based upon an analysis of the ‘purposes’ of different categories of games (defined by their rules and equipment) developed by Ward and Griggs (2011) and Ward (2012b) which utilises principles of play, tactical problems, tactical solutions, on-the-ball and off-the-ball skills as a means to identify the movement problems rules in games create. These may take the form of broad thematic problems, such as maintaining possession using different equipment and rules, or developed into more specialised sport-centred movement problems, such as penetrating and scoring in netball. Pupils can also be encouraged to create their own games, either within these traditional problems or by encouraging them to create their own movement problems (Hastie, 2010). The analysis of gymnastic activities in Table 3.2 approaches the subject matter where movement is considered the purpose of the activity. There is potential here to layer this exploration into movement problems such as Newlove and Dalby’s (2005) exploration of Laban’s analysis of movement (cf. Ward, 2014). These movement problems can be investigated together within the context of movement themes such as travelling, balancing and flight (cf. Malmber, 2003; Werner, 2004). These movement themes become important because they are a consequence of the aesthetic nature of gymnastics (cf. Ward, 2014). Both tables are not exhaustive and serve only to represent examples of the breadth of learning outcomes which can be developed from the position of movement culture.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strands of Learning</th>
<th>Stages of Building Technomotor, Sociomotor, Cognitive/Reflective and Affective Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technomotor</strong></td>
<td>Learning to solve the technical motor problems presented by moving in context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play and Early Years</td>
<td>Explore simple actions and combinations of actions themed around travelling (off-the-ball), sending (on-the-ball), travelling (on-the-ball), receiving (on-the-ball) and passing (on-the-ball). Work towards being in control of implements and objects by developing coordination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamental Movement Phase</td>
<td>Develop experiences of travelling (off-the-ball), sending (on-the-ball), travelling (on-the-ball), receiving (on-the-ball) and passing (on-the-ball). Understand the reciprocal nature of game skills and how timing affects desired outcomes. Use these skills within simple games which provide the time and space for the regular and consistent opportunities for the skills to be executed with a recognised tactical purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialised Movement Phase</td>
<td>Refine and combine actions to develop control, coordination and fluency in a range of skills. Execute these skills appropriately and effectively in relation to the created games. Create contexts which provide regular and consistent opportunities for the skills to be executed with a specific tactical purpose and agreed outcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialised Activity Phase</td>
<td>Execute combinations of specialised skills related to specific sporting versions of games with fluency and consistent accuracy. Connect the execution of these skills with timing and effective decision making to reflect specific tactical solutions within particular phases of play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociomotor</strong></td>
<td>Learning to solve the social problems presented by moving and playing with and against others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with others to develop considerate and safe behaviour when working with games equipment, such as taking turns, creating, understanding and abiding by simple rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognise how abiding by agreed rules and fair play contribute to enjoyable game play. Compare and contrast the social demands of individual and small team games. Explore simple solutions to these social challenges. Recognise the importance of team affiliation and how including and supporting others can aid its creation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understand how etiquette contributes to an enjoyable competitive environment and how adopting an officiating role can support fair and enjoyable game play. Recognise how perspective and context can support the need for a balance between competitive results and learning and progression. Recognise the importance of all team members in solving tactical problems created by team games, and understand the social-emotional challenges created by competitive game play. Explore different possible outcomes and directions games can create. Explore the role of positive feedback, recognising individual strengths and weaknesses and motivational states can help these challenges to be overcome. Learn how to provide appropriate feedback to support more proficient movement and tactical play when practicing and playing. Understand the contribution adopting officiating, coaching, statistician and competition manager roles can play in supporting game play and player development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understand how empathy, focussing on positive efforts and strategic thinking are required to create and support team affiliation. Consider the different roles required within teams such as motivator, ideas person and team player. Work with peers to create games and/ or adjust rules and conditions to support the execution of specific skills to reach particular tactical solutions. Create and adopt different formal roles such as official, coach, captain, manager and competition manager to support enjoyable and competitive play. Respect the efforts and decisions of those adopting these roles. Explore different forms of competition and the consequences of their outcomes. Work appropriately and with independence to develop individual and team proficiency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strands of Learning

Stages of Building Technomotor, Sociomotor, Cognitive/Reflective and Affective Development

Play and Early Years Fundamental Movement Phase
Specialised Movement Phase
Specialised Activity Phase

Cognitive/Reflective

Learning to understand how to become more effective at solving movement problems by understanding the patterns and processes inherently involved.

Explore different properties of equipment and the relationship between movements and their effect on this equipment. Develop an understanding of personal space and recognise and utilise empty space. Recognise how different movements create different demands on the body.

Recognise the relationship between technomotor movements and successful execution. Reflect upon ‘effectiveness’ within the context – what can be the logics of practice (e.g. social inclusion, effective technical and tactical play). Develop an understanding of the benefits of consistency in conditions when practicing to become more proficient at particular skills.

Recognise the relationship between rules and equipment and the creation of tactical problems. Recognise basic tactical solutions to these tactical problems. Recognise the connection between on-the-ball and off-the-ball skills and the decisions that have to be made. Recognise that decision making and skillfulness are not limited to those in direct contact with the ball. Recognise the physical fitness and technomotor demands of different skills.

Understand and recognise how rules and equipment create categories of games based upon the tactical problems they represent for players. Work as an individual and with others to explore the relationships between on-the-ball and off-the-ball skills and their connection to particular tactical solutions to particular tactical problems. Recognise similarities and differences between on-the-ball skills, off-the-ball skills and tactical solutions in games with similar and contrasting tactical problems.

Recognise how rules and equipment can be altered to create games which represent phases of game play and facilitate development of skill execution and appropriate, effective decision making. Reflect upon the reasoning behind decisions made during game play and develop an understanding the cycle of information processing, particularly the role of selective attention in making quick decisions. Recognise how to observe skill execution and recognise strengths and areas to develop. Recognise how the latter can be developed in isolated and game-related practices. Identify the fitness requirements of different skills and recognise a connection with other activity areas. Reflect upon personal strengths and employ this information to make decisions over what and how to practice by devising fitness activities, skill practices and simple games. Recognise how playing games can contribute to personal health.

Understand and recognise how rules and equipment can be altered to create games which represent phases of game play and facilitate development of skill execution and appropriate, effective decision making. Recognise how rules and equipment can be altered to create games which represent phases of game play and facilitate development of skill execution and appropriate, effective decision making.

Analyse and demonstrate an understanding of the relationships between particular on-the-ball and off-the-ball skills and their connection with a combination of tactical solutions to solve particular tactical problems within the context of specific sporting forms of games. Understand similarities and differences between on-the-ball skills, off-the-ball skills and tactical solutions in games with similar and contrasting tactical problems.

Understand how rules and equipment can be altered to create games which represent phases of game play and facilitate development of skill execution and appropriate, effective decision making.

Analyse decisions made during game play through an understanding of information processing and selective attention.

Employ simple frameworks for analysing the execution of on-the-ball and off-the-ball skills to evaluate their effectiveness. Reflect upon personal strengths, weaknesses and motivations, using this information to devise practices to help develop physical fitness, technomotor competence and/or decision making. Understand how skills, fitness and the social dimensions of playing games can contribute to personal health.

(Continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strands of Learning</th>
<th>Stages of Building Technomotor, Sociomotor, Cognitive/Reflective and Affective Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Play and Early Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>Develop confidence and enjoyment of exploring the control of various pieces of equipment which may be used in game play. Develop self-managed and independent engagement with created activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.2 Technomotor, sociomotor, reflective/cognitive and affective learning outcomes in gymnastics (Ward, 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strands of Learning</th>
<th>Stages of Building Technomotor, Sociomotor, Cognitive/Reflective and Affective Development</th>
<th>Specialised Movement Phase</th>
<th>Specialised Activity Phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technomotor</strong></td>
<td>Early Years Play</td>
<td>Fundamental Movement Skills Phase</td>
<td>Specialised Movement Phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning to solve the technical motor problems presented by moving in context.</td>
<td>Explore simple actions and combinations of actions which enable the exploration of the key movement themes.</td>
<td>Explore space around the self and apparatus to develop and combine actions. Explore movement sentences that attempt to reflect movement themes and compositional concepts of directions, levels and speeds. Develop an understanding of criteria for judging the quality of actions.</td>
<td>Refine and combine actions to develop more specialised gymnastic actions; part of or whole actions, including e.g. partial or full inversion of the body. Demonstrate movement sentences which explore space around the self, others and apparatus to show a breadth of understanding across the movement themes and compositional concepts. Exhibit varied changes in body tension, control, co-ordination and fluidity of movement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociomotor</strong></td>
<td>Early Years Play</td>
<td>Fundamental Movement Skills Phase</td>
<td>Specialised Movement Phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning to solve the social problems presented by moving and playing with and against others.</td>
<td>Exhibit considerate and safe behaviour when working with others within a gymnastic environment. Contribute to agreed working conditions; abide by these codes of conduct. Share movement ideas with others and support others in their enjoyment of gymnastic movement.</td>
<td>Work individually and in small groups to explore solutions to simple movement problems. Apply some criteria for quality. Develop an understanding of the roles listening and speaking play in supporting communication in the exchange and development of ideas. Work with others to handle and share apparatus safely and considerately.</td>
<td>Work individually and with others to create and solve movement problems. Demonstrate an understanding of how to work effectively with others to share and build upon ideas, selecting and developing appropriate solutions which match individual abilities. Develop an understanding of how to provide feedback to support the development of movement quality. Understand and adopt different roles within an intra-class project such as a display to other year groups. Develop an understanding of how movement solutions and the immediate environment can be adjusted to support safety, learning and enjoyment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strands of Learning</td>
<td>Stages of Building Technomotor, Sociomotor, Cognitive/Reflective and Affective Development</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive/Reflective</td>
<td>Early Years Play</td>
<td>Fundamental Movement Skills Phase</td>
<td>Specialised Movement Phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognise differences between movement themes and begin to associate recognised terms to describe these movements. Recognise how movements can be sequenced to enable the safe exploration of the movement themes. Reflect upon the challenges different types of movement present.</td>
<td>Begin to understand the differences between movement themes and connect key vocabulary to movements within them. Build a working knowledge of quality by reviewing your own and others’ work. Recognise how the sequencing of movements can enable the fluid exploration of the movement themes. Understand how body tension and momentum can be used to create different body shapes and qualities of movement. Recognise the role of different types of fitness in supporting the body in exploring gymnastic movement and enabling the safe lifting and carrying of apparatus.</td>
<td>Develop an understanding of the key features of particular body positions and movements which enable fluid and aesthetic movement within and between the movement themes. Understand the decisions required to develop movement sentences which explore the movement themes and compositional concepts. Begin to employ this understanding to improve personal and peer movement proficiency. Understand the key components of physical fitness which support the body in exploring gymnastic movement and enable the safe lifting and carrying of apparatus. Recognise the connections between the movement requirements within gymnastics and other activity areas. Recognise the potential gymnastic movement can contribute to health.</td>
<td>Apply understanding of body positions and movements that demonstrate fluid and aesthetic movement to support the quality of movement of the self and others. Reflect upon and explore the decisions required to develop complex movement sentences which explore different movement themes and compositional concepts. Design a set of criteria from which to judge performed sequences. Understand the connections between the movement requirements within gymnastics and other activity areas. Understand how gymnastic movement can contribute to wellbeing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>Develop confidence and enjoyment from exploring space around the self, apparatus and others. Rise to the challenge of solving and refining movement problems, taking pride in the demonstration of solutions reached.</td>
<td>Demonstrate perseverance in engaging with the creation of movement sentences individually and with others. Take ownership and care of individual and group movement solutions and perform these solutions to others. Recognise how learning within gymnastics can be applied to other environments within the local community. Reflect upon factors which affect motivations to engage with these opportunities.</td>
<td>Demonstrate a desire to work independently and in groups to develop movement sentences for an intra-class event. Adopt different roles in this event to help its smooth running. Perform work in front of larger groups and identify where in the local community learning and participation can be continued. Reflect upon personal experiences of gymnastics within the community, analysing the strengths and weaknesses of structures involved in this provision. Explore how potential barriers to participation and enjoyment may be overcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing a positive bond with exercise, movement, play and sport.</td>
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</table>
It is the analysis of subject matter in relation to its pedagogical possibilities and then transformation into lesson material that enables learning as ‘occupation’ within movement culture to become realised. The learning strands act as portable structures to support teachers in realising the many different possibilities exploring sports can offer. This helps to dissolve the dominance and exclusivity of traditional competitive sports. Analysing sports from the perspective of movement culture takes this exclusivity and creates a purposeful licence to change the form of sports. By exploring the many possibilities sport offers and critiquing taken-for-granted practices, the nature of the subject matter being explored can be conjoined with pupils’ own knowings. In this way primary physical education becomes more about human growth, rather than being dominated by chronologically and socioculturally normalised ways of moving.

Summary

The terrain between sport and physical education is complex and contested. Within this terrain educational values of diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity clash with the exclusivity and normalising practices of sport. As the subject matter of primary physical education, sport has come to dominate the subject, in particular, the notion that pupils require FMS in order to access movement culture. These types of approaches to the subject are based upon hierarchical and reductionist thinking about developing children and sport as subject matter. In adopting such perspectives the sociocultural complexity which creates our diverse engagement in physical activities is overlooked. This results in the favouring of privileged ways of moving. Attempts have been made to widen our view of the educational value of primary physical education through the theorising of physical literacy. However, these attempts continue to legitimate the reproduction of raced, classed and gendered ways of moving. In this chapter I have examined an alternative to such ways of thinking that conceptualises physical education within movement culture. I have explored the potential of this position to secure a coherent position of integration for physical education and sport. This exploration has revealed how movement culture draws from Deweydian thinking about knowledge construction. It also encourages us to consider learning in primary physical education in a similar way to learning within an occupation. This practical embodied approach to ongoing knowledge construction provides us with a framework of learning strands to support the analysis of the potential of subject matter for learning. I have applied this framework to some traditional primary physical education subject matter. In doing so I have attempted to illustrate how such an approach can help our insight into the many different directions of experiences that can be taken within primary physical education.

References

Association for Physical Education (AfPE). (2008). A manifesto for a world class system of physical education. Reading: AfPE.


Introduction
Historically, the schooling and education of young people has been far from uniform within countries, let alone across them. Therefore, providing an overarching commentary would not only be incredibly long if it were to be comprehensive, but it may reasonably be argued that it might be quite futile. (The sheer breadth of this point can be appreciated in the second half of this book.) What is apparent, however, is that significant influences upon primary education and upon physical education have served to shape its inclusion and delivery. This chapter first illustrates how different socio-cultural factors such as those surrounding the Second World War can come to influence a subject area. Second there will be some explanation of how physical education has become positioned within wider ideas of education. Next the significance of the secondary sector upon primary physical education will be explored before looking at the contested terrains of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Influences upon schooling and education
Historical analysis reveals that for long periods of time, primary or elementary-aged pupils were not institutionally educated. From points in time when they were, typically the education and resulting physical education were influenced by the immediate culture and environment. For example, in Westernised economies such as the UK and United States in a period between the mid-19th century and early 20th century, the origins of contemporary sport were developed (Guttmann, 1994). Against this particular backdrop, boys’ public schools provided the setting for the development of institutionalised and codified team games where the moral benefits of ‘playing the game’ were professed (Mangan, 1981; Holt, 1989). In particular, team games such as cricket and rugby were seen as fundamental to any resultant physical curriculum and were perceived as enabling the building of one’s character and the teaching of characteristics such as manliness and loyalty – qualities that were seen as ‘transferable to the world beyond’ (McIntosh, 1979: 27). What is referred to as the ‘cult of athleticism’ involved training young men to be leaders (for battle, for civic duty and for business) and became the cornerstone of the Muscular Christianity movement, which professed the positive moral benefits of physical exercise and sport (Mangan, 1981). Such messages were professed around the globe, most notably by missionaries who were
often founders of both schools and sports groups overseas (McIntosh, 1987). The inclusion and proliferation of games activities for these ends did therefore inevitably follow within many school environments regardless of age.

In addition, early discourses of physical education, however loosely defined, were largely shaped within forms of health education, with benefits framed in general and largely functional terms (Kirk, 1992). In the mid-19th century and into the 20th century, within modern and industrial societies, physical exercise was typically viewed as one of four elements contributing to health, along with nutrition, sanitary conditions and clean air (Thomson, 1979). The establishment of early education policy documents across the globe served to highlight the association between being physically active and healthy. Indeed, as early as 1905 in the UK, the syllabus for ‘Physical Training’ explained that: “The primary objective of any course of physical exercises in schools is to maintain, and if possible, improve the health and physique of the children” (Board of Education, 1905: 9). Subsequent revisions, such as the 1909 syllabus, further reinforced and detailed this objective (Kirk, 1988), specifying key benefits of being physical through physical training, namely benefits to general health through efficient functioning of the body, remedial benefits such as correcting poor posture, and developmental benefits in terms of assisting the natural pattern of growth of the child. The reason for such a focus came from the directive of the medical profession, whose association with physical education was closely aligned, illustrated by the fact that there was even a Physical Education committee of the British Medical Association (Welshman, 1996). What followed was the development of one of the earliest syllabuses, and the 1933 Physical Training syllabus recommended a daily lesson of twenty minutes of activity, to include three periods of formal lessons and others to cover activities such as games and swimming (Board of Education, 1933). Still with a health education focus, open air teaching was encouraged, not only to provide children with increased oxygen to supply their muscles during increased exertion, but also to lay the foundation of the habit of seeking outdoor pursuits. Teachers were advised to encourage children to discard some of their outer garments to enjoy freedom of movement (Chedzoy, 2012).

In countries such as Australia and New Zealand the focus on health has largely been maintained, moving the physical education agenda in a particular direction (see Chapter 23).

Significant global events such as the Second World War also served to shape the landscape of notions of what physical education might be. Beyond those influences discussed, the displacement of people invigorated and challenged societies. Examples include Rudolf Laban and the influence and spread of the development of ‘movement education’ (Wright, 1977).

Primary schools also took ideas for new equipment from apparatus used in combat training by the military (Johnson, 1981). Children were encouraged to develop their strength by hanging, climbing and swinging on ropes and nets (McIntosh, 1968). This was the beginning of equipment being introduced into schools for the prime purpose of promoting such activities. Later the apparatus became more purpose built and sophisticated and adopted for particular activities such as gymnastics (Smith, 1974).

In countries such as the UK, physical education moved under the wing of education, where it stayed for the majority of the next century. The emphasis moved away from the inclusion of the subject on therapeutic grounds, and physical educationalists moved towards finding a justification for their subject in a crowded curriculum – a legacy some might argue educationists have struggled to justify ever since (Chedzoy, 2012).

### The positioning of physical education within education

The marginalisation of physical education within school curricula is deeply rooted in philosophical thought in which the physical is considered subordinate to the mental. Such Cartesian
perspectives on a mind–body split continue to pervade Western European approaches to education in which the physical remains separate and inferior to cognitive activity (Sparkes, Templin & Schempp, 1990). This elevated status of intellectual labour over physical work is reflected in relationships between work and play, where work activities are held in high esteem for the significant seriousness involved and play is marginalised and inconsequential (Kirk, McKay & George, 1986). Schools continue to assume this mind–body dichotomy and position play-like physical activities, upon which physical education depends, as areas of the curriculum which offer pupils a break from the real work in the classroom (Giroux, 1983; Kirk, 1988; Jess, 2010). This recreative contribution to the informal, hidden school curriculum has consequently become the justification for the place of physical education in the lower echelons of a hierarchy of subjects within the formal curriculum (Kirk, 1992; Capel, 2007).

The denunciation of sports as merely requiring pupils to learn a ‘knack’ or ‘trick’ and thus offer little in the development of educational understanding serves to illustrate the peripheral position of physical education, compared to subjects that are deeply rooted within rational forms of knowledge, such as science and mathematics (Peters, 1996). The long-standing debate over the educational value of physical education centres on lines of argument stemming from what educational activity is and should be. In distinguishing between schooling and education, Carr (1997) argues physical education becomes part of a rich collection of activities which may or may not have educational value. However, they still retain a valuable role in developing a pupil’s understanding and ability to function in our world. Despite such perspectives, the clamour of physical education departments to offer courses with examinations is an example of the approach, favoured by Reid (1997), to redefine the subject into a sphere of academic study or the ‘academicisation’ of physical education (Kirk, 2010: 6).

Kirk (2010) believes that the degree status awarded to teacher training in physical education has served to place the subject away from a sole field of study into growing ‘sub-disciplines’ of studies in ‘sport’. More significantly, he argues theoretical study has pushed student engagement with practical physical activities aside and separated students from the content they are required to teach. In causing a “crisis of content knowledge” he believes a pervasive and durable identity and mode of pedagogical practice of “physical education as sport techniques” have been created and continually regenerated (Kirk, 2011) (see Chapter 3). This enduring and uniting feature of the subject suggests the existence of an implicit agreement amongst school practitioners which has served to construct a physical education landscape dominated by a “sporting model” (Capel, 2007: 494). Perhaps the most obvious influence of this pedagogical practice has come from subject specialists of physical education within the secondary sector of education.

The influence from secondary physical education

The influence from secondary physical education towards primary physical education has perhaps been best summed up by Griggs (2007) with the paper entitled ‘Physical education: Primary matters, secondary importance’. Here the narrative outlines the top-down model where resourcing, subject content and pedagogies flow unabated from the secondary sector into the primary sector. The dominance of a pedagogy framed within a sporting model in an educational sense has amounted to the repetitive learning of techniques associated with sports dominated by traditional games, which are not necessarily reflective of pupils’ needs or the wider movement culture outside of school (see Crum, 1993) (see Chapter 3). Pupils face consistently regurgitated content, focused upon the mastery of performance skills, more often than not abstracted from their movement contexts. Consequently, exploration and learning of activities are severely restricted by short lessons, limited curricula blocks of activity and teacher-directed learning. Despite the
intention to facilitate development in the performance of these sport techniques, pupil progression throughout their years at school remains very limited (Siedentop, 2002; Capel, 2007; Kirk, 2010). In short, what occurs during many primary physical education lessons is the delivery of a watered-down version of a secondary physical education programme. For many children, however, these experiences are inappropriate, as the activities are too complex in relation to their current developmental status (Jess, 2011).

The potential consequence of these disconnected educational experiences is the creation of a ‘proficiency barrier’ through which children find it difficult to move, caused by the absence of progressive steps that permit children to move from the simple activities of the early years to the more complex activities of later childhood and beyond (NASPE, 1995; Jess, Dewar & Fraser, 2004). Here children are unable to efficiently perform basic physical competencies such as throwing and catching a ball; they will find it difficult to participate successfully in physical activities that require these skills at a later time. Ecological approaches to studying motor development of children have revealed that mature movement patterns are influenced not only by maturation, but also by environmental factors, including equipment, cue information and feedback (Goodway, Rudisill & Valentin, 2002; Langerdorfer & Robertson, 2002; Southard, 2002; Whitall, 2003), “thus refuting the ‘it happens naturally’ misconception” (Bailey et al., 2009: 8). With the most significant periods of development taking place almost entirely within the primary age range (Gallahue & Ozmun, 1995), putting the right building blocks in place from the bottom up builds a much stronger and sustainable curriculum model (see Gallahue & Ozmun, 1995; Almond, 1997; Jess et al., 2004; Haydn-Davies, 2005; Griggs, 2007).

As a direct result of such concerns, much of the literature within primary physical education has focused upon both conceptual and practical ways to improve children’s key developmental movements (see Pickup, Haydn-Davies & Jess, 2007 for a summary). ‘Physical Literacy’ (Whitehead, 2001), ‘Basic Moves’ (Jess et al., 2004) and ‘Fundamental Movement Skills’ (STEPS PD, 2007) all seek to wrap the essence of what children need to learn in primary physical education and beyond (Griggs, 2015). According to Crum (1993: 342) the essence of what is required and needs to be operationalised is

for such a satisfying and lasting participation, one must develop a repertoire of skills and knowledge so that exercising, playing, dancing, or sporting is possible without disgracing oneself and/or disturbing other participants. This competency repertoire does not come naturally to individuals; it can only be acquired in structured learning processes.

If these experiences are connected with the wider movement culture of any given country, they should enable schools to deliver a broad range of activities, the rationale of the selection of which must centre upon pupils’ needs and school facilities.

The contested terrain of primary (physical) education

Though pervasive in much of secondary education, there has always existed a tension and often reaction to a top-down, subject-focused, teacher-directed model within the primary sector. The mid-20th-century policies within the UK provide perhaps the starkest and clearest example of this. Historically, the story of primary education within the UK has been comparatively short. It was not until the 1960s that pupils aged five to eleven could be educated in schools specifically designed for that age range (Oliver, 2004). Yet by the end of the decade, two seminal but polarising documents – namely, the Plowden Report (CACE, 1967) and the ‘Black Papers’ (Cox & Dyson, 1969a, 1969b) – would represent key viewpoints on what quickly became
highly contested terrain. The Plowden Report encapsulated child-centred theories of education enshrined in its maxim “at the heart of education lies the child” and encompassed the philosophies of Dewey and Piaget (McIntosh et al., 1981). It was unashamedly humanistic in tone and brought the needs of children to the fore by encouraging them “to be themselves and to develop in the way and at the pace appropriate to them” (CACE, 1967: 187). In practical terms, the report paved the way for the expansion of nursery education with the greater involvement of parents and gave schools the freedom to determine their own curriculum ideas (Oliver, 2004). In stark contrast the polemic ‘Black Papers’ (so-called in direct opposition to Government White Papers) spelt out a distinct conservative and traditional vision of education, positioning themselves against so-called ‘progressive’, ‘liberal’ ideas purveyed in the Plowden Report and championing a subject-focused, teacher-directed and prescribed curriculum (Harnett & Vinney, 2008). Finding a balance between these opposing viewpoints coloured the educational landscape for the next two decades and shaped the drafting of the Education Reform Act (ERA, 1988) and the first incarnation of the National Curriculum.

**Primary education in the 21st century**

Globally the aims and values of primary education appear to be driven by two major ideas: child-centred education and social and economic progress. Child-centred and progressive philosophies continue to call for more flexible and autonomous systems (Dewey, 1916; Boyce, 1946; Marshall, 1963; Schiller, 1972; March, 1970; Armstrong, 1980; Rowland, 1984). Here classrooms strive to become diverse environments designed to motivate children to discover new skills and knowledge. Children are perceived as active learners who are facilitated by teachers rather than sitting passively and receiving information (Entwistle, 2012). Such learning activities may appear to some to be less structured and more akin to play (Dearden, 2012). By contrast when and where influences of child-centred educational philosophies have diminished, the emphasis on education as a tool for economic improvement has gained sway. Here more prescriptive and standardised environments and practices (including strategies, pedagogies and curricula) have been in evidence which greater pushes performance in literacy and numeracy (Ball, 2012). In recent years an almost contradictory hybrid view of primary education seems to be emerging across the globe where techniques of child-centred education are being adapted not only to ensure the individual child’s growth, but also to prepare him or her to fulfil their economic role (Alexander, 2004; Brehony, 2005; Hartley, 2005). What has become further evident, too, is an increasing emphasis on education for citizenship in its broadest form. This does not restrict itself to participation in civic, social and political life, an understanding of rights and duties, of other cultures and of life in often multi-ethnic, multilingual societies, but also increasingly involves an awareness of a responsibility for healthy, sustainable and environmentally responsible living.

*(Shuayb & O'Donnell, 2008: 24)*

A tendency towards polarisation and subsequent comparative positioning has been a long-term feature of primary education played out in exemplars such as teacher/subject vs. child, skills vs. knowledge or standards vs. breadth (Alexander, Doddington, Gray, Hargreaves & Kershner, 2012). Subject areas such as physical education have also suffered as a result of polarising debates (often amongst sport and health) and subsequent comparative positioning (see Chapters 2 and 3).
Educational discourses

Summary

What this chapter has shown is the contested terrain within which primary physical education is situated. Educationally it strives to position itself against external influences, different philosophies and age phases, but what the education discourse shows is that the path is far from linear and uniform. The influences of both past and present are also significant, and when positioned amidst discourses of sport, education and health, primary physical education has the potential to create and re-create itself in many different forms.

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Gerald Griggs


Educational discourses


PART II

Educational policy and curriculum
Introduction

This chapter critically explores historical and contemporary ‘drivers’ of curriculum in primary physical education. Drawing on theoretical perspectives developed in curriculum studies literature in education (Connelly & Connelly, 2013), education policy studies (Ball, Maguire, Braun & Hoskins, 2011; Ball, Maguire & Braun with Hoskins & Perryman, 2012), and physical education (Penney, 2013), the chapter explores developments in official curriculum policy, in the enacted curriculum, and in the spaces and networks that connect political and professional arenas. In doing so, the chapter aims to bring to the fore the complexity of curriculum processes ‘in’ and affecting primary physical education. At the same time, the intention is to provide concepts and frameworks that can help extend understanding of why, and how, official policy and curriculum practices are driven in particular directions. The chapter therefore examines the factors contributing to specific developments in primary physical education curriculum, as official policy and as curriculum practices, and considers how particular conditions enable some developments and preclude or inhibit others.

Analysis and discussion highlight that, in some instances, the ‘drive’ is to resist particular curriculum directions and/or maintain the status quo of curriculum. ‘Drivers’ are thus associated with both continuities and changes in primary physical education. In addition, the chapter seeks to counter tendencies to de-personalise talk about ‘curriculum’. Engagement with and in curriculum development is inseparable from professional values and, also, professional responsibility for issues of quality and equity in primary physical education curriculum (Penney, 2013). Hence, the position taken is that the interrogation of decisions and processes that directly and indirectly act as curriculum drivers needs to also consider who is influential in and has responsibility for the directions pursued. From this perspective, various stakeholders are policy actors (Ball et al., 2011) and, as such, also act (even if inadvertently) as curriculum drivers.

The chapter takes these theoretical ideas forward through three main sections, each of which aligns with elements in Connelly and Connelly’s (2013) curriculum policy framework. The first addresses curriculum drivers associated with developments in “formal curriculum policy” (Connelly & Connelly, 2013); that is, official curriculum texts and associated mandatory requirements for primary physical education curriculum. The second section turns attention to curriculum drivers in schools that are clearly reflected in teachers’ interpretation and enactment of formal
curriculum policy. This relates to Connelly and Connelly’s (2013) notion of “prudential curric-
ulum policy” and focuses on curriculum planning in individual schools and for specific groups of
students. Contextually specific considerations and teachers’ “practical wisdom” are central to the
‘sense-making’ processes that are involved in prudential curriculum policy as teachers variously
adopt, grapple with, (re-)negotiate, appropriate, and/or resist discourses and directions inherent in
formal curriculum policy. The final section of the chapter fills some of the gaps in the preceding
two sections. It addresses what Connelly and Connelly (2013) term “implicit curriculum pol-
icy”, encompassing the multitude of guidance materials and resources that in many contexts are
significant drivers of primary physical education curriculum.

**Official curriculum drivers**

Readers internationally will have personal experiences to draw on of system-level curriculum
development addressing primary physical education, invariably as part of broader curricu-
lum reform. The establishment of new national curriculum and/or revisions to national cur-
riculum are stand-out examples of the sort of development that this section seeks to ‘unpack’.
As the title indicates, the focus is on the factors that collectively influence the curriculum path
that such developments follow, with certain discourses being privileged, others marginalised,
and particular visions of and for primary physical education curriculum identified as legitimate
and desirable. Any curriculum development fundamentally involves choices about curriculum
futures. The interest here is in why certain choices are not merely made, but are able to be made,
and/or appear ‘the only’ or ‘the natural’ path for primary physical education to follow. In saying
this we also acknowledge that curriculum development is always a balance between changes and
continuity, and ‘drivers’ will variously work (and be designed) to prompt change or, in contrast,
maintain aspects of status quo. Official curriculum texts are typically recognisable as efforts to
achieve some sort of a balance in these terms.

So what is it that influences the curriculum directions that “formal curriculum policy”
(Connelly & Connelly, 2013) in primary physical education pursues and ultimately expresses? It
is not easy to neatly summarise these. The mix of influences extends to social, cultural, historical,
economic, and political drivers and encompasses global and national drivers. Various drivers align
and others clash. Formal curriculum policy is ultimately the outcome of contested negotiation of
influences, captured in Luke, Woods and Weir’s (2013) notion of curriculum “settlements” that
are characterised by compromise.

Repeatedly, curriculum developments in physical education highlight that major drivers are
historical and current official curriculum texts and, also, recognised, established practices. Dis-
courses of ‘reform’ are essentially ‘brought to’ understandings of what primary physical education
‘looks like now’ in terms of curriculum structure and requirements relating to content coverage,
but also understandings of how these are ‘typically’ being enacted as programs of primary phys-
ical education with certain levels of resourcing (including time allocation, staffing, equipment,
and facilities). The starting points for discussion about new curriculum developments are telling
in this regard and invariably provide the grounding for ‘stability amidst reform’, with stability
variously justified on ideological, political, economic, and pragmatic grounds. Kirk’s (1992) work
remains an unrivalled account and critique of ‘landmark’ shifts in the discourses defining physical
education curriculum in terms of its focus and form, with the emergence of new curriculum
models and pedagogical practices linked to changing views about what it was important for chil-
dren to learn in and through physical education and about particular learning. Kirk’s (2010) far
more recent work has highlighted as much about stability and resistance as change in physical
education curriculum. More specifically, he has catalogued the durability of a multi-activity
Curriculum drivers

curriculum and the privileging within this of sport-specific skills and performance. Internationally, the dominance of these discourses and sustained legitimation of primary physical education curriculum constructed around a series of sport-based experiences has invariably been the backdrop to and point of reference for ‘reform’. Furthermore, it has frequently emerged as the ‘fall back position’ in attempts to reach “settlement” (Luke et al., 2013).

Discourses are, in effect, key curriculum drivers. As Kirk’s work (1992) highlighted, the history of primary physical education is bound up in shifting relations between discourses of education, child development, health, fitness, and sport that are themselves dynamic and intertwined with other discourses, including gendered discourses (see, for example, Fletcher, 1984; Kirk, 1992, 2002). Discursive shifts, including the changing status of particular discourses and the emergence or rise to prominence of new discourses, reflect historical drivers acting in combination with a specific set of political, social, cultural, and economic drivers at any particular time and in any particular curriculum context. Amidst this, a notable continuity is the sustained overarching dominance of discourses whose origins lie in sport and health. Internationally official curriculum ‘reforms’ variously reflect the political appeal and open appropriation of specific health discourses (including health-related fitness, health promotion, physical activity, wellbeing, and obesity discourses) and similarly, a number of sport-based discourses (performance, skills, games, fundamental movement skills) to shape visions of and for primary physical education curriculum. A re-invigorated and recently positioned ‘reform’ discourse that appeals to the political and educative market is the inclusion of ‘literacy’ that has seen growth in Canada, the United States, and the UK. ‘Physical literacy’, initially termed by Whitehead (2001), is an example of the shifting relations in discourses that drive new developments in curriculum. Corbin (2016: 25) has explored the many uses and implications arising from the ‘physical literacy’ discourse and raised questions about interpretations, purposes, and whether it is a ‘passing fad’.

In some instances, political imperatives grounded in particular ideological views can clearly be seen to take curriculum developments in a specific direction and simultaneously preclude the pursuit of alternative directions. This was vividly illustrated decades ago in the initial development of a National Curriculum Physical Education in England and Wales (Evans & Penney, 1995) and has remained a palpable feature of subsequent reforms. Across the border in Scotland, developments stemming from the Curriculum for Excellence speak to other discourses, most notably, of health and wellbeing, holding prominence in broader policy and, hence, finding expression in formal curriculum policy pertaining to physical education (Horrell, Sproule & Gray, 2011).

In other instances, the way that new curriculum requirements are articulated and what they set out as directions for primary physical education reflects the apparent (or at least partial) mediation of traditionally dominant discourses in/of physical education. The recent development of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (AC: HPE) (ACARA, 2016) is a timely example of contrasting interests and discourses being managed and mediated in the official text. The result is formal curriculum policy that in some respects appears to fulfil its stated remit of being ‘futures oriented’. Five “key ideas” (or “propositions”) are identified as informing the curriculum development and are essentially positioned as ‘drivers’ of choices about content and expected achievement that are reflected in the curriculum specifications. The five key ideas are (i) focus on educative purposes; (ii) take a strengths-based approach; (iii) value movement; (iv) develop health literacy; and (v) include a critical inquiry approach (ACARA, 2016). Yet other aspects of the specifications simultaneously signal the influence of other drivers. The historical roots of the HPE learning area are, for example, visible in both the two content strands (personal, social, and community health and movement and physical activity) and the twelve “focus areas” (alcohol and other drugs, food and nutrition, health benefits of physical activity, mental health and
wellbeing, relationships and sexuality, safety, active play and minor games, challenge and adventure activities, fundamental movement skills, games and sports, lifelong physical activities, rhythmic and expressive activities) (ACARA, 2016).

The AC: HPE is also a development that illustrates the way in which global drivers (including a futures discourse, an emphasis of education needing to respond to rapidly changing societies and lives, and discourses of wellbeing being, combined with discourses of resilience and safety) come together with national drivers. The latter include the challenge for HPE to articulate a meaningful connection with and contribution to three cross-curricular priorities: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures; Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia; and Sustainability (ACARA, 2016).

The AC: HPE, like any comparable development internationally, also reflects drivers that come from other sectors and areas of education. Requirements for HPE (or in other contexts, PE), particularly for the primary years, are heavily shaped (and typically also constrained) by whole curriculum priorities (with literacy, numeracy, and science taking precedence in curriculum discussions) and the ‘drive’ of ‘a crowded curriculum’. Primary physical education is also interestingly positioned between vertical drivers coming from below in the form of development of early years education and from above in that how physical education is conceptualised for the secondary sector remains a significant driver of visions for and expectations of primary physical education.

Drivers from broader industry and associated professional contexts also come into play. The list of focus areas in the AC: HPE is perhaps telling in this respect, providing some indication of the range of interests and interest groups who have a stake in primary physical education and who to varying degrees are able to see their interests embedded in formal curriculum policy. Particular lobbyists are ultimately significant curriculum drivers. The inclusion and furthermore significant extension of text and requirements relating to ‘Swimming and water safety’ in the new Victorian Curriculum (VCAA, 2017) is a timely example of this activity and influence. At the time of writing, across Australia formal curriculum policy at a state level that responds to but at the same time differs from the AC: HPE is ‘taking shape’. Developments in implicit curriculum policy (see later) will ultimately be vitally important to teachers’ understandings of the implications of new requirements for primary physical education programmes in schools.

As indicated in the introduction, it is easy to slip into a style that depersonalises these or other similar developments. Yet the reality is that individuals are very significant in driving curriculum in particular directions and resisting or mediating pressures for formal curriculum policy to reflect other directions. In the case of the AC: HPE it is not overstating the politics of curriculum to say that the appointment of writers and advisory group members and the strength of commitment of those people to a ‘futures perspective’ was vital in securing (amongst other things) the expression of the five propositions noted earlier (see Macdonald, 2013).

In any development of primary physical education, therefore, who the ‘key actors’ are and, furthermore, who has the credibility and support to be accepted as a key actor are crucial. Petrie and lisahunter’s (2011) work in New Zealand has further highlighted that the policy actors who are directly and indirectly influencing the course and direction of developments in primary physical education come from policy sectors beyond education. The final section of this chapter picks up their emphasis that contemporary primary physical education policy is the product of policy overlap and interconnections.

In Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere, no curriculum development can escape being confronted with economic realities and/or imperatives. Although invariably accounts highlight constraints being placed on what formal curriculum policy can therefore prescribe, developments in primary physical education in Scotland (Jess, 2011) highlight a distinct contrast. In this case,
a fiscal opportunity in the form of unprecedented government investment in curriculum development openly sought to ‘drive’ primary physical education in a new direction [characterised in the initiative entitled, ‘Basic Moves’]. Furthermore, funding for significant professional learning for teachers was integrated into the investment.

Finally it is pertinent to highlight that although the focus of this chapter is ‘curriculum drivers’, it is critical to acknowledge that curriculum is integrally intertwined with matters of pedagogy and assessment. Curriculum developments cannot ignore this or be immune from influences that come from agendas associated with pedagogy and/or assessment. In relation to the former, many international readers will relate to curriculum visions being limited by the anticipation that many primary teachers have limited pedagogical confidence and competence in physical education. In parallel, as indicated earlier and discussed further in Chapter 7, curriculum developments also reflect that the major focus of assessment is invariably on other curriculum areas.

**Drivers of the enacted curriculum**

The various drivers of the enacted or “prudential” curriculum (Connelly & Connelly, 2013) in primary schools are reflected in interpretations of and responses to official curriculum requirements and frameworks in individual school and classroom settings. Ball and colleagues’ (2012) framework is useful in revealing the range of influences at play and enabling us to look at what shapes primary physical education curriculum in any specific school context. It is purposeful as an organising frame for discussion and reflection about drivers of and in enactment.

**Situational influences** include the demographic, historical, and cultural factors shaping curriculum thinking and practices in any given school. The demographic of the school, including its classification of public or private, has been shown to influence the content of curriculum, valued elements of assessment, and status of physical education in the school. Research in the secondary sector has illustrated the ways in which socio-economic status shapes what knowledge, skills, and understandings are the central focus of physical education curriculum and what the (different) curriculum visions are for ‘physically educated students’ (O’Flynn, 2010). As indicated earlier, curriculum histories are also gendered.

Meanwhile, in many primary schools it is hard to move past the drive provided by an established curriculum grounded in sporting discourses and traditions. Traditional influences for many schools are athletics and swimming carnivals, participation in other competitive interschool events, and selection into representative teams in ‘valued’ sports and physical activities. Amidst (and despite) numerous instances of curriculum reform, seasonal patterns of participation in sport continue to be key drivers of primary physical education curriculum in terms of content and structure.

Culturally specific drivers reveal important situational differences in curriculum. A good example is the overt valuing of the connection with nature in the Swedish curriculum when it states: “Through teaching, pupils should develop the ability to spend time in outdoor settings and nature during different seasons of the year, and acquire an understanding of the value of an active outdoor life” (NAE, 2011: 50). In Scandinavian countries this is more commonly known as ‘friluftsliv’, a culture that encourages a freedom to roam, to explore, and to appreciate nature (Soderstrom, 2013).

A situational and also highly pragmatic driver of primary physical education internationally is the weather. As we discuss later, this overlaps with material influences. In many instances accounts highlight curriculum planning being configured to accommodate the impact of cold, wet winters, with the choice of activities confined to those that can occur in whatever all-weather spaces are available, and the frequency of lessons is often affected. In tropical settings, including parts of
Australia, it is the heat, strength of the sun (with associated concerns for sun safety), and seasonal rain that affect the activities included in the curriculum.

**Professional influences** include disciplinary factors and status, professional development, teacher values, and qualifications. These influences operate at a whole-school level and at an individual level, such that the professional culture within a school is important, but so are personal professional values. Internationally it is widely recognised that principals (or headteachers) play a critical role as drivers and facilitators of curriculum innovation in primary physical education. It is equally well recognised that a principal’s lack of professional and curriculum leadership for primary physical education may well be reflected in a distinct absence of any meaningful drive and/or displacement of primary physical education.

As Petrie (2011) has discussed, an enduring issue for primary physical education curriculum is debate about who should (and can legitimately) teach it. Differences of opinion exist about whether it is the generalist classroom teacher who is best placed to provide quality experiences due to their educational and holistic approach to the learner (McMaster, 2015) or, alternatively, whether curriculum expertise lies with specialist teachers who can provide specialised movement and physical activity teaching (Ardzejewska, McMaugh & Coutts, 2010).

Teacher training has also been studied as an influential sector and prospective (indirect) curriculum driver. Yet local and personal professional factors invariably appear to retain their dominance. Morgan and Hansen (2008) and Dinan Thompson (2009) have openly stated that the individual teacher’s values and beliefs and socialisation to movement and physical activity are critical and, for many teachers, shapes a comfort zone in relation to curriculum practice.

Armour and Duncombe (2004; Armour & Yelling, 2004; Armour, 2010) have long been prominent in proposing systematic professional development for teachers of physical education. Petrie (2017) has also advocated for a model of collaborative research that has professional learning for university staff and teachers at its heart. The ‘Everybody Counts’ project has evidenced the capacity of such an approach to ‘drive’, support, and help sustain curriculum and pedagogical innovation.

**Material influences** consist of the pragmatics of resources (human and physical, including time allocations and facilities) in and outside of a school.

Time is perhaps the most prominent of all issues associated with primary physical education curriculum and something that is central to debates and position statements directed to the matter of ‘quality’. It is unequivocally a driver of curriculum in the sense that any curriculum is constrained and enabled by the length of time allocated and frequency of allocation (see Chapters 16–27). Yet, as preceding discussion has also acknowledged, many other factors shape what can happen in whatever time is available to teachers.

The nature of facilities available, type and quantities of equipment, and teachers’ knowledge and understanding of how best to utilise whatever equipment they have are significant drivers. Whether or not a primary school has a swimming pool or an indoor hall or gymnasium are factors that are vividly reflected in the curriculum. In Ireland, Woods, Tannehill, Quinlan, Moyna, and Walsh (2010) found that the availability of facilities aligned to seasonal weather has proved difficult, and in particular due to lack of funding, aquatics activities are difficult to maintain and that classrooms are being built within previously covered areas. International readers will be able to recount their own scenarios of primary physical education curriculum being shaped to fit facilities and/or conditions.

An emerging material influence is new technologies that are dependent upon affordability and access, but that also bring opportunities for teaching and learning. The use of technology as a student-centred and agentic resource is being discussed in curriculum enactment and connection (Casey & Jones, 2011; Kirk, 2014). There is a growth in apps for physical education (see,
for example, PEGeek, PECentral), some of which hold the attraction of being time efficient. However, we caution that their uptake, if uncritical, may also narrow intent, opportunities, and choice in curriculum.

A more significant and continuing material influence is the availability of print-based, online, and/or service-based resources that complement, support, or drive the primary physical education curriculum. Such resources align with education system developments or sport and health agencies and/or are the product of other commercial or charitable organisations that have (specific) interests in primary physical education. Without a critical lens being applied to these resources and tools, they can become the ‘de facto’ curriculum and, as Griggs (2010) states, show that primary physical education is indeed ‘for sale’. Research in Australia (Williams, Hay & Macdonald, 2011; Robinson, Gleddie & Schaefer, 2016) and in New Zealand (Petrie & lisahunter, 2011) has highlighted the need for collaboration with ‘deliverers’, but also reveals that it may bring both creative and destructive elements (Williams et al., 2011: 413). Certainly, the marketisation of primary physical education is, in some contexts, very much a reality.

External influences reflect the need to always consider the wider policy context that affects what happens within schools and, more specifically, in the name of primary physical education. Notable contemporary external influences include numeracy and literacy testing frameworks and performance; sport and health agendas that come and go; and funding arrangements in schools, states/provinces, and governments (see Chapters 16–27). Internationally, the broader education context and policies of accountability and performativity are presenting increased pressures on schools and teachers. For primary schools, a key area of accountability is performance in literacy and numeracy. Brooks and Dinan Thompson (2015) have outlined the impact of numeracy and literacy testing on the primary physical education specialist teacher in Queensland, Australia, with further marginalisation of physical education as ‘play and relief’ and reduced time allocation. Griggs (2007) has also related the impact of increased time on literacy and numeracy and consequent positioning of physical education in England and Wales. Interestingly, Dollman, Boshoff and Dodds (2006) explored the relationship of time allocated to physical education to literacy and numeracy achievements, and where an increase of physical education curriculum time was allocated, there was no disadvantage to student results. The relationship between time allocated to physical education and academic performance remains a focus for research and continued debate in Australia and internationally.

The physical literacy discourse was noted earlier as an international agenda and language, amidst its varied interpretations across countries, including Canada, the UK, the United States, and more recently, Australia. In its varied use, the term and associated frameworks appear to have an educative, sport development and assessment intent (Corbin, 2016; Lundvall, 2015), and in the United States has displaced physical education with the now termed ‘physically literate student’ (SHAPE, 2014). As a largely external influence that has gained sporting and political grab, physical literacy can create new possibilities for physical education, but also has inherent risks for professional practices and primary physical education curriculum. In this regard, the impact of other popular and influential discourses is worthy of note. An example of a prominent health agenda that has proven to affect the physical education curriculum is obesity. Gard and Wright (2005) demonstrate that the popular and science discourses surrounding obesity are ambiguous, present moral agendas, and are based on ideological assumptions and yet are significant in driving body, health, and physical activity messages in physical education. In parallel to health agendas, external sporting agendas and, more importantly, investment, have also been overt drivers of primary physical education in schools. This was exemplified in England with the sustained drive from the Youth Sport Trust (YST) and establishment of the ‘PE, School Sport and Club Links’ (PESSCL) strategy that delivered increased funding for school sport partnerships and coordinators
and packages of resources and equipment to support (and at the same time re-shape) the form of primary physical education (DfES, 2002). More recently Griffiths and Armour (2013) have investigated the impact of participation and Olympic discourses. Internationally, numerous sporting agencies continue to invest in resource development and provision of development officers or coaches to work ‘with’ primary schools, within and beyond the curriculum. As previously noted, such investments can variously support and (re-)shape primary physical education or may come to represent a de facto curriculum.

Ball and colleagues (2012) have thus provided a useful frame to outline the various drivers of the ‘prudential’ curriculum (Connelly & Connelly, 2013), or what we term the enacted curriculum. The frame helps to explain the many and varied interpretations of and responses to formal curriculum policy. What is evident in these examples is the overlap or interactivity of drivers, such as material and situational influences relative to weather and infrastructure. A further question for the readers though is what is missing from the analysis? How well does the framework reflect and connect with what drives their personal and contextual enactments of curriculum?

**Curriculum drivers and policy spanners**

In this final section of discussion we focus on curriculum drivers ‘in between’ and spanning across official and enacted curriculum. This relates to what Connelly and Connelly (2013) term implicit curriculum policy and includes influential guidance materials, de facto curriculum texts, and programs that have come to constitute and/or drive the curriculum. The number and diversity of materials and resources that are directed towards primary physical education often result in fragmentation of the curriculum, inequitable opportunities, and unintended cost attached to the educative purpose. At national and government levels, and through investment in systemic initiatives/interventions, there is direct and powerful impact on primary physical education, as evidenced in the status accorded to physical literacy in Canada as the framing discourse for curriculum.

As the preceding sections have highlighted, however, developments in formal or implicit policy only have curriculum impact in practice by virtue of individual decisions and actions. From this perspective, principals (or headteachers) and teachers in primary schools are themselves important policy spanners – making links between different agendas and potentially bringing coherency to primary physical education curriculum. Hence, we emphasise that those of us involved in primary physical education curriculum must recognise ourselves as ‘drivers’ (or policy actors) of curriculum thinking and practices. As such, we need to recognise that there are conditions that enable some developments and inhibit others; that we may actively maintain the status quo; and that we may adopt, adapt, or resist curriculum directions. We can reflect and review; we may exploit the opportunities afforded in curriculum; or we may advocate or oppose. We ask you to consider and critique the why and how of curriculum to look forward to quality and socially just learning and assessment in primary physical education.

**References**


Curriculum drivers


6
THE DELIVERERS DEBATE

Richard Blair

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the relatively new yet emerging issue of who should be teaching children physical education and school sport in primary schools. Traditionally in most western school systems, including countries such as England, the United States, Australia and Canada, physical education curriculums and programmes of study have been designed, developed, taught and evaluated by qualified teachers (Kirk, 2010). In primary schools this has been the generalist class teacher, professional educators who have not necessarily specialised in physical education (Blair & Capel, 2011; Sloan, 2010). However, in recent years research has shown that physical education in primary schools has also been taught by people other than the class teacher (Stewart, 2006; Blair & Capel, 2008, 2011; Griggs, 2008, 2010; Powell, 2015; Sloan, 2010; Williams, Hay & Macdonald, 2011; Williams & Macdonald, 2015), typically non-professionals who have coaching qualifications from national governing bodies (NGBs) and specialise in aspects of youth sport (Blair & Capel, 2008; Griggs, 2010). Extra-curricular school sport has again traditionally been delivered by qualified teachers in some countries – for example, England – but in others such as America coaches have been used to support and deliver extra-curricular sports teams.

This chapter considers the opportunities, issues and challenges faced by primary schools and the range of different adults who take responsibility for the delivery of primary school physical education curriculums and programmes of extra-curricular school sport or physical activity. The discussion is located within the broader concept of the alignment and strategic fit of three groups of adults: qualified teachers who are not necessarily specialists in physical education but in child development and pedagogy, adults who are not qualified teachers but specialists in youth sport or children’s physical activity, and other adults who have a link to physical activity, movement or youth sport either professionally or as a volunteer.

The debate regarding who should or could deliver physical education and school sport is conducted in a context of growing worldwide concern regarding childhood obesity (Gately, 2010) and an increasing volume of international rhetoric and research regarding how children are experiencing physical education, physical activity and youth sport, for example, MacPhail (2010). The global context brings to the fore the relevance of the issues relating to the social, political and pedagogical opportunities and challenges for all schools and the adults they deploy to deliver
physical education and extra-curricular school sport. The chapter aims to discuss the opportunities, challenges and consequences regarding the teaching of physical education and school sport at a level that encompasses but also moves beyond the technical issue of actual delivery. Scott, Terano, Slee, Hisbands and Wilkins (2016) inform us that any change or innovation to an educational system usually requires more than a mechanical or technical solution. In agreement with this point (see also Blair, 2013) this chapter leans the discussion towards understanding how adults support children in physical education and school sport through their ‘strategic fit’ (Chon, 1991). Chon (1991) introduces ‘strategic fit’ as part of a broader concept of ‘alignment’ between the organisation and the individual.

The position of working towards an aligned community of policy to practice is also supportive of Fullan (2007), who suggests that for individuals and organisations to achieve success in meeting shared goals there needs to be a focus on ensuring that documents such as vision statements, plans and policies, and in the case of education curriculums and programmes of study, are aligned with one another and that they support and communicate core messages and a common direction. The concept of alignment and the explicit connection of vision, policy and pedagogy are required in any educational system or organisation whenever development or adaptions are sought or needed (Scott et al., 2016). Scott et al. (2016) continue to state that if the development or change is to be sustainable, it usually requires a change in beliefs, feelings, knowledge and behaviours. Therefore consideration is given to the concept of alignment and the work of Fullan (2007) in relation to all the adults identified as having or developing a shared vision for physical education and school sport.

The delivery debate is an increasingly complex area of discussion given that in recent years the physical education curriculum and extra-curricular programmes and school sport have been delivered by a range of different contributors (Blair & Capel, 2008, 2011, 2013; Griggs, 2010; Powell, 2015; Williams et al., 2011; Williams & Macdonald, 2015). Indeed Williams et al. (2011) report that the outsourcing of Health, Sport and Physical Education (HSPE) was commonplace in the schools they studied. Although this chapter acknowledges the multiple complexities and potential controversy connected to the outsourcing of physical education and school sport, see Williams and Macdonald (2015) for a detailed explanation of outsourcing. The chapter attempts to offer a position that supports practitioners, teachers, coaches and others to consider the contribution they can make to a physical education and school sport curriculum or programme specifically in relation to their strategic fit against the vision, aims and organisational culture. Thus the discussion aims to support adults to reflect on their ontological alignment with the overall vision, curriculum and pedagogical approach a school takes to physical education and school sporting activities. Some scholars have developed very clear views in relation to the outsourcing of physical education and school sport and appear certain regarding who should be teaching primary-aged children physical education; Talbot (2008), for example, is clear that the best-placed adults are the class teachers themselves. This chapter attempts to take a more flexible, progressive and perhaps even more pragmatic position by offering the potential to develop and evolve practice alongside a shifting cultural, social and political landscape. Therefore it agrees with the findings presented in the study by Williams and Macdonald (2015) that using a range of different adults to support a physical education and school sport programme can have educational value. Consideration is given to how schools might be successful in providing children with an inclusive and ethical curriculum or programme of physical education and school sport. That could include some aspects of outsourcing, but that is introduced from the critically reflective position that views this praxis from a strategic and not just a technical or practical position.

Building on this notion, Blair and Capel (2013), although not entirely disagreeing with the position of Talbot (2008) regarding teachers, have added to the discussion by presenting the idea
that in specific contexts and with the appropriate professional development and support, adults other than teachers (i.e. sports coaches, dance instructors and specialists in outdoor adventure and play) can make meaningful contributions to successful primary school physical education curriculums and programmes of extra-curricular school sport or physical activity. Blair and Capel (2013) consider the potential motivation for children being taught by someone who possess intricate and detailed knowledge and understanding of an activity. They also stress that this approach will only work if additional adults – they refer to sports coaches – are provided with the appropriate support and development and are clear about the expectations of the school (Blair & Capel, 2013). But critically they state that additional adults should only be used to support the physical education and school sport programmes and should not take overall responsibility for the longer-term planning or delivery (Blair & Capel, 2013); they should be part of a team.

It is important to note that any discussion regarding utilising a range of different adults to support physical education and school sport should be had in the context of the documented challenges faced in understanding the difference between physical education and youth or school sport, notably (Kirk, 2010). Kirk (2010) has presented well-developed views on the social construction of physical education and his concerns regarding the idea of physical education being delivered, interpreted and seen as youth sport. This point will be developed further in the final section of the chapter and is a central issue in understanding how the concepts of alignment and strategic fit might support the deployment of adult contributions to physical education and school sport curriculums and programmes of study. But for now it is worth stating that in broader terms the aim of physical education curriculums is for every child to develop their awareness and understanding of becoming physically literate; this is clearly defined by Whitehead (2010: 5) to be, ‘the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engaging in physical activities for life’.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into three main sections that look at the historical and current contexts of primary school physical education and school sport from a social and political perspective. The idea of a primary school multi-educational and experience team (MEET) for physical education and school sport is discussed. This includes the importance of the link between an adult’s strategic fit and the operation of actual practice being connected and understood by all stakeholders. The importance of this understanding is developed in the final section which looks at how a PE MEET could be developed through a conceptual framework and the concept of alignment and strategic fit, connecting the organisation vision, strategy and policy with individual practice.

The historical and political context – an example from England

This section provides an example of the delivery debate and current context from England. It includes an overview of primary Initial Teacher Education (ITE) for physical education and highlights specific issues regarding teacher socialisation and confidence. A brief description of the policy context provides a broad historical and political background to the debate, leading to a discussion regarding the research on sports coaches working in schools.

Primary Initial Teacher Education for Physical Education

In the past thirty years physical education in the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) of primary school teachers has received limited input by many universities and ITE providers (Talbot, 2008). This, combined with the personal biographies and subjectivities of many primary ITE student
teachers in relation to their formative experience of physical education and school sport, has resulted in many primary ITE students lacking the confidence to teach physical education (e.g. Garrett & Wrench, 2007; Morgan & Bourke, 2008). This point is supported by Talbot (2008) who estimates that 40% of all newly qualified primary school teachers received only six hours preparation in teaching physical education. This picture of dissatisfaction sits in an historical context reported twenty years ago by Carney and Armstrong (1996) who found that 93% of student respondents reported they were unhappy with the time allocated for physical education on their ITE course.

Beyond this context Morgan and Bourke (2008) found that most respondents in their study had a moderate level of confidence in teaching physical education. The issue of teacher confidence is also reinforced by Flintoff, Foster and Wystawnoha (2011) and the Office for Standard in Education, OFSTED (2013). These concerns, combined with the issue raised by Green (2008) regarding the use of sports coaches in primary schools becoming normal and accepted practice, informed Keay and Spence (2012) and Smith (2015) to hypothesise that due to the normalising use of coaches, teachers are not getting the opportunities to teach physical education and as a result are being de-skilled. Combine this concern with the different challenges of class management, increased physical risk and specific content knowledge, and this all contributes to physical education being perceived as one of the most challenging areas of the curriculum for primary teachers (Sloan, 2010; Keay & Spence, 2012).

Policy changes

The challenges of ITE for primary physical education are positioned in a broader political context in which physical education and school sport is being developed and delivered. In 1997 the New Labour government presented a series of policy guidelines that placed an increased pressure on schools to make use of non-qualified teacher status (QTS) sport specialists (Smith, 2015). In 2003 the Labour government introduced the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links strategy (PSSCL) re-titled in 2008 as the Physical Education, School Sport and Young People (PESSYP) strategy. These programmes were operationalised through School Sport Partnerships (SSPs) and introduced as a means of achieving a range of different policy outcomes, including an emphasis on competitive team sport through both curricular and extra-curricular activities. The DfES/DCMS (2003) and Flintoff et al. (2011) report that this competitive team sport approach was to be the responsibility of teachers and sports coaches.

In May 2010 the Conservative–Liberal Democrat coalition government replaced the heavily funded SSPs with the School Games (SG) initiative, a more modestly funded programme that ultimately focussed on the most talented young sportspeople (Flintoff et al., 2011). Smith (2015: 874) writes that the coalition government’s decision to remove the SSP and replace it with the SG initiative had a ‘particularly profound impact on the delivery of PESS in primary schools’. The issue of competitive sport and specifically team games being placed at the forefront of physical education curriculums was further reinforced by the publication of ‘Creating a Sporting Habit for Life’ (DCMS, 2012) and Sporting Futures (Cabinet Office, 2015); again both publications present a clear expectation that Physical Education and School Sport was to be delivered by sports coaches. Although it should be noted that Sporting Futures (Cabinet Office, 2015) does state that coaches should work alongside teachers to enable teachers to be upskilled. Critically this position of coaches’ upskilling teachers does lead us to think that a coach’s knowledge and understanding of physical education are superior to that of a teacher’s.
Coaches in schools

The background of teacher education and policy change has led to the current position in which Ward (2005) reported on research that indicated a third of all primary schools in England were using external sports providers to cover physical education lessons. In the broader political and social contexts, there are several possible reasons why coaches are used to provide physical education lessons. First, 'PE teaching and coaching are regarded as synonymous' (Lyle, 2002: 10); this is a position that has recently been reinforced by government policy (DCMS, 2012) and funding (Flintoff et al., 2011) – for example, the Sport Pupil Premium introduced by the current conservative government (Smith, 2015). This is also a view reinforced in government documents and recent initiatives which use the words physical education or PE and sport synonymously and do not offer a clear distinction between the two (DCMS, 2012). The view that past government initiatives, including the PESSCL project, have reinforced similarities between physical education and youth or school sport is supported by both Hutchings et al. (2009) and Phillpots (2010) and is a well-documented concern of Kirk (2010).

In the context of the latest government policy initiatives, the PESSCL and Sport Pupil Premium funding, headteachers in English primary schools are using sports coaches who 'coach' pupils within their curriculum on physical education lessons (Blair & Capel, 2011, 2013; Hutchings et al., 2009; Griggs, 2010; Smith, 2015). Findings from Blair and Capel (2008) show that coaches lacked key aspects of knowledge, skill and understanding required to work within the National Curriculum Physical Education (NCPE), notably, curriculum and pedagogical knowledge. However, Blair and Capel (2011) and Blair (2013) found that by following a professional development programme aimed at supporting coaches to develop the skills and knowledge to work in schools, coaches did develop their awareness, skill and knowledge to work within the curriculum. Blair (2013) also reports on the issues that blocked the coaches developing their knowledge, skill and understanding: notably, the lack of relationship between schools, teachers and coaches and the perceived lack of support provided to the coaches by their direct-line managers. These are interesting findings in the context of government strategy and policy being directed towards more coaches and other adults working together in schools and specifically primary school settings (DCMS, 2012). Smith (2015) also supported the earlier work of Blair and Capel (2011, 2013), Blair (2013) and Griggs (2010) in identifying that sports coaches are being used by headteachers to deliver physical education and cover teachers planning, preparation and assessment time (PPA). Indeed, a school sports coordinator interviewed by Smith (2015: 878) suggested that the use of hourly paid specialist coaches might be the ‘PE of the future’.

Therefore the current policy context appears to be overtly shaping and indeed supporting the challenges presented by Kirk (2010) that physical education is developing into sport. Of concern is that this approach is a common site in primary schools due to the deliverers increasingly being recruited from a background and education in youth sport (Blair & Capel, 2011). The exclusive use of sports coaches is concerning in that the research suggests that, broadly speaking, their pedagogical practices are not inclusive and delivery is sport specific (Blair & Capel, 2011; Blair, 2013). Of course, a similar argument can be applied, although perhaps not as tightly to teachers, in that although their practice is hopefully inclusive, they may not have the specific subject knowledge required for a depth of learning that motivates and inspires children to develop the competence and confidence to be physically active. The next section offers thoughts on the challenges and issues for the future of physical education and school sport.
The future of primary school physical education and school sport

Acknowledging the historical, social and political context, the messy relationship between physical education and sport and the empirical evidence informing us that adults other than qualified teachers are coaching children in physical education lessons (Blair & Capel, 2011, 2013) and the suggestion reported by Smith (2015) that this might be the ‘PE of the future’, the next two sections aim to present an initial proposal that attempts to build on this reality and shine the light for progression, innovation and the application of a theoretical concept to support the future of physical education and school sport in primary schools.

The situation in which adults who do not hold qualified teacher status but are being deployed to teach or coach primary-aged children physical education (Blair & Capel, 2011; Griggs, 2010) has emerged from the issues and challenges presented earlier in this chapter, including teacher socialisation and education, historical policy, funding and political ideologies (i.e. physical education as competitive sport). The view has often been presented that coaches do not have the knowledge and understanding to successfully work in the school setting, notably (Blair & Capel, 2008; Griggs, 2010, etc.). However, Blair and Capel (2011, 2013) and Blair (2013) have also reported that with professional development coaches did develop their knowledge, skill and awareness of working within the physical education curriculum. Blair (2013) reported that as a result of professional development, coaches developed their ontological narrative, and this adaption in thinking was the significant factor to why they evolved and eventually changed their coaching pedagogy when working in schools. There was also some evidence that the coaches adapted their coaching pedagogy and behaviours in community settings (Blair, 2013). With this in mind it is interesting to consider the current context of primary school physical education and school sport critically and reflectively. Coaches and other adults are working in schools delivering physical education and school sport, and this can be seen as an issue for the reasons already stated, but there is some empirical evidence that coaches who do not have QTS can develop their understanding, thinking and skills to work successfully in the school context.

Therefore, we consider the reality that coaches are working in schools (North, 2009) alongside the position that any change or innovation to an educational system usually requires more than a mechanical or technical solution (Scott et al., 2016). In addition to the notion that for individuals and organisations to achieve success in meeting shared goals, there needs to be a focus to ensuring that documents such as vision statements, plans and policies, and in the case of education curriculums and programmes of study, are aligned with one another and that they support and communicate core messages with a common direction (Fullan, 2007). Fullan (2007) references aligning with one another, a concept referred to by Chon (1991) as a ‘strategic fit’ between organisations and individuals. In considering the connections and synergies made in this paragraph, the idea of adults other than those with QTS contributing to the physical education and sporting opportunities of primary school children starts to develop as a more ethical and pedagogically appropriate prospect. This development is mainly due to the emphasis placed on the approach being principally driven from a position of strategy and ‘strategic fit’ before operational practice. The next section offers thoughts on deploying a range of adults in schools with the aim that they can contribute to a progressive and developmental curriculum and extra-curricula programmes of study. It discusses the idea of a Physical Education Multi-Educational and Experience Team (PE MEET) being operationalised through the concept of alignment and a strategic fit that links an overall vision to practice.
Blair and Capel (2013) write that in primary schools different people might be best placed to deliver physical education and school sport dependent on the individual school and context. This point can be extended to consider the concept of a PE MEET of adults delivering physical education and school sport to primary-aged children.

A PE MEET could consist of a number of different groups of adults, such as adults who hold qualified teacher status (QTS). A second professional group of adults could include physiological and occupational therapists, adults who have a professional interest and understanding of children, movement and physical activity. Admittedly this is a progressive proposal, but placed in a rapidly changing society, an idea that is perhaps worth pursuing. A third group includes adults who do not hold QTS but are employed as a sport or physical activity coach and who hold national governing body qualifications. A final group of adults that could contribute to a PE MEET would be volunteers, parents, grandparents, older siblings and others.

The broader philosophical context through which this section introduces the concept of a PE MEET shares the view of the educationalist and public pedagogue, John Dewey, in seeing school education as forming one part of a child’s overall education, albeit a very significant and important part. But school education is not seen as the only context in which children learn, and by extension, teachers are not viewed as the only adults who can support children’s learning. The ideological position regarding the introduction of a PE MEET into primary schools is that of providing children with a broader range of experiences while at the same time maintaining a depth of knowledge and experience in relation to activity and delivery. The philosophical and ideological points presented hint at an opportunity to move beyond the traditional activities and sports seen on curriculum plans and extra-curricular timetables and create more inclusive and engaging programmes. The pragmatic position regarding a PE MEET is that in an area of the curriculum that some primary school teachers find challenging (Morgan & Bourke, 2008), additional support, provided through a strategic approach, would seem a positive and constructive prospect.

Due to the range of possible experiences a PE MEET could potentially offer children, if well managed, conceived and operationalised, this approach would exemplify the epistemology of knowledge being socially constructed (Light, 2008; Kirk, 2010). It would be supportive of a vision for providing all children with the experience of an intentional, ethical and inclusive physical education curriculum and extra-curriculum programme of study, thus potentially not only placing physical education at the heart of every school [i.e. the vision statement of the Association of Physical Education (AfPE, 2016)] but at the heart of the every school and its wider community. This would allow children to experience not only a range of different physical activities, but also be inspired and supported by a team of educated and experienced adults to construct a developmentally appropriate depth of knowledge, understanding and skill.

The remainder of this section considers the different groups of adults who could contribute to a progressive and motivational curriculum and extra-curriculum programme of study. It is important that the next section is read with an understanding that all adults, regardless of educational or experimental background, will need to be supported in order for the headteacher to be confident that their contribution ‘fits’ the curriculum aims and overall vision for physical education and school sport (Blair & Capel, 2013). The idea of an adult’s ‘strategic fit’ is of central importance to understanding why, for the purposes of this chapter, physical education and school sport have not been separate but discussed together, despite their differences. The central
argument is for schools and indeed youth sport organisations to consider how the knowledge, skills, experience and understanding of different adults fit into the vision and planning of either physical education or school sport or both.

The first group of adults that should be contributing to a PE MEET would be the teachers. This would support the view of Talbot (2008) regarding teachers being the best-placed adults due to their in-depth knowledge of children. However, many primary school teachers are choosing to have someone else cover the teaching of their physical education lessons, and in a lot of schools this coverage is being provided by sports coaches (Blair & Capel, 2011, 2013; Griggs, 2010; Williams & Macdonald, 2015).

Successful primary schools have been auditing the knowledge, experience and skills of parents and grandparents for some time now – it is nothing new. North (2009) reports that out of the 1.1 million sports coaches, three-quarters of this group are made up of volunteers. Parents or grandparents who have an interest or past experience in physical activity and youth sport could become a supportive and available resource for schools. A study by Busser and Carruther (2010) in a North American context showed that the vast majority of volunteer coaches are co-producers, adults who have engaged in coaching as a product of their child’s interest in that sport. A similar trend is reported by North (2009) in the UK, where participation in sports coaching tends to drop when their children drop out of the sport. The idea of the adult coach or volunteer as a co-producer of their child’s interest in physical activity or sport would appear to work well for primary schools, with interested parents or grandparents contributing to the delivery of curricular and extra-curricular programmes while their child or children attend the school. Parents and grandparents who themselves have had or are currently having positive experiences from being physically active or taking part in sport have the potential to enthuse and inspire children with their knowledge and passion for a particular area of physical activity or sport. The idea of grandparents supporting children seems to create an interesting model for the development of physical literacy and lifelong participation in activity (see Whitehead, 2010).

In addition to support in practical areas of a physical education or school sport programme, parents and grandparents who have achieved success in sport, dance or an activity in whatever capacity (performer, coach, commentator, administrator or chairperson etc. might take part in assemblies, giving children the opportunity to be inspired by listening to stories of past triumphs, watching footage of past successes and perhaps even holding a medal! There seems to be an opportunity for inspiring children by using resources that all schools have: parents and grandparents and even older siblings who have been or currently are engaged in being physically active and playing sport. There are additional wider community benefits to this approach – volunteering is a positive activity that contributes an individual’s health, both body and mind, and to an increased sense of localism and community responsibility (Cabinet Office, 2015).

A fourth group of adults who could make a contribution to physical education and school sport programmes of study are physiological and occupational therapists, professionals who have specialised knowledge and understanding of supporting movement for health and wellbeing. Admittedly the use of health care professionals may initially sound overly idealistic, but a recent cross-party review of physical education in England made significant recommendations regarding the development of a team in every school that would be dedicated to promoting all types of physical activity (All Party Parliamentary Report [APPR], 2016). But realistically, at least in the immediate future, unlike parents and grandparents, these professionals are likely to be a less available resource for the majority of state-run schools. However, the idea of children’s learning being supported by professionals who offer a different perspective on being active, far less sport oriented and significantly more focussed on quality of movement to support lifelong health and wellbeing, seems progressive when discussed in the broader context of increasingly sedentary
societies and the health-related issues and implications of childhood obesity (Gately, 2010). Again like parents, grandparents and indeed coaches, therapists could be utilised over medium terms such as half-terms or for one-off events such as assemblies or activity, health and wellbeing weeks.

The aim of this section was to propose the idea that primary schools might consider the different groups of adults who could form a PE MEET. Three broad groups of adults have been identified, including professionals, teachers and therapists, semi-professionals, sports coaches and volunteers, parents, grandparents and older siblings. In agreement with Blair and Capel (2013) it is the view that regardless of the adult, the school should provide clear support regarding the vision for physical education and school sport and the overall curriculum or programme aims. The headteacher must be satisfied all adults are able to contribute the overall whole-school aim of continuously raising educational standards (Blair & Capel, 2013). The following section considers how adults might be successfully deployed in an inclusive and progressive physical education curriculum and school sport programme through the concept of alignment and the idea of strategic fit.

**The concept of alignment**

In this section the concept of alignment and ‘strategic fit’ will be considered in relation to the school and individual adults who might contribute to a PE MEET. Discussion will centre around the following connecting and operationalising points: 1) vision and culture, 2) strategy and policy, 3) curriculum or programme and 4) pedagogy and practice. The section will highlight how through appropriate leadership, management and organisational structure, adults could be deployed with a ‘strategic fit’ allowing them to support the school in aligning the overall vision for physical education or school sport, or indeed both, with the actual pedagogy of their practice.

It is acknowledged that points 1 to 4 may initially present as an overly simplistic interpretation and an example of vertical alignment, or even a hierarchical concept of alignment. Therefore, consideration is also given to what might be introduced as horizontal alignment; it is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss this in detail. But horizontal alignment might best be presented as the messiness and micro-politics of the workplace, including the challenge of synergising positions of power with people and resources (Leftwich, 2004). In addition it is important to note that it is not the suggestion that points 1 to 4 are aligned exactly – this is undesirable, as it would not allow for any challenge, change or innovation to take place.

The idea of a shared practice in the context of sports coaches, teachers and schools has been suggested before by Blair (2013) and Sloan (2010), amongst others. Where this discussion differs is the development of how this might be successfully designed, developed and implemented initially from a strategic position or starting point. Research by Culver and Trudel (2006) reported on the challenges faced by youth sport organisations and their coaches in developing a culture of social and situated community-based learning. The study showed that in order to cultivate a culture in which knowledge was shared freely and exchanges were seen as an important part of a developmental process, a vital ingredient was leadership and organisational structure (Culver & Trudel, 2006). The concept of alignment and strategic fit linked to clearly identified leadership offers schools and indeed youth sport organisations a framework through which a range of adult contributions can be organised and managed in order that the headteacher can be confident that the overall vision and aims are being achieved.

The proposal of primary schools utilising the knowledge, understanding and skill of a range of different adults by forming a PE MEET presents a marked shift in focus away from the views of educationalists such as Talbot (2008), who argued strongly that teachers, regardless of specialism or expertise, are the best people to teach primary-aged children physical education. These
views are also supported by others (see Griggs, 2008, 2010). These concerns are valid and carry significant weight and in the specific context of sports coaches are further reinforced by the findings of Blair and Capel (2008), who found that coaches did not have the necessary pedagogical knowledge or competence to work within the NCPE.

These views and findings should not be dismissed and are the popular position of many educationalists; indeed, Blair and Capel (2013: 185) state ‘our view is that teachers should be teaching in curricular physical education and extra-curricular time’. But pragmatically we must continue to move forward and find ways to work with or around and not against centralised government policy and funding in order to maximise our resources, both material and human, to provide the best opportunities for children to take part in an inclusive, progressive and engaging physical education curriculum and school sport programmes. The concept of alignment and strategic fit for a PE MEET relies on the clear communication of a school’s vision for physical education and school sport to all the contributing adults, The idea of utilising the theoretical concept of alignment and ‘strategic fit’ to operationalise a PE MEET will bring challenges, not least the issue of the different adults’ diverse learning needs, but, as Fullan (2007) suggests, for successful individual and organisational change to take place, particular care and attention should be given to the communication of various documents, including vision statements, plans and policies. This position is reinforced by a New Zealand–based review of professional learning for teachers, Timperley, Wilson, Barrar and Fung (2007) that highlighted the need for professional development providers to conceptualise their content. They report that for development activities to have impact on actual practice, there needs to be a logical and consistent thread for teacher learning to the desired outcomes for pupils, as documented in vision, curriculum and policy documents (Timperley et al., 2007). The review reports that most importantly documentation and rhetoric need to be aligned with the desired practice in classrooms (Timperley et al., 2007), gymnasiu
their socialisation (Capel, 2005; Curtner-Smith, 1999). Critically the adult’s practice should allow the children to achieve success in meeting the broad curriculum aims and by working towards the school’s overall vision. Therefore pedagogical choices regarding points such as teaching methods, learning activities and approaches to class or behaviour management should broadly fit into the school’s core philosophical position as communicated through the aligned vision to practice continuum. For example, any adult contributing to the PE MEET should know and understand the behaviour policy and have the skill to make decisions about when and how to interpret it in practice (i.e. assessing at what point to engage the policy in any given situation). It is the school’s responsibility to ensure that this is the case.

The communication of the vision to practice continuum has to support the alignment of fit and practice for a range of different adults. Initially through a documented format it would aim to promote all adults to reflect on their own understanding of physical education and school sport versus that of the school’s. For the concept of alignment and strategic fit to support the implementation of a PE MEET, it is vital that the dissemination of vision, strategy, policy and curriculum documentation is done with a clear and purposeful approach to communication, both written and verbal. Adults should only be deployed if their knowledge and skills match or ‘fit’ the desired outcomes of the physical education or school sport, extra-curriculum programme of study or both.

Conclusion

The chapter has considered how primary schools might engage in the delivery debate and provide a strategic response to teaching a physical education curriculum and an extra-curricular programme of activity and school sport. The operationalisation of a PE MEET through the concept of alignment and strategic fit presents both an opportunity and a challenge for teachers and schools. To design and deliver a curriculum and extra-curricular programme of study that is supported by a range of different adults with different educational and experimental backgrounds will not be straightforward, but needs to consider the use of different adults supporting physical education, extra-curricular activity and school sport. Through a conceptual framework of alignment and strategic fit, primary schools may be in a stronger position to offer children a broader range of activities while at the same time retain and indeed enhance the depth and quality of experience.

But the PE MEET is a concept, a proposal that presents some theoretical synergies, but in reality its operationalisation is unlikely to be straightforward and as highlighted will require leadership, organisation and documentation structure. As suggested at the start of the chapter’s final section, the issues of horizontal alignment with the messy and often thorny challenges presented by the micro-political climates that exist in all organisations will almost certainly cause issues. In some contexts and schools, these issues will undoubtedly become blocks and in others merely hurdles that support further innovation and creativity. But the success of such a concept will perhaps initially at least sit in the hands of motivated and talented individuals who can make the conceptual or theoretical links from documentation to practice, individuals who can see the potential range of experiences and activities alongside the depth of knowledge and skills a PE MEET could potentially offer the children in their schools. But perhaps most crucially, these individuals will have the energy, determination and resilience to consider how the broad principles and possibilities of such a venture might transfer into their own practice and context.

Pragmatically in the broader social and political contexts in which physical education and school sport exist, they are still seen by some as synonymous. There seems to be a need at the micro level to work more strategically against a clearly defined and documented vision to practice
continuum. A key point is that the dissemination and operationalisation of documentation and development should embrace the research findings regarding successful professional development, programmes or interventions, for example, Timperley et al. (2007), who report on the importance of alignment and the need to present a logical and consistent content thread through a clear documentation continuum, moving from overall vision to practice outcomes. In a view supported by Blair and Capel (2013) in the context of educators selecting their instructional methods, they state that there needs to be alignment between a teacher’s philosophical position and their actual practice or pedagogy. When these synergies are made, developed or found, primary school physical education curriculums and extra-curricular programmes of school sport could genuinely provide children with a broad range and depth of experience, placing physical education, extra-curricular activity and school sport at the heart of the school (AfPE, 2016) and its wider community.

References


The deliverers debate


This chapter reflects that although assessment and standards are issues at the fore of contemporary developments and debates in education globally, they have received relatively little attention across research and professional communities associated with primary physical education. The chapter draws on research from mainstream education and physical education to address developments in primary physical education that are linked to assessment and standards and broader developments that are affecting policy and practice and thus present opportunities and challenges for teachers, teacher educators and other professionals working in primary physical education. We necessarily begin by addressing the language and terminology captured in the title of this chapter and discussing the educational and political contexts in which contemporary developments and debates are located. This provides the backdrop from which we critically explore ways in which differing conceptualisations of primary physical education and, similarly, varied conceptualisations of assessment, are reflected in established and emergent practices internationally.

Assessment and standards are terms that have contested and varied meanings across education contexts. The broad spectrum of assessment terminology includes high- and low-stakes assessment; formative and summative; authentic assessment; assessment for, of and as learning; assessment efficacy; assessment literacy; evaluation and judgment; achievement and grading; outcomes; standards; benchmarks; knowledge requirements; competences; and standardised or criterion-referenced assessment. There is not the space in this chapter to explore in depth the different (and similar) meanings and convoluted use of these terms, including varied nomenclature and interchangeable use internationally. However, throughout the chapter we draw attention to the significance of differing conceptualisations and terminology for assessment policy and practice in primary physical education. It is interesting to reflect, for example, that in Latin traditions, to ‘assess’ was to ‘sit beside the learner’ (Dinan Thompson, 2017), to collect information and evidence of learning and student achievement and to facilitate improvement. More recently assessment has been identified as a potent carrier of values (Cumming & Wyatt-Smith, 2016). Hay and Penney (2013) have similarly promoted the conceptualisation of assessment as a socio-cultural and pedagogical process that is value laden in form and content and that inherently advantages some students in comparison to others. This chapter reflects this recognition that both the products and processes of assessment can legitimate, promote or marginalise particular knowledge,
understandings and skills; it positions learners and teachers and can be used to justify policy and political decisions made at a national, system, school and classroom level. Hence, the chapter adopts a broad conceptualisation of assessment and explores assessment policy and frameworks, formal and informal assessment practices and assessment outcomes. In addressing the latter, following Stobart (2008), it addresses the intended and unintended effects of assessment policies and practices in primary physical education and pursues relationships between assessment, pedagogy and curriculum. Assessment from this perspective is one of three inter-related message systems of schooling (Bernstein, 1971, 1990).

Talk of standards shifts the focus of assessment conversations to frameworks that formally articulate learning expectations, provide a point of reference for making judgements about learning achievements in primary physical education and/or that are used in benchmarking exercises. Once again, we face a situation in which the way in which ‘standards’ are referred to and the relationship between standards frameworks and assessment policies and practices varies across education authorities and internationally. However, a trend that many readers will undoubtedly relate to is the increased prominence of ‘standards’ as a discourse embedded in contemporary curriculum developments and, in some instances, an explicit driver of developments (see also Chapter 5). This reflects the broader impact of accountability and performativity discourses on education systems and, more specifically, on assessment policy and practices. Although national testing frameworks, reporting systems and public performance tables associated with literacy and numeracy best exemplify the spread of these global discourses, this chapter highlights that physical education is by no means immune to their impact. We suggest that navigating and mediating the effects of accountability discourses and engaging with standards frameworks in ways that support quality and equity in teaching and learning are significant challenges for primary physical educators. Furthermore, in considering standards we draw attention to the way in which ‘achievement standards’ are linked to performance discourses and examine the expression of performance discourses in assessment and achievement in primary physical education.

Finally as a point of introduction, it is pertinent for us to acknowledge the range of issues that recent research in physical education has associated with assessment, including issues of equity, efficacy (Hay & Penney, 2013), the influence of assessment on student learning and pedagogy (Redelius & Hay, 2009), narrowing of curriculum, the multiple purposes and uses of assessment (Thorburn, 2007), links to subject status (Marshall & Hardman, 2000) and the importance of assessment literacy (Hay & Penney, 2013; Dinan Thompson & Penney, 2015). Subsequent sections connect with and seek to extend discussion of the issues specifically in relation to primary physical education. Internationally much of the research focusing on assessment in physical education has centred on the secondary school setting and, particularly, on examination or senior secondary contexts, where assessment in physical education is viewed as ‘high stakes’ in relation to its contribution to careers and pathways outside of school (see, for example, Thorburn, 2008; Jones, 2017; Paveling, 2017; Penney, Jones, Newhouse & Cambell, 2012). On the flip side, Dinan Thompson and Penney (2015) coined primary physical education assessment in Australia as ‘low stakes’. In doing so they sought to emphasise the flexibility for student learning, negotiation and teacher autonomy that primary physical education may offer, but at the same time acknowledge that flexibility in assessment frameworks contributes to the low status and marginalisation of primary physical education. At various points this chapter reaffirms the notion of assessment as a ‘double-edged sword’ for primary physical education. ‘High-stakes’ assessment is typically also associated with high accountability for teachers and schools, as well as students. Low accountability or so-called ‘low-stakes’ assessment is something that has an understandable professional appeal for the primary school sector to allow the developmental focus and for enjoyment and participation to remain the focus in primary physical education. In connecting with these debates
we also acknowledge that primary physical education and, hence, assessment in primary physical education involves multiple stakeholders and policy actors (Ball, Maguire, Braun & Hoskins, 2012), spanning education, sport, fitness and health arenas. As we discuss later in the chapter, various agencies and individuals are involved directly and indirectly in shaping assessment policies and practices in primary physical education, and in Brown and Harris' (2016) terms, play the roles of assessment ‘takers-givers-users’.

Importantly, the chapter as a whole brings a critical lens to the discussion, identifies complexities for primary physical education assessment and makes suggestions for ways forward. Questions explored through the chapter and returned to in the conclusion include: ‘What constitutes developmental and socially just assessment in primary PE?’ and ‘Should we assess in the primary years?’ Both of these questions prompt us in the first instance to look in more depth at the complexities of ‘assessment’ from conceptual, pedagogical and pragmatic perspectives.

**Assessment and ideologies**

As indicated earlier, assessment is conceptualised in this chapter as inherently value based and an educational process. In physical education, it is a process characterised by uncertainties and a lack of consensus on how student achievement and success are viewed (Hay, 2006; O’Sullivan, 2013). Previously we have also emphasised that assessment is “a collection of evidence, but that the matters of what is to be assessed, who is to be assessed, and how the assessment is to occur, are acknowledged as social practices” (Dinan Thompson & Penney, 2015: 487). The social practices of assessment are influenced by inter-related global, national and local influences that give rise to both clear tensions and distinct possibilities for developments in assessment in primary physical education.

In part because of the flexible nature of many curriculum frameworks for primary physical education, local contextual factors appear highly significant in shaping what is taught, how and when, and by whom and what aspects of teaching assessment focuses on and extends to. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify a number of contrasting ideologies at play nationally and internationally that affect schools’ and teachers’ approaches to assessment in primary physical education. Further, we highlight that differing terminology and nomenclature associated with assessment reflect and reaffirm contrasting ideological perspectives and add to the complexity of assessment in primary physical education. For example, *standards* are interpreted as curriculum content (know and do elements) in the SHAPE (Society for Health and Physical Educators) America National PE Standards (www.shapeamerica.org/standards/pe/), whereas in the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, standards align with ‘achievement standards’ that “[allow] teachers to monitor student learning and to make judgments about student progress and achievement” (www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/overview/structure) (2016a). In a peformativity discourse standards can mean legitimacy and transparency, but can at the same time constrain the potential for assessment for learning, authentic learning experiences and socially just practices.

Different ideological perspectives are thus linked to different conceptualisations of assessment and to different visions of the prime purpose(s) of assessment. Following Stobart (2008) we draw attention to the value of distinguishing between talk of the purpose(s) and function(s) of assessment, with the emphasis that the actual (or prime) function of assessment may be quite different from the claimed purpose. Stobart’s (2008) and Hay and Penney’s (2013) explorations of assessment both draw our attention to the value of exploring the consequences of assessment to reveal more about the uses (and abuses) of assessment in contemporary education. Koch and DeLuca (2014) have also highlighted that assessment designed ‘for student achievement’ can have
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multiple uses and that in an accountability framework, assessment becomes a mechanism for accountability and performativity.

Further ideological issues come to the fore if we ‘unpack’ concerns for assessment to facilitate learning and/or evidence of student achievement in primary physical education. Specifically, all assessment frameworks and practices need to be acknowledged as grounded in particular ideologies of knowledge and learning. It is significant, for example, that primary physical education has been purported to contribute to the development of the whole child internationally. In 2008, the Welsh Assembly government released a holistic play-based curriculum for early years (children aged three to seven years) and ceased traditional physical education (Griggs & Petrie, 2016). Titled Foundation Phase, the revised 2015 version outlines outcomes for assessment of physical development aligned somewhat to physical education. In Australia, the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) (DEEWR, 2009), developed at the federal level, promotes a play-based, early childhood ideology for zero to eight years and yet is largely ignored in the specifications for the primary years that are articulated in the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2016a). In Spain, key competences for lifelong learning, such as ‘knowledge of, and interaction with, the physical world’ and ‘competence in social skills and citizenship’, have been integrated into the physical education curriculum (Llexia, Gonzalez-Arevalo & Brax-Vierira, 2016) with obvious links to physical activity, movement skills, social skills, teamwork and fair play.

In an interesting study from the United States, Mercier and Doolittle (2013) state that the standards movement in this country has strengthened PE as a subject, as it articulates the ‘know and do’ and sets an expectation for quality PE programs. They see the next logical step is to link to teacher evaluations, an additional function, but note that a difficulty is the systems/policy makers relying on standardised tests (fitness testing) as ways to collect data, whereas research has shown fitness testing to deter/disengage students from PE (Mercier & Silverman, 2012). They propose that alternative assessments are necessary if we are to note the purpose of PE as a contribution beyond physical training (e.g. personal and social development). Johnson (2016: 11) explored the assessment related to Standard 5 as it pertains to ‘valuing physical activity’, and he states: “Assessment of the meaning standard in PE receives significantly less attention compared to other content standards”. Strands of skills, knowledge, physical fitness and physical activity are assessed more frequently. He calls for alternative assessment, as “standardized assessments or quantitative measures do not provide the rich data available by the written or spoken word” (Johnson, 2016: 17).

These observations from the United States align with many of our own experiences that point to an imbalance in the focus of assessment in primary physical education such that there is limited alignment between assessment and the breadth of skills, knowledge and understandings that many contemporary curriculum developments encompass. In the section that follows we expand upon some of the assessment foci and approaches that are prominent in primary physical education internationally. Here we highlight that the various developments reflect a privileging of particular ideological perspectives on education and learning and different philosophies of physical education (Evans, 2004; Green, 2000). We suggest that internationally it is evident that tensions exist between curriculum documents that have aligned with contemporary ideologies of learning and learners and assessment practices that rely on a dominant discourse of performance assessment, ability and assessment of learning and that are grounded in discourses of sport performance, fitness and/or health promotion. For example, Fromel et al.’s (2014) comparative study across the Czech Republic and Poland illustrates the positioning of physical education in schools as part of the health discourse and use of fitness testing to justify that role. In part, these trends and the inherent tensions that they present in primary physical education reflect the historical bases of physical education (see, for example, Kirk, 1992) and what have become established ‘traditional’
curriculum and assessment practices in primary schools. They also reflect that primary physical education in some countries at least draws on the resources and services of providers from sport and health organisation agencies (Griggs, 2010; Petrie & Lisahunter, 2011; Petrie, Penney & Fellows, 2014; Williams & Macdonald, 2015) (see also Chapter 5).

Further ideological or value-based complexities in relation to assessment arise from the marginalisation of physical education amidst the increased significance of literacy and numeracy in the primary school. The ‘knock on’ effects that many teachers will relate to are time constraints, limited investment in facilities, resources and/or professional learning. The unintended consequences of some of these ‘realities’ of contemporary primary physical education, we suggest, is a continued reliance upon performance assessment. As others have observed, such practice may unknowingly contribute to the standards agenda, the ‘measurable outcomes’ (Yates, 2013) and ‘seductive paths to excellence’ (Macdonald, 2015). Alternatively, however, official curriculum can provide different ways forward for teaching, learning and assessment in primary physical education. In this regard we draw attention to the Swedish Compulsory Curriculum – Physical Education and Health (Swedish NAE, 2011) only commencing official ‘knowledge requirements’ (assessment and judgement) at Year 6. Interestingly, research (Annerstedt & Larsson, 2010; Redelius, Fagrell & Larsson, 2009; Svennberg, 2017) in Sweden shows that the lived local curriculum and assessment have been influenced greatly by teachers and community; thus modified and contextual standards are applied.

**The ‘what, why, how, when and who’ of assessment in primary PE**

The title of this section reflects our emphasis that there is a set of important issues to consider relating to current and prospective future assessment practices in primary physical education. Each of the questions posed relates to decisions about assessment in primary physical education that are important for quality and equity (Hay & Penney, 2013). Furthermore, it is rare that these matters are tightly prescribed by official curriculum. More often, they are decisions that teachers in primary schools are challenged to engage with: What learning in physical education should be the focus of assessment at any particular point in time, and what form should that assessment take? This section draws attention first to issues that stem from these questions that relate to the practicalities of assessment in primary physical education and at that the same time have implications for quality and equity. Second, it critically explores a number of practices associated with assessment in primary physical education internationally.

Earlier we drew on Stobart (2008) to distinguish between the purposes and functions of assessment in primary physical education. In discussing specific trends in assessment in physical education and exploring the purposes and functions that they serve, we stress that the way in which assessment is understood, approached and enacted is as important as what skills, knowledge and understandings assessment addresses. Both play a critical role in shaping whether assessment (particularly from learners’ perspectives) meaningfully informs and supports ongoing learning, or in contrast, appears confined to an isolated and in some instances, narrow, judgment on learning (or performance). Discussion about the respective balance in emphasis in this regard can be framed in relation to differing conceptualisations of assessment and the adoption of different assessment terminology. This includes assessment for/of/as learning, formative and summative and formal and informal assessment. As Stobart (2008) has highlighted, however, the use of particular terms may obscure a shift in orientation and function such that assessment that is labelled as formative may well serve a ‘mini-summative’ function, particularly in policy contexts that privilege accountability and performativity discourses.
As explained earlier, both the form and nature of assessment practices in primary physical education reflect the influence of historical, established assessment discourses and at the same time shifting global discourses in education. Both sets of influences contribute to (formal) assessment, focusing on a particular and in many instances relatively narrow set of skills in physical education and to the use of specific approaches and contexts. In parallel, we highlight the need to recognise that informal assessment practices play a central role in judgments about learners and learning in physical education. In this regard, research in the broader field of health and physical education prompts particular consideration of the ‘body’ and ‘health’ discourses that affect pedagogy and shape how learners, their achievements and capacities are regarded in physical education (Evans, Rich & Davies, 2004). Research focusing on body pedagogies brings to the fore the ways in which underlying and surrounding discourses affect how students may be positioned in and by assessment processes and pedagogies as (relatively) able or not as learners in physical education (Hay & lisahunter, 2006). Hence, we draw attention to the significance of both formal and informal assessment in primary physical education relative to the messages that are overtly and inadvertently communicated to students (Hay & Penney, 2013).

Contemporary contexts of primary education also reaffirm the identification of specific tasks and times ‘as assessment’, distinct from ‘everyday’ or ‘routine’ teaching and learning. ‘Test’ discourses in turn come to the fore and legitimate both particular types of tasks and modes of collection of evidence, as evidenced by, for example, the use of ‘checklist’ approaches in/as assessment in primary physical education (Dinan Thompson & Penney, 2015). The use of fitness tests, sport-specific skill tests and testing protocols associated with fundamental movement (or motor) skills (FMS) all illustrate different ideologies finding expression in assessment in primary physical education. The tests reflect the status that specific fitness, health and sport discourses have gained and sustained in physical education over time. Internationally, instruments, measures and pedagogical processes that relate first and foremost to health promotion or sport performance are used in and ‘as’ assessment in primary physical education – and in turn, have underpinned specific activities being accorded ‘core’ status in many primary physical education curricula. FMS illustrates such a trend. It is an internationally established discourse that informs curriculum, pedagogy and assessment in primary physical education and that has openly been appropriated for its political appeal (Swabey & Penney, 2011). Numerous resources and programmes produced for teachers and schools have addressed FMS. In parallel, other research continues to use physical activity levels and other behavioural change data as a measure of the quality of children’s ‘physical education’ in primary schools (see, for example, Ridgers, Carter, Stratton & McKenzie, 2011). Turning to the present day, physical literacy can arguably be regarded as the new FMS. Although the definition and conceptualisation of physical literacy and its relationship to physical education remain debated, it is discourse that has assumed and been accorded significant status within physical education policy and practice (as reflected, for example, in UNESCO’s [2015] Guidelines for Quality Physical Education). It is also a discourse that has particular implications for assessment in primary physical education and, in turn, for judgments to be made about the effectiveness and/or quality of primary physical education programs.

Various developments in physical education curriculum and pedagogy have taken assessment in primary physical education in other directions. Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) (Bunker & Thorpe, 1982), for example, has informed the development of the Game Performance Assessment Instrument (GPAI) (Mitchell, Oslin & Griffin, 2006; Oslin, Mitchell & Griffin, 1998) and the Team Sport Assessment Procedure (TSAP) (Gréhaigne, 1997). A recent Spanish study has shown these tools have different applications and were useful across the psychomotor and cognitive domains, although they highlighted the limited impact of tools, as they were largely used as observation tools without student voice (Arias-Estero & Castejón, 2014). Developments
associated with sport education (Siedentop, 1994) similarly demonstrate new thinking in physical education spanning matters of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. Sport education can particularly be credited with more attention being directed to peer assessment and a broadening of the skills, knowledge and understanding that assessment in primary physical education can legitimately address. Yet it is also pertinent to note that assessment that does not primarily focus on the psychomotor domain still has marginal standing in physical education. Other practices that remain institutionalised in many primary schools, including sports carnivals or ‘sports days’, and selection for school and representative sport teams, serve a parallel and public role (from the parent, principal, teacher and students’ own perspective) as ‘de facto’ assessment of learning and achievements in primary physical education (Buns, 2015; Griggs, 2010). Such practices highlight that established pedagogies and pragmatics are strong in the primary physical education assessment discourse. They might even be considered as an “entrenched discourse in taken-for-granted practice” (Dinan Thompson & Penney, 2015: 496) and in need of critique of purpose, function and alignment to curriculum, local and global ideologies.

**Challenges and opportunities for assessment in primary PE**

This section takes a critical lens to assessment in primary physical education and poses questions for the development of quality assessment. It reflects that emerging discourses and policy developments bring challenges and opportunities. Hay and Penney (2009: 389) proposed that “quality PE requires the concerted and considered alignment of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment and the inclusion of a primary focus on assessment for learning; authentic, integrated assessment; assurance of construct validity; and socially just approaches to assessment”. Hence, the educative purpose of physical education is positioned at the centre of experience and assessment, and yet it is currently marginalised. Although curriculum and policy documents tend to make visible developmental learning in a broad range of authentic, individual and collaborative physical activity contexts, it appears somewhat invisible in the fragmented and segmented (Maton, 2011) assessment practices where standards and sport performance have become ‘de facto’ assessment (Griggs, 2010; Buns, 2015).

A major challenge is to establish a conceptual base for assessment that will counter some of the tendencies described that displace educational discourses. Arnold’s (1979) seminal concepts of learning in, through and about movement, in our view, provides a sound foundation and an opportunity for developing quality and socially just assessment in primary physical education. Arnold’s framework is a familiar international language in physical education curriculum, but to date has not been made explicit with assessment. Positioned as interrelated dimensions of learning, ‘in, through and about’ inform ‘how and why we move and we can improve’ (ACARA, 2015: 6) and value enjoyment, experiential learning, theoretical bases and social and personal skills in movement and physical activities. Collecting evidence across the three interrelated elements of learning in movement and physical activity contexts prompts consideration of the breadth of learning and ways of learning that physical education should encompass — and arguably reflect and recognise in assessment. Taking Arnold’s dimensions forward as the basis and focus of assessment will present challenges. Recent research has, for example, drawn attention to a notably narrowed interpretation of learning ‘in’ movement (that is, movement skills, strategies and tactics) and learning ‘about’ movement (that is, through fitness) (Dinan Thompson, 2017). We return to this in the final section of this chapter.

We must also acknowledge there are intended and unintended consequences of the various assessment practices, including those adopted in school, sport, health and fitness resources. There are many stakeholders and actors producing ‘ready-made tools’ for assessment in primary physical
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In a study of primary physical education teachers in Australia (Dinan Thompson & Penney, 2015: 492), teachers were unaware of how routine assessment practices affected equity and student learning, as evidenced in this comment: “I never thought too deeply about the tick and flick on the checklists until now . . . it’s a quick and easy tool. I’ve never thought that the focus on proficiency might cause disengagement, or that students might want to know what the bits [valued elements] are” [our insert]. What is also evident here is the absence of student voice and involvement in the assessment culture, such that their opportunities for success are prospectively limited.

Undoubtedly, assessment in primary physical education continues to reflect a profound dilemma. An ‘absence or silencing’ of assessment in primary physical education may reinforce the ‘low stakes’, marginalised status and legitimacy of the subject and yet may provide notable freedoms for curriculum and pedagogy and for teachers and learners. How do we meet the challenge of making assessment quality, socially just and high stake but not high stakes? (Tan, 2013). Further to assessment being socially just, a noted and documented complexity for physical education is the inclusion of effort and motivation as a factor in determining student performance and grades (Ikonomopoulos, Tzetzis, Kioumourtzoglou & Tsorbatzoudis, 2006; Redelius & Hay, 2009; Annerstedt & Larsson, 2010). More recently, Svennberg’s (2017) study in Sweden has reported that it is a ‘gut feeling’ that contributes to assessment and judgements in physical education and in addition performance in sports, migration background and parent education as influencing factors.

New and emerging discourses and advancements in primary physical education present both a challenge and opportunity. If we take the discourse of physical literacy as an example, significant growth has occurred internationally but with varied interpretations and impact on physical education. Health discourses, too, have influenced physical education over time. Popular and political discourses will continue to come and go and replace existing influences, and a deeper understanding of impacts is required. Advancements in technologies, including psychometric data and the use of devices and purposeful design of apps and games, are having an impact on physical education classes (Brown, 2015; Casey & Jones, 2011; Palao, Hastie, Cruz & Ortega, 2015). This brings another set of stakeholders (also referred to as deliverers in Chapter 6) that have the potential to influence and shape curriculum and assessment. Psychometric data on student wellbeing is increasing, including ratings on social skills and fitness and tools such as the Wellbeing Profiler (Redmond et al., 2016; Waters, 2016). This may or may not affect physical education assessment, but is another set of evidence for students and teachers.

Teaching and learning in many primary schools also increasingly foregrounds new technologies. Initial research on technologies in physical education assessment is showing that they are flexible, efficient and invite student engagement, and yet on the flip side, are flagging a narrowing of curriculum and opportunity as the apps are determining the learning experiences and assessment (for example, the Coaches Eye app prioritising FMS). Further, we highlight the need for awareness that new technologies and digital forms of assessment can reaffirm existing inequities in learning opportunities in primary physical education and/or bring new inequities amidst the rhetoric of ‘advancement’. A study on the use of exergames in Sweden (Öhman, Almqvist, Meckbach & Quennerstedt, 2014) has highlighted the need for teachers to be aware of the body and health messages they are promoting and hence a need for a framework to critique the ‘ready-made’ and ‘adopted’ resources for learning and for assessment. For this we offer, the assessment literacy elements (Hay & Penney, 2013), or what Leirhaug, McPhail and Annerstedt (2016) call ‘preconditions’, to build teacher capacities in developing quality and socially just assessment.
Looking forward: contemplating quality assessment in primary PE?

To return to key questions raised by this chapter: ‘What constitutes developmental and socially just assessment in primary PE?’ and ‘Should we assess in the primary years?’ Discussions presented earlier highlight that assessment continues to represent a ‘double-edge sword’ relative to ideologies, pedagogies, practices, stakeholders and silences in primary PE. So what for the future? We propose that assessment in the primary years needs to be characterised by a focus on assessment for learning; a purposeful connection with each of the constructs of learning in, through and about movement and physical activities; tasks, contexts and approaches that contribute to authenticity and integration in children’s lives in and beyond the school gates; and socially just practice, catering for diversity and addressing equity through supportive environments. Some would say this is ‘utopia’, but as suggested earlier, both intended and unintended consequences of current assessment practices present the need for critical engagement in assessment purposes and functions with students, teachers and stakeholders if we are to raise to a high stake (not stakes).

Arnold’s (1979) conceptual frame of learning in, through and about movement and physical activities offers an intentional international language that is conceivable from the early years of physical education to the senior secondary years. The Australian Curriculum: HPE (Foundation to Year 10) utilises this framework by establishing three intentionally integrated sub-strands: ‘Moving our body’, ‘Understanding movement’ and ‘Learning through movement’ (ACARA, 2016b). Current assessment practices suggest, however, that dominant performance assessment discourses locate and fragment assessments to narrowed interpretations of ‘Moving our body’ and the fitness content in ‘Understanding movement’. These are routine and performance (and usually sport) based, using ready-made tools and some new technologies, and are more obvious and quantifiable. Recent questions raised for reflection with PE specialists in Australia include: In your primary years, do you have 33.3% of assessment occurring across each sub-strand? Or alternatively, can you purposefully design assessment to integrate the three sub-strands and capture authentic and personalised learning in traditional and non-traditional physical activity contexts over a period of time? (Dinan Thompson, 2017).

Primary physical education will always have a variety of stakeholders and policy actors, and new and emerging public and political discourses will continue to create a mix of challenges and opportunities for assessment in this sector. We suggest that building teacher assessment literacy through the elements of assessment comprehension, application, interpretation and critical engagement with assessment (Hay & Penney, 2013: 77–80) provides a way forward for teachers to reflect on and design assessment and to engage with assessment resources, ready-made tools and new advancements. Teacher capabilities about assessment types, purposes, conditions, implementation and student engagement; making sense of and acting on evidence, impact and consequences; and challenging the ‘taken-for-grantedness’ of assessment can provide a strong platform for quality and socially just assessment. This process needs to engage students as much as teachers. Students are at the heart of learning and assessment and need to understand the requirements and conditions, know how teachers make judgements and explore with them how assessment can assist their learning. Critically, we need to do more to make explicit the educative purpose of assessment in primary physical education and achieve ‘assessment enabled learning’ in primary physical education.

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PART III

Learning and learners
Developing the ‘whole child’ is a mantra that has been rehearsed in primary school physical education across the globe for decades (Burrows & Wright, 2001). In countries like New Zealand and Australia, both heavily dominated by British traditions of physical training, the 1950s saw key shifts in how physical education was thought about and practised (Burrows, 1999; Kirk, 1992; Wright, 1995). Gone were the days (well, not quite) of militaristic drill routines, regimented exercises, obsessive concerns about posture, medical inspections, and corsets. Instead the austerity and regimentation of physical exercises were replaced with a more humanistic emphasis on pupil enjoyment, fun, and learning through the physical as well as ‘in’ it. As a New Zealand primary school inspector in the 1960s put it:

Today, the whole trend of modern thought in physical education is towards using movement as a medium for much wider educational purposes – as a means of social development and creative expression, and as an opportunity for the exercise and education of the mind and the emotions as well as the muscles.

(Walbrun, 1966: 38)

Thirty years later when I was training to be a physical education teacher, we were certainly encouraged to view our role in fostering the whole of children’s development as crucial. ‘Physical education is education in, through, and about the physical’ was the key message for us beginner teachers. Issued with a syllabus that specified the physical, personal, and social stages of growth and development of our students (e.g. Department of Education, 1987), we were taught that age-related changes in each of these spheres were ‘normal’, that children would advance sequentially through a series of stages, and that our role as physical education teachers was to provide subject matter, assessments, and learning activities that facilitated pupils’ developmental journey en route to adulthood.

In contemporary times, too, few would question the idea that physical education can and does contribute to the development of the ‘whole’ child. Indeed, as signalled in the final section of this text, curricula worldwide emphasise the subject’s contribution to all manner of competencies, attributes and dispositions. In New Zealand, for example, the learning in primary physical
education focuses on developing personal health, movement concepts/skills, and relationships with other people and healthy communities and environments (Ministry of Education, 2007). Key competencies are expected to be interwoven into learning activities, assuring a development of the whole child – that is, thinking, relating to others, using language, symbols, and texts, managing self, and participating and contributing.

There is no question that physical education, at least at the level of rhetoric, is about much more than ‘physical’ development. It is geared towards producing whole, balanced, and well-rounded citizens. There is also little question that physical education’s claims to develop the ‘whole’ of a ‘child’ have been helpful in terms of justifying the subject’s existence in schools, boosting its status and arguments for greater curriculum time (Tinning, Macdonald, Wright & Hickey, 2001). What I am keen to question in this chapter, however, is what developmental thinking and practice do. That is, when we think in developmental terms and commit ourselves to developing the ‘whole’ of the pupils we teach, what kinds of consequences, both positive and negative, emerge for children, for teachers, and for teaching/learning in primary physical education?

I suggest that development is one of those tricky terms. Used so often, inside and outside of education circles, it fails to attract much attention. We all assume we know what it is. Certainly, before studying critical psychology literature at university, it had never occurred to me to question the way I thought about development. I had not really given much thought to what the disciplinary knowledge that underpins it was, nor the assumptions that drive the idea that child development is the raison d’etre of physical education. In brief, what I discovered once I had the luxury of time to dwell with the literature and reflect on my teaching experiences was that the notion of developing children is a little dodgy at best and highly problematic at worst. In what follows I endeavour to outline why.

I begin by examining the notion of child ‘development’ itself. Drawing predominantly on critical psychology and sociology of childhood literature, I discuss the assumptions undergirding the idea that physical education, or any other subject for that matter, can and should develop children. I first consider ‘motor development’, an enduring focus for school-based physical education, before examining the broader developmental contributions physical education teachers are exhorted to make to the ‘whole’ child. I then explore what kind of ‘child’ is envisaged at the centre of our child development efforts in physical education, raising questions about whose interests are served (and not) when the developed child is thought about in particular ways. Here, I consider examples from physical education practice and guidelines compiled for physical education pedagogy. To conclude, I suggest that thinking and doing development differently might enhance our efforts to reach and engage with more children in primary physical education. Although this is predominantly a conceptual chapter, throughout I try to anchor my argument to real-life exemplars that will hopefully resonate with some, if not all, readers.

What is development?

One way to think about whole-child development is to consider the sets of ideas and practices associated with it as a discourse. Although discourse is a term construed differently across a range of social science disciplines, for the purposes of this chapter, we can consider discourse in the way French philosopher Michel Foucault did, as “practices that systematically form the objects about which they speak” (Foucault, 1972: 49). So, if we are referring to developmental discourse, I mean the sets of assumptions, practices, and theories that together work to produce ideas about what children need at particular points in their lifespan. I am also referring to what ideas about child development do – to the ways ideas about development shape curriculum-making decisions,
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assessment, and, as mentioned earlier, even justifications for physical education’s very existence
in schools.

I have argued elsewhere (see Burrows & Wright, 2001: 165) that in physical education, “the-
ories of development have provided a rich source of knowledge about what children are like,
how they grow and develop and what they need at specific stages in their schooling”. Evidence
of developmental thinking and practice is present in the ways schools are organised, when and
what specific content is taught, and how children are treated at particular points in their life
trajectories. At a basic level, most primary schools are organised along developmental lines. That
is, children aged 5 to 6 years are grouped together in one class, whereas 10- to 11-year-olds and
those in between have their own rooms, own teachers, and own sets of learning tasks. In physical
education, many classes are driven by the idea that younger children will need to learn the fun-
damentals of gross movement (e.g. running, leaping, jumping, throwing), whereas older children
will be capable of finer manipulative motor skills and able to integrate those fundamentals into
more complex games involving strategy, problem-solving, and decision-making (Wright, 1997).
Development is envisaged as sequential, evolving in a linear fashion via stepwise progressions en
route to a ‘mature’ kind of human motor functioning.

Although at first blush this scenario might seem commonsense, as anyone who has taught
a class of children knows, rarely are these normative patterns of development experienced or
enacted. Some of the students we teach may fit the ‘norms’, yet many more do not. For all sorts
of reasons, Johnny may have a more sophisticated throwing technique than Janice. Mary may
swing a tennis racquet with extraordinary skill and gusto, whereas Jimmy barely grasps how to
hold the implement. Fairly obviously, motor skill development is context dependent. Mary may
have grown up with a tennis court in her backyard and tennis-loving parents, whereas Jimmy
may be a refugee from a war-ravaged country whose only experience of motor skill development
has been learning to run fast to avoid danger. Further, for some children with physical impair-
ments (and indeed for many children without such ‘labels’) motor development milestones will
be accomplished in different ways and certainly on different time frames, if at all (Ballard, 1993).
Any parent of a child whose trajectory doesn’t match the sequential, normative, age-related
pattern presumed in developmental discourse will attest to what being labelled ‘developmentally
delayed’ can do to a learner’s sense of themselves as capable and proficient. This is especially so
in physical education (Fitzgerald, 2006; Holland, 2010) where children’s skills and abilities are
often so visible to others.

Despite the obvious disparate experiences and thus resources for motor development different
children will have, many primary school curriculums and resource handbooks for teachers
proceed as if there really is a normal way that children should develop in a movement sense.
In the fitness goals aligned to different aged children, the motor patterns outlined in teaching
handbooks, and in the assessment regimens carried out in many classes, the presence of normative
notions about who children are and what they might become persist. Take, for example, Galla-
hue’s Developmental Physical Education for All Children (Gallahue, 1993) or Gabbard’s Lifelong Motor
Development (Gabbard, 1992). The titles may be different for both textbooks, but the idea that
children will basically share a normative motor development trajectory is shared. The following
excerpt from another physical education teacher education text illustrates this point nicely:

Understanding the way people normally develop movement skills throughout the
lifespan enables us to diagnose problems in those individuals who may be developing
abnormally . . . Also, because there is a link between all domains of behavior, improve-
ment in the motor domain may indirectly lead to improvements in intellectual or
social development. Activities can therefore be devised to assist in the development of
movement potential. To accurately create such a movement curricula, we must have a
knowledge of normal motor development.

(Payne & Isaacs, 1987: 7)

This narrative clearly affirms that there are standards for ‘normal development’; those deviating
from the ‘norm’ are construed as in need of ‘remedial’ assistance, and developments in one sphere
(e.g. motor domain) are held in causal relationship to those in other spheres (for example, cog-
nitive and/or social domains). It is not only the structure of physical education that is shaped
by this knowledge, but also what counts as viable or correct ‘performance’ at different ages and
stages and which children actually get to access or engage with school-based physical education.

Earlier I have tried to signal some of the enduring developmental assumptions that appear
to underpin what happens in the name of the movement dimension of physical education in
primary schools. I have also tried to point out some of the problems with assuming normative
trajectories of motor development and privileging norms of achievement that may have little
relevance or recognition for many primary school students. In the next section, I ask questions
about what happens when, added to the mission to develop students’ motor patterns, comes an
invocation to develop the ‘whole’ of a child. That is, when emotional, intellectual, social, and
spiritual constituents of children are added to the mix, what does this mean for learning, learners,
and, of course, teaching practice in primary schools?

Developmental psychology

I begin by mapping the contribution of three developmental theorists to provide a flavour of
some of the key features of developmental thinking before exploring the ways physical education
draws on this to shape curricula and programs. Most would agree that Piaget, Kohlberg, and
Erikson have been particularly influential. Although writing at different times and on different
continents, these three were all thoroughly committed to the notion that the development of
children could be charted in age-related stages. Each of these theorists also conceived of child
development as an individual process, as a progressive moving from positions of dependence to
ones of autonomy and independence. In addition, each of them envisaged a relationship between
growth of the body and achievement of the tasks required to reach successively higher levels of
development. That is, the developing physical body was linked to the development of intellectual,
moral, and emotional maturity.

Piaget (1936), for example, suggested that movement is a vehicle for the development of
rational thinking. For him, it was a child’s interaction with objects and people in his (sic) world
that was crucial in the development of his (sic) capacity for not only physical, but also cognitive,
emotional, and social behaviour. ‘Hands-on’ experiences and opportunities for ‘free play’ were
therefore crucial elements of a child’s education. Arguably, so, too, was school-based physical
education!

Kohlberg (1966, 1969) was interested in how moral judgement developed. He proposed a
typology of six stages which individuals pass through in an invariant order en route to a pinnacle
of moral reasoning. As is evident in his commentary here, for him, stages were fixed:

The concept of stage implies an invariance of sequence in development, a regularity of
stepwise progression regardless of cultural teaching or circumstance. Cultural teaching
and experience can speed up or slow down development but it cannot change its order
or sequence.

(Kohlberg, 1966: 6)
German-born Erik Erikson was another stage theorist whose impact on physical education has been considerable. In the tradition of Piaget, Erikson represented the human life cycle as consisting of eight progressive psycho-social stages of ego development. Erikson suggested that at each stage of life, a particular crisis must be overcome before progression to the succeeding stage can be guaranteed; for instance, trust precedes autonomy and identity precedes intimacy. He attributed especial importance to the stage of adolescence, where he suggested the major developmental task for youth is the forging of a coherent sense of an autonomous self through separation from attachments to family characteristic of earlier stages. As was the case with the theories of Piaget, Erikson’s conception of this cycle of development was based exclusively on male experience. Apart from the initial infant crisis of “trust versus mistrust”, each of the successive stages of childhood he presented involved tasks of individuation (Gilligan, 1993). That is, each of his stages represented a successive move away from relationship experiences toward development of an autonomous, initiating, and separate self. According to Erikson, the tendency of female children to retain attachments and privilege relationships with others over forging an autonomous identity was indicative of a developmental impediment.

In summary, whereas Piaget focused on rational thinking, Kohlberg stressed moral autonomy, and Erikson favoured ego integrity as the end point of human development, what each of these theorists share is support for the notion that children progress along a natural developmental path toward fulfilment of their potential. Further, each of these pivotal theorists equated male development with child development, regarding male behaviour as the norm and female behaviour as some kind of deviation from that norm. Most of the empirical studies which formed the bedrock of their respective theories were conducted with exclusively male samples, and, in the case of Piaget, predominantly with his own children. Finally, each of these developmental gurus presumed the sequential age-related stages of child development to be universal, fixed, and solid. Although, on the one hand, it may be useful to have something to guide us in thinking about and planning for what children might need in primary school physical education, in what remains of this chapter, I want to question the wisdom of continuing to privilege developmental knowledge in our curriculum-making and our interactions with learners, particularly when thinking about developing the ‘whole’ child.

Developing the ‘whole child’

Knowledge of developmental changes is centrally implicated in the production of the whole child (Burman, 1994). In Te Whāriki, New Zealand’s Early Childhood curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1996), and in primary school curriculum statements in New Zealand (see Ministry of Education, 2007) and elsewhere, the emotional, intellectual, social, and physical constituents of children are increasingly being construed as elements of the whole person that need to be held in equilibrium. Well-being is a catch phrase that proliferates in education circles currently as teachers and curriculum makers alike draw on discourses from health promotion to understand the importance of children’s overall well-being for functioning in all aspects of their lives, including school learning (Lupton, 1999; Sinkinson, 2011). School physical education is advanced as a subject that can foster traits like team spirit, cooperation, camaraderie, self-esteem, enhanced mental growth, and emotional resilience (Culpan, 1995/1996). Some proponents argue that physical education actually provides the centre point, the pivot for synthesis, of all the attributes deemed important in a fully developed human. New Zealand’s Health and Physical Education Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) embraces Hauora – a Maori word translated for this syllabus to mean ‘total well-being’. In the conceptual and structural framework of this document, an interweaving amongst all of these elements is indicated, with the implicit goal being portrayed
as achievement of a harmony or synthesis of all of the key stated attributes of humaness. Other physical education theories maintain that a causal relationship between physical development of children and emotional, spiritual, and intellectual development exists, with some (e.g. Hellison & Templin, 1991) explicitly building their curriculum models around the notion of sequential progressions from caring for self to caring for others in meaningful ways. Each of these claims is premised on developmental knowledge – not necessarily directly drawn from the theories of Piaget, Kohlberg, or Erickson – but nevertheless based on an idea that children develop in specific ways at specific ages and stages and that physical development is a precursor to development in all other spheres (e.g. mental, social, spiritual). As Morss (1993) puts it, they presume the child is some kind of bio-social compound.

What development does

One does not need to look far to see the ways pedagogies privileged in primary physical education classes are intimately linked to the aforementioned developmental notions. For example, monitoring the extent to which class members participate ‘cooperatively’, take on ‘leadership’ roles, or function as part of a ‘team’ provides teachers with information about children’s development in social and moral domains. Evaluating children’s posture and recording their height and weight is another pedagogic practice used to classify children’s development according to biological norms. The ‘fat’ or ‘skinny’, ‘tall’ or ‘short’, ‘erect’ or ‘knock-kneed’ child is only able to be defined as such against pre-existing ‘norms’ of age- or stage-appropriate ‘development’. In school physical education practice, the use of checklists for recording children’s motor skills and social skills is particularly prevalent. In the course of a series of lessons on dance, a child may expect to be assessed on his or her ability to perform particular movement skills or patterns, but also his or her capacity to ‘work as part of a group’, to ‘share’ ideas, to ‘create’ new movements, and so forth. In an age of increased accountability for student learning in schools, teachers are ‘reporting’ on and classifying an increasingly vast array of developmental accomplishments. As Walkerdine’s (1984) research suggests, the classificatory and monitoring practices of teachers actually work to produce the very object they claim to describe. In other words, we ‘see’ development because we are ‘looking’ for it!

What developmental knowledge also does is create and sustain the category of childhood and specify what characterises this stage in a human’s life trajectory. In other words, without the idea that human beings develop in particular ways at certain ages and stages, there would be no such thing as infancy, toddlerhood, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. As Morss (1993) suggests, “it (developmental psychology) has told us what babies are like, what children are like and (more recently) it has told us what adults are like” (p. 2). In turn, these visions of childhood (Stainton-Rogers & Stainton-Rogers, 1992) are drawn on to justify and normalise particular attitudes toward children. For example, a protective stance is rendered necessary if children do not have the cognitive capacity to make intelligent decisions for themselves. In school physical education, the relative intellectual immaturity children are presumed to possess in comparison with adults encourages teachers to view themselves as the arbiters of deciding what is in the best interests of the child.

On the earlier account, practices like mandating daily physical fitness, providing only nutritious food in school canteens, and urging compulsory participation in school sports teams are justified as children are not yet in a position to make sensible, informed choices about their health and physical well-being for themselves. This is particularly the case for primary-aged children who are presumed to required extensive adult guidance. As Mayall (1994: 14) attests, “adult behaviours towards children are conditioned by the understanding that they are best regarded as
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being beings in process rather than as members of the category people”. Categorising childhood as a period of growth characterised by weakness, dependency, and inferiority comparable to adults produces a discourse of children’s needs which validates particular adult treatments of young people. I would argue that nowhere is the distinction between childhood and adulthood played out in more obvious ways than in the institution of the school.

Moreover, as discussed earlier, the sources of such timeless, universal truths about the ‘child’ are invariably studies of particular individual children, the results of which are then generalised to formulate accounts which become truisms for all children. Piaget drew heavily on research conducted with his own children to construct his accounts of childhood, and even more recent conceptualisations of the nature of childhood are inevitably secured on the basis of highly context-specific and culture-bound studies of individual children (Baker, 1995; Morss, 1993). In many cultures, relationality rather than independence is valued, collectivity rather than individual autonomy, yet the kind of child citizen imagined in much developmental discourse is one who will eventually develop into a free, responsible, individual, and democratic subject. As several critics have shown, the child at the centre of developmental psychology is an idealised and essentialised child, a bourgeois and implicitly ‘male’ child, yet it is portrayed as the child, natural, inevitable, and uniform across culture, class, gender, and time (Parker & Shotter, 1990; Stainton-Rogers & Stainton-Rogers, 1992).

Aspirations to foster the ‘whole’ of children’s development are laudable on some dimensions. Seemingly progressive curricula such as those advanced in New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2007) broaden and loosen the purpose of physical education. Flexibility, adaptability, problem-solving, the capacity to communicate feelings, and the ability to cooperate with others are foregrounded as much as the traditional agendas of advancing physical and/or motor development in children. As Youngs (2004) puts it, physical education requires change efforts based on thinking and emotion; which are matters of the soul/wairua. However, as Lupton (1999) and others have discussed, in some sense, these progressive agendas have served to extend surveillance to all aspects of a child’s life. There is no part of a student’s life that is exempt from examination, from ‘development’, from an aspiration to ‘improve’. In effect, the ‘good’ student in primary physical education does not only need to demonstrate improvement in motor development, but in his or her capacity to respect others, emotionally connect, and intellectually understand the relation of class content to broader societal agendas and all manner of other goals. As a primary school physical education teacher in Lupton’s (1999: 296) study attests:

We try and get across to the kids that health is an overall thing – there is an emotional, physical and social wellbeing, and they’re all just as important. And that’s the way I look on it when I’m teaching as well, that they are interrelated in that way. And the health and human relations programme that we run is all about developing the ‘whole me’ and I see it tied together in that way.

When the ‘whole me’ is premised on developmental assumptions, assumptions that are ethnocentric, evaluative, normative, and moralising, there is an issue.

Conclusion

Physical education as a field, a discipline, and a profession has undergone some seemingly radical shifts in philosophy, orientation, and function in the last two decades. Some of these shifts are anchored to global concerns around sedentary living and spiralling obesity rates (Gard & Wright, 2005), whereas others are driven by educational agendas ranging from promotion of social justice
to maximising individual potential and preparing students to be competitive citizens in a changing world (Ministry of Education, 2007). Flux and change aside, however, the notion that physical education, whatever it comprises, must and does assist children to ‘develop’, to ‘grow’, and to ‘progress’ en route to whatever ideal of adulthood has currency at the time has remained. In this chapter I have endeavoured to subject this most basic of disciplinary claims to critical scrutiny – not to decry all that we do in primary school physical education, nor to suggest that developing the ‘whole’ child is not a worthy aspirational aim, but rather, to ask questions about which kind of child is privileged in developmental discourses, what notions of ‘development’ undergird our practice, and with what affect for those we serve – children. Although one chapter is no place for a full exposition of the nuances of these arguments, nor of the ways developmental thinking plays out in widely differing contexts, there are just two questions I hope readers are left with – ones that can be asked of ourselves, our practices, and our institutions.

First, why do we think children should develop in particular ways? What notion of the ‘ideal’ child underpins our desire to foster particular traits and capacities in young people? How does this gel (or not) with the needs and aspirations of the young people we teach?

Second, there is increasing recognition that the developmental milestones underpinning many physical education programs are ill placed to reflect the diverse ways that children from diverse locales and with different dispositions move through their lives. If we recognise that the ‘developing child’ at the centre of our physical education practice is not a unitary, predictable, or universal self, then what do we premise our practice on? In New Zealand, curriculum guides would suggest an ‘inquiry-based’ process. That is, starting with what children know, need to know, and want to know and do and framing content and pedagogy around this. If nothing else, when claiming to develop the whole child in physical education, consider which child one is aspiring to develop. As I have endeavoured to argue throughout this chapter, there is no such thing as a unitary normative child who will follow predictable pathways of development. There is no universal child that desires or must reach the developmental goals specified in curriculum in order to feel ‘whole’ or well. Rather, there is simply an array of divergent wholes. Commitments to an individualised conception of the child and a sequential, hierarchical pattern of development construct the child at the centre of physical education in ways that privilege one narrowly conceived version of childhood over multiple diverse childhoods. Perhaps it is time for a less ‘developmental’ take on developing the whole child? As Broughton (1987: 1) puts it, developmental psychology:

Segments, classifies, orders, and co-ordinates the phases of our growth and even defines what is and is not to be taken as growth. It creates a developmental discourse that, like language itself, both engenders and pre-empts the range of conditions of possibility within which the human life course can make sense.

If developing the whole child is what we’re doing in primary school physical education, then recognising what ascribing to developmental norms does in terms of diminishing that whole would seem crucial.

References


9

PRE-SERVICE PRIMARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER EDUCATION

Niki Tsangaridou and Ermis Kyriakides

Introduction

“In a world where education matters more than it ever has before, parents and policymakers alike are asking how to find extraordinary teachers who can help all children acquire the increasingly complex knowledge and skills they need” (Darling-Hammond, 2006a: 4). Teaching quality is a priority in many educational systems around the world (Hardman, 2011; Rink, 2013). Research over the last several decades confirmed the critical role of the teacher in student learning and acknowledged that one of the most significant ways to improve student learning is the quality of teaching (Rink, 2013; Seidel & Shavelson, 2007; Siedentop, 2009). Many scholars have suggested that a key issue to achieving this is to enhance teacher education programs so as to educate high-quality teachers for schools (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Cochran-Smith & Villegas, 2014; Lampert, 2010; Rink, 2007; Siedentop, 2009; Zeichner, 2007). Society expects teachers to be sufficiently knowledgeable in the subjects they teach and proficient in pedagogy. It is therefore vital that teacher education programs are of high quality in order to prepare skilful teachers. As several scholars have emphasized, the primary goal of teacher education should be to ensure that future teachers are capable of producing high-quality learning outcomes for all of their students (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015; Gore, 2001; Rink, 2013; Siedentop, 2009; Zeichner, 2009).

This chapter provides an overview and discusses illustrative issues on primary teacher education in physical education (P-TEPE). The chapter is divided into seven sections. In the first section the major historical discourses within teacher education are presented. In the second section an account of the main conceptual orientations on preservice teacher education is provided. The third section discusses the status of primary physical education in schools. The fourth section presents an account of the major lines of research P-TEPE, and the fifth section discusses the major characteristics of quality teacher education programs. In the sixth section the key findings and conclusions are summarized. Finally, the last section provides recommendations for further research.

Historical discourses within teacher education

Pedagogy evolved as a specialized field of study during the early part of the twentieth century (Darling-Hammond, 2016). Until that time the professional studies component had been introduced into the preservice curriculum (Feiman-Nemser, 1990; Zeichner, 2009). Today, all
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teacher education programs require that some professional courses be taken by preservice teachers (Cochran-Smith, 2016). The dilemma is not whether teachers should receive preparation for teaching, but whether and how various approaches to prepare and support teachers make a difference (Darling-Hammond & Liberman, 2012). The professional studies of the preservice curriculum comprise three components: the foundational studies in education, pedagogical studies, and teaching experiences. The foundational studies include introductory courses to education such as the history of education. The aim of foundational studies is to serve as a bridge between general education and pedagogy. The pedagogical studies element is often referred to as general/generic and special/specific methods courses.

A general methods course intends to convey what is known about the art and science of teaching that is of common interest and use to K–12 teachers. Special methods courses, on the other hand, address that which supposedly is different about various grade levels or content specialists.

(Cruickshank, 1985: 26)

The final element of professional studies is the teaching experiences, which take place in school settings. The major objective of these experiences is to provide prospective teachers with opportunities to study and practice teaching (Lampert, 2010; O’Sullivan, 2003).

Of all the elements of the preservice curriculum, pedagogical studies have received the greater criticism. Historically the pedagogical courses have been referred as those horrible courses that waste students’ time (Cruickshank, 1985; Darling-Hammond, 2016). Methods courses also have been characterized as being too idealistic, theoretical, and simplistic. Critics argue that the instructors of these courses provide only abstract knowledge to preservice teachers; that theoretical knowledge reflects the teacher educators’ personal ideology; that opportunities for practicing theoretical knowledge are not given to prospective teachers (gap between theory and practice); and that the content of such methods courses is not intellectually rigorous and forces more conservative and narrow types of thinking (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Cochran-Smith & Villegas, 2014; Lampert, 2010; Zeichner, 2009). In summary, evidence suggests that over the years teacher preparation has been criticized as lacking subject matter thoroughness and practical relevance (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012; Zeichner, 2009).

Conceptual orientations in teacher education

In her seminal chapter entitled “Teacher preparation: Structural and conceptual alternatives” Feiman-Nemser (1990) identified five conceptual orientations in teacher preparation. According to Feiman-Nemser (1990: 220) “An orientation refers to a set of ideas about the goals of teacher preparation and the means for achieving them”. The five orientations in the specific framework are (a) academic, (b) practical, (c) technological, (d) personal, and (e) critical/social. An orientation includes a set of ideas about teaching and learning and a philosophy about learning to teach. Such ideas give direction to teacher preparation tasks and activities such as planning, content development, instruction, supervision, and assessment. These orientations are not mutually exclusive. In practice they overlap in many ways and exist side by side in the same program (Feiman-Nemser, 1990). Rink (1993) adopted Feiman-Nemser’s framework and suggested the same four orientations to analyse Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) programs, including the academic, practical, technological, and critical/social orientations. Similarly to Feiman-Nemser (1990), Rink (1993: 316) argued that the orientations should not be attached to specific
forms of teacher preparation. They “can and do coexist in different aspects of the same program and perhaps should all be a consideration in program design”.

A decade later, O’Sullivan (2003) used Cochran-Smith and Lytle’s (1999) framework of teacher preparation as an alternative way to analyse PETE programs. Cochran-Smith and Lytle’s (1999) framework includes three perspectives of knowledge: (a) knowledge for practice, (b) knowledge in practice, and (c) knowledge of practice. The “knowledge for practice” conception emphasizes the teacher’s role as a scholar and subject matter specialist. Skilful teachers have a good understanding of their subject matter and well-developed teaching practices in order to deliver successfully the content to the students. Shulman’s research program of teacher reasoning represents this perspective of teacher learning. The second conception of teacher learning is “knowledge in practice”, which emphasizes the teacher’s practical knowledge. Practice stimulates teachers to know what to do, how to do it, and how to solve problems that evolve in specific situations. The third conception is “knowledge of practice”, which aligns with the critical/social orientation proposed by Feiman-Nemser (1990). In this orientation schooling and teacher education are viewed as important agencies for the creation of a more fair and humanistic society. O’Sullivan (2003) argued that this framework is more useful to elucidate visions for teacher education programs and make clear what we expect our preservice teachers to know and be able to do after completing our preparation programs. “Depending on your beliefs about teaching and learning to teach, you may emphasize one or more conceptions of teaching at the expense of others, thus making a judgment about the scope and content of the curriculum for teacher education” (O’Sullivan, 2003: 279).

Tinning (2006) used Zeichner’s (1983) framework, which involves four perspectives to discuss the orientations of PETE: the behaviouristic perspective, the personalistic perspective, the traditional/craft perspective, and the critical inquiry perspective. The behaviouristic orientation is based on the positivistic epistemology of behavioural psychology. Teacher education programs based on this tradition emphasize the development of specific observable teaching practices that seemed to enhance student learning. The personalistic orientation “is based on the foundations of phenomenological epistemology and perceptual and developmental psychologies” (Tinning, 2006: 372). Programs focused on this orientation try to develop psychological maturity and teaching competence. The focus of students’ concerns has been the major emphasis of research into PETE over the last decades. In the traditional/craft orientation students are expected to receive knowledge with little effort into shaping their own professional development. These programs relate mostly to the modelling of cooperating/supervisory teachers’ practice approach. The critical inquiry orientation is based on the assumption that all education is ideological. Programs focused on this orientation aim to help preservice teachers to recognize the socially constructed nature of schooling and to challenge the status quo. “Technical teaching skills are not valued (or pursued) as ends in themselves but rather as practices that carry hidden messages related to power and control” (Tinning, 2006: 372). Tinning (2006) extended Zeichner’s (1983) framework by adding another perspective of what he named the academic orientation. The academic orientation emphasizes the teacher’s role as a scholar and a subject matter specialist. According to Tinning (2006) most current PETE programs comprise subject matter knowledge that includes physical activity (games, sport, dance, fitness, etc.) and subject matter knowledge of the sub-discipline of the field of kinesiology (exercise physiology, motor learning, sociology of sports, etc.). Tinning (2006) noted that there are several challenges to the centrality of sub-discipline knowledge of kinesiology for the preparation of the teachers.

In the literature there have been several discourses regarding the theoretical orientation and focus of teacher education programs. Academics have indicated that the majority of teacher education programs are based on the behaviouristic orientation, which emphasizes the technical
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According to these scholars, teacher educators should consider the critical/social orientation in reforming the preservice curriculum (Fernandez-Balboa, 1997; Gore, 2001; Kirk, 1986, 2010; Tinning, 2006, 2010; Zeichner, 2009). Reflecting back to the last decades of PETE, we can observe that some teacher educators have become more sensitive and critical about the complexities of the educational process (Kirk, 2010; O’Sullivan, 2003; Tinning, 2010). Even though pedagogical discourses in teacher education proliferated during the last decades, the critical and post-modern pedagogies remain in rhetorical and theoretical forms, and few programs have translated these pedagogies into practice (Fernandez-Balboa, 1997; Kirk, 2010; Tinning, 2006, 2010).

Primary physical education in schools

Primary physical education has an important role in the school curriculum because it can contribute to the development of students’ fundamental motor skills and physical competences; support the development of social, cognitive, and affective skills and behaviours; and develop lifetime physical activity patterns (Bailey et al., 2009; Graber, Locke, Lambdin & Solomon, 2008; Hunter, 2006; Jess, 2011; Rink & Hall, 2008). Although everybody agrees on the strong justification for physical education in the school curriculum, the quality of primary physical education has been seriously criticized (DeCorby et al., 2005; Fletcher & Mandigo, 2012; Griggs, 2007; Harris, Cale & Musson, 2012; Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Morgan & Hansen, 2008; Petrie, 2010; Rainer, Cropley, Jarvis & Griffiths, 2012).

As far back as the 1970s, Hanson (1972) indicated that although several changes and developments have occurred in primary school physical education and teacher education, in most cases the primary school teacher still remains the central figure in the total effort and is the one who teaches physical education in many elementary schools. Recent evidence indicates that across the world physical education in primary schools is mainly taught by generalist primary teachers and, to a lesser extent, by physical education teachers (Graber et al., 2008; Hanson, 1972; Hardman, 2005, 2008; Hardman & Marshall, 2001; Hunter, 2006; Petrie, 2010; Ni Chroinin & O’Sullivan, 2016). Freak and Miller (2015) indicated that countries recognized as having generalist teacher models include the United States, the United Kingdom (particularly Britain and Ireland), Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. In addition, in a number of primary schools internationally, physical education is no longer taught by qualified, professional teachers but by coaches who are not qualified educationalists (Blair & Capel, 2011, 2013; Griggs, 2010, 2015). Evidence in the literature suggests that the outsourcing of physical education has been a considerable feature over the last several years in Australia, New Zealand, and the UK, among other countries. Scholars have expressed serious concerns about this trend which negatively affects the profession (Blair & Capel, 2011, 2013; Griggs, 2010, 2015; Williams, Hay & Macdonald, 2011).

Research evidence suggests that physical education programs, when designed and delivered by primary school teachers, are of poor quality most of the time (DeCorby et al., 2005; Fletcher & Mandigo, 2012; Graber et al., 2008; Hardman, 2008; Kirk, 2005; Tsangaridou, 2012). Several facts contribute to this situation: a significant number of primary school teachers are insufficiently prepared by their teacher education programs to teach physical education; they have limited subject knowledge and necessary pedagogy in physical education; and only few of them have participated in effective professional development programs when initial training is completed (Fletcher & Mandigo, 2012; Graber et al., 2008; Griggs, 2015; Hardman, 2005, 2008; Hunter, 2006; Kirk, 2005). The literature indicates that although some scholars over the last few years have described the effects of programs or teaching practices
that improve students’ learning and positive feelings towards physical education, a rather small body of literature exists on how teachers implement physical education programs in primary schools (Fletcher & Mandigo, 2012; Griggs, 2015; Jess, 2011; Locke & Graber, 2008; Ni Chroi nin & O’Sullivan, 2016; Rink & Hall, 2008).

**Primary physical education teacher education programs**

Traditionally, teacher education programs have been criticized for not providing meaningful education to teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2006a; Griggs, 2015; Hardman, 2011; O’Sullivan, 2003; Zeichner, 2009). Since the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), several reform proposals have been published in the United States that provided ideas of how to restructure teacher education programs (Cochran-Smith, 2005). P-PETE has been also criticized for not providing meaningful education to teachers. As Griggs (2015) indicated, global concerns have been raised about P-PETE programs and continuing support for primary school teachers, especially in their competence to teach effectively physical education in schools. “Analysis of the history of teacher education in [the] UK reveals a picture of erratic and incoherent change, driven by both providers of training and, more significantly, overarching power of government policy from both sides of the political divide” (Griggs, 2015: 45). The literature outlines several concerns within P-PETE (Hunter, 2006). Because worldwide it is the generalist primary teachers who are responsible for teaching physical education in schools, the following discussion focuses on P-PETE programs that prepare generalist instead of specialist teachers for service in schools.

One of the major problems relates to the lack of time allocated within P-PETE. In most undergraduate programs, the prospective primary teachers are usually required to attend only one course on elementary physical education (Curtner-Smith, 2007; Griggs, 2015). As Fletcher and Mandigo (2012) found, the instruction of most primary teacher education programs can be limited to as little as eight to twelve hours. The preparation on primary preservice teachers has been described as a poor experience and a poor professional preparation by many teachers. The lack of adequate training affects negatively the content and pedagogical knowledge of the teachers. In addition, very few teaching opportunities are provided to preservice teachers (Curtner-Smith, 2007; Fletcher, 2012; Tsangaridou, 2016).

The physical education literature suggests that research on P-PETE has not been comprehensive and systematic (Griggs, 2015; Hunter, 2006; Tsangaridou, 2016). Three representative directions that portray this field of study are briefly discussed. The first group of studies examined how preservice primary teachers’ perceptions of physical education develop and what influence those perceptions have on their teaching of physical education. Evidence indicated that prior experiences within sport and physical education influenced teachers’ perceptions and practices. These perceptions are most often conservative and are not easily changed. Little time is provided to teachers to reflect upon their beliefs and practices (Curtner-Smith, 2007; Fletcher, 2012; Griggs, 2015). Findings from studies exploring the biographies of prospective primary teachers suggested that early physical education experiences, those prior to undergraduate preparation, are very powerful in the development of primary teachers’ perceptions of physical education. Evidence suggests that the memories of these trainee teachers are not positive (Allison, Pissanos & Sakola, 1990; Fletcher, 2012). Findings also confirmed the major influence of personal school experiences in physical education on teachers’ perceptions of their ability to teach physical education (Morgan & Bourke, 2008). Results also reveal that students with the most positive attitudes toward teaching physical education reported stronger self-perceptions of sports competence (Faulkner & Reeves, 2000).
The second group of studies focused on preservice teachers' views and perceptions on methods courses and field experiences. Across this set of studies, learning to teach in the context of methods courses and school experiences was characterized as a challenging activity. In exploring the influence of a field-based primary physical education methods course on preservice teachers' beliefs, Xiang, Lowy, and McBride (2002) found that the methods course had a positive impact on the trainee teachers' beliefs but no impact on their disposition towards teaching primary physical education. Other studies explored preservice primary teachers' experiences during student teaching and found that the preservice teachers' knowledge about the pedagogy and content of physical education has increased (Ashy & Humphries, 2000; Faulkner, Reeves & Chedzoy, 2004; Tsangaridou, 2002, 2008). Findings from studies on preservice teachers' reflection suggested that the nature of these reflections relate to pedagogical content knowledge and social issues (Curtner-Smith, 2007; Tsangaridou, 2005). In another study, Garrett and Wrench (2008) described the impact of field experiences on generalist primary student teachers' orientations towards a critical pedagogy. Results suggested that for some student teachers the connections made with real-life experiences facilitated a more critical reflection, and for others the reflective strategies did not influence them to criticize traditional practices and consider alternative possibilities in their teaching approaches.

The third group of studies focused on preservice teachers' views and perceptions of the P-PETE program. Chróinín and Coulter (2012) assessed the effect of initial teacher education on prospective primary teachers' understandings of the nature and purpose of physical education. Results suggested that although at the beginning of the program the participants' responses were dominated by sport and health discourses, by the end of the program the prospective teachers were able to elaborate and argue for a specific kind of physical education grounded in educational discourses. Freak and Miller (2015) examined primary prospective teachers' perceptions of preparedness to teach physical education in primary settings during an undergraduate program in one Australian university. Results of the study indicated that the participants who completed one or more units of study felt more prepared to plan and teach primary school physical education. Although the participants stated feeling prepared to teach physical education, a variation was also found for conceptions of the subject and organization, roles and responsibilities necessary to enact this perception. In a more recent study, Ni Chroinin and O’Sullivan (2016) designed a longitudinal study to explore Irish primary teachers' beliefs about learning to teach physical education across time. The researchers recorded beliefs over six years, including three years of an undergraduate program and the first three years teaching in schools. Findings of the study suggested that learning to teach required active involvement in physical education content, selecting exemplary learning activities and ideas related to the content areas of physical education, and practicing teaching the physical education lessons in applied settings.

In summary, the physical education literature suggests that research on P-PETE has not been comprehensive and systematic. Much of the empirical research studies on preservice programs has consisted of small-scale studies in individual programs. Further studies are needed in opening up new ways of understanding P-PETE.

Improving the quality of P-PETE programs

The establishment of several reform agendas and initiatives for teacher education around the world highlights both the emerging areas of concerns and the range of developments in teacher education programs. The literature pinpoints several key components of quality teacher education programs. Darling-Hammond (2006a), for example, in her book Powerful Teacher Education: Lessons from Exemplary Programs offers an analysis of exemplary programs in developing successful
teacher preparation programs. She emphasized that powerful programs aim at developing teachers who are strongly committed to all students’ learning, who are highly knowledgeable about learning and teaching, who have strong content knowledge and practical skills, and who are willing to think critically and reflectively about their teaching. In this part of the chapter an effort is made to summarize the set of conditions and characteristics addressed in the literature that seemed to contribute to the development of this type of teacher. The most successful teacher education programs exhibit the following attributes:

1. Clear and consistent visions of teaching and learning that guide the program;
2. Well-designed courses that blend the subject matter with the pedagogical knowledge;
3. Well-designed courses that enhance multicultural values and perspectives;
4. Clear communication of the performance standards according to which preservice teaching is assessed;
5. Clear and effective strategies to help students confront their beliefs about teaching, learning, and students;
6. Strong integration of instruction and teaching practice;
7. Extended and well-supervised field experience that is integrated with coursework;
8. Efficient teacher education programs that are closely connected to schools and communities;
9. Strong relationships, common knowledge, and mutual beliefs and visions about teaching and learning among school and university faculty.

(Darling-Hammond, 2006a, 2006b, 2010; O’Sullivan, 2003; Tsangaridou, 2016)

The literature also includes a range of visions about specific dimensions of teacher preparations that seemed to affect the development of preservice teachers’ perspectives and views about teaching and learning (Collier, 2006; Dodds, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2010). Frameworks and reform proposals also exist describing the knowledge domains that teachers need to possess. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council in the United States, for example, require teacher education programs to specify particular goals for what teacher candidates should know and be able to do (Dodds, 2006; Rink, 2007). These frameworks and proposals proposed that teacher educators should aim to:

1. Recruit and retain high-quality teacher candidates;
2. Educate teachers with strong content knowledge;
3. Prepare teachers to have strong pedagogical content knowledge;
4. Prepare teachers who respect the individuality of students and appreciate and foster diversity;
5. Educate teachers who critically examine their values and beliefs;
6. Empower teachers to reflect on teaching and schooling.

(Collier, 2006; Dodds, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2010)

Numerous policy proposals for improving teacher and teacher education effectiveness exist in the literature. The evidence base, however, is less clear (Darling-Hammond & Rothman, 2015; Dodds, 2006). In improving this situation, Darling-Hammond and Rothman (2015) investigated how high-performing countries create coherent systems for developing quality teaching and proposed the following components:

1. A systemic approach
2. Strong recruitment and preparation
3 Attractive teaching conditions
4 Continual support for learning
5 Equitable allocation of teachers and resources
6 Proactive leadership development

Darling-Hammond and Rothman (2015) emphasized that these elements are intended to be coherent and complementary, to support the overall goal of strengthening the teaching profession and ultimately help design systems that expand learning opportunities for all children.

As has been noted, several professional organizations have outlined professional standards for future teachers. Agreement is widespread that professional training should be designed to help prospective teachers learn to integrate different forms of knowledge into practice skilfully (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Rink, 2007; Rovegno, 2003; Shulman, 1987; Ward, 2013). Teacher educators, however, do not agree on what kind of knowledge future teachers should possess (Kirk, 2005, 2010; Rink, 2007; Tinning, 2010). Several discussions exist in the literature of what types of subject matter preparation should be emphasized in the preservice curriculum. Some believe that the content of the preservice curriculum should be aligned with the K–12 school curriculum. Others claim that the content of the preservice program should focus more on the sub-disciplines of physical education. There are also others who support alternative knowledge bases for teacher preparation programs (Fernandez-Balboa, 2007; Kirk, 2010; O'Sullivan, 2003; Rink, 2007; Tinning, 2010).

A number of frameworks, typologies, and categories have been proposed by scholars to portray ways in which knowledge can be explored as related to practice. What knowledge represents depends to a great extent on underlying epistemological assumptions. Shulman's (1987) framework of teachers' knowledge base for teaching and teacher education portrays ways in which knowledge can be explored as it related to practice. This framework includes the following seven categories: (a) content knowledge, (b) general pedagogical knowledge, (c) curriculum knowledge, (d) pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), (e) knowledge of learners, (f) knowledge of contexts, and (g) knowledge of educational ends. In physical education, Rovegno (2003) presented another comprehensive framework on teachers' knowledge. Rovegno (2003) suggested four conceptions of the nature and characteristics of teachers' knowledge: (a) teachers' knowledge as practical knowledge, (b) teachers' knowledge of personal knowledge, (c) teachers' knowledge as complex, and (d) situated knowledge. Research studies in physical education on teacher knowledge have primarily focused on pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, and PCK (Tsangaridou, 2006b). Most of the studies have focused on the pedagogical aspects of teaching and learning (Rink, 2013). Studies on teachers' PCK in physical education have described how preservice teachers acquire, elaborate, and transform their PCK (Rovegno, 2003). An important omission has been the investigation of teachers' understanding of their subject matter content (Siedentop, 2009; Ward, 2013).

A fundamental component of the preservice curriculum is the teaching practices. Several scholars suggest that it is important to have well-chosen courses that include core knowledge for teaching. They also emphasized that it is important to have meaningful teaching experiences in order to provide prospective teachers with opportunities to integrate and use their knowledge in effective ways in the schools (Lampert, 2010; O'Sullivan, 2003). Teaching experience has been traditionally considered to be very valuable in the teacher education curriculum. Research, however, suggests that the role of these experiences in the professional development of teachers is not always positive. Findings suggest that during teaching experience many prospective teachers tend to imitate their cooperative teachers’ behaviours and seem to become more concerned with control and discipline and to feel less responsible for student learning (Behets & Vergauwen,
Results have also indicated that the majority of cooperative teachers, due to their lack of training and experience in supervision, provide minimal feedback for future teachers. Research on effective supervision indicates that in order for teaching experience to be meaningful to prospective teachers, all practical experience should be supervised by well-trained supervisors who are able to systematically observe and record prospective teachers’ behaviours and provide them with opportunities to reflect on their teaching practices (Behets & Vergauwen, 2006; O’Sullivan, 2003; Tsangaridou, 2016).

In summary, knowledge derived from empirical research in the field of professional knowledge and quality teaching experiences can be used by teacher educators in designing and delivering more meaningful teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman 2012; Lampert, 2010; O’Sullivan, 2003).

Conclusions

Teacher education programs provide experiences whereby prospective teachers learn the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need to teach (Darling-Hammond, 2006b; O’Sullivan, 2003; Siedentop, 1985). Scholars agree that teacher educators cannot prepare preservice teachers for all they will encounter in their professional career. They seemed to reach a consensus, however, that teacher education programs are essential for the preparation of teachers (Ball & Forzani, 2009; O’Sullivan, 2003). “Preparing teachers to teach is about teachers building a repertoire of knowledge, attitudes, mindsets, belief systems, and skills for success through a teaching journey” (Milner, 2010: 118).

The knowledge base derived from research on teacher education and sport pedagogy can be used as a framework in enhancing more effective programs. Research has shown that primary teachers’ knowledge of the subject matter is not rich (Griggs, 2015; Kirk, 2005; Rink & Hall, 2008). As noted, a key aspect in supporting such concerns has been the lack of time given to the subject matter preparation during teacher education (Curtner-Smith, 2007; Fletcher & Mandigo, 2012; Griggs, 2015; Tsangaridou, 2016). Thus, more emphasis on the PCK of physical education should be given during preservice education. Content and methods courses beyond the introductory level should be included in teacher preparation programs (Tsangaridou, 2016). These programs should give opportunities to primary teachers to develop and improve their professional knowledge of physical education. It is clear from research that teachers are a critical factor in any effort to make significant changes in schools (Gore, 2001; Siedentop, 2009). Therefore, teacher education programs should provide opportunities for preservice teachers to feel confident, comfortable, and capable of teaching high-quality physical education to young students (Kirk, 2005; Marsden & Weston, 2007; Petrie, 2010).

Research evidence also suggests that the nature and quality of field experiences play a key role in the process of learning to teach (Behets & Vergauwen, 2006; Garrett & Wrench, 2008; Lampert, 2010; O’Sullivan, 2003). Based on these findings, well-designed school field experiences should be included in teacher education programs to help teachers become familiar with the realities of teaching and schooling and help them to learn how to teach physical education effectively. In addition, during field experience, teacher educators should systematically supervise primary teachers when teaching and should provide them with opportunities to reflect critically on their teaching (Behets & Vergauwen, 2006; O’Sullivan, 2003; Tsangaridou, 2016).

Findings also suggested that teachers’ perceptions and beliefs affect teachers’ practices. Understanding the belief systems of teachers is critical in improving teaching practices (O’Sullivan, 2005; Tsangaridou, 2006a). The teachers’ views serve as filters through which their learning takes place, and they are critical targets for, and major determinants of, changes in teaching practice.
Pre-service primary physical education

(O’Sullivan, 2005; Tsangaridou, 2008). Reflective inquiry courses and programs that provide teachers with a theoretical knowledge base about quality teaching in physical education and the use of reflective strategies that attempt to bring to the surface, challenge, and transform teachers’ beliefs seem to be promising (Curtner-Smith, 2007; Gore, 2001; Tsangaridou, 2005).

In summary, research informs us that well-chosen content and pedagogical and field experience courses that emphasize reflection make a great difference to an effective teacher education program (Behets & Vergauwen, 2006; Collier, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Garrett & Wrench, 2008; Morgan & Bourke, 2008; O’Sullivan, 2003). These elements are key components in educating skilful, effective, and successful future teachers who will make a difference in students’ lives. In particular, evidence suggests that the content and the ways in which this content is delivered – the pedagogies – to prospective teachers, as well as the opportunities they have to apply this knowledge in well-designed and properly supervised field experience, play a vital role in producing teachers who are able to organize and teach challenging content to diverse learners (Behets & Vergauwen, 2006; Collier, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Dodds, 2006; Ward, 2013).

Future directions

Quality teaching practices and school programmes have been of high interest in the educational community (Kirk, 2005; Locke & Graber, 2008; Marsden & Weston, 2007; Rink, 2013; Siedentop, 2009). Scholars emphasize that school physical education needs to provide a quality curriculum and instruction for children in order to increase the possibility that they will become and remain physically active (Hardman, 2011; Kirk, 2005; Marsden & Weston, 2007). Siedentop (2009) in his inspiring chapter “Research on Teaching Physical Education: Celebrating Our Past and Focusing on Our Future” emphasizes that research on teaching physical education and research on physical education teacher education should aim primarily to improve the profession and, particularly, the quality of physical education programs in school.

In the literature there are several propositions of how to best prepare skilful teachers. Fewer research efforts, however, exist that describe and assess how teacher education programs have prepared skilled teachers. As Darling-Hammond (2006a: 303) indicated, although there has been a lot of arguments about the structures of teacher preparation programs, “there has been less discussion about what goes on within the black box of the program inside the courses and clinical experiences that candidates encounter”. Consequently, studies exploring and discussing how teacher education programs can prepare skilful primary teachers to teach physical education are definitely needed. Knowledge originating from this line of research would provide valuable information about how to restructure more effective teacher education programs.

Promising areas of research in P-PETE relate to teachers’ professional knowledge, beliefs, reflection, and learning to teach. Today, little research evidence exists that describes how primary teachers develop their pedagogical content knowledge of physical education. As a result, studies that describe the nature of knowledge in the context of primary school teachers need to be conducted. Further, studies of primary teachers’ beliefs in teaching physical education also seem to be needed. Understanding how primary teachers develop their espoused and enacted practical knowledge of physical education is valuable in designing and delivering quality and meaningful teacher education programs. Another area of research that relates to teachers’ beliefs and that needs to be expanded is teacher reflection. In view of the fact that the process of reflection seems to emphasize an analytical component of teaching, it might contribute to the improvement and quality of physical education in schools. More empirical studies are also needed in the area of learning to teach in further exploring the potential of teaching experiences on prospective teachers’ abilities to teach quality physical education lessons in real settings. This review has shown that
research into primary school teaching and P-PETE needs more exploration. Further inquiry in all trends of this line of research needs to use a variety of methodologies and theoretical frameworks to advance our knowledge base. We also need more studies that use longitudinal research designs so as to provide rich and robust descriptions of the effects of such programs. Knowledge deriving from this line of research should be used more effectively by teacher educators in designing preservice and in-service teacher education programs.

Reform proposals in teacher education around the world have increased during the last decade, calling for quality programs and higher standards in teacher education (Collier, 2006; Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012; Dodds, 2006; Hardman, 2011; Zeichner, 2007, 2009). These proposals called for changes in teacher recruitment and retention processes, in developing new pathways to teaching, in the structure and content of the curriculum, in the amount and structure of teaching experiences, and in the induction process (Darling-Hammond, 2006b; O’Sullivan, 2003). Although all these initiatives are important, such efforts are inadequate without fundamental changes to the curriculum of professional preparation for teachers, whether and through whatever pathway that occurs. Research evidence has suggested that the most effective pathway to improve student learning outcomes is the quality of teaching, particularly teachers’ ability to influence and facilitate such learning (Seidel & Shavelson, 2007; Siedentop, 2009). To produce better teachers, however, we need to reexamine those elements of our professional preparation curriculum and pedagogy that are essential to our work and identities (Gore, 2001). As Milner (2010: 119) reminds us: “Teacher education is an intervention. Whether it is a strong or weak intervention, teacher education matters.”

References


Introduction

With primary physical education receiving increased political, professional and academic attention (e.g. Kirk, 2005; Quay & Peters, 2008; Tsangaridou, 2012), the subject is beginning to move from its traditionally marginal role in the primary school curriculum (Carse, 2015). This change in fortune is largely due to the perception that physical education during these formative years has the potential to help address the concerns regularly raised about children’s health and wellbeing, physical activity levels and sport participation (Petrie & lisahunter, 2011). Although this attention is to be welcomed, disquiet about the quality of primary physical education remains a persistent feature within the literature (e.g. Harris, Cale & Musson, 2011). In particular, global concerns are regularly voiced about the quality of the physical education experiences received by primary school-aged children when delivered by generalist teachers (e.g. Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Graber, Locke, Lambdin & Solomon, 2008; Griggs, 2010). Given that generalist class teachers are responsible for the delivery of primary physical education in many countries (Tsangaridou, 2012), significant progress is unlikely to be made until issues around the motivation, confidence and competence of those who teach primary physical education are addressed. Therefore, although this chapter acknowledges significant quality improvement in primary physical education will involve an integrated process across the cultural, material-economic and socio-political arenas (Petrie, 2016), the focus will be on the need to find effective ways that support the professional development of generalist class teachers in their teaching of physical education. To address this topic, the chapter is split into four related sections. First, it discusses how traditional approaches to teachers’ professional development are being questioned as more contemporary approaches increasingly recognise the complex nature of teachers’ professional learning. The chapter then considers key contextual factors influencing the position of physical education within the primary school before discussing how the traditional professional development experiences that most generalist teachers receive appear to have done little to address the issue of quality in the subject area. Finally, the chapter considers how findings from a small number of contemporary professional development projects appear to have the potential to act as a catalyst for a shift in the nature of future professional learning development in primary physical education.
Putting teachers’ professional learning in context

The aim of this initial section is to consider how contemporary thinking about teachers’ professional development offers an opportunity to address the deficiencies that have long been reported about traditional professional development (e.g. Hoban, 2002; Kennedy, 2005; Korthagen, 2016). This traditional approach, which still dominates in many contexts, is grounded in the belief that attendance at one-off, off-site, short courses will act as the catalyst for change in teachers’ thinking and practice. These courses are usually delivered by ‘experts’ whose role is to transmit course content to the teachers who are generally passive recipients but who are expected to cascade new content to colleagues when they return to their schools (Darling-Hammond, Chung Wei, Andree, Richardson & Orphanos, 2009). Large-scale examples of this traditional professional development approach come from studies in England (Pedder, Storey & Opfer, 2009) and New Zealand (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar & Fung, 2007) where a consistent finding revealed a dominant delivery model which sees teachers attending short courses where they listen, usually passively, to others with greater expertise. A key to the persistence of this traditional approach has been the interest in teachers’ professional development at the policy level (Kennedy, 2014): an interest that has consistently seen government agencies taking a simplistic cause-and-effect view of professional development as a relatively straightforward, top-down transmission process (Ball, MaGuire & Braun, 2012). Teachers have thus become accustomed to a form of ‘quick fix’ professional development (LeCompte, 2009) that offers ‘set’ content designed to address their perceived limitations. In essence, this traditional approach treats teachers as technicians (Lingard, Hayes & Mills, 2003), as opposed to autonomous professionals, because it is based on the premise of pre-prepared materials that are ‘teacher proof’ (Kelly, 2009).

In recent years, it has increasingly been proposed that this traditional approach is no longer appropriate because it “contradicts everything we know about the ways in which people are most likely to learn” (Armour, 2006: 204). Fleet & Patterson (2001) argue that policy-makers, academics and professional development providers too often speak for teachers and not with them, with the result that the teacher role is simply to transmit the messages that children are expected to act on (Gard, 2008). In this scenario, the professional learning needs and wishes of teachers, and the influence of their local contexts, receive little attention in this top-down professional development process.

As is now discussed, calls for professional development that is designed for and with teachers and that is relevant to their everyday practice are becoming increasingly more common (Helterbran & Fennimore, 2004). Accordingly, there is a growing acknowledgement that educating teachers is a much more complex process than has long been assumed (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002) and that there is a need for professional development approaches that “develop sophisticated but accessible means of understanding continuing professional development more deeply” (Kennedy, 2014: 690). As such, an emerging body of literature is asking for professional development approaches to be more explicitly informed by theoretical perspectives that can support an understanding of the relationship between teachers’ professional learning, government policy and practice in schools (Ball et al., 2012; Fraser, Kennedy, Reid & Mckinney, 2007; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2010). Korthagen (2016: 5) proposes that the key for the future is subsequently to question and explore how teachers learn because, “if we wish to promote teacher learning, we will have to take their thinking, feeling and wanting into account”. However, this shift will require a move towards professional learning approaches that explicitly set out to enhance teachers’ motivation and confidence alongside their capacity to improve the quality of their teaching and children’s learning (Day & Gu, 2007; Fullan, 1993; Guskey, 1986; Kennedy, 2005). Although the traditional
professional development course will undoubtedly have a role to play in this form of teacher learning, there is a need to recognise that professional learning is a ‘dynamic enterprise’ (Sheridan, Pope Edwards, Marvin & Knoche, 2009: 385) that incorporates a wide range of different learning experiences concerned with increasing teachers’ knowledge bases, skill sets and attitudes. As Korthagen, Loughran and Russell (2006) have proposed, the promotion of teacher change through pre-planned, ‘quick fix’ programmes is an approach doomed to failure, which means a need to shift the focus from the curriculum package to the teacher as the learner. As Stenhouse (1975: 142) suggested several decades ago, teachers should not be led to view the curriculum process “as a package of materials or a syllabus of ground to be covered” but more as a “way of translating any educational idea into a hypothesis testable in practice”. As teacher learning becomes the focus of the discussion, however, it is also important to acknowledge the influence of the social context in which this professional learning is taking place (Hoban, 2002). Efforts to influence teacher learning, motivation and confidence need to be attuned to the specific circumstances and settings in which teachers are working. Accordingly, the role of collaboration in teachers’ professional learning has increasingly been stressed. For example, Fleet and Patterson (2001: 4) have emphasised the importance of “the relational aspect of professional development” and highlight the importance of valuing teachers’ knowledge and perceptions, building on affective components and encouraging engagement by focusing on meaningful, relevant content. Teachers therefore need to engage in collaborative, interactive professional development for further exploration of, reflection on and evaluation of new materials they meet (MacNaughton & Hughes, 2007). As Sheridan et al. (2009: 396) observe, “training alone is insufficient and that ongoing support efforts are necessary to transfer knowledge and skill to practice”.

In this relational vein, the potential influence that ‘communities of practice’ may have on teacher learning has received considerable attention (e.g. Wenger, 1998). The ‘communities of practice’ concept is based on the belief that participation in communities is a key to individuals’ identity formation and has a significant influence on their learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Wenger (1998: 85) argues that ‘communities of practice’ are “a locus of engagement in action, interpersonal relations, shared knowledge and negotiation of enterprises, such communities hold the key to real transformation – the kind that has real effects on people’s lives”. However, although this idea of knowledge sharing may imply that ‘communities of practice’ are supportive and harmonious settings, they also involve those features of interpersonal relations that include conflict, tension and dilemma (Herskind, 2010). ‘Communities of practice’ are therefore complex phenomena as, concurrently, they have the potential to provide teachers with collaborative and supportive professional learning opportunities while also highlighting differences and uncertainties that create new possibilities for change (MacNaughton, 2009). Unlike the traditional professional development approach, recognising the importance of ‘communities of practice’ allows teachers the opportunity to focus on issues, problems and successes they experience in their daily lives. In this way, professional learning experiences within ‘communities of practice’ are likely to be highly relevant and meaningful for teachers and have the potential to give them some ownership of their professional learning. In this context, teachers are no longer seen as technicians, but as professionals who have some control of their own continuing professional learning.

Therefore, although government agencies will undoubtedly continue to influence teachers’ professional learning, there is a growing consensus among professionals and academics of a need to move beyond the simplistic top-down ‘silver bullet’ approach and create a context for professional learning that is more participative, collaborative, situated and focussed on teachers’ learning.
Before focusing on the physical education professional development of generalist class teachers, the chapter will consider how numerous factors have influenced the positioning of physical education within the primary school and accordingly highlights the need for teacher professional development concentrated on improving the quality of the subject area. At the global macro level, it is important to acknowledge that the primary school curricula across the world incorporate a wide range of subject areas and learning experiences. Two of these subjects, literacy and numeracy, are consistently viewed as the core of the primary school curriculum and generally receive more curriculum time and attention. The majority of the other subject areas subsequently receive less attention and are viewed as being more marginal e.g. design, technology and physical education (McCormick & Paechter, 2000). Further, with the delivery of this multi-subject curriculum usually being the responsibility of one class teacher (Alexander, 2012), concerns are often raised about the subject knowledge of these teachers, particularly in relation to the non-core subjects (Thornton, 1998). In addition, with policy imperatives changing on a regular basis, non-core subjects often become a development focus for a short period before this focus moves to another subject area or educational theme (Ball et al., 2012). Therefore, as physical education seeks to find its position in the congested curriculum at the school level, both DeCorby, Hala, Dixon, Wintrup and Janzen (2005) and Morgan and Hansen (2008) have reported that this marginal status often leads to limited whole-school planning or informed leadership to support the development of primary physical education.

At the individual teacher level, findings consistently report that many generalist teachers have negative perceptions of, and lack of confidence to teach, physical education. For many class teachers a lack of physical education content has been reported to reduce their confidence and motivation to teach physical education (e.g. Faucette, Nugent, Sallis & Mckenzie, 2002) and contribute to doubts about what they are teaching (DeCorby et al., 2005; Hart, 2005). It has also been reported that many class teachers who perceive themselves to be lacking in the motor skills and the knowledge of rules, tactics and techniques do not feel confident or competent teaching physical education (Carney & Chedzoy, 1998; Morgan, 2008; Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Xiang, Lowy & Mcbride, 2002). In addition, many class teachers are influenced by their personal experiences as learners in the physical education setting when they were at school themselves (Faulkner, Reeves & Chedzoy, 2004). In line with the teacher socialisation literature (Lawson, 1983), Morgan and Hansen (2008) report that many primary teachers reproduce their personal physical education experiences within their own teaching of physical education and suggest that because many of these teachers experienced a physical education curriculum focussed on a multi-activity games and sport approach, they believe that this is what physical education should involve. However, as has been discussed elsewhere, this dominant multi-activity approach has received much criticism in recent years, particularly due to its negative influence on the nature of children’s learning experiences (Morgan & Hansen, 2008). As a consequence, many primary teachers often express negative perceptions of physical education (Harris et al., 2011) which may lead to a lack of engagement in their professional development as teachers. As Petrie (2010) has noted, the combination of limited appropriate primary physical education content and low confidence levels appears to be a significant barrier to the effective teaching of physical education in primary schools. She goes on to suggest that developing primary school generalist teachers’ content knowledge and supporting them to feel confident about themselves as participants in movement activities are important areas for consideration for professional development programmes if there is to be a change in the quality of physical education in primary schools.
Putting primary physical education in context, it is apparent that although the subject is currently receiving more attention than usual, the evidence would suggest that this attention may only be for a relatively short period. In addition, even though this raised attention may be welcomed, the subject would still appear to have a marginal position in a congested primary curriculum and, critically, is largely taught by generalist class teachers who report themselves uncomfortable with their teaching of the subject. Supporting generalist class teachers’ professional development in physical education would therefore seem to be a key component of any future quality improvement agenda.

**Putting generalist class teachers’ physical education professional development in context**

Given the many issues discussed in the previous section and the concerns that have been consistently raised about student teachers’ inadequate initial teacher education (ITE) in physical education (Blair & Capel, 2011; Griggs, 2007; Harris et al., 2011; see Tsangaridou in the previous chapter), the professional development of generalist class teachers has been identified as a key area to the future development of primary physical education. As Armour and Duncombe (2004: 18) suggest, primary physical education is arguably the “phase where enhanced professional development for teachers is most needed”, while Tsangaridou (2012) has highlighted the need for more systematic, rich and robust study on the effects of physical education professional development on generalist primary teachers.

At one level, there has been some degree of success in this area. With the increased attention being focussed on primary physical education, there is evidence that national professional development programmes and accompanying research studies are being carried out in many parts of the world. Using the United Kingdom as an example, where considerable amounts of money have been invested in national schemes that seek to support primary physical education curriculum developments alongside the associated professional development of primary teachers, as these programmes have been implemented, interest within the research community has grown and has resulted in an increasing number of evaluations and academic publications. Examples of these national schemes and publications in England include the National PE and School Sport Professional Development Programme (PESSCL) (Armour & Duncombe, 2004), the Youth Sport Trust’s TOPs Programmes (Harris et al., 2011), the School Sport Partnership Project (Mackintosh, 2012) and the Primary PE Premium (Griggs, 2016) and, in Scotland, the Active Schools Project (Reid & Thorburn, 2011) and the Scottish Primary Physical Education Project (Elliot et al., 2012). In addition, there have been a number of similar studies focussed on the practices of generalist primary teachers in various parts of the world that include Hong Kong (Ha, Lee, Chan & Sum, 2004), Australia (Morgan & Hansen, 2008) and New Zealand (Petrie, Jones & McKim, 2007).

However, in line with the issues reported earlier in the chapter about traditional top-down professional development programmes, most of these physical education studies consistently re-iterate the limitations of this linear ‘quick fix’ approach. For example, in their investigation of the Youth Sport Trust’s TOPs programme in England, Harris et al. (2011) concluded that although the professional development courses on offer had some positive impact on the teachers’ subject knowledge and attitude towards physical education, the short timescale of the courses, the focus on pre-prepared resource materials as opposed to pedagogy and the lack of follow-up support significantly limited the effectiveness of the programme. It has also been reported that the ‘outside experts’ who deliver these courses often fail to discuss how the content might be applied in teaching contexts (Bechtel & O’Sullivan, 2006) and rarely fully address
teachers’ learning needs (Armour, 2006). A further observation by Atencio et al. (2011) and Jess and McEvilly (2013), when reflecting on many years designing professional development courses for generalist primary teachers within a Scottish context, was to recall how the impact of their early professional development attempts in the form of short-term, off-site courses supported by a detailed manual faltered as many teachers returned to their school contexts with no support structures in place. Consequently, although these large-scale traditional professional development programmes may briefly raise the profile of physical education within many primary schools, the approach taken has often been perceived as too brief, superficial and lacking in the challenge, relevance and progression that will bring about a long-term change in quality (Harris et al., 2011; Petrie et al., 2007).

**Contemporary professional development in primary physical education**

In response to the limitations of these traditional programmes, a small number of professional development projects have been designed in efforts to address the key concerns raised. Examples from New Zealand (Petrie, 2010; Petrie, Burrows & Cosgrif, 2014) and Scotland (Elliot & Campbell, 2013; Carse, 2015) have reported on these more in-depth, contemporary projects and, as is now discussed, may offer some key pointers for future professional development efforts. In New Zealand, two projects were set up to focus on a longer-term, participative, collaborative and situated professional learning experience for generalist primary teachers. In the first study, a year-long national professional development programme was concentrated on generalist teachers’ knowledge, practices and attitudes in relation to physical education (Petrie, 2010). Focussed on whole-school professional development, the programme involved ‘lead teachers’ from each primary school working alongside a physical education subject. Following a ‘lead teacher’ professional development programme, a range of school-based activities were introduced in each school over the year. These activities included regular after-school staff meetings, the production of lesson/unit plans and the advisers working through scripted lessons with staff, modelling physical education lessons and offering teachers’ feedback on taught lessons. Following analysis of data from 25 teachers, Petrie (2010) concluded that the successes of the project saw the teachers changing their view of physical education, transferring their pedagogy skills from the classroom to the gymnasium and generally feeling more confident and motivated to teach physical education. However, as noted earlier, the study also highlighted how the teachers were hindered in developing appropriate learning experiences because of their limited physical education content knowledge. In a later study, Petrie et al. (2014) reported on a more in-depth project in which three teacher educators worked closely with four primary teachers over a period of two years. Primarily situated in teachers’ schools, this project started by focussing on the teachers’ current thinking and practice and used this as the catalyst to expand their pedagogy repertoires, develop innovative physical education practices and explore how these innovative ideas could be sustained and spread to the wider school community and different school sites. As the project unfolded it was apparent that all participants (both teachers and teacher educators) passed through a complex process of change as they negotiated their personal preconceptions about physical education, personalised their issues to reorient their thinking about physical education and also began to ‘do things differently’ (53). Crucially, these changes were predicated upon the participants working collaboratively in a ‘community of practice’ that helped them co-construct the initiatives and recognise that changing their previously ‘fixed’ concepts and practices required time to “grapple with the discomfort of not knowing, engage in reflective dialogue, talking and dithering, and come to a place of reconfiguring and reimagining” (55).
The Scottish Primary Physical Education Project (SPPEP), which ran between 2006 and 2014, was a similar in-depth project that followed a different pattern from the New Zealand projects. During the lifespan of this project, over 1,000 generalist primary teachers were offered the opportunity to enrol in government-funded master’s-level programmes that set out to help the teachers develop a specialism in primary physical education. These two-year programmes, based at the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, differed from previous professional development in Scotland in that the modular course structure enabled the teachers to spend time negotiating how key theoretical concepts could inform their thinking and practice in relation to physical education. During the programmes, the teachers were regularly presented with opportunities to apply key ideas from the modules in their own school contexts and then share their experiences in a ‘community of practice’ with fellow students and university staff (Jess & Campbell, 2012). Rather than providing pre-prepared resources and lesson plans, the teachers were encouraged to regularly reflect on their personal values, beliefs and contexts as they sought to design physical education learning experiences that met the needs of the learners they were working with (Thorburn, Carse, Jess & Atencio, 2011).

From small-scale studies investigating the impact of SPPEP (e.g. Elliot & Campbell, 2013; Carse, 2015), findings emerged that displayed how the long-term and recursive nature of the professional development experience contributed to the teachers’ efforts to change their thinking and practice. By challenging the teachers’ thinking over time, the teachers began to use their professional autonomy to develop physical education programmes that were contextualised within their individual school settings (Carse, 2015). As a consequence, as the teachers’ thinking and practice started to change, they began to view the change process as something over which they had some agency rather than as an external policy that was being imposed upon them to implement (Thorburn et al., 2011; Elliot & Campbell, 2013). Interestingly, it was also apparent that the teachers were aided in their change efforts by a supportive policy environment aligned with the on-going marginal status of physical education within their settings (Carse, 2015). As such, running through the teachers’ change efforts was the professional autonomy they were able to exert within their school contexts, which contributed to their ownership of the change process.

However, a factor constraining these change efforts was a feeling of isolation that stemmed from the issues encountered as the teachers attempted to collaborate with their colleagues and other physical education practitioners. In particular, the teachers felt they had to overcome the traditional multi-activity sport and games perceptions of physical education that were held by most of their children and colleagues. Although challenging, these negative factors highlighted the complex nature of the change process at the ‘chalk face’ and the many contextual factors that contribute to the sustainability of change (Fullan, 1993). Significantly, many of the teachers highlighted the importance of being part of a supportive ‘community of practice’ in which they were able to share their experiences in physical education (Elliot & Campbell, 2013).

Although these contemporary programmes in New Zealand and Scotland acknowledge the messiness of this type of in-depth professional development, both experiences highlight how the long-term nature of the projects and the genuine opportunities for collaboration offered the teachers the time and space to become immersed in a change process, to reflect on their practice and to then consider how to improve their practice through a continuous learning process.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the issues facing generalist class teachers in their teaching of physical education by highlighting the current higher status of physical education in primary schools and the many reasons for the ongoing concern about the quality of the learning experiences that
The primary teacher

children meet in primary physical education. Although the chapter acknowledges that improving quality will be a long-term and multi-faceted process, it takes the view that generalist teachers’ professional learning in physical education will be one of the key factors influencing any improvements. However, traditional top-down approaches to teachers’ professional development may still dominate across the education sector, and within primary physical education specifically, but the chapter argued that the gains from this ‘quick fix’ approach are generally limited. By considering findings from a small number of contemporary studies, the chapter proposes that professional learning needs to be part of a regular long-term process that encourages teachers to actively negotiate the ever-changing local and wider influences that affect their thinking and practice in physical education. Making, or having, the time to collaboratively reflect on how their previous and current experiences, personal interests and current capacities act to influence their thinking and practice would seem to be a logical starting point for this process. By regularly reflecting on the impact of these changing influences, teachers will hopefully begin to view their primary physical education professional learning as a long-term and recursive process and not simply as a ‘quick fix’ that is an add-on to their ‘real’ work.

References


Introduction

The growth in alternative routes into teacher education (TE) has resulted in an increase in the range of staff acting as teacher educators. The traditional role of a school-based mentor has evolved to include opportunities for a range of staff to engage in the delivery of core content, with much training traditionally delivered within a higher education institution (HEI) setting becoming embedded in schools, teaching school alliances (TSA) and school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) providers. However, teacher educators are not solely focused on initial teacher education (ITE) and training. Their role extends to support the facilitation of training and development opportunities across teachers’ professional journeys.

If you are reading this chapter, it is likely that you are involved in some form of teacher educator role. The aim of this chapter is therefore to provide an overview of the role of the teacher educator within the context of primary physical education. It will focus on how as a teacher educator you can support beginner teachers and other colleagues through their early professional development. It will focus on developing an understanding of how you yourself can develop as a teacher educator through personal reflection and professional development to ensure that you remain up to date with changes in educational practice.

Before continuing to read this chapter you may therefore wish to consider the following short questions:

1. What is the role of the teacher educator?
2. What specific knowledge, skills and understanding might I need to develop to become effective in this role?
3. How will I manage my professional development in this role?

In reflecting upon these questions, you are starting to identify what your role as an educator is. Therefore let us start by considering why we become teacher educators and how this can be supported in the early stages of development. Specifically let us think about what drives us to take on that role and, more importantly, what qualities you might need to have or develop as you grow into that role.
The role of the teacher educator

Koster, Dengerink, Korthagen and Lunenberg (2008: 567) define the role of the teacher educator as being “deeply involved in the professional development of student teacher and teachers”. More specifically they define the teacher educator as “someone who provides instruction or gives guidance and support to student teachers, and thus tries to render a substantial contribution to the development of students into competent teachers” (Koster et al., 2008: 568). Korthagen, Loughran and Russell (2006) argue that central to the role of the teacher educator is the development, within those they are supporting, of a high level of reflective practice in order that they use it as a tool to support self-learning. In essence they are encouraged to try out ideas and experience success and failure to encourage them to learn.

In practice, White and Jarvis (2013: 3) suggest that the key roles undertaken by teacher educators consist of “the preparation, leading, facilitation and evaluation of a multiplicity of activities”. Based on the work of White and Jarvis (2013), this may include the activities listed in Table 11.1.

Although many of the roles detailed in Table 11.1 may seem administrative or organisational, they note the diversity highlighted by White and Jarvis (2013). They also start to raise our awareness that in order to be effective as a teacher educator, we may well have to develop our subject knowledge to ensure that we have the content knowledge and confidence to deliver the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity area</th>
<th>Specific activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling</td>
<td>Taught sessions&lt;br&gt;Placement-related sessions&lt;br&gt;Assessment&lt;br&gt;Progress reviews&lt;br&gt;Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and delivery</td>
<td>Taught sessions&lt;br&gt;Training activities for other teacher educators</td>
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<td>Observations</td>
<td>Lessons&lt;br&gt;Taught sessions&lt;br&gt;Mentor meetings</td>
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<td>Discussions</td>
<td>Pre- and post-lessons&lt;br&gt;Progress reviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Progress reviews&lt;br&gt;Personal tutorials for those engaged in training activities&lt;br&gt;Support meetings for those delivering training activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Progress against specific criteria&lt;br&gt;Academic work</td>
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<td>Quality assurance</td>
<td>Moderation&lt;br&gt;• Assessed work&lt;br&gt;• Placement experiences&lt;br&gt;Compliance requirements&lt;br&gt;Annual reviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recruitment and selection</td>
<td>Interviewing&lt;br&gt;Marketing</td>
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Table 11.1 Key roles expected of teacher educators
theoretical underpinnings associated with effective teaching. But what specifically do we need to be developing in relation to knowledge, skills and understanding?

Central to our role is the development of high-quality teachers worthy of entry into the teaching profession. Coe, Aloisi, Higgins and Elliot Major (2014: 2) argue that great teaching is reflected in the progress of pupils resulting in the identification of “six components of great teaching”. These include:

- Pedagogical content knowledge
- Quality of instruction
- Classroom climate
- Classroom management
- Teachers’ beliefs
- Professional behaviours

Thus as a teacher educator it can be argued that the cornerstones of our role are supporting beginning and developing teachers to enhance their knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of areas, all of which contribute to their ability to deliver high-quality lessons, the success of which is reflected in the progress made by their pupils.

But can we be more specific about what we need to be developing in our teachers? The work of Shulman (1987) identifies seven key characteristics in the training of teachers, whereas the Teacher Development Agency (TDA, 2007) identified four key components related to subject knowledge for teaching. With specific reference to physical education, Metzler (2011) in his text *Instructional Models for Physical Education* uses Shulman’s seven characteristics to frame subject knowledge within physical education. Table 11.2 provides an overview of the key characteristics identified by Shulman (1987), TDA (2007) and Metzler (2011) with specific examples of what this includes in relation to content.

Thus in reviewing the key roles of a teacher educator, we can start to see that they are indeed diverse. As a beginner teacher educator you may start as a mentor, supporting beginner teachers within the classroom setting and providing support for the practical application of teaching through observations, feedback and action planning. Over time this might develop to engage you with the development of their theoretical knowledge and understanding through the delivery of taught sessions. At the pinnacle is the coordination of training across a number of teachers and responsibility for accreditation against specified teacher standards. But you are also likely to become a role model. Beginner teachers will look up to you, and therefore in the same way you would in your role as a teacher, modelling expected behaviour becomes important.

What is clearly evident, however, is that the role of the teacher educator is diverse and complex. You will need to develop a range of new skills to support you and those with whom you work to develop knowledge, skills and understanding across the delivery of primary physical education. The next section of this chapter focuses on how your role as a teacher educator may development over time.

### Becoming a teacher educator

Boyd and Harris (2010) suggest that a number of tensions are experienced during the transition into teacher education, especially if it involves movement into a higher education establishment, with feelings such as isolation and changed support networks — specifically about knowing where to go for support. Much of this relates to changes in roles, compliance requirements and perceived changes to teaching approaches (Boyd, Harris & Murray, 2007).
Table 11.2 Key characteristics of knowledge as identified by Shulma (1987), TDA (2007) and Metzler (2011) with specific examples of content.

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content knowledge</td>
<td>Subject knowledge</td>
<td>• Subject matter</td>
<td>• Knowledge of fundamental movement skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Knowledge of athletics, dance, games, gymnastics, outdoor and adventurous activities, swimming</td>
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<tr>
<td>General pedagogical knowledge</td>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
<td>• Generic teaching methods</td>
<td>• Generic teaching approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pedagogical content knowledge</td>
<td>Development</td>
<td>• Subject-specific teaching methods</td>
<td>• Approaches to assessment</td>
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<td>Knowledge of learners and their characteristics</td>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>• Learning as a process</td>
<td>• Behaviour management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td>• How content develops</td>
<td>• Specific teaching approaches in physical education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of educational contexts</td>
<td></td>
<td>• How context affects educational goals</td>
<td>• Teaching games for understanding sport education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Theories of learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Behaviourist, cognitivist, motivational domains of learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Affective, cognitive, psychomotor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Continuity and progression in learning</td>
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<td>• Individual needs</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Aims of education</td>
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<td>• Curriculum design and content</td>
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<td>• Education and the wider community</td>
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<td>• Health and active lifestyles/lifelong participation</td>
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<td>• Safeguarding</td>
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The reasons for becoming a teacher educator vary. Focusing specifically on the context of physical education, Dowling (2006) argues that for many, entry to the role of teacher educator is based on an expertise in the field and a long-held desire. I remember a conversation I once had with a newly appointed colleague who thanked me for giving them the opportunity to fulfil their dream of returning to their teacher training college to be able to support the development of new teachers. But becoming a teacher educator is not a rite of passage. The commonly held myth that if you are an outstanding teacher you will become an outstanding mentor or teacher educator is not always evident. Carter (2015) in his review of teacher education and training identifies that the strength of a mentor/teacher educator is in their ability to deconstruct their own and others’ practice to demonstrate what effective learning and teaching are.

Thus, many of us go into teacher education as a result of our own experiences and a desire to move forward within our profession. Our most common entry into the world of the teacher educator is that of the mentor, supporting beginner teachers whilst on placements. Most of us will undertake limited staff development to support this transition. We may undertake some mentor training, and the development of mentoring standards (Department for Education, 2016) does give us a clearer framework on which to hang our experiences, but how this is monitored and reviewed in specific relation to us as teacher educators is limited to potential placement evaluations completed by the beginner teacher. If working as a teacher educator within an HEI or on provision delivered by an HEI, many will accept your level of experience as a qualification to deliver the provision, although some will look for academic qualifications at the master’s level.

What we must therefore consider is how we approach the role of the teacher educator and what resources and subject knowledge we refer to when planning, delivering and assessing activities. For many of us our first port of call is to go back to how we were trained. This may be beneficial, but can also potentially result in us becoming unwilling to look outside the box to find alternatives – common comments like – ‘when I trained we did this . . .’ or “oh you don’t need to do it that way’ run the risk of producing a ‘mini me’. In working with teacher educators across phases and subjects within education, I constantly stress the need for beginner and developing teachers to be encouraged to explore their own approaches to teaching and not think that by copying others the effect will be the same. Just because it works for you does not mean it will work for them.

We must also accept that many of us will face changes in how we work with others and how we look at ourselves. In this section we will look at some of the changes we might see focusing on our own identity and the specific skills we might need to develop, in particular the delivery and monitoring of sessions and the development of effective working relationships.

Your own identity

Understanding how your personal values, beliefs and attitudes might influence the way you see the role of the teacher educator is important. Many staff who engage as a teacher educator see a change in how they identify themselves, resulting in a change to their perceived ‘professional identities’. Dowling (2006: 249) argues that this may result in professionalisation which relates to “promoting the material and ideal interests” of teaching and professionalism that relates to “moral and ethical aspects of one’s work as a teacher”.

Much literature identifies the changing identity of teachers who take on the responsibility of a teacher educator. Some argue that at times there can be conflicts between the role as a teacher and your role as a teacher educator. In fact, Jarvis (2013: 16) identifies that for some “moving from being an expert as a teacher to being a novice as a teacher educator can be unsettling”. You may start to question your own understanding of how and why things are done, but in many
way that is also a strength as it provides you with the opportunity to step back and reflect upon your own practice. I know that whenever I have had the opportunity to do this, I have always changed aspects of my teaching. In fact, some teachers, when reflecting on their identity in the context of moving from a teacher to a teacher educator, or in some instances undertaking both roles, find issues around becoming deskilled in their classroom teaching, challenges with developing pedagogical knowledge and conflict between the culture of the classroom and the culture of teacher educator as problematic.

As we have previously noted, you will bring a range of skills and experiences based on the roles you have undertaken previously. For example, you may have recent and relevant experience working in schools, expertise in specific subject areas or pedagogical approaches or expertise in working with pupils with different needs. However, the transition from being a teacher to becoming a teacher educator can be challenging as you move from teaching pupils to teaching teachers. Associated with this are changes in the relationships you may have with staff, as well as your role changes from working with them to, in some cases, the management of their professional learning journey. Taking time to consider how the different roles you will now be expected to undertake will change is important. We will look at this in more depth later in the chapter.

**Frameworks for teacher educators**

To be effective teacher educators Koster et al. (2008) suggest the need to demonstrate competences in the following:

- Content matter
- Pedagogical understanding
- Organisational understanding
- Group practices and communications
- Professional development

In many ways these competences reflect the characteristics identified by Shulman (1987), TDA (2007), Metzler (2011) and Coe et al. (2014). However, evidence is limited regarding the qualifications for teacher educators or frameworks on which you can identify your current capacity and areas for development. The British Council (2015) identify within their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Framework for teacher educators a need for those engaged in these activities to develop knowledge skills and understanding across three key areas. These areas and the specific aspects are shown in Table 11.3.

The British Council (2015) identifies that development occurs across four stages. The foundation stage includes the teacher educators and the basic knowledge, skills and understanding to undertake the role. Having been identified as possessing the relevant skills to undertake the role, the teacher educator enters the engagement phase as they engage more actively with teacher educators. The integration phase is achieved as you develop your competence, resulting in the specialisation phase when you coordinate other teacher educators and become a reference source for others within the field of teacher education.

The framework (British Council, 2015) provides a useful tool against which to reflect upon how you as a teacher educator can evidence your own competences. In essence, in reflecting and collecting evidence to support your progress towards achieving such competences, you are modelling your expectations of the beginner teacher in evidence their progress against the teachers’ standards or any other competence they are expected to achieve.
Julia Lawrence

Table 11.3 British Council (2015) Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Framework for teacher educators (p. 6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional practices</th>
<th>Enabling skills</th>
<th>Self-awareness feature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing the subject</td>
<td>Communicating effectively</td>
<td>Openness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the teaching context</td>
<td>Teamworking skills</td>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding how teachers learn</td>
<td>Thinking critically</td>
<td>Interactivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning, managing and moderating teacher training</td>
<td>Building relationships</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing and developing learning resources for teachers</td>
<td>Effective organisational skills</td>
<td>Resilience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrating effective teaching behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting and mentoring teachers</td>
<td>Increasing motivation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring teacher potential and performance</td>
<td>Leadership/supervisory skills</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Researching and contributing to the profession</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Taking responsibility for your own professional development</td>
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For example, as a teacher educator in the field of primary physical education, you should maintain an up-to-date knowledge of teaching approaches or examples of best practices. This might be achieved through wider reading, through attendance at subject-specific conferences, through attendance at activity-specific trainings and through membership in your national subject association. The challenge therefore arises that with the busy role of teacher and teacher educator, how do we maintain an up-to-date overview of our subject area and the associated practices within it? This must form part of your professional development which we explore later within this chapter.

**Delivering content**

Perhaps one of the key challenges for the teacher educator is to modify teaching approaches to reflect the different learning needs of adults in comparison to pupils. Although much of your previous work may have been teaching pupils or students, teaching adults can seem more daunting and different. The key principles, however, should be the same. As with a classroom environment, successful teacher education is based on setting high expectations and creating a learning environment that encourages teachers to try out new ideas and where opportunities to reflect upon personal practice is encouraged. In many ways we learn as a result of the experiences we have and through the mistakes we make. In fact Lunenberg, Korthagen and Swennen (2007) argue that as teacher educators we should not be afraid to create environments where mistakes can be made.

A starting point is to find out what those with whom you are working already know, rather than assuming that you know what they know. Establishing prior experiences allows you to structure your learning activities to reflect the needs of the beginner teacher, in a similar manner to how you would structure the learning for individual pupils. All teachers will bring some experience to the table, and when working with groups of teachers, allowing them to share experiences and ideas is as powerful as standing in front of them.

However, you will need to undertake some reading on the subject to ensure that you have the theoretical underpinning to support teachers’ learning. For some, this can be one of the more challenging aspects of the role. From personal experience, having the confidence to stand up and...
Teacher educators deliver taught sessions that are focused on the theoretical underpinning of learning and teaching can be daunting, as in many ways you are exposing yourself to being asked challenging questions. Referring back to Table 11.2 will help you to identify the key areas of content you will need to plan and deliver.

Many of those teachers or beginner teachers undertaking training and development want concrete examples of what things look like. Thus, making the links between theory and practice becomes critical. It therefore becomes important for all those involved to engage in critical conversations associated with the ‘why’ question. By this I mean, why do you choose to do something in such a way? On what basis are your decisions made? Thus, as a teacher educator you will need to manage relationships between academic activities and placement activities. Making explicit links between theoretical underpinnings to the practical application of these within the teaching classroom becomes important. For many beginner teachers and to some extent teacher educators, there can be an imbalanced focus towards the practical application without the theoretical foundations that allows for the development of a clearer understanding of why things work. You will need to consider how these different activities are linked and how you encourage trainees to think about linking these to each other. For example, how does what you cover within an academic session become embedded within the planning, delivery and reflections of the teacher you are working with, and then how do you encourage these teachers to reflect upon the impact of this on pupils’ progress and modify subsequent practice?

White (2011), reporting a personal view of the role of teacher educator, identifies the need to model practice. From personal experience, being able to model your expectations – for example, in the context of primary physical education, delivering practical sessions, modelling strategies they can use in the classroom, and maintaining experience in the school environment – is important. Maintaining a professional currency is also important. Beginner teachers will respect you much more if you have experienced in practice what you are talking about. Such an approach is much more effective than a traditional transmission model where information is just given, rather than challenges being acted upon.

The following case study provides a basic example of how theory can be embedded within the practical aspect of physical education.

Case study: embedding theory in practice

Beginner teachers on a primary education programme receive a series of theory-based lectures focusing on the theories of learning and development – for example, Vygotsky (social constructivism) and Skinner (behaviour management) and domains of learning (cognitive, affective and psychomotor) and practical sessions focusing on content knowledge.

During a practical focusing on the development of games activities, following a brief overview of the session, including the sharing of the learning objectives and expected learning outcomes for the lesson, beginner teachers engage in warm-up activities, including raising of heart rate and stretching. During this part of the session, the teacher educator uses the numbers game (calls out a number and the participants get into a group of that size) to establish groups for one of the activities. In doing so they are modelling a behaviour management strategy that can be employed within a lesson. However, the overall size of the group does not allow for equal size groups. The teacher educator explores with the participants how they might manage this situation in relation to affective development should it arise in one of their lessons.
Having established working groups, the teacher educator asks the class to think about what has happened to their bodies as they have been warming up. They give the groups two minutes to complete this task and ask them to come up with five different examples. By doing this the teacher is modelling how 
*timings* can be used to focus the learning. After two minutes the teacher educator asks individual groups to share their ideas. Questioning is used to draw out not only what they have experienced, but also their knowledge of why (differentiated questioning). By allowing time at the start of this activity for the participants to explore and share ideas, the teacher educator is confident that all participants will be able to answer the question (management of learning environment).

At the start of the lesson the teacher educator set up a grid area using codes; this was used for the warm-up, and now this area is broken up further to provide working areas for the groups, allowing the teacher educator to demonstrate transitions between activities and management of the learning environment. As the group members have numbered themselves the teacher educator calls out a number and asks them to collect a piece of equipment from a designated area; they then ask a different number to collect a resource from a different designated area. Here the teacher educator is modelling the distribution of equipment and resources.

During the practice phase of the lesson, the teacher educator changes the size of the areas that some groups are working in (differentiation). The teacher educator is also aware that different participants have different experiences and abilities; therefore, when setting new activities they identify some participants to take on a more coaching role (pedagogical approach), allowing them to support other pupils to develop their skill level (social constructivist approach to learning).

Because of the uneven group sizes, during the more competitive phase of the lesson the groups have different rules for the different sized groups – for example, a team of three has to pass the ball four times to score a point, whereas a team of four has to pass the ball five times (differentiation).

At the end of the session the teacher educator reviews the learning of the class against the learning objective and outcomes shared at the start of the lesson (tracking of pupil progress). They encourage the participants to share with their group how they think they have met these outcomes and what they will need to do to make further progress (target setting).

**Developing a different relationship with others**

As a teacher educator you will engage in a range of different relationships, for example, between yourself and beginner teachers, developing teachers, established teachers, other organisations (for example, other schools), other providers and HEIs. From experience, the key factor you need to establish when working across groups of people is the establishment of clarity of expectations. From the start, all parties need to clearly understand their roles within any situation. In doing so you will relieve a lot of stress and anxiety. For example, when working with beginner teachers, this might include presentation of themselves and their work or their levels of engagement in taught sessions. For mentors, this might be related to organisation, management and tracking of beginner teachers’ progress. For staff delivering taught sessions, this might be reflected in content and management of resources, and with HEIs, it might relate to compliance, management and access to resources.

However, the key relationship you will establish is between yourself and the teachers you are working with. In fact Hobson et al. (2008: 413) suggest that

one of the factors – if not the key factor – reported as having a major impact upon student teachers’ experience in schools is the extent to which they perceive that their mentors and other host teachers have time for them and helpful and supportive.
Potentially one of the hardest relationships to manage is that with other staff you work with. Having been a colleague, you may now be asking them to support delivery of the programme; you might be training them in how to mentor trainees or other staff. Central to any relationship are the elements of trust and ownership. By this I mean that both parties must feel that the relationship is reciprocal and that they have a say in how it is managed. Establishing an open and honest relationship is crucial for when difficult conversations need to be had.

**Giving and receiving feedback**

As a teacher educator you will need to engage in a range of activities to support those with whom you are working. This may include the giving and receiving of feedback across a range of situations, for example, on lessons observed, on academic sessions and on mentor meetings. Coe et al. (2014: 4) argue that observations are most successful when “primarily used as a formative process – framed as a development tool creating reflective and self-directed learners as opposed to high stakes evaluation or appraisal”. Coe et al. (2014: 5) go on to identify “six principles of teacher feedback” that focus on the impact of teaching on pupil progress, specificity of the feedback, individuality of the feedback, professional development, trust and school ethos.

As an educator you will have experience in how to undertake lesson observations. Central to this process is the opportunity to discuss with the teacher what they are planning to deliver and the reasons behind this choice; further, after the lesson, discussion regarding the outcome of the lesson and the progress of the pupils in the class becomes important. How these are managed are crucial in maintaining positive working relationships.

However, as a teacher educator you will also have to undertake observations of taught sessions, for example, those focusing on the academic content of the programme. You will also have to observe mentors undertaking their review meetings with trainees so that you can ensure that there is consistency across the mentors in the approaches that they adopt. From a personal point of view, you can also expect your lessons and your academic sessions to be observed as part of quality assurance processes.

You will therefore need to develop the skills necessary to do this. If you are observing or being observed, be clear about what criteria the observations are based on. Use these as a template for how all sessions are planned and delivered. If the programme on which you are working has a substantial academic component associated with it, you may have to take responsibility for aspects of assessment and marking. Although the principles or assessment and marking reflect those which you are used to with regard to working with pupils, it is the level of criticality that will differ. You will need to think about how the trainees are using relevant literature to support what they are doing, as well as how they present this in written form. For many of you, writing at a degree or even master’s level may well be something you have not experienced since completing your own training, or for the master’s level, not at all. It is therefore important that if you are required to undertake this role, you seek advice and guidance as to how this can be completed efficiently and effectively.

**Social emotional support**

As a result of previous experiences of working with pupils, you will be aware that learning takes place across different domains (cognitive, affective, psychomotor) and that individuals learn in different ways. This is no different in the context of teacher education. Research (Hobson et al., 2008) suggests that during initial teacher education and training, the trainees identify the following core features:

- An affectively charged personal journey
- The development of a range of relationships with significant others
Julia Lawrence

- A need to reflect on the relevance of what they are experiencing
- Development of their personal teacher identity

As part of their affective development, trainees might experience positive and negative emotions. It is within this area that they experience their success and failures, as well as issues associated with feedback and workload. Managing beginners’ expectations is important in order that their (and your own) mental and physical wellbeing are not compromised. Ensure that within any programme beginner teachers know they have someone they can contact if they have a problem. This may be their mentor, but they may choose to seek support someone outside of their immediate training circle. Be clear what structures are in place to support this.

Developing as a teacher educator

Working with colleagues and those joining the teaching profession is both exciting and challenging. For some it gives them an opportunity to take a step back and review their own practice and how this is informed by theory. For others it provides them with the opportunity to take a step back and reflect more. We have already noted that one of the key factors that you may need to consider is how you will maintain ‘currency’ with regard to your professional knowledge and practice. By that I mean, how will you ensure that you keep up to date with changes in pedagogical approaches, curriculum approaches or research that is being conducted within your subject area? Most teacher educators will deliver programmes that are supported by some form of academic study for those training to become teachers. Although this tends to be provided with academic support for the trainees, what is sometimes less clear is how the teacher educator working outside of the HEI context might access appropriate resources.

Managing personal development

In reviewing the development of professional standards for teacher educators in the Netherlands, Koster et al. (2008) suggest that underpinning the engagement and role of the teacher educator is the attitudes and beliefs they themselves possess. Although the teacher educator may be seen as predominantly engaging with the student or those already in the teaching profession, Koster et al. (2008) suggest that a focus on the professional development of the teacher educator themselves is also important, although it is not always evident where this development may arise from. Paramount to becoming an effective teacher educator is the personal engagement in review and refinement of your own skills and knowledge base. Engaging critically with your own development is important. As we have previously identified, you need to model the behaviours you expect of those with whom you teach. Although the framework established by the British Council (2015) provides some guidance, working with a local HEI to develop your own academic qualifications might also be beneficial.

Summary

The aim of this chapter has been to provide an overview of the role of the teacher educator. It has specifically focused on teacher education development and how this is delivered as part of the role of the teacher educator. It has challenged you to reflect on your role, as well as providing examples of application within a physical education context. Throughout you have been encouraged to reflect on your current abilities and how you could develop further.
Teacher educators

At the start of the chapter I encouraged you to answer three simple questions:

1. What is the role of the teacher educator?
2. What specific knowledge, skills and understanding might I need to develop to become effective in this role?
3. How will I manage my professional development in this role?

Take some time to review these questions to identify whether you would still answer them as you have and, more importantly, what areas of development you now wish to focus upon.

References


DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Alison Wrench and Robyne Garrett

Introduction
Equity, student diversity and inclusion have figured in physical education (PE) curriculum development in Australia and internationally for more than twenty years (Whatman & Singh, 2015). Translation of goals for ‘schooling that is free from discrimination based on gender, language, sexual orientation, . . . culture, ethnicity, religion, . . . disability, socioeconomic background or geographic location’ (MCEETYA, 2008: 7) into pedagogical practices and curriculum is neither straightforward nor guaranteed. Of concern are pedagogical practices, structures and curriculum which perpetuate experiences for some students, which are framed by marginalisation, low-demand and ‘less privileged and privileging forms of PE knowledge, skills and bodily dispositions’ (Whatman & Singh, 2015: 215).

Curriculum and pedagogical practices for improved educational outcomes, justice and inclusion in PE are central to this chapter. In attempting to understand the nature and meaning of PE from the perspectives of marginalised students, we first address socio-critical pedagogical orientations to PE. In doing so, we acknowledge the social construction of inequity and engage with Nancy Fraser’s notions of justice. We next address cultural, educational and pedagogical considerations for students in relation to gender, disability, ethnicity and indigeneity. In conclusion we note the intersectionality of categories of marginalization, arguing for inclusive pedagogical practices founded in the life-worlds of students, which recognise and value the resources and cultural capital students bring to their schooling.

Critical pedagogies and PE
Critical theories and perspectives provide a lens for exploring interrelationships between power, knowledge and culture (Garrett & Wrench, 2006). Teachers are encouraged to question taken-for-granted practices and reflect upon knowledge and skills being valued, as well as who is privileged through these value orientations. This includes exploring assumptions that inform constructions of gender, ability, race and ethnicity, challenging these socially constructed judgements, as well as the ways they influence thinking and teaching in PE.

Pedagogical practices of PE have a potential to affect student identity, engagement, achievement and assumptions about ability (Wright, 1997; Tinning, 2010). When pedagogical practices
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of PE fail to recognise the dispositions and cultural understandings of students in scaffolding ‘traditional school learning methods and contents’ (Hattam, Brennan, Zipon & Comber, 2009: 304), students may experience marginalisation and not achieve their potential in terms of what PE has to offer. When this occurs PE is implicated in (re)producing social inequalities founded on middle-class, Anglo-Saxon, male norms (Williams & Wilson, 2010). Questioning ‘why’, ‘how’ and ‘what’ is taught in PE is critical for those concerned with including all students and enhancing educational as well as justice effects of schooling.

Pedagogical practices are complex and encompass relationships between teachers, learners, curricula content and knowledge generated (Lusted, 1986). How we teach curriculum content, the nature of relationships, student learning and knowledge produced are all important (Garrett & Wrench, 2011). It follows that pedagogies for inclusion and accounting for student diversity in PE involve more than teaching skills, games and transmitting knowledge. We turn next to consider inclusion, diversity and justice as these relate to pedagogies of PE.

Inclusion and diversity

Schooling is underpinned by structures and practices founded on ‘norms’ and ‘classifications’ (Foucault, 2003) through which all students can be ‘known’ (Ball, 2013). Pedagogical practices of classification, categorisation and division work to ‘exclude’ or construct some students as ‘other’ in terms of, for instance, gender, class, race and disability (Ball, 2013). From this perspective inclusion means bringing students ‘in’ to the accepted centre or norm (Graham & Slee, 2008).

Integrating students with diverse and complex backgrounds is commonplace in contemporary schooling. However, positioning students together does not guarantee inclusion. Common understandings of inclusive pedagogical practices for PE typically prioritise equal access and participation so as to ensure continued participation in the learning area (Tinning, 2002). Generally there is little consideration of the nature of movement experiences to which students are provided access, the consequences for knowledge and identity work (Wrench & Garrett, 2012) or that labelling of particular groups contributes to sorting practices that perpetuate difference (Grenier, 2007).

In more critical terms, inclusion means not just recognising difference (in need and purpose) but actively providing for those differences, making adaptions and modifications to both curriculum and pedagogy (‘what’ and ‘how’ of PE). Inclusion, hence, incorporates creating meaningful learning opportunities within supportive environments where all students feel they belong. Rather than centring the ‘other’, inclusion incorporates recognising diversity, valuing difference, responding to the uniqueness of individuals and focusing on students strengths rather than deficits (Garrett & Wrench, 2006). It follows that inclusion does not require individuals to fit into existing school systems, but rather, schools are responsive to student needs (Fitzgerald, 2012).

Diversity, like inclusion, is not a straightforward or neutral concept. Common-sense understandings focus on embracing student difference as a means to ensure justice and equity. However, there is a propensity for discourses of diversity to ignore and/or direct attention away from practices, structures and relationships that contribute to the marginalisation of specific groups of students (Lock, Minarik & Omata, 1999). When students are located within mainstream discourses of diversity, it is possible to assume they have an individualised responsibility for schooling success whilst ignoring societal and institutional structures that contribute to marginalisation.

Significantly the PE field is not well noted for recognising inequalities and catering to student diversity (Flintoff & Fitzgerald, 2012). Identifying diversity in terms of gender, class, disability and ethnicity is insufficient whilst failing to interrogate and/or address curriculum offerings
and pedagogical practices that privilege an Anglo-Saxon, middle-class male student norm. In attempting to provide a means for addressing these concerns, we turn to Nancy Fraser’s theorisation of justice.

**Justice**

Fraser contends that justice is underpinned by ‘social arrangements that permit all to participate as peers in social life’ (2010: 16). Justice outcomes are reliant upon addressing barriers to parity in participation in the three interrelated areas of recognition, redistribution and representation (Fraser, 2010).

*Recognition* concerns cultural hierarchies (Fraser, 2010), organised around gender, class, ethnicity and disability, amongst others, which work against parity in participation. Recognition requires teachers to consider how their practices take into consideration the cultural resources, abilities and understandings students bring to PE lessons. Consequences arise in terms of confronting and countering the dominance of particular movement forms, understandings of ability and corporeality founded on an Anglo-Saxon, middle-class male norm which marginalises some students.

*Redistribution* focuses on economic and material barriers to full and fair participation (Fraser, 2010). Redistributive justice therefore involves pedagogical practices that provide access to educational goods and cultural capital (Lingard & Keddie, 2013). It also requires consideration of whether curriculum offerings and practices incorporate rigour and high expectations that support all students in acquiring knowledge and skills required for realising positive long-term outcomes in terms of health, physical activity and bodies.

*Representation* is the political dimension of justice and frames who is included/excluded and warrant ‘just distribution and reciprocal recognition’ (Fraser, 2010: 17). Representative justice is integral to developing the social, cultural and educational resources of all students. Representative justice challenges PE educators to adopt practices and curriculums that endorse knowledge founded in the communities and cultures of students, provide opportunities for student input into curriculum and learning and, hence, full participation in PE.

**Pedagogies for justice and inclusion**

**Gender**

Traditional understandings of gender are expressed in terms of difference or opposites – male and female, masculine and feminine. Essentialist in nature, they provide a simplified version of the complex development of gender identities (Keddie, 2005; Parker, 1996). They also fail to recognise the socially constructed nature of gender, which is mediated by social class, race, ethnicity and other social categories of inequality (Connell, 2005). In the context of PE, these binary constructions around the interests, abilities and potential of boys and girls are thought to be innate or fixed and significantly affect the way teachers think, act and teach (Wright, 1997; Grenier, 2007).

More recent approaches to thinking about gender focus on the social construction of gender and ways it is learned, experienced, lived and performed (Butler, 1990; Wright, 1995). From a young age gender comes into being through socially constructed performances that are understood consciously and unconsciously as acceptable. Gendered performances are evident in boys’ displays of domination, strength, aggressiveness and assertiveness and girls’ emphasis on body appearance, nurturing, passivity and gracefulness (Garrett, 2004). Institutions and
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Social structures contribute to this gendering process, and by school, gender development is well advanced.

Dissimilar uses of the body by males and females differentiate their bodies physically in terms of use of space, strength, flexibility, reflexes, posture, spatial perception and hand and eye coordination (Alloway, 1995; Pink, 2011). Consequentially, cultural stereotypes are reinforced and gender difference is accepted as ‘natural’ and normal. Assumptions that all boys aspire to possess attributes of hegemonic masculinity and girls to hegemonic femininity has led to differentiated PE for males and females (Petrie, 2004). Those who don’t fit gender and performance stereotypes are excluded in a variety of ways and subject to ridicule or suspicion (Haywood & Mac Ghaill, 2012; Petrie, 2004). Consequentially young people can be limited in movement forms and opportunities to express themselves physically as well as ways they can be, act and feel.

Research demonstrates that when teachers invest in limiting assumptions about males and females, their ways of doing gender sustain hierarchies and reinforce narrow conceptions of physical embodiment (Hills & Croston, 2012). Traditional understandings of equality have meant equal access to an Anglo-Saxon, middle-class male version of PE where the value of competition is deeply embedded and elements of strength, speed and aggression are celebrated. These qualities can conflict with girls’ understanding of femininity and their reluctance to participate, or diminished outcomes construct them as ‘inferior’ and the ‘problem’ in the PE field (Clarke, 2013). They are defined in terms of what they lack rather than what PE fails to deliver, and there is little exploration of the cultural and personal relevance of PE curriculum to girls (Whatman & Singh, 2015).

In attempts to be more supportive for girls, some approaches to gender equity have led to single-sex classes and role modelling initiatives. However, such initiatives do little to challenge the construction of gender processes and continue to limit opportunities for physical expression as well as partnerships between girls and boys (Hills & Croston, 2012; Petrie, 2004).

Building inclusive rather than exclusive practices begins with teachers examining their own philosophies and assumptions around gender, as well as attention to the way society creates and maintains difference. Recognition of the social construction of gender draws attention away from essential difference toward ideas that gender is continuously created through interactions, practices and discourses (Hills & Croston, 2012). Possibilities then exist to rethink the taken-for-granted ideas about how PE is organised, how students are grouped, how decisions are made and what constitutes appropriate and meaningful PE.

Redistributive practices support inclusion by minimising gender difference, reducing public display, promoting girls and boys to work together, encouraging teamwork and allowing students to engage safely in physical pursuits without fear of harassment or innuendo. In resisting assumptions and comparisons of effort and achievements, teachers can also redistribute opportunity to develop physical and skilful identities that help students become aware that there are multiple ways of being boys and girls.

Including broader forms of physical activity that celebrate physical traits beyond power, aggression and domination offers further possibilities for physical self-expression and legitimises alternatives to stereotypes. So, too, through establishing and maintaining clear standards of behaviour, physical safety of students is ensured as well as emotional and social safety from failure, public exposure and harassment from others.

Finally representative practices involve students in decision-making about content and activity forms so that all children feel they belong and have a voice in PE. They also make connections to students’ life-worlds and incorporate forms of physical expression that celebrate both male and female interests in the curriculum-making process (Keddie, 2005).
Disability

In the past, policies and practices regarding students with disabilities were largely informed by a medical model of disability and discourses of special education, which normalised segregating students with disabilities into special schools or classrooms (Connor & Gabel, 2013). Of consequence were practices of labelling and categorising, which constructed students with a disability in deficit terms relative to an able-bodied norm (Grenier, 2007).

Today, students with disabilities are more visible, with legislation supporting their right to full inclusion in mainstream schooling (Gabel & Danforth, 2008), with the aim being to protect against discrimination based on disability and, in accord with justice discourses of recognition and redistribution, communicate that students with disabilities are entitled to the same educational opportunities as everyone else.

Increasing numbers of students with disabilities are attending mainstream PE classes, rather than being segregated from them (Vickerman & Coates, 2009). However, as established earlier, inclusion does not ensure inclusiveness (Graham & Slee, 2008) and cannot be guaranteed by policy documents. Groundwater-Smith, Ewing and Le Cornu (2011) similarly warn that simply integrating students with disabilities into mainstream classes will not guarantee just or equitable outcomes. It follows that inclusion of students with disabilities in PE must involve more than keeping score or watching from the sidelines (Spencer-Cavaliere & Watkinson, 2010).

Social/human rights discourses counteract notions of students with disabilities as ‘lacking’ and needing to ‘catch up’ or ‘keep score’ for their able-bodied peers. These discourses encourage teachers to focus on ‘ability’ and, hence, what students ‘can’ do, learn and accomplish. Social/human rights discourses in conjunction with justice discourses of recognition also encourage teachers to gain knowledge and understandings about each student’s abilities, needs and learning preferences.

In focusing on what students ‘can’ do, possibilities exist for providing movement experiences that build on and extend a student’s existing capabilities. Justice discourses of recognition and redistribution are significant to developing high expectations and providing students with access to meaningful learning experiences. The ‘Give It a Go’ resource developed by the Australian Sports Commission and adapted internationally exemplifies a model for realising such aspirations. ‘Give It a Go’ (ASC, 2001) provides guidance in modifying movement experiences to meet student potential without compromising the integrity of the activity. The TREE acronym is proposed as a means to guiding modification. T = teaching strategies; R = rules, game or activity structure; E = activity environment, surfaces, space required; and E = equipment.

Recognising and valuing what students ‘can’ do encourages the use of a range of pedagogical strategies and communication forms, including visual, auditory and kinaesthetic (Overton, Wrench & Garrett, 2017). Where ‘one size does not fit all’, we also suggest that differentiated learning experiences are significant in providing access to a breadth of physical activity forms for all students, including those with disabilities.

Processes for gaining insights and understandings about a student’s interests and preferences reflect representative justice. Possibilities emerge for incorporating student perspectives and knowledge as well as negotiating student input. Safe, supportive learning environments are integral to treating students with respect and supporting them in negotiating the nature of their participation. Ultimately, in drawing upon justice discourses of representation, the aim is to encourage independence rather than dependence (Garrett & Wrench, 2006).

All students can benefit from the inclusion of students with disabilities in PE classes. When PE lessons are safe, supportive environments framed by success for all, students with and without disabilities can come to recognise and appreciate diverse abilities, strengths and relationships.
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(Overton et al., 2017). Through drawing on justice discourse of recognition, redistribution and representation, it is possible to recognise and respond to barriers that exclude, where inclusion of students with a disability is an ongoing process and attitude rather than a ‘placement’ within a ‘normal’ setting.

Ethnicity

Different cultures and ethnic groups attach various and diverse meanings to physical activity, movement and sport. PE, however, has traditionally been less than sensitive to cultural differences and has primarily offered sport-based, Anglo-Saxon, middle-class male versions. Where games dominate the curriculum, conflict can arise for those from different ethnic backgrounds when narrow and stereotypical assumptions are made around suitable forms of movement as well as their apparent interest and abilities (Dagkas, Benn & Jawad, 2011; Macdonald, Abbott, Knez & Nelson, 2009).

Although cultural minorities are frequently positioned as the problematic ‘other’ in PE, a lack of engagement or interest might also stem from shyness, experiences of racism, lack of skill, confidence, encouragement or expectation (Flemming, 1993). Significantly, there are no cultural or religious reasons that prohibit students from engagement in PE and physical activity; however, at times the form of activity, the context, the audience or the timing can be problematic and serves to limit engagement and enjoyment (Dagkas et al., 2011).

Research investigating the experiences of different cultural groups highlights the dangers of stereotypical assumptions made by teachers around bodies, interests and abilities. For example, particular sports are sometimes seen to be appropriate for Asian students, and Asian girls in particular are generally understood to be frail and small, resulting in a lack of expectation and encouragement by teachers to fully participate (Fleming, 1993). Although Asian communities are attuned to health practices, participation in games that demand qualities of domination and aggression may be less attractive.

Research has also identified areas of tension between PE and cultural practices of Islam (Benn, 1996; Carrol & Hollinshead, 1993). Some kinds of physical participation can contravene family, religious or social rules, particularly for adolescents when bodily and religious consciousness intensifies (Dagkas et al., 2011). Islamic requirements include modesty, gender-conscious groupings and attention to religious practices such as fasting during Ramadan; however, there is little consensus in position around modesty and religious integrity (Benn, 1996; Dagkas et al., 2011; Macdonald et al., 2009; Siraj-Blatchford, 1993). This lack of congruence in religious practice highlights the complexities around inclusion in PE. Whereas some need gender separation for freedom of participation, others do not. So, too, whereas some forms of activity have high value in western contexts (dance, sport, swimming, music), others are frowned upon (Dagkas et al., 2011), particularly during Ramadan, where students go without food and water during daylight hours; thus, activities like swimming, where water can enter the mouth, or strenuous activities where fasting can cause dehydration or fatigue, are also problematic (Carrol & Hollinshead, 1993).

In various ways teachers reproduce, albeit unknowingly, existing structures and inequalities in society (Carroll & Hollinshead, 1993). All movement forms are ethnic or cultural; however, PE is overwhelmingly a white embodied space where white movement forms underpin current practice. Problems surface when teachers ignore the ways that white experiences and knowledge come to count for the experience of everyone (Douglas & Halas, 2013; Dowling et al., 2015). So, too, the public nature of the learning area with its focus on the body as well as the sport-based curriculum provide sites of complex social interaction that produce multiple and overlapping
effects of exclusion. Few teachers are aware of the complexities that PE contexts present and the shame or conflict that some children face (Carrol & Hollinshead, 1993; Siraj-Blatchford, 1993).

In building inclusive practices in PE, teachers must create possibilities for movement and healthy activity while still respecting cultural boundaries. As teachers we need to confront our unintentional racial practices and stereotypical assumptions to consider how the prevailing practices and priorities of PE lead to environments that cause conflict, alienation or have little relevance.

Social justice for ethnically diverse students is a process as well as a goal that does not see them as deficit but allows all groups to participate equally in PE and fulfil their needs (Harrison & Clark, 2016). In order to gain deeper and more nuanced understanding of ethnic communities, as well as dilemmas children can experience, Lather (1987) suggests: “We must be willing to learn from those who don’t speak up in words In order to identify and consider: What are their silences telling us?” (p. 12).

Redistributive practices respect diversity and include physical activity forms that are valued outside the typically Anglo-Saxon male forms so that ethnically diverse students can see themselves represented in the curriculum and have their movement forms valued. In addition, it is important to engage in regular dialogue with students regarding tolerance and inclusion such that we work to eradicate harassment and include all.

**Indigenous students**

Indigenous students are not a homogenous population, nor are they distributed evenly in terms of geographic location, socio-economic status and educational achievement (Anderson & Walter, 2010). Deficit discourses, however, work to homogenise and construct Indigenous students, their families, communities and cultures as 'lacking' in comparison to an invisible 'white' norm. Educational underachievement is explained through discourses of individualised responsibility, victimhood and blame, and institutional, curricular and pedagogical practices that (re)produce disadvantage and inequality are neither examined nor addressed (Whatman & Singh, 2015).

The colonial and settler projects continue to haunt understandings of Indigenous peoples, the place of their perspectives in official curriculum and pedagogical practices, including as these relate to PE (Fitzpatrick, 2009). For instance, games and play had been used to prepare Indigenous children for traditional pastimes and ways of life (Edwards, 2007). However, colonial and settler assimilation imperatives directed Indigenous children ‘to forget the ways of the Old people’ (Mattingley & Hampton, 1988: 4). Indigenous values, movement forms and ways of knowing had no role in Australian schooling. A consequence has been the ongoing marginalisation of Indigenous movement cultures in Australian PE curriculum (Tinning, Macdonald, Wright & Hickey, 2001).

Assumptions have been made that Indigenous students share common learning styles, cultural sensitivities and life experiences. Limiting stereotypes are also framed by discourses of biological determinism and essentialist understandings of natural sportiness or athleticism of black-/brown-skinned peoples (Fitzpatrick, 2013). Discourses of race work through power relations to tie all Indigenous students to presumptions of natural ability in PE, which simultaneously suggest they are inherently non-academic (Hokowhitu, 2008). Of consequence are low expectations in relation to academic capacities, which perpetuate educational underachievement and disadvantage for Indigenous students. In terms of redistributive justice, achievement in PE must incorporate more than physical performance and expertise.

Nakata (2011) argues for critical re-orientations to educating Indigenous students. Teachers, pre-service education and the development of pedagogical practices that actually enhance educational achievements of Indigenous students are all significant here (Rigney, 2011). Nakata (2011)
also calls for critical re-orientation to the ways in which all students engage with Indigenous knowledge and content. The inclusion and recognition of Indigenous perspectives in official curriculum incorporates opportunities to counteract stereotypes and normalise the inclusion of Indigenous movement forms in PE. This, however, is reliant upon culturally aware pedagogical practices and embedding Indigenous content rather than treating it as an add-on to the normalised Anglo-Saxon PE curriculum (Williams, 2016).

Traditional Indigenous Games (TIG) exemplify means for recognising and embedding Indigenous knowledge, movement forms and perspectives into PE curriculum. Pedagogical practices for teaching TIG can support knowledge acquisition around culturally valued skills and interrelationships between games, community and ‘country’ (Dinan Thompson, Meldrum & Sellwood, 2014). Dinan Thompson and colleagues (2014) identify pedagogical practices that incorporate cooperative play and collaboration with Elders and community members as a means of developing cultural awareness. In drawing on justice discourses of redistribution and recognition, possibilities also exist for developing strong Indigenous identities and appreciation of Indigenous ways of knowing.

Dance also represents possibilities for exploring and appreciating Indigenous knowledges, cultures and identities (Williams, 2013). Teachers of PE, however, need to be respectful of cultural sensitivities around ownership of dances by particular Indigenous peoples and communities. In accord with justice discourses of recognition and representation collaboration with appropriate Indigenous communities, Elders and dance performers is essential if dances are to be taught in culturally respectful ways and develop connections with wildlife, ‘country’ and traditional ways of knowing (Williams, 2013).

Teaching TIG and dance represents possibilities for justice in PE in terms of recognition, redistribution and representation. With this in mind, we suggest that guiding principles developed by Sarra (2011) provide a useful pedagogical framing for teaching Indigenous students in PE. These principles include having high expectations for achievement by Indigenous students. Engaging learning experiences, which in PE would incorporate breadth in movement forms, is essential. Developing positive and strong Indigenous identities and establishing collaborative partnerships with Indigenous families and communities are also important.

Conclusion

Curriculum and pedagogical practices that address discrimination, value diversity and incorporate the perspectives of marginalised students represent movement towards just and inclusive schooling (Keddie, 2012). In the field of PE, however, discourses of recognition, especially as these relate to gender, ability and ethnicity, have been a priority for justice agendas. Economic barriers around, for instance, socio-economic status, and political barriers, including around body size, have not received the same attention (Evans & Davies, 2014). Where justice, inclusion and accounting for student diversity are central to teachers’ work, it is important to recognise that student marginalisation in PE may be framed by intersections of gender, race, disability, socio-economic status and overweight/obesity (Whatman & Singh, 2015).

In many respects overweight/obesity represent contemporary categories of exclusion and marginalisation for students in PE. Of consequence are moralising assumptions, activities whose demands exclude overweight/obese students and experiences of bodily surveillance, humiliation and shame (Cale & Harris, 2013). All students, no their matter size, class, gender, (dis)ability, culture or ethnicity, warrant enjoyable, engaging, accessible and quality PE. This, though, is dependent on teachers reflecting upon the ways in which the structures (why), curriculum (what) offerings and pedagogical practices (how) of PE work to marginalise or exclude in relation to
these categories and their multiple intersections. With this in mind, we suggest the following critical questions around learning environments, curriculum and pedagogy.

Learning environments
• Are learning environments safe, supportive and inclusive of all?
• Are students positioned in stereotypical and/or homogenous ways?
• What is the nature of student/student and student/teacher relationships?

Curriculum
• Are learning experiences engaging across affective, behavioural and cognitive domains?
• Is there balance between competitive, cooperative and aesthetic activities?
• Are connections made between PE and students’ life-worlds?

Pedagogy
• How can I ensure rigour without relying on comparisons and measurement tools which privilege ‘performance’ and ‘corporeal perfection’?
• Are multiple points of entry, forms of achievement and success recognised?
• Is decision making shared between teacher and students such that student negotiation and input are supported?
• Are high expectations held and communicated to all students?

We conclude in arguing that curriculum and pedagogical practices that challenge and address inequalities in practicable ways can lead to PE being more just, inclusive and respectful of all. When we view all students as resources to be developed rather than problems to be managed, it is possible to design curriculum and pedagogical practices in PE which make meaningful connections to student life-worlds, value their input and utilise existing cultural capital.

Notes
1 Writing from the Australian context, we use the term Indigenous in this chapter in discussing deficit discourses, associated issues and experiences as these relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) students.
2 Within the context of Indigenous culture in Australia, country refers to the place of a traditional language group of an area. There are over 260 ATSI countries and language groups.

References
Diversity and inclusion


Introduction

As interested practitioner/researchers, we often ask primary school–aged children, “What did you learn in physical education today?” Their response usually begins with, “We did . . .” and is finished as they describe the activities, games, or sports they did, such as high jump, cross-country, football, gymnastics, or fitness. When we endeavour to probe a little more about what they learnt about, “You did. . . . and what did you learn?” they stare blankly at us, with a look that suggests we are so stupid because they have already told us and we clearly did not understand them the first time. At the same time, we are equally disturbed by the lessons we frequently observe that have a very explicit learning focus on skills that seem to have little relevance to the present or future needs of children. For example, we recently watched 5- and 6-year-olds spend 40 minutes learning the key techniques associated with galloping, and in a similar way we have observed lines of 11-year-olds waiting their turn to high jump. While we recognise that galloping is a functional locomotor skill and high jumping is a core athletic event, we are left pondering if these are the most important skills all children need to be learning? If they are not, then what should we be spending time on in our physical education programmes? How often will these children gallop or use their high jumping skills as they transition through school and into adulthood?

Our interactions with teachers (generalist and specialist) do not always help alleviate concerns about the focus of lessons or lack of explicit learning embedded in primary school physical education, and more frequently highlight how focused teachers are on the sports, games, or fitness-based activities that appear to dominate planning for physical education in primary schools. These frequent interactions make us ask: Why is it that students can articulate their learning in maths, reading, and writing, but predominantly only describe their doings when discussing physical education; are we focused on planning for activity as opposed to planning for learning; what is the focus of the learning in our programme, and is this learning important for them now and in their futures; and what do we need to do as teachers of physical education to remedy this situation and change the responses of students? This chapter goes some way to exploring these questions.
Part I of this handbook explored the discourses that have informed the nature, purpose, and practices of physical education in primary schools internationally, and in doing so demonstrate how the discourse of sport, health, and education (and to a lesser extent military) shape what learning is planned for in primary school physical education. As is evidenced in Part IV of the handbook, physical education in primary schools internationally continues to be dominated by sport, games, and fitness which privilege participation, abstracted skill development, and traditional sports/games-based programmes over broader education endeavours (see Chapter 8). In a similar way, a review of literature and resources relating to planning physical education in primary school reveals a focus on (a) curriculum content primarily focused on movement skills, or a ‘mandated’ sports/fitness programme of learning, and (b) pedagogical strategies to enhance the learning environment. Models for teaching and learning reflected in primary school physical education resources do little to encourage teachers to move beyond traditional teacher-directed motor skill–based lessons to more inquiry-based approaches to student learning advocated for by a number of authors (Dumont, Istance & Benavides, 2012). Instead, such materials act as pragmatic resources designed to support generalist and specialist teachers to deliver physical lessons in primary school settings without the need for many teachers to have to reconsider the nature or purpose of physical education. As a result, we continue to see programmes and practices in primary school physical education where the uniqueness of varied contexts is hardly evident and the changing needs of learners does not appear to be prioritised.

What children are learning in physical education and what they need to learn are directly related to how schools and teachers think about and plan for learning. Our sense drawn from reading across primary physical research for a number of years, and having read across the global context section of this handbook, is that many primary school physical education programmes are underpinned by traditions, alongside narrowly framed physical health agendas, that result in physical education programmes that do not commonly reflect the explicit needs of learners in each specific context. Instead, we commonly see programmes that could be seen as a ‘one-size fits all’ curriculum, which is in sharp contrast to the learning experiences primary-aged children may experience in literacy (oral, written language learning) or mathematics education, where primary school teachers work extensively to provide differentiated, scaffolded, and student-centred learning experiences for the children in their classes.

Resistance against the dominant discourses of sport and health over broader educational agendas is a challenge for teachers of physical education (specialist and generalist). As evidenced in Part II, education/sport/health initiatives and policies are often thrust upon us by curriculum designers or other voices (politicians, economists, ‘celebrities’) who are detached from our unique learning contexts or the lives of the young people we work with. This can result in our individual and collective agency not always being recognised and in there being limited opportunity for teachers to design learning programmes and opportunities that are focused on what is important for all our learners, both in their lives now and in the future.

In this chapter, you will have the opportunity to explore physical education planning that moves beyond the functional and directed (mandated) to examine a process that supports teachers to extend the possibilities for learning in physical education. In doing so, it is hoped that your imagination, your curiosity, and the activist educator in you will be ignited in ways that support you to question notions of a ‘uniform’ or one-size-fits-all model of teaching and learning in primary school physical education and provide you with a strategy to potentially change physical education practice in your specific context.
A process to support development

In this section we draw extensively on the work of Halbert and Kaser (2013) and Timperley, Kaser, and Halbert (2014) in order to evidence how the Spiral of Inquiry (SoI) framework, alongside other educational frameworks, could be used to enhance learning in physical education and potentially shift the focus of learning and teaching to better meet the needs of all learners. This is a brief overview of the SoI framework as it relates to thinking about physical education in primary schools. It is important to acknowledge that the SoI is a process closely aligned to the broad body of research and practice commonly referred to as practitioner action research (see Carr and Kemmis, 1986; Noffke and Somekh, 2009; Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon, 2014).

The SoI framework is “a process of systematic and disciplined inquiry that results in real changes to practice” (sic, p. 4) as teachers, learners, and the school community work collaboratively to address the complex and challenging educational issues/concerns in their context. This process is about more than tinkering with programmes and pedagogy and instead requires educators to engage their inquiring and curious minds to consider what is going on for learners, how do we know, how are we contributing to this, and what can we do differently and with what effect (Halbert & Kaser, 2013; Timperley et al., 2014).

It [the Spiral of Inquiry] asks you to engage in a process that will be full of surprises and also deeply satisfying, because you will make tangible progress in addressing real learner-related challenges. It also asks you to suspend judgment on how to ‘fix’ things that are not going well, because we cannot work out more effective ways to do things until we have a clear understanding of what is currently happening and why.

(Timperley et al., 2014: 6)

The SoI is a process of developing collective professional agency for moving educational praxis, practices, curriculum, programmes, and pedagogies on in ways that reflect the unique needs of the learners in different contexts and is underpinned by notions that there is no one physical education programme that is right for all learners or all communities/countries.

Although primarily positioned as a professional learning approach, the process of working through such a framework simultaneously works to generate and challenge teachers to think about the focus of their programmes and subsequently planning for learning. Hence, it can play a valuable role in supporting teachers of physical education by asking them to consider their own practice and what this means for learners and learning; as such it raises the stacks on professionalism. The SoI approach supports teachers, school leaders, and school communities to develop a clearer sense of what learning matters most in their unique educational contexts and therefore becomes a useful platform for questioning the status quo and advocating for relevant and meaningful educational programming, pedagogies, and practices.

The following sub-sections provide a brief overview of how the use of an SoI approach might support teachers, and their school communities, in the development of a more contextually relevant and student-centred physical education programme. The examples used are drawn from our own observations and experiences, research as part of a collaborative project (Petrie et al., 2013), discussions with colleagues, and research in primary school settings mainly in Aotearoa New Zealand, but also from the United States, Australia, Singapore, and the United Kingdom.

Scanning

The initial starting point of the SoI is the scanning phase, focused on what is going on for our learners? In the scanning phase teachers, both individually and collectively, reflect on what they are seeing, hearing, and feeling about learners and learning. It is not simply about examining
learning from an academic perspective or in relation to learning that can be easily measured, but instead considering learning in its broadest sense, across the widest range of contexts. Teachers may already have data from physical ‘fitness’ testing or from observations of students’ physical skills and sports-specific game knowledge gathered during lessons; however, a school-wide scan involves more than looking at data gathered from student assessment or administrative data. It should include evidence gathered from observations of children across the school day, including at play during break times, when working independently during class, and in their interactions beyond the school day as part of sport teams, on field trips, or during interactions with other members of the community (when, for example, they are on road patrol). Equally important is evidence gathered by listening to the voices (or pictorial accounts) of children, parents, caregivers, school support staff (grounds staff, receptionist, counsellors, etc.), and the local community. At this stage of the inquiry phase the onus is on teaching teams and school leaders to adopt an evidence seeking and inquiry mind-set, as opposed to simply looking for evidence to reinforce the status quo. As an example, a teacher or group of teachers may gather evidence that is reflective of the following examples:

During break time, students play on the jungle gym. Teachers on duty, supervising the playground, ensure that students are safe and avoid injuries. Throughout break time teachers deal with issues about turn-taking, students using the equipment in ways it wasn’t designed for, and the occasional disagreement or instance of bullying. Equally as they observe, they notice ‘clique groups’ and the leftover others, and also spend time trying to cajole those who don’t seem confident to engage in games to join in and play with their peers.

Mr B’s class, along with all other students in the school, have been preparing for the school’s annual cross-country. On the day of the event, five children from Mr B’s class are absent from school (there are lots of students absent across the school), and two others have notes that they are injured. Some parents arrive to cheer their children on, while the two students who are in wheelchairs sit at the end of the race holding the finish tape, as the course is not suitable for them to participate.

Across the middle years of school students are exposed to a multi-activity framed physical education programme. Although they have been exposed to a myriad of sports it becomes evident in movement-based tests, in game play and in the school sports programme that other than the motor elite students, most students have limited skills (technical and tactical) across a range of sports.

At parent/teacher conferences (interviews) Ms C asks caregivers about what activities their child is involved in out of school. Many are involved in some sort of sports team, but an equal number participate in other forms of physical activity that is unstructured, such as skateboarding, basketball games at the park, community dance, games in the street with the neighbours, time on a trampoline, bush walking, etc. Ms C starts to wondered how the physical education programme that she delivers supports her students to participate in a wide range of the activities they appear to enjoy.

Students, caregivers, and colleagues regularly express worryingly narrow conceptions of what it is to be healthy and what being active constitutes and make moralistic judgements about others (and themselves) based primarily on the shape of an individual’s body or levels of engagement in formalised physical activity.

These provide different insights into what is going on for the learners in their school communities. In completing a scan and gathering evidence from in-class activities, staff meetings, break
times, and interviews with students and observing similar scenarios to those detailed earlier, teachers are better able to respond to the question: What are students learning both from our HPE programmes and from the wider HPE context?

Some triggers that may help teachers or programme/school leaders begin the scanning process are the common themes or frustrations with student/teacher practices, such as the constant bullying or telling of tales. However, at the same time this phase requires teachers to be open to thinking broadly about what they are seeing and hearing in relation to student needs and learning and to do so without judgement. This in itself is challenging, as the automatic response is to try and explain why things are like they are. For example, in the cross-country example, it is easier for teachers or sports leaders to argue that the cross-country experience teaches children to preserve or that this is the only event where children in wheelchairs are not accommodated, but the SoI process asks us to park these explanations and be open to seeing all inequities, inadequate pedagogies, or poor learning opportunities that are occurring.

Often the scanning phase reveals a wide range of themes that are worthy of addressing. In previous research (Petrie et al., 2013), where we ‘observed’ similar scenarios to those described previously, three areas really stood out as relevant to teaching and learning in HPE:

- Notions of healthy and unhealthy were very black and white. Children focused only on the physical aspects of wellbeing, were learning to judge themselves and others based primarily on body shape, were more inclined to be moralistic and lay blame on others (particularly parents), and had adopted individualistic notions about who was responsible for their health status.
- From their experiences of sport, games, and fitness, both in and beyond the school gates, they were learning who is able, that they (or others) were ‘hopeless’, that they don’t like some bits of physical education and physical activity is not very fun, and games weren’t fun as people cheated, others weren’t included for a range of physical and social reasons, and the games required skills some did not have. Additionally, students were unclear about what they were learning during physical education time. Although they could describe the activities and games they were playing, they were not able to describe any explicit learning associated with skills (physical and/or interpersonal skills).
- Interpersonal skill learning had limited effect. Even though teachers had class ‘rules’ treaties and had had some explicit team-building activities in physical education – students spoke of behaving nicely to others as a way of keeping their teacher happy – teachers saw evidence of a lack of these interpersonal skills exhibited in the playground.

**Focusing**

Once the scanning phase is complete and teachers, alongside colleagues, have had an opportunity to make sense of their ‘data’ and what it means for student learning, the challenge is to avoid ‘quick-fix’ solutions.

It is also important to avoid the temptation at this stage to rush into ‘doing something’. The ‘let’s just get going’ spirit needs to be resisted – not forever but for long enough to increase the odds that our actions will have the impact we desire. We need to have the courage and patience to slow down and develop a deeper understanding of what is worth spending time on before moving to hasty action. Focusing well will lead to informed action.

*(Timperley et al., 2014: 10)*
Our attention needs to be on where we are going to focus our energies so we can best enhance the experiences and outcomes for our learners. Whereas the temptation for some of us (Petrie et al., 2013) was to rush in and start teaching HPE differently and fix students’ current ‘misunderstandings’, we collectively recognised that the issues were broader than changing the content or pedagogical approaches that we had used previously. Changing the content of individual lessons or units of work was not going to be adequate, and spending time on one of the themes our scan had revealed without considering the bigger picture would potentially mean that in solving one issue we would not address others. We needed to determine what was most important and therefore worth spending time on and focusing our own energies on. For us this meant we prioritised a focus on what the needs of the learners we were working with were and therefore what this meant for how we thought about and focused on learning. This phase of our thinking is best articulated by a reframed ethos that we collectively determined captured a reimagined framework for HPE in the schools we were working in. The key tenets of this philosophy were that children:

- know when, why, and how to use knowledge in different contexts (classroom, school, and beyond the school gates);
- understand notions of wellbeing that are holistic, multi-dimensional, and inter-related;
- articulate, question, and share multiple perspectives about being well, active, and what it means to be engaged in a wide range of movement experiences;
- celebrate diversity, i.e. bodies, abilities, dispositions, activities, and cultures;
- think critically about their world and accepted ‘norms’.

An expanded version of this ethos can be found at www.tlri.org.nz/tlri-research/research-progress/school-sector/every-body-counts-understanding-health-and-physical. During the focusing phase of the SoI, we had to ask ourselves the following: How do our current physical education programme and practices contribute to student learning? And what learning focuses are of most/less relevance for our learners? These questions are equally relevant for everyone involved in primary school PE, especially if we are interested in ensuring that physical education has meaning and relevance in the lives of young people now and in the future.

Although in this example we had a range of foci, it is essential in the focusing phase that a clear decision is made about what the focus is and for the teachers/school leaders to avoid having a wide or disparate range of foci that could lend itself to a scattergun approach where nothing specific is ever addressed.

**Developing a hunch**

It is always easy to look to others in order to explain issues associated with student learning (or lack of learning), but as professionals the onus is on us as teachers to interrogate what we are doing that may contribute to student ‘knowing’ about the world, themselves, and others in particular ways. Timperley et al. (2014) challenge us to “consciously surface individual hunches, about what we are doing that is leading to the specific situation for our learners” (p. 12). For example, as we watch a specialist or expert running the football, lessons we may (or may not) be conscious of are the lack of progress made by some learners, disengagement by others, and then a few who appear to be loving the challenge of the experience. Equally we may be aware of the less-than-enthusiastic engagement of particular learners when games get overly competitive. Our hunch may be that these experiences are not positive for some of our students, but equally we may be challenged to recognise that our choice of activity and pedagogies used (including management) accentuate the issues. We need to be comfortable
Rethinking practice

asking ourselves and others how our actions and decisions are contributing to the learning and/or mislearning of our students.

If you think back to the initial scenarios detailed earlier in the chapter, a hunch about the lack of participation of some students in break time activities may be that those students are too lazy to engage (as is similarly claimed when students ‘opt’ out of physical education lessons). In contrast, it may be that the nature of activities that are made available in the school during these times do not accommodate a wide range of physical abilities, or that when we have used similar games in our physical education classes the focus has been on movement abilities (elitist perspectives) and not on using games to develop inclusive dispositions amongst students. Although it is easy to blame the individual, as is more common in a neoliberal society, the challenge is to look beyond the ‘simple’ answer and interrogate our hunches in a more transparent and systematic manner. Beyond looking at the students, a hunch that arose for us (Petrie et al., 2013) was associated with the use of the term physical education in the class programme. As detailed, the use of physical education when shared with students, other teachers, and parents brings with it preconceived ideas about what learning would entail and the nature of lessons. In one group meeting Shane Keown, one of the classroom teachers in the project, shared his hunch.

The names “PE” and “Health” conjured up particular ways of thinking and doing for himself and also, he argued, for his students, parents, other staff and the school’s senior leaders. In short, ‘everybody’ knew Physical Education was running, doing fundamental motor skills, or a quick game and ‘everybody’ knew Health Education was talking about eating vegetables, keeping clean, brushing one’s teeth and balancing energy in and out. For him therefore, endeavouring to ‘do’ HPE in line with the sentiments captured in the ethos while still calling it HPE, presented a real conundrum. As he noted, “I can’t do this, and call it HPE”. “So…” [Long pause] a voice piped up, “What would you call it?”

(Cosgriff, Petrie & Burrows, 2013: 11)

Such open sharing by Shane demonstrates how our hunches, when shared, can reveal ways of thinking about our teaching that challenge us to consider how our practice traditions may shape student learning.

It is essential that we test our hunches before we move on to act. In a similar way to the quick-fix desires that become evident as we complete the scanning and focusing phases, moving ahead to change practices based on unsubstantiated hunches may derail the success of a new learning focus or change plan, as decisions may not be grounded in evidence. Instead we need to ensure we are testing our hunches. This requires:

• the courage to interrogate how our own beliefs, practices, and the practice traditions in our school community might be contributing to the issues associated with student learning;
• a willingness to be honest and open enough to share our hunches, our beliefs, and values with other colleagues so we can collectively unpack them;
• a readiness to seek evidence that allows us to check our assumptions in ways that are genuinely about uncovering the accuracy of our hunches.

New learning

Often the focus on student learning distracts from the focus on teacher learning. As Timperley et al. (2014) highlight, “better outcomes for learners are a result of teachers and leaders acquiring new knowledge and developing new skills that lead to new actions” (p. 15). Tinkering with
content or delivery approaches will not be sufficient to create sustainable change or praxis that is morally informed in a way that has the potential for history-making education change (Grootenboer, Edwards-Groves & Choy, 2017; Kemmis et al., 2014). Addressing the issues that the scan, focus, and hunch-checking phases have illuminated requires that teachers, and in many instances school leaders, undertake their own professional learning in order to be able to take action that enhances the educational outcomes for their students. This may take the form of learning new content, pedagogical approaches, planning, or understanding of broader contextual matters, but it is not professional learning abstract from student learning. For our research team (Petrie et al., 2013), the learning looked different for different people, depending on the year level they were teaching and their own strengths and identified areas that needed development in order to progress our shared ethos. Although we all spend significant amounts of time in dialogue learning about what being active would mean in a range of contexts and exploring student-centred pedagogies, over the two-year period we worked together, teacher learning was continuous. For example, Joel invested time learning about biomechanical principles and social emotional learning, Deidre and Jo explored pedagogical approaches associated with integrated curriculum and student leadership, and Shane focused on strategies that would help him support students’ critical thinking about healthy bodies and interpersonal relationships. So although we had a broad collective agenda different teachers recognised their own strengths and weaknesses and what they individually needed to work on to ensure that their own students’ needs were addressed and learning was most deeply enhanced.

Regardless of the context, all new teacher learning should be aligned with the focus of the inquiry and clearly developed in a way that will make a significant contribution to changing the learning experience of students. This new learning may be challenging for teachers as it supports them to find new ways of practicing, and, of course, it may take time. However, if individual teachers and the wider school community is committed to making physical education better for all students, then it is essential that teachers, as professionals, commit to learning as much as they would expect their students to. This phase of the So I needs to be supported with adequate funding and time for teachers to truly engage in prioritising their own learning. Superficial engagement will not suffice if the intention is to bring about real change in practices and therefore in student learning.

Taking action

Having taken the time to determine what the focus for learning should be and preparing ourselves as teachers “now is the time to put new ideas that we have learned into informed, focused and team-led action” (Timperley et al., 2014: 17). This may take the form of a new curriculum programme or a change in pedagogical decisions about the nature of activities or the pedagogical approaches utilised. Introducing new approaches, ideas, and curriculum is not without risk, a sense of apprehension, and uncertainty, but if you do not try, then you will not know if we are deepening student (and our own) learning. However, a note of caution: taking action does not mean rushing and trying to make all the changes you have determined are important all at once. In much the same way teachers scaffold learning in lessons, we need in this phase to take things slowly and work methodically through a series of actions as we apply our own new learning. A useful analogy is to consider changing educational practices as a process, much the same as learning a motor skill. For more complex serial motor skills we often tackle parts of the skill before working on the whole. Taking action that will deepen student learning needs to happen in much the same way. Each stage of the action phase (or motor skill learning) requires a process of action, reflection, and refinement. As it relates to student learning this process will require an objective reflection on the impact on learning as well as acknowledgement of individual teachers’ own
Taking action in the EveryBody Counts project (Petrie et al., 2013) looked different in each class and across the two contexts. New focuses were worked on; for example, Joel prioritised student learning about managing their own emotions and understanding what being active meant, Shane worked with his students on building relationship learning, how to resolve their own conflicts, and balance, flight, and landing. Although taking action looked different across the sites, there were some common approaches that everyone focused on. In particular, we had all agreed that planning for learning as opposed to planning for activity was core to making sure learning was at the centre of everything we did in health and physical education time. By identifying the learning first, teachers were then better positioned to determine what sorts of activities would best support students to make progress toward the desired outcome. This form of action in itself ‘forced’ a change in practice and allowed teachers, students, school leaders, and parents to see connectedness and relevance in what was delivered in physical education time. Such an approach is equally important in supporting the teachers and school community to be transparent and possibly more comfortable with the changes that are occurring, and in doing so dispel some feelings of risk and apprehension.

This is also why it is important to remember that SoI is an iterative, cyclical process and teachers and/or school leaders may need to go back and gather more evidence to help inform their thinking.

**Checking**

It is only through careful checking that we can decide if we have made enough of a difference – and this will start to inform where we go next. What is most important in this question is the word ‘enough’. Most of what we do as educators makes a difference, but collectively we still have much more to do before every learner crosses the stage with dignity, purpose and options.

(Timperley et al., 2014: 19)

What difference we are making and for whom is a fundamental question for educators. If we reflect on the discourses that appear to shape physical education primary schools and what our scanning phase revealed, then we need to consider if our efforts as teachers are making a difference for all our students in a way that contributes to the students and the communities in which they live. At the same time, in working through the SoI process we have a responsibility to check that our new learning and the actions we have taken have had a genuine and positive impact for all our learners. The checking phase requires gathering evidence of the impact on learning and asks us to interrogate our practices and the quality of the impact, not simply judge the learners’ progress. At the same time, as with any action-reflection process, the checking phase allows us to consider where to go next and what phases of the SoI we may need to revisit to continue the process of enhancing and deepening learning. This is a time when we check if the new programme we are offering or our pedagogical decisions are making an impact on learning. As Halbert and Kaser (2013) attest, this means checking all the teachers to take assessment information and using it to examine the effectiveness of teaching. As a result, checking is constant and should be embedded as regular practice so the teacher and/or school community can make adjustments as necessary and not simply wait until the following term or year.
As a checkpoint in the research that has been described throughout this chapter (Petrie et al., 2013), we interviewed students and teachers and drew on planning materials and documentation, as well as student work, to check on our impact. We were excited by evidence that physical education looked different in each class and for each unique group of learners and that students were able to articulate their learning, not just describe what activities they were doing. Each teacher was able to reflect on their own learning and the impact on students. For example, Shane was excited that all his students had a more holistic view of health, though he was concerned that his students did still not have the skills to negotiate ‘being healthy’ in the complexity of broader school messages and those in the media. At the same time Joel was conscious that although his teaching in physical education had significantly improved with lessons being learning focused and much more inclusive, he was very aware that he still had a significant amount to learn about including students with disabilities. These reflections helped provide clarity about what we still needed to work on and the next steps in the inquiry process. It was at this stage we (Petrie et al., 2013) developed a list of reflective questions that became tools to help us continue a process of inquiry as part of common practice throughout the school year and consistently challenged us to think about the relevance of our physical education lessons and programme. Some of these questions were: What teaching approaches help enhance my PE programme? How do I know that deep learning is occurring for my students? Am I planning for activity or for learning? How do my students feel about what they are doing/learning? Is everyone included in ways where they are engaged, challenged, motivated, safe, and successful? How do I respond to the changing needs of my class?

Physical education in your school community

The SoI approach can provide a clearer sense of what learning ‘matters most’ for the learners in your context, and therefore becomes a useful platform for questioning the status quo that is a current physical education programme. Many teachers and school leaders will find using an inquiry process both intimidating and challenging. In particular contexts, broader factors such as external assessment and accountability requirements, teacher professional standards and subsequent ‘monitoring’ will enhance the restricted feeling that teachers may operate under and curb teachers’ willingness to challenge the status quo. Regardless this should not prohibit innovation, especially for teachers and school communities that are invested in providing quality and relevant physical education learning opportunities for all learners. As detailed in Collaborative Teacher Inquiry (Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, 2010) establishing particular conditions will enhance the success of any inquiry process. This includes:

- valuing curiosity, wonder, and risk-taking
- honouring diversity of ideas, thoughts, and actions
- providing choice
- fostering rich opportunities to question and test ideas
- access to resources, including high-quality professional resources and literature
- utilising expert others

(p. 6)

We would add that a necessary part of the planning and inquiry process is that we learn to live with this discomfort and feel comfortable with taking the necessary time or the risks needed to create sustainable change that enhances what learning is.

Planning should not simply be a process of deciding what activities to cover, how students will meet national standards, or what sports students need to be ready for in upcoming events.
As professionals, we have a responsibility to ensure that the physical education programme we provide for our students reflects the unique and real learning needs of the young people in our communities now and in the future. The challenge is to be open and willing to think about the needs of your students and not be trapped by tradition or the demands of global discourses.

References

Introduction – what is a transition?

The significance of the transition from primary to secondary school in the United Kingdom (UK) and its equivalent elsewhere has been depicted both as one of the most difficult in pupils’ educational careers (Zeedyk, Gallacher, Henderson & Lindsay, 2003) and as a “key rite of passage” (Pratt & George, 2005: 16) in young people’s lives. Transition is often defined as “circumstances often arising from social and biological events that disrupts previously existing social equilibria” (Caspi & Moffit, 1991: 157). The term transition represents the time when a pupil moves between schools, usually primary to secondary, and presents children with a period of temporary adjustment that is complex and multi-dimensional, resulting in a number of social, personal and physical challenges (Elliot & Punch, 1991).

Indeed children feel excited, optimistic and anxious prior to Key Stage 3 (KS3 is the beginning of secondary school education, ages 11–14 years) (Dismore, 2008), and many express positive attitudes towards their new environment before and after the transition. It is often accompanied by optimism and anticipation of new opportunities, and it can also be viewed as a challenge and a threat, with children welcoming opportunities for new social experiences (Lucey & Reay, 2000). Indeed, children perceive social acceptance to be of great importance and critically identify “fitting in” (Chedzoy & Burden, 2005). Furthermore, this represents a period where any previously established social hierarchy is challenged and where pupils may no longer be the best academic, eldest pupil, most popular or best-performing athlete. Significantly, this re-structure of the social hierarchy at the start of secondary education has the capacity to initiate feelings of anonymity and irrelevance for young children; self-concept can seriously decline (Tonkin & Watt, 2003) and impose lasting ramifications on academic performance and health and well-being (Anderson, Jacobs, Schramm & Splittgerber, 2000). In addition, there is a lack of understanding of when transition starts and ends and often becomes nothing more than an obligatory event in the summer term rather than representative of an event that should be viewed as longer term, well planned and thought out (Fabian, 2002). Although numerous articles have explored the impact on the transition from primary to secondary school (Galton, Gray & Ruddick, 1999; West,
Sweeting & Young, 2010), very little research exists on the significance of the transition process on young children’s experiences in physical education (PE) and subsequent lifelong physical activity.

Often school transition programmes are based on the transmission of administrative and organisational procedures, rather than personal, social, emotional or physical attributes (Jindal-Snape & Miller, 2008). Indeed, research on school transition has revealed that information is not exchanged consistently between secondary and feeder primary schools (Capel, Zwodiak-Myers & Lawrence, 2004). Furthermore, a lack of continuity and progression in learning of pupils as they move from primary to secondary school has been implicated as a longstanding weakness of the education system (Ofsted, 2002), culminating in a PE experience for young children that is repetitive, uninspiring and underestimates the potential physical movement capabilities of the pupils.

To minimize the impact of transition within PE and to ensure that the ‘rite of passage’ that a child both expects and perceives is progressive and seamless, schools will integrate a number of strategies to provide a rewarding and enjoyable experience. These could include continuity of delivery and curriculum, progression bridges, transfer of information, collaboration and partnership working with a secondary school and developing competency in fundamental movement. However, research would suggest that transition and PE is often neglected, the curriculum demonstrates discontinuity, secondary PE teachers ignore what primary teachers have taught previously and little support and collaboration is offered. Therefore, the result is often a ‘stop-start’ curriculum for PE that reflects a lack of progression and consistency, a spiralling curriculum that lacks focus and consideration of the National Curriculum and young children that receive inadequate experiences in their PE lessons and a resulting lack of movement competency to fully engage in the secondary PE curriculum.

The purpose of this chapter is to recognise that young children as a consequence of their physical education are presented with a transition between primary and secondary school and the impact of this can have a significant influence on them socially, physically, emotionally and psychologically and their long-term future physical activity, both positively and negatively.

The significance of transition on physical activity

The combination of a decline in fitness standards of young people and the substantial increase in the prevalence of overweight and obesity among children and adolescents around the world (Eisenman, 2006) has undoubtedly presented a major concern for the young people of today. In recognition of this, schools and in particular PE have been identified as key settings for the promotion of physical activity (Naylor & McKay, 2009) and potentially a valuable resource in combating sedentary lifestyles (Bailey & Dismore, 2005). Indeed, research suggests that it is the primary school years that are crucial in fostering young children’s interest and enthusiasm in the concept of physical activity (James & Johnston, 2004). Despite this, currently there is a large variation in the quality of children’s experiences, both across and within primary schools (Rainer, Cropley, Jarvis & Griffiths, 2012), and a number of research articles have raised concerns regarding the quality of PE teaching specifically in primary schools (Morgan & Hansen, 2007).

However, the provision and delivery of high-quality PE experiences can be affected by many factors, some of which may assist or hinder delivery and participation. In particular this is evident within primary PE where many institutional barriers, including reduced time provision in the curriculum, poor facilities, the absence of PE professionals (Pickup & Price, 2007), lack of support from head teachers (Rainer et al., 2012) and lack of guidance and support from secondary PE teachers (Lance, 1994), will all culminate in affecting children’s experiences of PE in the secondary school. Despite primary school PE having been identified as an integral part of the
process of developing lifelong physical fitness, the subject currently is viewed as a ‘low priority subject’ amongst teachers (Morgan & Hansen, 2007). Although it is acknowledged that there are instances of high-quality provision, it appears widely accepted that primary school teachers are unable to develop sufficient expertise in the range of curriculum subjects they are expected to teach, in particular PE (Carney & Winkler, 2008). Critically, though it is recognised that PE within primary education has much to offer and can significantly contribute to lifelong physical activity, it continues to be overlooked in relation to other subjects (Haydn-Davies, Jess & Pickup, 2007). In recognition of this, schools are being called upon to give greater attention to their PE programmes (Naylor & McKay, 2009) to ensure that young children are able to sustain lifelong physical activity beyond the primary years.

The role of fundamental movement competency in supporting transition

Of concern, the most recent OFSTED report (2013) commented on primary PE teachers’ insufficient subject knowledge contributing to their inability to deliver the step-by-step approach in teaching skills and lack of awareness of the standards expected of pupils at the end of each key stage. As a result, the contribution of PE specialists in secondary schools may come too late to affect children’s competence, motivation and attitude to physical education. Nevertheless, although the primary school provides a crucial context for regular and structured movement experiences that will provide opportunity to acquire movement competency, criticism of the status of physical education in the primary setting should be noted (Gard & Fry, 1997). Indeed, the National Curriculum (NC) for PE for primary schools (2013) articulates that pupils should develop competence and confidence in Fundamental Movement Skill (FMS) in a range of challenging situations across different physical activities. Critically, the primary PE curriculum recognises the importance of progressively consolidating and developing movement patterns both in isolation and combination. Indeed, research indicates that early learning experiences, particularly in primary school children, are crucial to their continuation in physical activity (Sport Wales, 2008), and furthermore, the primary years provide the opportunity for pupils to learn prerequisite fundamental movement skills essential to lifelong physical development (Gallahue & Ozmun, 1998). In particular, a failure to engage children at this critical time in appropriate high-quality PE provision prior to the transition to secondary education is likely to result in inadequate development of basic movement competence, or FMS (Lubans, Morgan, Cliff, Barnett & Okely, 2010; Rainer et al., 2012).

The current issues related to the teaching of primary PE exacerbate the situation such that Jefferson-Buchanan (2011) suggested that many young children are unlikely to have fully refined their FMS as a result of a number of complex factors impinging on the quality of the teaching of PE in the primary school that affect the physical development process. Furthermore, Ryrie, Money, Holland, Sibley and Fairclough (2011) reported that primary PE teachers’ knowledge of FMS suggested that there was considerable ambiguity regarding the use of and understanding of the concept and this could potentially affect young children’s subsequent development of FMS. Moreover, children who fail to master competency in FMS are more likely to experience a failure in the motor domain and less likely to participate in sport and games during childhood and adolescence (Hardy, Reynolds, Zask & Okely, 2010) and more importantly secondary physical education. And yet, worryingly, a common misconception generally exists that would suggest the developmental concept of FMS is determined by maturational stages, and therefore young children ‘naturally’ learn FMS and are influenced little by the task, practitioner or environment (Gallahue & Ozmun, 1998). Although a growing body of evidence would refute this suggestion and endorse that children do not ‘naturally’ obtain proficiency in FMS (Goodway & Branta, 2003)
and crucially the acquisition of FMS is developmentally sequenced and is contingent upon multiple internal and external factors (biological, social, psychological, motivational) (Hardy et al., 2010). Nevertheless, failure to take advantage of this sensitive period in childhood will make it increasingly more difficult to attain a higher level of motor skill proficiency later in life and at recognised key transitional phases (Gallahue & Ozmun, 1998), such as the progression from primary to secondary education.

It would seem that competence in FMS is critical to a young child’s lifelong physical fitness, and their initial experiences and opportunities within primary PE are significant in supporting a seamless progression to secondary PE. Notwithstanding, those with responsibility within the formative years of primary education to ensure young children acquire and develop FMS typically are generalist teachers, and this provides a significant challenge, often resulting in PE not being taught to the desired and prescribed standard of quality outlined through the NC (Sloan, 2010).

Teaching primary PE and the contribution to transition

Traditionally within primary education PE has been taught by a generalist class teacher (Garrett & Wrench, 2007), with limited contribution from a specialist primary PE teacher, and this raises further concerns. Although the NC for PE provides the structural framework for PE, as well as guidance on the content, it is the physical educator who has a pivotal role in establishing the appropriate learning environment and developing positive attitudes towards PE (Luke & Sinclair, 1991). For far too long it has been documented that the generalist PE teacher has received minimal preparation and hence, often feels inadequately prepared to teach PE (Faulkner, Reeves & Chedzoy, 2008). Indeed, this inadequate and inappropriate preparation often serves as a barrier to effectively achieving the expectations and outcomes identified within the PE curricula. As a result generalist primary teachers do not perceive themselves to be adequately prepared to teach physical education in their initial teacher education, having only received a total of six hours of PE-specific subject/content knowledge throughout the whole of their initial teacher training (Blair & Capel, 2008), giving rise to low levels of confidence amongst those who teach PE (Green, 2008).

What appears to be crucial for educators is how they present physical activities to children in the primary school and in what form this might take, and this has contributed to long-standing disputes over the inherent nature and purpose of physical education per se within the primary school (Jefferson-Buchanan, 2011). Furthermore, it could be argued that the esoteric nature of ‘PE knowledge’ itself causes confusion, conflict and counter-productivity within the primary school, often with teachers not confident in what to teach or unsure of a structured and progressive approach to curriculum planning and delivery, in spite of the guidance offered by the National Curriculum. Consequently, the primary PE curriculum is often epitomised by teachers who deliver PE as “a set of discrete experiences” (Griggs, 2007: 61) rather than the more thematic approach delivered by their secondary counterparts that would suggest continuity and progression. Consequently, primary PE teachers’ lack of confidence is reflected in their preference not to teach PE at all (Morgan & Bourke, 2008: 46) or teach it with little regard to how it will affect secondary PE in the future and lifelong physical fitness.

Moreover, there is a tendency for primary PE teachers to hand the responsibility to an ever-widening community of externals which has seen the growing trend of employing sports coaches (Blair & Capel, 2008; Carney & Winkler, 2008). As a result PE is often not being taught to the desired and prescribed quality as outlined in the National Curriculum (Sloan, 2010), and this approach is threatening the ‘engulfment’ of PE by traditional sport methods (Griggs, 2015).
Combined with the different challenges regarding the specific content and pedagogical knowledge, including the increased physical risk and class management, PE is therefore perceived as one of the most challenging subjects in the curriculum for primary teachers to deliver (Kattene & Edmondson, 2004), and teachers are 'crying' out for further support.

Therefore, to ensure that young children are provided with the appropriate knowledge, skill and understanding through rewarding and challenging experiences within PE that support the transition to secondary PE, there continues to be an ongoing debate for the support of specialist teachers of PE within the primary school (Blair & Capel, 2008). To ensure young children have appropriate experiences of PE, Pickup and Price (2007) have suggested that a well-constructed primary school PE curriculum should, on average, provide around 500 hours of physical education learning between 5 and 11 years of age (assuming two lessons per week each term for six years). Nevertheless, an integral part of this will be ensuring that those who are responsible for implementing and developing the PE curriculum are willing to ask: 'what do we want children to be able to do and know at the end of the 500 hours of learning' (Pickup & Price, 2007). Furthermore, to ensure that this time is dedicated to PE, we will need to ensure full support from the head teacher and that a PE specialist is employed to fulfil these objectives and outcomes.

Furthermore, a lack of clarity and misconception surrounding the aims, values and purposes of primary PE is a significant factor (Penney & Evans, 2008) that often contributes to encourage teachers to construct a curriculum that they are comfortable with, reflecting their own personal learning experiences. Often teachers will make assumptions about this content, usually informed by their own experiences at school, which are sport based and negative (Keay & Spence, 2012) often as a result of the flexibility afforded within the programmes of study in the National Curriculum for PE. Therefore, primary PE teachers have pre-conceived ideas of how PE should be taught based on these recollections and continue to teach what and how they were taught, reinforcing what they value and believe (Penney & Evans, 1997). Therefore, this can reflect teachers delivering to their strengths and what they know due to their lack of knowledge and confidence to fully engage with the National Curriculum for PE.

Primary PE – nothing more than playing games or sport!

As a result of primary PE teachers’ prior experiences, primary school PE often becomes a multi-activity approach involving short blocks of often-unrelated physical activities with the result that learning experiences are compartmentalised and fragmented (Haydn-Davies et al., 2007). Critically this has resulted in a curriculum taught in discrete blocks often presented as a disconnected and differentiated experience (Jess, 2012), often demonstrating a lack of continuity and progression. In relation to this, Talbot (2009) recently commented that a systemic weakness exists in the delivery of PE in primary schools within the UK, with the curriculum delivered being a watered-down secondary school version with too much emphasis on the activity and not on the learning experience. Indeed, Morgan and Hansen (2007) contend that inadequate training and low levels of teacher PE expertise inhibit effective PE teaching; the result is often PE lessons that “resemble supervised play” (DeCorby, Hala, Dixon, Winstrup & Janzen, 2005). In a previous study young children have commented that they too often considered PE as ‘a break from school work’ or chance to ‘get out of school work’ (Dismore & Bailey, 2011: 506). Therefore, not only primary teachers, but also pupils often interpret PE as a non-academic subject or a subject of little priority, and consequently this could reflect the importance, significance and marginal position attached to it within the curriculum (Pickup & Price, 2007).

Consequently, PE in primary schools may have languished for too long as the timetable slot where pupils can 'let off steam', 'not be judged' and therefore often could be viewed by both
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those in the primary and secondary sector as not providing a meaningful and distinctive educational contribution (Sprake & Palmer, 2012). Indeed, Talbot (1996) has previously suggested that secondary PE teachers adopt an ignorant approach to primary pupils' previous achievements and highlighted that secondary teachers did not know enough about the principles of progression and therefore chose to ignore any information that was supplied to them, often being suspicious of its authenticity and relevance. Significantly, Howarth and Head (1985) have reported previously that pupils post-transfer perceived PE to be far more enjoyable. Their preference for this was due to the PE specialism offered in the secondary school and recognition that primary PE had been taught by inexperienced staff. Critically, children's perceptions of PE in the secondary school is that it “takes on the identity of a specialised subject taught by specialist teachers in specialist settings”. The bulk of what is known as physical education as an institution occurs in, or is significantly influenced by, secondary physical education (Green, 2008). Indeed, Haydn-Davies (2012) suggested that if this is an accepted position, then it is not that primary PE is of low status or that it is misunderstood, but that it has no status or inherent purpose other than to meet the needs of secondary PE.

It would seem that primary PE teachers are crying out for support and attention from their secondary PE counterparts. They feel isolated, ignored and inferior, and often this contributes to their identity as a PE teacher and what they interpret as PE and culminates in primary PE being delivered as ‘stop-start’ curriculum of discrete experiences and a PE curriculum that is sport oriented rather than developmental and progressive.

A consistent and seamless approach to progression

It would seem that we expect far too little of our children in primary PE (Pickup & Price, 2007), and furthermore, secondary PE teachers are quite dismissive in their recognition of the importance in preparing children for their secondary PE experience. As a consequence, many primary pupils often approach PE in the secondary school with apprehension, not sure what to expect or whether they are competent to participate. Indeed, Kirk (2004) argues that specialist experiences in secondary schools come too late to affect the majority of children in relation to their competencies, perceptions and motivations, and this inherently may have an effect on children’s participation levels. In acknowledgement of these concerns, a young person’s physical education experience typically is governed by a ‘top-down’ approach whereby PE does not properly begin until the secondary school.

Moreover, the introduction of a revised National Curriculum in the UK (NC, 2013) has focused attention on embedding a progressive curriculum for PE that provides continuity, consistency and relevance. In doing so, the intention has been to ensure that a seamless, joined up curriculum that has provided opportunity for young children to move effortlessly through primary to secondary school from 3 to 18 years of age has been implemented. Indeed, the Key Stage 3 curriculum provides opportunities for young children to build on and embed the physical development acquired during Key Stages 1 and 2. Subsequently, such a curriculum has intended to enhance young people's predispositions towards lifelong participation in sport and physical activity and their subsequent motivation and engagement in secondary PE. However, Griggs and Ward (2012) have highlighted that often teaching in the secondary school represents a “cycle of reproduction of curriculum and practice within PE”, or what has alternatively been referred to as a spiral curriculum (Capel et al., 2003). Moreover, this would suggest that pupils repeat work covered in the primary school, and often this fails to challenge or extend pupils, to the extent that their experiences of PE are uninspiring. It would suggest that secondary PE teachers are apprehensive and distrusting of what and how PE is delivered within the primary school. Indeed,
Lance (1994: 46) identified “a need to tackle the mistrust and disrespect which exists across the divide between people who, after all, are members of the same profession”. It would seem that secondary PE teachers need to recognise that learning is central to what they do and therefore adopting a ‘fresh start’ approach is not what a seamless, joined up and progressive curriculum would suggest.

The problem of continuity during transition is not new, and Talbot (1996) suggested that primary PE teachers do not have the necessary information or background to effectively develop a progressive curriculum. Although this may be true, primary PE teachers must not be held to task, as many struggle to meet the curriculum requirements struggle with inappropriate facilities and support (Rainer et al., 2012) and have low levels of expertise and confidence (Morgan & Bourke, 2008). Furthermore, core subject areas provide clear guidelines for progression of the curriculum, monitor consistency of delivery and provide detailed transition modules that are planned and supported equally by both the primary and secondary school and integrated within the year 6 curriculum. Consequently, the position of PE within an already ‘crowded curriculum’ often results in transition being dealt with rather tentatively and considered more of a token gesture and often does not facilitate a progressive curriculum. Certainly factors such as curriculum continuity and familiarity have been regarded as barriers rather than catalysts to enjoyment of PE by children and implicated as contributing to negative attitudes towards PE (Subramaniam & Silverman, 2002). Furthermore, Dismore and Bailey (2008) have reported that pupils entering secondary school PE struggled with a change in the way that the curriculum was taught.

Therefore primary PE teachers require considerable negotiation, lobbying and strong leadership – in particular to gain access to funding for equipment, facilities, teaching spaces, guidance and support and curriculum positioning. Recently Rainer et al. (2012) identified that primary PE teachers receive little support from their head teachers and increasingly are looking to their feeder secondary school for further guidance and support on curriculum mapping, schemes of work and ultimately recognition that they are doing a good job. Moreover, there is still need to forge a stronger primary-secondary curriculum bridge so that primary teachers might gain a clearer conception of the purpose of physical education (Jefferson-Buchannan, 2011).

Indeed, Lawrence (2006) would suggest that PE lessons in the secondary school were less difficult for pupils and involved repetition of previous work covered. Therefore, it is essential that if secondary PE is to further promote lifelong physical fitness, then the enjoyment and attitudes developed with primary PE needs to be further reinforced, developed and challenged, rather than a curriculum that could be less challenging, repetitive and uninspiring. Furthermore, Rainer and Cropley (2013) identified that secondary PE teachers simply ‘abandon’ what has been taught previously within the primary school and will teach what they believe to be correct. This would suggest that the curriculum for PE is not progressive and seamless, but often a ‘stop-start’ curriculum lacking continuity, consistency and collaboration between both primary and secondary PE teachers. Moreover, there are indications that discontinuities are present (Nicholls & Gardner, 1999) and a ‘hiatus in progression’ (Galton et al., 1999) contributing to pupils disengagement in physical education and school sport.

It is also worth noting that the move to secondary education presents a change in the learning and teaching environment and a sharp contrast to how young children have been taught previously. Often the child-centred approach indicative of primary education (Meirink, Meijer, Verloop & Bergen, 2008) is replaced with secondary PE teaching that is more direct and the curriculum delivered at a faster pace to facilitate maximum coverage of the curriculum (Galton et al., 2003). Notwithstanding, this clearly demonstrates an ignorance from both parties to ensure that young children are provided with appropriate learning and teaching environments within PE that ensure learning is both progressive and builds on prior experiences.
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Conclusion

Young children’s early experiences of PE, sport and physical activity can have “profound implications” on future patterns of subsequent participation (Trimble, Buraimo, Godfrey & Minten, 2010: 40). Therefore, creating and harnessing pupils' enthusiasm to engage in lifelong physical activity may depend in part on the manner in which PE is delivered (Fairclough, Stratton & Baldwin, 2002) and furthermore the relations that exist between secondary and primary PE teachers to support this. PE programmes in the primary school should facilitate the learning needs of students and provide them with the skills and knowledge to successfully participate in and negotiate the world in which they live (Petrie, 2009). Indeed,

if policy makers and those within the physical education profession are serious about effecting a real change, they must redirect their efforts and build upon the key principles which they already know, namely that primary physical education is of primary importance.

(Griggs, 2007: 66)

To achieve this will require a collaborative approach, with concerned parties working in tandem to ensure that primary PE reflects a curriculum that is consistent, continuous, developmentally progressive and challenging and extending. Indeed, it must be acknowledged that the primary PE teacher cannot do this in isolation and needs considerable support, direction and guidance from their secondary counterparts if transition within PE is going to become an integral part of a young child’s lifelong physical activity.

For professionals and practitioners to be able to work collectively towards overcoming the challenges within primary PE, they will first need to recognise and understand what they are working towards (Haydn-Davies, 2012). There is still clearly a need to forge a stronger primary-secondary curriculum bridge so that the primary teachers might gain a clearer conception of the purpose of physical education, which could empower them to do what they do best: teach the children in their care (Carney & Bailey, 2005). To fully implement a primary curriculum that is developmental, progressive and inspiring to young children will require teachers who are willing to engage fully with the PE curriculum and also be aware of the curriculum beyond KS2. Many researchers believe primary PE to be ‘broken’ and in need of being ‘fixed’ (Griggs, 2007; Tsangaridou, 2014), and currently this chapter would suggest that considerable work is required. It would seem there are many challenges and barriers that culminate in the transition of young children from primary to secondary school being an experience that does not challenge and does not prepare or support lifelong physical fitness, and PE is therefore still in need of significant remedial work.

References


Negotiating transitions


Introduction

In this chapter, I wish to argue that teaching physical education (learning to move and moving to learn) is itself a creative act, rather akin to a creative performance that is based on expertise, structure and facilitation. The notion of creativity has a long history related to educational provision in the UK. Creativity is typically described in terms of a product, a process or a creative person (Taylor, 1998; Lubart, 1999) and can relate to ideas, playfulness, exploration, problem-solving, purposefulness and artistic and imaginative invention. The first wave of education policy related to child-centred philosophy and practice in education in the UK came during the 1960s Plowden era (Central Advisory Council for Education, 1967). Here creativity was viewed as a ‘soft’ or relaxed approach to teaching and learning where children were discovering learning for themselves, with little support or guidance.

The second wave of creativity in the UK began in 1999 with the All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education report (National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education, NACCCE). This was significant in bringing the concept of creativity into the forefront of thinking as it recommended creativity should have a core place in both learning and pedagogy. According to this report, teaching for creativity involves encouraging beliefs and attitudes, persistence, identifying creative potential across subjects and making connections, motivation and risk-taking and providing opportunities for the experiential and experimental. There was advocacy for greater creativity in education through ‘a balance between teaching skills and understanding and promoting the freedom to innovate and take risks’ (p. 10). Here, creativity was defined as ‘imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are both original and of value’ (p. 12). A number of policies and practices promoting creativity in schools in the UK followed the NACCCE (1999) report, all influenced by political and economic agendas (Excellence and Enjoyment, DfES, 2003; Expecting the Unexpected: Developing Creativity in Primary and Secondary Schools, Ofsted, 2003; Creativity: Find It, Promote It, QCA, 2004; Creative Partnerships programme, DfES, 2004; and the report Nurturing Creativity in Young People, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2006). In addition, a study of 17 education systems: Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Hungary, Italy, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Japan, Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, Switzerland and the United States outlining The Arts, Creativity and Cultural Education: An
International Perspective Sharp & Le Metais, 2000) revealed that many countries share the same beliefs and priorities for the arts, creativity and cultural education. This study was part of a programme of work for the International Review of Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks. The International Review was funded by Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). According to the report, there is a global:

recognition that creativity is important, and that its development should be encouraged in schools; a realisation that cultural education is an essential component in helping pupils feel included and valued; an acknowledgement of the key role of the arts in the curriculum in developing creativity as well as cultural understanding; a concern about how to organise and manage the arts in the context of the demands of the whole curriculum, including the necessary emphasis on literacy and numeracy (and) a need to find effective ways of raising the profile and status of the arts in education.

Application of a creative curriculum in the UK included all young people being encouraged as both spectators and participants in creativity and culture through the introduction of a five-hour-a-week ‘cultural offer’ (DCMS, 2007). Furthermore, the inclusion of creative development as a strand in the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum in 2007 was significant, followed by The Rose Review of the Primary Curriculum, which affirmed the need for independent and creative thinkers and learners (Rose, 2009). Creativity is now considered to be embedded in the Foundation Stage curriculum and the National Curriculum for schools in England and relates to personal development, imagination, problem-solving and thinking skills (Ofsted, 2010) and is ‘essential to the success and fulfilment of young people, to the vitality of our communities and to the long-term health of the country’ (Robinson, 2013). Furthermore, European Union (EU) and international governments, authorities and bodies (ACARA, 2014; Education & Training/ET, 2010, 2020 work programs; EC 2008/C 86/01, EC 2010/C 117/01) have ‘highlighted the significance of the promotion of creativity and creative thinking in all education levels as it is considered a crucial and important element for the growth of modern economies and societies’ (Konstantinidou, Zisi, Katsarou & Michalopoulou, 2015).

A champion of creativity in education, Anna Craft (2000, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2011) argued that creativity can be reflected in everyday potential, as life-wide (Craft, 2005) as opposed to being preserved for the gifted few. Craft introduced the notion of ‘little c creativity’ which values ‘everyday’, or ordinary, creativity in contrast to extraordinary, or ‘big c’, creativity (ibid, 2001).

little c creativity . . . focuses on the resourcefulness and agency of ordinary people. A ‘democratic’ notion, in that I propose it can be manifested by anyone (and not just a few). It refers to ability to route-find, successfully charting new courses through everyday challenges. It is the sort of creativity, or ‘agency’ which guides route finding and choices in everyday life. It involves being imaginative, being original/innovative, stepping at times outside of convention, going beyond the obvious, being self-aware of all of this in taking active, conscious, and intentional action in the world.

(Craft, 2002: 56)
However, anxiety remains amongst educators that creativity is being stifled because the focus on creativity has been paralleled by an expansion of performativity policies, used by the government to seek to raise standards in schools. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) together with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority has now established a significant ‘performativity’ culture (Evans, Rich, Davies & Allwood, 2005) through national inspections, national testing, target setting and league tables. It has been argued that the creativity/creative learning policy contrasts with the continuing testing regimes, audit culture and quality assurance measures which seem to favour technician-oriented pedagogies (Boyd, 2005). It appears that teachers in England are encouraged, on the one hand, to take risks, innovate and nurture creativity, and on the other hand, are subject to heavy-duty tracking, measurement and accountability. As Cullingford (2007) asserted, creativity represents ‘open mindedness, exploration, the celebration of difference and . . . is taken to be an automatic opposition to the language of targets, to instrumental skills, the measurement of outcomes and the dogmas of accountability’ (p. 133). Performativity can be seen to be ‘hijacking the creativity discourse’ (Turner-Bisset, 2007: 201), and this impact has been felt sharply within the foundation subjects. Curriculum time in physical education (PE) has become increasingly marginalised as greater emphasis has been placed on teaching core subjects such as literacy and mathematics.

At the time of writing, the UK is deciding how it will begin the process of Brexit, our government is debating the value of a grammar school system of secondary education and there is an emphasis in the classroom from the earliest years on data proving evidence of pupil progress via phonics screening, Standard Assessment Tasks and a variety of other assessment tools. In contrast, some of those working in the education sector are calling for yoga to be on the curriculum (Fox-Leonard, 2016) and to rank schools by pupil wellbeing in league tables (Gurney-Read, 2016). Physical education is among the top three school subjects in European Union member states (EU27), where creativity is the most prominent in curricula (Heilmann & Korte, 2010). Great teachers understand the culture of raising standards and performativity, of accountability and target setting that exist in education, but importantly, they also understand the potential of physical education to develop physical, intellectual, emotional, social and artistic learning. Great teachers enable teaching to occur at the tension between structure and creativity and promote learning as a creative activity.

Creative approaches

The power of learning in physical education can be transformational and can enable learners to access opportunities that they may not have known existed. The Association of Physical Education in 2015 summarised physical education as:

the planned, progressive learning that takes place in school curriculum timetabled time and which is delivered to all pupils. This involves both ‘learning to move’ (i.e. becoming more physically competent) and ‘moving to learn’ (e.g. learning through movement, a range of skills and understandings beyond physical activity, such as co-operating with others). The context for the learning is physical activity, with children experiencing a broad range of activities, including sport and dance.

and that physical education must provide:

inclusive learning experiences that . . . acts as the foundation for a lifelong engagement in physical activity and sport. The learning experiences offered to children should
be developmentally appropriate to help them acquire psychomotor skills, cognitive understanding, social skills and the emotional learning they need to lead a physically active life.

\( AfPE: 2015 \ 3 \)

There has been an increase in the provision of professional development for teachers in recent years, particularly regarding subject knowledge and confidence building as well as a focus on increasing physical aspects of physical education (Griggs, 2007; Blair & Capel, 2008; Sloan, 2010). This is partly because the amount of time spent on physical education in Initial Teacher Education in England is limited to around 12 hours, but also there is reliance on the use of external sports coaches/companies to teach physical education in primary schools. There is still concern that the National Curriculum for Physical Education in England and Wales has not been taught effectively in primary schools, e.g. Revell (2000), Speednet (2000), Warburton (2001) and Wright (2004).

According to Lavin, Swindlehurst & Foster (2008: ix), the ‘issue of who is delivering physical education in schools is an area of growing concern and interest to the profession’. Sports coaches are being used in primary schools, both inside and outside curriculum time, and although they may have confidence, they may not have the necessary knowledge of appropriate age/stage development, knowledge of National Curriculum expectations, understanding of cross-curricular links or, most importantly, a knowledge of the individual pupils’ strengths and challenges, as a class teacher should. A creative approach to teaching physical education enables teachers to make informed decisions in relation to planning, provision, teaching strategies, assessment and evaluation. Such decisions are based on secure and confident subject and pedagogical knowledge and an understanding of the creative potential of the body. Physical education can:

- develop skills in interaction, team-working, problem-solving, observing, evaluating, verbal and non-verbal communication of ideas and emotions, and in making connections
- ... can improve self-esteem and confidence, it can widen aspiration

\( Siddall, 2010: 10 \)

Creative approaches is teaching essential knowledge, skills and understanding where the focus is on developing children’s physical literacy (Whitehead, 2013) and capacity to become highly active and explorers of ideas and strategies, thereby motivating them to make informed choices and decisions. High-quality and creative teachers offer a careful balance of support and challenge to learners in order to enable them to explore their capabilities with confidence. I acknowledge that to teach creatively may take some out of their comfort zones, but as Goodwin (2010: 10) summarises there is an excitement as well as a risk in creativity, stating that ‘creativity can be uncomfortable, unpredictable, anarchic, boundary breaking and insecure but also playful, invigorating and pleasurable’.

In my previous work (Pickard & Maude, 2015) I outlined five ‘power’ principles that underpin a creative teaching and learning approach: purpose, opportunities, wellbeing, environment and revel. These power principles are not in a linear order but are core features when planning and providing a creative teaching and learning environment and when assessing. I will expand on these here, as these principles underpin excellence in creative approaches to teaching and learning.
Creative approaches

Purpose – valuing purposeful physical exploration and meaning making

Meaning making in primary physical education relates to understanding the body – physical, cognitive and emotional age/stage development – and to scaffold children's abilities and potential to explore and examine opportunities for relevance. This can be applied through time for play and experimentation with the use of action, metaphor, analogy, descriptive vocabulary, imagery, pattern, rhythm and pace. Such physical explorations and a careful balance of unstructured, guided and structured support and challenge engage the learner in connecting to and building on previous learning and making new physical meanings. Physical education uses the kinaesthetic mode or bodily movement and provides a vehicle for learners to develop social and cultural awareness such as physical empathy and understanding of difference and feelings, values and ideas. Cognitive development and connection can be seen through: enhanced memory associated with physical patterning and repetition; application of and building on previous knowledge, for example, of tactics and use of weight in problem-solving activities related to games; understanding of other subjects through themes; and topics and cross-curricular connections such as dance and maths played out in shapes, number, pattern and space. Ensuring relevance in opportunities, activities, themes and ideas that are related to children’s interests and that integrate knowledge, skills and understanding will provide contexts for meaning. Learning and creativity are collaborative social processes, and meaningful creativity only exists against a social, community or cultural background.

Opportunities – harnessing opportunities within and across the curriculum

The paradox of play is that play is not, nor should be, easily defined; it can be limitless, complex, sometimes chaotic, non-linear and unpredictable. It can be regarded as trivial and purposeless or deeply serious and purposeful and is not always context dependent. What is important is that time, space and value are given to play and exploration, as this is the way that children (and adults) try out old and new knowledge, thinking and possibilities individually and with others, as play is a means of creating and preserving friendships. Play and exploration are essential to physicality and creativity. Chazen (2002: 198) gives an all-encompassing definition of what play is:

Playing and growing are synonymous with life itself. Playfulness bespeaks creativity and action, change and possibility of transformation. Play activity thus reflects the very existence of self.

Problem-solving, investigative activities and creative improvisation tasks can challenge and enable children to take risks in their learning, try new things and generate new possibilities and knowledge, and during this range of more and less structured activities and opportunities children will also gain explicit instruction as appropriate and individualised teaching. In addition practical opportunities to play with risk and fear can be transformational in building children’s confidence. Using different environments both inside and outside (forest/wood/beach/mud, etc.) can enable children to test out and make connections to previous knowledge, skills and understandings whilst learning new things. Well-organised cross-curricular links enable children to make connections in their learning in motivating and meaningful contexts. These associations with other areas of learning and experiences when using prior knowledge and experiences link across and through subjects and across different media.
Wellbeing – *developing awareness of health and well-being*

Physical education provides an inclusive learning entitlement for social, physical and mental health which should ensure that all children:

- Are provided with opportunities to gain competence in a broad, balanced range of physical activities.
- Are helped to enjoy being active and to feel confident and comfortable in a physical activity context so that they are more likely to choose to be active in their own time.
- Experience and appreciate the broad range of benefits (physical, psychological and social) of a healthy, active lifestyle.
- Are aware of how active they are and should be and know how to find out about and access activity opportunities in the community, including at school, around the home and in the local area.
- Understand about ‘energy balance’ and the need to increase physical activity in daily living to assist with ‘healthy’ weight management.

*(AfPE, 2015a: 4)*

Research evidence shows that education and health are closely linked (Suhrcke & de Paz Nieves, 2011); simply put, children with better health and wellbeing are likely to achieve better academically. Furthermore, ‘the culture, ethos and environment of a school influences the health and wellbeing of pupils and readiness to learn’ (Brooks, 2014: 4)

Environment – *providing a motivating and inclusive environment*

Sustaining motivation needs to be carefully thought through as we consider the material or content of the session, the learner’s role(s) and the environment (Gough, 1999). Ideally, we want a motivational climate that fosters children’s intrinsic motivation, where they experience fun out of curiosity, they want to learn new things and develop new skills where the experience becomes a reward in itself (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Quested & Duda, 2009). Within a school-based environment it may seem that there is a greater focus on extrinsic motivation, where children perform an activity as a means of achieving a certain (correct) or desired outcome. If children are passively receiving information from a teacher, it is difficult to judge whether they are motivated or truly engaged. Similarly, if they are required to simply copy the teacher’s movements for the whole session, it is difficult to see whether the children are challenged to build on old and apply new knowledge. Wenger (1998) in his model of situated learning proposed that learning involved a process of engagement in a ‘community of practice’. Communities of practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning, share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger, 2009). Communal creativity encourages purpose, ownership, group identity and empathy. For example, the following ways aid social, collaborative and creative learning opportunities:

- Asking open-ended questions which engage learners in envisaging what might be, such as ‘What if?’ and ‘What else?’;
- Encouraging connections and relationships in relation to context and material but also in working together;
- Providing opportunities for learners to try out different approaches together through experimenting and anticipating and overcoming difficulties;
- Engaging in supported reflection of ideas, actions and outcomes.
Central to valuing and developing creativity is the idea of ‘creativity in relationship’ (Chappell, Craft, Rolfe & Jobbins, 2009) where dynamic social relationships between child-child and child-teacher should be fostered.

**Revel – celebrating physical success, achievement and progression**

Through the provision of rich learning experiences children can progress to become autonomous learners who are physically literate. It has been suggested by Whitehead (2010: 42) that a physically literate individual:

- Has the motivation to use their physical capacities
- Can move with poise, economy and confidence in a wide variety of physically challenging situations
- Is perceptive in ‘reading’ the physical environment
- Has a well-established sense of self
- Has the ability to build relationships with others
- Can identify and articulate their own movement performance.

Celebration and articulation of achievement, success and progression, however small, is worthwhile. The use of recalling previous experiences, making connections to new learning and the use of open questions can stimulate a range of different responses which could aid in the generation of a rich variety of movement. Asking children to generate further questions is a way to develop more material and will enable them to take greater ownership of creative processes. This can be encouraged when reviewing progress, watching peers and giving feedback, but also giving opportunities to act on feedback. The greater the opportunity to reflect upon and challenge assumptions and initial responses, the more likelihood there is that children will become more innovative and find a range of ways to solve problems. Offering space and valuing time to think can enable children to create answers.

In relation to evaluating and improving performance, learners are engaged in a process of continuity and progression. Children should be involved in describing what they have done and what others have done by observing, describing and copying and use what they have learnt to improve the quality and control of their work to identifying what makes a performance effective and suggesting improvements. There are many ways to integrate reflection, review and appreciation into the creative provision of physical education.

**Creative teachers and learners**

Creative approaches mean that teachers will take risks with teaching in the same way we expect learners to be creative risk takers. This may relate, for example, to trying out a range of teaching styles or strategies, providing greater opportunities for ownership from the learners or exploring different environments for teaching and learning. Such opportunities include risk-taking, acceptance of failure, fun, silliness and mess (Chappell et al., 2009: 182). According to Jonathan Barnes (2007: 137) creative teachers are simply those who adopt and apply a ‘creative state of mind’. The core characteristics which result in creative practice are:

- Curiosity and questioning;
- Connection making;
- Originality;
- Autonomy and ownership.
In these ways teachers are creative facilitators who are involved in:

- Encouraging exploration
- Nurturing children’s insatiable curiosity
- Using problem-solving and investigational approaches that stimulate mental activity and self-expression, questioning and probing
- Providing vivid first-hand experiences in a variety of environments, scaffolding experience for learners
- Providing a secure environment where the learner can make private thinking explicit and open to change
- Communicating effectively
- Presenting new ideas as problems to be solved and areas to be investigate, which allows for cognitive restructuring
- Promoting positive attitudes
- Encouraging goal setting and appropriate task difficulty
- Providing a ‘comfortable challenge’ (a challenge just beyond reach yet attainable)
- Enabling confidence in language of discussion, support of people around the stimuli of the moment
- Building relationships between learner and teacher for ‘real’ learning, with awareness of individual need.

Creative teaching then can be viewed as ‘using imaginative approaches to make learning more interesting and effective’ (NACCCE, 1999: 49), and the features of creative teaching as proposed by Craft (2005) could include innovation, relevance and ownership.

Furthermore, Grainger, Barnes and Scoffham argue that just knowing the prescribed curriculum requirements is not enough:

if teachers are to be creative practitioners they need much more than a working knowledge of prescribed curriculum requirements. They need a secure pedagogical understanding and strong subject knowledge, supported by a passionate belief in the potential of creative teaching to engage and inspire hearts and minds. Such teaching depends upon the human interaction.

(2004: 250)

Central to teaching is the learner, and teaching for creativity can be seen as having a clear intention to develop children’s own creative thinking and behaviour (NACCCE, 1999). Creativity should not be treated as a temporary fashion; in teaching for creativity the teacher must embrace a willingness and commitment to explore ideas with children and make choices governed by knowledge and expertise, but also to place the needs of the learners at the heart of what they do. Such teachers create relevance and engagement so that all the children will want to learn. Teaching for creativity principles as suggested by NACCCE (1999) are worthy of some consideration. These include encouraging young people to believe in their creative identity, identifying young people’s creative abilities, fostering creativity by developing some of the common capacities and sensitivities of creativity such as curiosity, recognising and becoming more knowledgeable about the creative processes that help foster creativity development and providing opportunities to be creative – a hands-on approach.

Children enjoy, engage with and learn from creative teachers and learn most from teachers who support and challenge their thinking. However, it is important that creativity is
not thought to be ‘equated with sloppiness’ (Desailly, 2012: 3). Children do need specific knowledge and skills for their creativity to flourish; as Barnes (2007: 239) suggests ‘the robustness and rigidity of this disciplined understanding can in many ways be the best provoker of creativity’. The NACCCE report made it clear that in its view sustained creative development ‘involves knowledge of the field in question and skills in the media concerned . . . (and to) recognise the mutual dependence of freedom and control at the heart of the creative process’ (1999: 49). In order to challenge ourselves as teachers and the learners we work with, it is important to consider whether the way we learn influences the way we teach. It is crucial for us to clarify what creativity means for us and in terms of teaching and learning.

The environment is created by us as teachers (Konstantinidou et al., 2015). Prentice’s (2000) concept of creative teachers are those who display ‘cultural curiosity . . . continue to be self-motivated learners, value the creative dimensions of their own lives and understand how creative connections can be made between their personal responses to experience and their teaching’. Cremin (2009) argues that it is possible to adopt a creative mind-set or attitude through the capacity to generate, reason with and critically evaluate in dealing with the mundane as well as the unusual aspects of everyday life; the creative process can involve risk, challenge, uncertainty and criticality. Creative professionals can combine subject and pedagogical knowledge and ‘teach creatively and teach for creativity’ (Cremin, Barnes & Scoffham, 2009). In addition, Warburton is concerned that creativity is ‘a skill that can be practised, a process to be pursued and a performance to be enjoyed’ (2007: 1273). This is a helpful way of thinking as it enables us to develop a creative habit as at the core is the provision of a teaching environment where creativity can flourish where both the teacher and the children actively engage in the creative process and in the co-construction of creativity.

Creative practice

Here I offer a summary of ways to view dance, gymnastics and games in order to develop creative approaches to engage children in a lifelong love of physical activity. Dance involves the development of technical and expressive skills and making connections between ‘feelings, values and ideas’ (Siddall, 2010: 9). Learners will use a range of movement vocabulary, dance skills and dynamics (time, weight, space and flow) in composition, performance and appreciation. High-quality dance teaching begins with a theme or idea/stimulus, and these can be visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, tactile or ideational. Such stimuli can easily be cross-curricular, such as:

**Early years/key stage 1**

**Literacy links**
- We’re Going on a Bear Hunt
- Can’t You Sleep Little Bear
- Giraffes Can’t Dance
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar (also see Science links)
- Animal Tales by Beatrix Potter
- Fairy tales

**Science connections**
- Seasons
- Metamorphosis (The Very Hungry Caterpillar)
Building dance vocabulary
• Direction using pathways

Key stage 2

Literacy links
• Greek myths and legends
• Poetry

History links
• The Great Fire of London
• World War I
• Tudor dances such as Pavanne

Dance vocabulary and composition
• Composition using dice and chance
• Using different choreographic devices

It is important to be mindful of continuity and progression, as children respond to different movement stimuli using dance as a rigorous decision-making process. Children should:

• Develop single actions into more complex patterns and sequences/phrases of movement,
• Work alone and in pairs and small groups,
• Use and apply knowledge and skills of shapes, speed, size, direction, level, tension and flow,
• Articulate greater clarity of movement, strength and flexibility and express a range of ideas and moods

Given the cross-curricular opportunities, there are many purposes and opportunities for meaning making. In working with others through making creative compositions children should be enabled to express themselves and develop confidence in abilities and ideas, therefore supporting well-being. Dance lends itself to creating an enabling environment for creative endeavour modelled and facilitated by the teacher. Learners can take on a range of roles in the process of making work such as choreographer, dancer or evaluator and can articulate cognitive, physical and artistic skills that are used in the work.

Gymnastics

Gymnastic activities call for strength, flexibility and stamina. Again development of these areas relies on teacher confidence with subject knowledge to bring the learner body confidence and power. Again learners should be encouraged to make connections in and through their learning, drawing on previous learning to build new learning. One of the challenges for the teacher can be to encourage children to explore dynamics of movement vocabulary such as body shape, direction, speed, rhythm, pathways, level and relationships, and here connections to dance can also be made. One of the most interesting and creative aspects of gymnastics, of course, is that there is option to use the floor and apparatus. Do also remember that there are obvious connections to skills used in other environments such as climbing a tree and balancing at a playground.
Creative approaches

Games

In games there is much creative potential for object control on the spot and travelling between bases and points. Specific games skills, such as catching, throwing, kicking and striking can be developed through game-like progression. For example, catching grows out of progressive activities such as:

- grasping,
- picking up,
- receiving a rolled object,
- placing up and allowing an object to land back in the two hands,
- dropping and grasping,
- bouncing and catching,
- sending a ball and letting it bounce before catching
- sending an object to a wall and catching from a bounce.

There is much potential for the creation of games based on each of these progressive skills. As the children become more able to apply a range of skills they can devise invasion, net/wall, striking and target games.

Dance, gymnastics and games

In all physical activities children will have the opportunity to increase their sensorimotor and neuromotor skills, gross motor and fine motor activity, movement vocabulary, use of space and direction, dynamics and movement memory. Learners should be able to capitalise on their perceived competence and success through cooperation and competition. Children can be engaged through research, selection and creation of increasingly complex sequences that contain a greater number of actions and links. A range of resources can be manipulated in all aspects of physical education too: dance, gymnastics and games, including, for example, balls, hoops, ribbons and bean bags as the children develop skills in travelling, jumping, balancing, rolling and turning. Furthermore, different environments for creative opportunities can be embraced both inside and outside. Opportunities to make choices and decisions and to select and reject movement material are powerful. Repetition and practice will enable the application and development of quality of movement, flow and performance skills as well as develop movement memory. Such practice can be a personal challenge for improvement or in collaboration with others. It is the teaching approach that will facilitate and ensure through the balance of support and challenge that children are motivated to engage in physical education in all aspects of dance, gymnastics and games.

References


PART IV

Primary physical education in the global context
Introduction

Over the last 30 years or so in England there has been a ‘dramatic change in the political salience of school sport and PE’ (Houlihan & Green, 2006: 74); some have even termed it to be a ‘quiet revolution’ (Department for Education & Skills, 2007). Although there were sporadic criticisms of physical education in the 1960s and 1970s (Kirk, 1992), it wasn’t until the mid-1980s that physical education was thrust to the forefront of political debate, played out through the media with the creation of a ‘moral panic’ (Evans, 1990). Schools were heavily criticised and physical educators were accused of neglecting their traditional responsibility – servicing the needs of elite sport (Kirk, 1992). This argument gathered momentum when in March 1987, Panorama aired a documentary — *Is Your Child Fit for Life?* The programme investigated the demise of competition and school sport, blaming physical education teachers and their move to a participation ‘sport for all’ approach, claiming that this was cultivating a new breed of PE teachers (Evans, 1990). The moral panic complemented by a lack of success in elite competition resulted in physical education teachers being attacked by politicians and government alongside negative media reporting (Evans, 1990; Kirk, 1992, 1999). Physical education was now under threat as a subject (Hardman & Marshall, 2001; Macfadyen & Bailey, 2002; Hardman, 2008).

Alongside the reform in physical education and school sport (PESS) there was also an accompanying radical reform in relation to the status of schools (Keddie, 2016). In 2000, ‘academies’ were introduced by the then Labour government to reform underperforming and run-down schools; but in 2010, the new Conservative-led coalition government introduced the ‘2010 Academies Act’ (Department for Education, 2014). This act permitted all schools to apply to convert to an academy with priority given to schools with ‘outstanding’ ratings determined by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). This government also introduced alongside the Academies Act the opportunity for groups to open new schools under the ‘Free Schools’ programme. Groups such as parents, teachers, universities, businesses, religious and voluntary groups could apply. If successful in identifying parental demand groups would be invited to apply submitting a proposal in compliance with the requirements of the programme. In England today, current figures identify that there are 137 primary-aged free schools open, with another c.140 primary and c.60 ‘although’ schools in the ‘pipeline’ (Department for Education, 2017). Both academies
and free schools are expected to deliver a curriculum, in particular the teaching of English, maths and science, but it is not a statutory requirement to deliver the national curriculum.

This chapter seeks to explore how, since the turn of the century, primary schools in England have been affected by curriculum redesign, sport strategies and political ideology aimed at ‘transforming physical education and school sport’ (Department for Education and Skills/Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2003).

**Official curriculum**

The National Curriculum in England establishes the programme of study and attainment targets for schools. Introduced in 1995, the National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE) has undergone many alterations, with the last occurring in 2014. This revision of the NCPE requires schools to provide a high-quality PE as well as opportunities for competitive sport, physical activity, health and fitness. With a specific focus on primary physical education, the current curriculum can fit onto one page.

**Key stage 1**

Pupils should develop fundamental movement skills, become increasingly competent and confident and access a broad range of opportunities to extend their agility, balance and coordination, individually and with others. They should be able to engage in competitive (both against self and against others) and cooperative physical activities, in a range of increasingly challenging situations.

Pupils should be taught to:

- master basic movements, including running, jumping, throwing and catching, as well as developing balance, agility and coordination, and begin to apply these in a range of activities;
- participate in team games, developing simple tactics for attacking and defending;
- perform dances using simple movement patterns.

**Key stage 2**

Pupils should continue to apply and develop a broader range of skills, learning how to use them in different ways and to link them to make actions and sequences of movement. They should enjoy communicating, collaborating and competing with each other. They should develop an understanding of how to improve in different physical activities and sports and learn how to evaluate and recognise their own success. Pupils should be taught to:

- use running, jumping, throwing and catching in isolation and in combination;
- play competitive games, modified where appropriate [for example, badminton, basketball, cricket, football, hockey, netball, rounders and tennis], and apply basic principles suitable for attacking and defending
- develop flexibility, strength, technique, control and balance [for example, through athletics and gymnastics];
- perform dances using a range of movement patterns;
- take part in outdoor and adventurous activity challenges both individually and within a team;
- compare their performances with previous ones and demonstrate improvement to achieve their personal best.
Swimming and water safety

All schools must provide swimming instruction either in key stage 1 or key stage 2.

In particular, pupils should be taught to:

- swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres;
- use a range of strokes effectively [for example, front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke];
- perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations.

(Department for Education, 2014)

Although the NCPE exists, it should be noted, particularly with the reform of the school system, that only schools in local authority control have a statutory duty to deliver the curriculum. Schools with ‘academy’ or ‘free school’ status are exempt.

Learning programmes

As seen by the curriculum, what a school physical education lesson ‘looks like’ in England is subject to a wide range of activities as well as potentially delivered by a diverse workforce of teachers, coaches, professional football clubs and private companies. It is recognized, however, that the curriculum tends to have a games-based focus, often created around ‘traditional’ team sports (see the list of sports in the Key Stage 2 curriculum).

Over the last decade there has been a call in primary schools to develop ‘physical literacy’ but not based upon ‘the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life’ (Whitehead, 2016); but many organisations have aligned physical literacy to solely focus on fundamental movement skills and physical competency. Yet with increased outsourcing and use of sports coaches, the focus on physical-education-as-sporting-skills (Kirk, 2010) and the expectation of elite success, the discourse of elite performance is delicately balanced against participation, health and fitness.

With the current state of primary physical education there is increasing opportunity for schools to seek support. Many organisations and companies are entering ‘education’ with a view to providing alternative provision. For example, private companies such as Virgin Active (O’Donovan et al., 2016) are seeking partnerships with universities [Active Inspiration] and organisations such as the Youth Sport Trust [Girls Active; Active Crew] to create a range of programmes for schools.

Resourcing

Physical education in primary schools has been the beneficiary of government investment since the turn of the century, borne on the back of sustained criticism of the quality, or rather ineffective, teaching of the subject (Griggs, 2007, 2016; O’Donovan et al., 2016). Surprisingly however, this funding has been a result of changes in sport rather than education policy (Parnell et al., 2016). Investment in PE and school sport, particularly focusing on primary schools, benefited from two major strategies implemented from 2003–2010; the PE, School Sport and Club Links Strategy (PESSCL) 2003–2007 and the PE and Sport Strategy for Young People (PESSYP) 2008–2010.

PESSCL and PESSYP witnessed an unprecedented level of funding into physical education and school sport. Created through the establishment of a network of School Sport Partnerships (SSP) (Flintoff, 2003; Ives, 2014; Smith & Leech, 2015). The SSP was responsible for providing support to improve the quality and quantity of physical education and school sport in school.
Both strategies focused significantly on primary schools (Smith & Leech, 2015) aimed at improving the quality of teaching as well as supporting schools to create links with local sport and national governing bodies to access high-quality coaching.

In 2010, then Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove surprisingly axed the programme. This was surprising given that OFSTED in numerous reports during this period identified that the value of physical education on the curriculum had improved (OFSTED, 2006, 2009, 2013). The reaction to this decision to cut the funding resulted in a public campaign supported by a range of parties, including high-profile sporting personalities, organisations such as the Youth Sport Trust and young people and the media. What followed was a partial reinstatement of funding (Houlihan & Lindsey, 2012: 159) as well as the introduction of a new initiative: the ‘School Games’. Funding for subject development, however, was limited, but more importantly the network of School Sport Partnerships began to dismantle, resulting in a patchwork of provision (Mackintosh, 2014), and support provided to primary schools was becoming obsolete.

In 2013, a new fund was introduced into primary schools: the PE and Sport Premium. This ‘premium’ provided ring-fenced funding for investment into PE and sport, with most primary schools receiving an average payment of c.£8,000. As a condition of this funding primary schools must publish their plans and expenditure on their school website and ‘make additional and sustainable improvements to the quality of PE and sport they offer’ (Department for Education, 2016). In addition it is strongly encouraged that schools use this funding to:

- Develop or add to the PE and sport activities that your school already offers;
- Make improvements now that will benefit pupils joining the school in future years.

(Department for Education, 2016)

How schools use the PE and Sport Premium is left to the school to decide, unlike its predecessors PESSCL/PESSYP where decision making and investment were made by the SSP. The most recent evaluation carried out in 2015 by NatCen Social Research on behalf of the Department for Education identifies that spending decisions are now mainly made by the head teacher (96%), but that often other staff are involved in the decision: often others people were involved in decision-making such as: teachers (70% of the time), leadership teams (69%), and school governors (52%). What is original in this funding is the accountability of school governors, and this accountability is noted in the OFSTED inspection framework. OFSTED inspections of schools are carried out, on average, every two to three years and are dependent upon the school’s previous rating. For example, a school rated poor/inadequate would normally have another inspection within a year, in comparison to a school rated ‘outstanding’ who would not expect another inspection for at least three years. In 2016, the PE and Sport Premium was included, and schools are now informed as to how this investment is to be inspected:

how effectively leaders use the primary PE and sport premium and measure its impact on outcomes for pupils, and how effectively governors hold them to account for this.

(OfSTED, 2016: 16)

To gain an outstanding rating in this area schools must show how governors challenge senior leaders to ensure staff and resources are effectively deployed to benefit pupils and ensure excellence (OFSTED, 2016). The good rating requires the same, but that good and improving outcomes for pupils are achieved. Interestingly, however, the PE and Sport Premium isn’t a stand-alone inspection, but is included within all the other funding streams and priorities – such as special educational needs, literacy and numeracy.
Interestingly, of all the schools receiving funding, the 2014 evaluation reported that only 45% of schools are measuring impact. Thus, if schools are unable to measure impact, it is unclear how OFSTED or other interested parties are to measure and evaluate the programme.

**Frequency**

Regardless of the status and associated funding for physical education, the subject still remains marginalised (Penney & Evans, 1999; Hardman & Marshall, 2001; Bailey, 2005; Hardman, 2008). However, because of the increasing alliance of the subject with the discourses of health and sport and associated legitimating publics, the need for a fit and healthy workforce to be nurtured and for success at the elite level in sport has legitimated physical education’s place on the curriculum (Williams, 1985).

Within the national curriculum for physical education in primary schools, ‘there is no statutory requirement for schools to devote a specific amount of time to PE’ (OFSTED, 2013: 5). The aspirational target of two hours included in the PESS strategies are now included in the criteria for the ‘School Games Mark’ but also include extra-curricular provision: ‘provide all students with two hours of Physical Education and school sport per week inclusive of extra curriculum provision’ (yourschoolgames.com, 2017: 2); however, for the Gold standard schools must ‘provide all students with two hours of timetabled Physical Education per week (within the curriculum only) and have extra curriculum provision in addition to this’ (yourschoolgames.com, 2017: 4). Since the removal of the PESS strategies it has been reported that time set aside for physical education has decreased; the Youth Sport Trust (2015: 9) reported a ‘decrease in the average number of minutes spent taking part in PE’.

Physical education and schools are increasingly being held accountable for obesity in children (Azzarito, 2007). As part of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) pupils in Reception and Year 6 are weighed and measured, resulting in a body mass index (BMI) score being produced. The results are then shared with the school, and schools that are considered to have a high proportion of pupils in the overweight and obese categories become of interest to the public health team. Head teachers are encouraged to provide more opportunities for their pupils to be active. The current ‘fashion’ for providing children with an opportunity to get healthy is the ‘Daily Mile’. An initiative first used by a school in Stirling, Scotland, where pupils at St Ninians primary have to walk or run a mile each day. The school also reports that no pupils are overweight (Slawson, 2015).

A health agenda within physical education is not new (Kirk, 1992), but schools are now becoming increasingly accountable for obesity in children (Azzarito, 2007). Kirk (1992) suggests that physical education is subject to change as culture changes, for example, the crisis discourses of youth obesity and its impact on health have gathered significant momentum and priority over the past decade (Gard, 2011). In light of this interest together with rising concerns about youth obesity in western culture, there is renewed emphasis on children understanding the importance of being active. Schools have been tasked with delivering health-based outcomes, such as being encouraged to ‘engage with healthy, active lifestyles’ (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2010: 5).

**Who delivers physical education**

The decision as to who teaches in schools in England is the decision made by the head teacher. In most subjects the teacher has Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), but with the growth of academies and free schools, even QTS is no longer a functional prerequisite. The increasing practice of
using unqualified teachers, particularly in physical education, appears to offer a practical solution for head teachers (O’Donovan et al., 2016). The practice of employing coaches (who may or may not have any teaching qualifications) to take on activities typically undertaken by teachers has been extensively researched and acknowledged as a potential solution for schools.

The danger here then lies in the pupils’ experience of physical education. Pickup (2012: 21) proposes that

the time spent in primary Physical Education can enable young people to continue to engage, enjoy and achieve throughout secondary school years and to make informed choices about their health and active lifestyles throughout life

so it is therefore not surprising that these first experiences are crucial, whether this is through their lesson being delivered by teachers where confidence and competence is considered lacking (Burns, 2013) or through use of coaches who may not have the curriculum content knowledge (Griggs, 2008) or who have little experience adapting sessions for working with children (Flintoff, Foster & Wystawnoha, 2011). What is identifiable, however, is that physical education has suffered from neglect (Curry, 2012), which leaves the quality of provision to be the victim of worldwide criticism (Hardman & Marshall, 2001). Even the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) review concluded that physical education lessons did not include enough strenuous activity, nor did teachers have enough specialist training (OFSTED, 2013).

**Teacher preparation**

Over the past 20 years the amount of subject-specific training in physical education has been in decline (Harris, Cale & Musson, 2012). For example, the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in England sees courses provide as little as five hours (Caldecott, Warbuton & Waring, 2006) with Talbot (2008) estimating that 40% of newly qualified teachers only received six hours of training in physical education. With such minimal preparation, it is not surprising then that a crisis in primary school physical education exists with teachers lacking the confidence to teach the subject, let alone any extra-curricular sport or physical activity. The ‘sport’ focus of the curriculum also leads teachers to believe that they do not have the subject knowledge to deliver such a ‘specialist’ curriculum (Spence & Haydn-Davies, 2011). The focus within both the PESS strategies and now the PE and Sport Premium on teacher development is in part due to the call from organisations, such as the Association for Physical Education and the Youth Sport Trust, to improve teacher confidence and the provision of additional training and support to improve subject knowledge.

To adhere to the PE and Sport Premium funding agreement, current teachers should be provided with the support to develop their skills and knowledge in physical education. Much of this CPD, through PESSCL, PESSYP and the PE and Sport Premium has taken the form of one or two-day training events in which much of the training is often led by coaches or secondary school physical education teachers (Carney & Howells, 2008; Blair & Capel, 2011). The preferred method of training is via the ‘cascade’ model, whereby one teacher would be expected to attend, learn and then return to their schools to implement what they had learned; however, this was identified as being rarely successful in practice (Duncombe & Armour, 2004; Armour & Makopoulou, 2012). It is difficult to identify the impact of this form of education on the confidence of generalist primary school teachers to teach physical education and is an issue within the PE and Sport Premium, as it was throughout the implementation of the PESS strategies (Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Blair & Capel, 2011). Despite it being a popular, accepted way of teacher learning, there is little evidence to suggest that these short courses are effective in
changing practice and students’ learning (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Lieberman & Pointer-Mace, 2010).

Schools have a responsibility, through the premium funding, to identify how they are investing in the CPD of teachers. Many schools use the form of teacher working alongside the coach, but yet again the transference of learning is limited. Longer-term programmes focusing on physical education pedagogy have focused not on the ‘content’ but on the pupil experience. The teacher thus becomes a facilitator to learning as opposed to prescribing and leading the activities, which in turn has resulted in improvements in teacher confidence and motivation (O’Donovan et al., 2016).

In 2015, the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) announced the formation of a new primary postgraduate certificate in education (PCGE) with physical education as a specialism. This would allow teachers to train in generalist subjects for 50% of their time with the other 50% dedicated to physical education subject specialism (National College for Teaching and Leadership, 2015). The impact of this specialism has yet to be realized, but it could provide one opportunity to ‘transform physical education and school sport’ (Department for Education and Skills, 2003).

Assessment

There is very little, if any, formal assessment in physical education. Up until 2014 schools assessed pupils across the whole curriculum using ‘levels’; since 2014 assessment has been without levels but through a number of key assessment principles outlined in the Department for Education’s publication ‘Assessment Principles’ (Department for Education, 2014). Within this document the Department for Education has an expectation of schools to not only demonstrate, but provide supporting evidence of, ‘their assessment of pupils’ progress, to keep parents informed, to enable governors to make judgements about the school’s effectiveness, and to inform OFSTED inspections’ (Department for Education, 2014, available online).

The following excerpt is the expectations of the Department for Education in identifying ‘Effective assessment systems’:

1. Give reliable information to parents about how their child, and their child’s school, is performing
   a. Allow meaningful tracking of pupils towards end of key stage expectations in the new curriculum, including regular feedback to parents.
   b. Provide information which is transferable and easily understood and covers both qualitative and quantitative assessment.
   c. Differentiate attainment between pupils of different abilities, giving early recognition of pupils who are falling behind and those who are excelling.
   d. Are reliable and free from bias.

2. Help drive improvement for pupils and teachers
   a. Are closely linked to improving the quality of teaching.
   b. Ensure feedback to pupils contributes to improved learning and is focused on specific and tangible objectives.
   c. Produce recordable measures, which can demonstrate comparison against expected standards and reflect progress over time.

3. Make sure the school is keeping up with external best practice and innovation
   a. Are created in consultation with those delivering best practice locally.
   b. Are created in consideration of, and are benchmarked against, international best practice.

(Department for Education, 2014c, online)
For class teachers this form of assessment across all subjects, but particularly in a subject area in which many feel unconfident or lacking knowledge, could be difficult to transpose and apply. In response, the Association for Physical Education put together a ‘Physical Education Expert Group’ and published ‘Guidance on Assessment: National Curriculum’ (2014). This document devised to support teachers outlines the minimal entitlement, but considers that schools should provide beyond the minimum and ‘devise a curriculum programme that is aspirational and is based on the needs of its pupils’ (p. 2). OFSTED recognised in the ‘Beyond 2012’ report an issue within physical education:

In primary schools, senior leaders did not systematically monitor subject leadership or the quality of teaching and assessment in PE. They did not provide sufficient support or challenge when teaching was not good enough.

(OFSTED, 2013: 56)

**Significant factors worth noting**

Physical education does not sit undisturbed as a subject within schools. The discourse of health, sport and education provide a multitude of programmes, strategies and initiatives aimed at improving and increasing physical activity levels in children and young people. The curriculum is at odds with the Chief Medical Officers report, and even the recently published Childhood Obesity strategy (HM Government, 2016) seeks out schools to promote all children to be physically active for at least 30 minutes per day. It is no wonder then that the state of primary school physical education is in such turmoil, as a generalist class teacher with very little training in physical education is becoming responsible for the physical activity rates and the health status of all the pupils in his or her class. Thus, it is no wonder that the confidence of teachers to ‘combat’ health, obesity and elite sporting success as well as to deliver the aims of the curriculum is in turmoil. As success in the subject is multifaceted; the ability of the student to participate in competitive school games, the health of the student to return a healthy BMI score and the inspection framework of OFSTED all contribute to the performance of the subject in a school. Yet for a subject with so much responsibility, there is very little investment into teacher education and preparing generalist class teachers to be confident and competent practitioners within the subject. Much of the training for physical education takes place once a teacher has qualified and is delivered through unsuccessful means of one-day courses with the expectation that the teacher goes back to their school with improved skills and knowledge.

In 2016, then Chancellor George Osbourne announced a doubling of the PE and Sport Premium through the introduction of a ‘sugar tax’. This tax on sugar in soft drinks is expected to raise an additional £520 million; thus, from September 2017 schools will receive even more funding, approximately double the current levels, to be used to improve physical education, including the focus on professional development of current teachers. However, with limited independent research into how schools are investing this funding into staff development, as opposed to using it to outsource PESS it is yet to be determined as to the impact of this ‘initiative’ in enhancing PE.

**Notes**

1 The School Games is an initiative focused on competition and sporting achievement. The government invested £10 million per year for an initial four-year period (2011–2015), and this commitment was renewed by the Conservative government in 2015.

The School Games Mark is a scheme administered by the Youth Sport Trust which enables schools to assess themselves against given criteria to achieve Bronze, Silver or Gold status. This status recognises the school’s commitment to the provision of school sport and provision of school competition. Schools can apply for the award on an annual basis. More information can be found on this scheme at: www.yourschoolgames.com.

In September 2012 there was a relaxation of the laws on the employment of teachers. Academies were given new freedom to appoint someone based upon their skills and experience regardless of whether they were qualified or not.


References


Introduction

Scotland is a small country with a population of 5.3 million people occupying the northern third of Great Britain and one of four countries that constitute the United Kingdom alongside England, Northern Ireland and Wales. The Acts of Union in 1707 joined Scotland to England to create Great Britain, but since the union the continued existence of legal, educational, religious and other institutions distinct from those in the UK have contributed to the continuation of Scottish culture and national identity. Following the Enlightenment in the 18th century, Scotland was transformed into one of the commercial, intellectual and industrial centres of Europe. This has affected Scottish culture illustrated in the strong literary, political and intellectual heritage of the country underpinned by a promotion of social justice (Bryce, Humes, Gillies & Kennedy, 2013). In recent times, Scottish identity has been exerted through devolution from the UK parliament in 1999 and the subsequent independence referendum in 2015.

Education in Scotland

Since the Acts of Union in 1707, the Scottish education system has retained its distinctness from the rest of the United Kingdom and has been a mark of the country’s national identity (Anderson, 2013). From the age of five, children enter an 11-year period of compulsory schooling, with a further two optional years. The majority of schooling is state funded and provided by Scotland’s 32 local authorities; there are just over 4% of children attending independent (private) schools within Scotland (Smith, 2013). Primary schooling for children aged 3 to 12 and secondary schooling for those aged 12 to 18 represent the main education sectors, although pre-school provision, special education, post-school provision involving further education colleges and universities and community education all make a significant contribution to this formal education process (Smith, 2013). The Scottish government initiates the education policy which is then taken forward through a complex dissemination process that involves governmental organisations (e.g. Education Scotland), agencies outside the political machine (e.g. the General Teaching Council for Scotland) and the local authorities (Humes, 2013).

Focusing specifically on the structures of primary education, within Scotland the academic year typically runs from the middle of August until the end of June and is split into four terms.
Scotland

The stages of primary school education run from nursery to Primary 7 (please see Table 17.1 for stages with corresponding ages and curriculum levels).

From 2009 onwards, Scottish education has experienced the implementation of CfE, as the policy has been enacted within local authorities and schools. This implementation process, however, has not been straightforward and has been characterised by continued refinement at the policy level as the original curriculum documentation has been extended and amended. As we now discuss, the introduction of CfE and this focus on lifelong learning and teacher education has proved significant for primary physical education.

Official curriculum

Before outlining the aims and outcomes of the primary physical education curriculum, it is important to provide some background to explain the underpinning rationale. In 2001, the Inspectorate for Education within Scotland published a report on the physical education curriculum, learning, teaching and resourcing within Scottish primary schools (Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education (HMIE), 2001). Although some positive aspects were identified, this report raised numerous concerns about the quality of primary physical education within Scottish schools and led to a number of reforms which were incorporated into the development of CfE. Around the same time as this HMIE report, the first Scottish Physical Activity Strategy was published and identified the minimum level of daily activity required by young people to provide health benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary stages</th>
<th>Age at start of school year</th>
<th>Corresponding curriculum for excellence level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursery</td>
<td>3–4</td>
<td>Early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary 1</td>
<td>4–5</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
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<td>Primary 2</td>
<td>5–6</td>
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<td>Primary 3</td>
<td>6–7</td>
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<td>Primary 4</td>
<td>7–8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary 5</td>
<td>8–9</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary 6</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary 7</td>
<td>10–11</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nicola Carse, Mike Jess and Jeanne Keay

(Scottish Executive, 2003). To provide a physical education response to these developments, a Physical Education Review Group (PERG) was formed by the Scottish Executive and drew its membership from a range of bodies and individuals involved in education, physical education and sport. The PERG report (Scottish Executive, 2004b) proposed that the subject had a central role to play in the promotion of health and wellbeing and therefore was an aspect of the curriculum which required greater priority and should build the foundations for healthy and active lifestyles from an early age (Scottish Executive, 2004c). The PERG proposed three main aims for the future development of physical education in Scotland: more time for physical education, more teachers of physical education and more choice in physical education. Taken together, the introduction of CfE and the recommendations from these key Scottish Government reports have had a significant impact on the physical education curriculum within Scottish primary schools.

With the introduction of CfE, physical education began to prosper as it was moved from the expressive arts to the new curriculum area of health and wellbeing (Scottish Government, 2009a). In response to wider societal concerns about the nation’s health and physical inactivity (Scottish Executive, 1998), health and wellbeing emerged as a new core area of the curriculum alongside numeracy and literacy. These three core areas are described as the responsibility of all and are to be integrated across the curriculum (Scottish Government, 2009a). Consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the health and wellbeing curriculum area sets out the right for all children and young people to have access to appropriate health services and to have their health and wellbeing promoted (Scottish Government, 2009b). Importantly, health and wellbeing is viewed in a holistic sense with specific focus placed on mental, social, emotional and physical wellbeing (Gray, Mulholland & MacLean, 2012). The overall outcome for learning in health and wellbeing is for children and young people to develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future (Scottish Government, 2009b).

The health and wellbeing curriculum area is constituted of six organisers, one of which is physical education, physical activity and sport. The other five are:

- mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing;
- planning for choices and changes;
- food and health;
- substance misuse, and
- relationships, sexual health and parenthood.

(Scottish Government, 2009b)

Although physical education, physical activity and sport are presented as one area of health and wellbeing, each of these components receives individual attention within the CfE guidelines. As such, having played a somewhat marginal role within the expressive arts curriculum, the physical domain now holds a more prominent position within CfE, with physical education itself now recognised as holding a key role across the education, health and sport sectors (Scottish Government, 2011b). Indeed the overall aim for the experiences and outcomes which constitute physical education are to establish a pattern of daily physical activity leading to sustained physical activity in adult life. Experiences and outcomes are intended to be used by teachers to create learning experiences and provide structure to the curriculum. Within physical education, they are organised under three headings: movement skills, competencies and concepts; cooperation and competition; and evaluating and appreciating. Taken together these experiences and outcomes should provide learners with opportunities for progression in learning as they build their physical
competences, improve fitness and develop personal and interpersonal skills and attributes. Furthermore, CfE places emphasis on choice; this is to be achieved within physical education by providing practical learning experiences that offer young people the opportunity to experience a range of physical activities, to work individually and in groups, and both in indoors and outdoors environments.

**Learning programmes**

Although Scotland is a small country, it would be misleading to suggest there is a ‘typical’ learning programme or lesson for primary physical education (see Jess, McEvilly & Carse, 2016). However, as in many other parts of the world, many primary schools still deliver a multi-activity curriculum programme in which specific physical activities are sampled in ‘blocks’ of four to six weeks to reflect the structure of the school year. With the school year split into four terms, it is therefore common for two or more activities, particularly sports and games, to be taught within each term. However, the recent upsurge in more contemporary and in-depth professional learning for primary teachers across the country has seen the dominance of this multi-activity approach increasingly being challenged as more holistic, models-based and interdisciplinary practices have gradually been introduced to schools (Jess, Carse, McMillan & Atencio, 2012; Carse, 2015; Jess, Carse & Keay, 2016).

This transition towards more holistic approaches has largely come about as a result of physical education being moved into the core area of health and well-being (Scottish Government, 2009b); the nationwide introduction of ‘Significant Aspects of Learning’ (Education Scotland, 2014) to complement the experiences and outcomes and aid assessment (to be discussed in more detail within the assessment section); and the complexity-informed core learning and basic moves (Jess, 2012) approaches that are common in many primary schools. In line with Bailey et al. (2009), these holistic approaches seek to help primary school children develop the interrelated physical, cognitive, social and emotional learning that acts as a foundation for successful engagement in physical activity within and beyond the school. In addition, more integrated and interdisciplinary physical education models have been introduced in primary schools; these different models include sport education, cooperative learning, teaching personal and social responsibility, critical thinking and teaching games for understanding (TGfU). Supported by Education Scotland, a cognitively focussed programme, Better Movers, Better Thinkers (Dalziell, Boyle & Mutrie, 2015) has also been introduced ‘to develop the ability to move and think in an integrated way within PE’ (p. 724) by focussing on moving and thinking, executive functioning and scaffolding practices.

With holistic, contemporary models and interdisciplinary approaches now more common, primary physical education learning programmes and lessons in Scotland are beginning to move beyond the skill technique and activity specific sampling sessions of the multi-activity approach. Efforts to establish learning programmes that revisit and scaffold children’s learning and seek to connect physical education learning across and beyond the school are increasingly being reported in the literature (e.g. Thorburn, Carse, Jess & Atencio, 2011; Carse, 2015). As a consequence, it is not uncommon for primary school children, particularly early years children, to work in different movement ‘stations’ over an extended period of time in a manner that is similar to their work in classroom settings (e.g. Jess, Atencio & Carse, 2013). Therefore, although primary physical education programmes in Scotland may still be dominated by the more traditional multi-activity approach in many places, there is a growing body of evidence reporting that the recent introduction of more holistic and educationally focussed developments are affecting practice.
Resourcing

Reflecting the range of learning programmes that contribute to the primary physical education curriculum, there is not a specific resource, textbook or programme plan used within Scotland. Resources used in primary physical education come from a variety of sources: developed by teachers specific to their school contexts (e.g. Begg & Watson, 2010); developed by local authorities working with universities and other partners (e.g. The Connections Resource, South Lanarkshire and Scottish Borders Councils in partnership with University of Glasgow, University of West of Scotland, NHS Scotland and South Lanarkshire leisure and Culture; Early Moves Resource City of Edinburgh Council in partnership with University of Edinburgh); and national resources promoted through government bodies such as sportscotland and Education Scotland (e.g. TOP Play/Sport; Better Movers, Better Thinkers). Within schools where models-based approaches have been developed, use will have been made of corresponding academic texts (e.g. Siedentop, Hastie & Van Der Mars, 2011; Griffin & Butler, 2005).

In terms of physical resources, the HMiE Report (2001) noted that primary schools generally had suitable accommodation and an appropriate range and quality of resources for physical education. However, it was also reported that most schools did not provide changing facilities, that the quality of accommodation varied depending on the size and design of the school and that school halls were often used for other activities beyond physical education such as assemblies, drama and accommodating school lunches. The past decade has seen the Scottish Government pursue a School Estate Strategy with the aim of enhancing teaching and learning environments; in relation to primary physical education, this strategy has been supported with specific facilities guidance from sportscotland (sportscotland, 2004). This guidance takes account of the two-hour requirement for physical education and has accordingly made recommendations on the design of sports halls and other physical spaces for physical education. Notably this guidance emphasises the need for changing facilities and specifically recommends that school dining should not take place in space used for physical education.

To support the developments that have taken place in primary physical education over the past decade, considerable amounts of money have been made available by the Scottish Government. Much of this funding was specifically targeted at the staffing base for physical education and will be discussed in more detail in the teacher preparation section. Concurrently, funding has also been made available directly to schools through a grant initiative. Introduced in 2013, Education Scotland facilitated the core physical education fund, a grant initiative where schools or clusters of schools had the opportunity to apply for up to £3000 of funding which could be used to improve the quality of learning experiences in physical education. There were four phases of the fund, which is now closed; in the report on the last phase, it was stated that 92 schools had successful bids out of 393 applications (Education Scotland, 2016). Overall, the last decade has seen significant financial input into primary physical education developments. However, despite this investment and initiatives, physical space and resources continue to be a concern for schools and teachers and a potential barrier inhibiting efforts to promote physical education (Lowden, Hall, Watters, O’Brien & McLean, 2014).

Complementary to physical education resourcing and to support participation levels and opportunities within and beyond physical education, the Active Schools Programme was introduced in 2000 and soon became embedded within Scottish primary schools. Funded by the Scottish Government and coordinated by sportscotland, the national sports agency, the Active Schools programme (https://sportscotland.org.uk/schools/active-schools/) operates through a network of local authority managers, school-based coordinators in primary and secondary schools and volunteers who deliver activity sessions in schools and communities across Scotland. The Active
Scotland

Schools coordinators have a significant role in the integration of physical education, physical activity and sport by creating opportunities for children to be physically active before, during and after school, as well as in the wider community. Official reports on the effectiveness of Active Schools (e.g. sportscotland, 2008) have emphasised the significant impact the programme has had on physical activity levels, particularly in primary school settings.

Frequency

Curriculum time for physical education in Scottish primary schools has been at the forefront of developments over the last decade. Following the PERG report in 2004, the Scottish Executive identified 10 actions to address the report’s recommendations, one of which was that schools should accommodate for the provision of at least two hours of quality physical education every week and set a target for this to be achieved within four years. However, in 2009, the government’s Health and Sport Committee (Scottish Parliament, 2009) reported the lack of progress being made within primary schools to meet the two-hour target and noted how this was ‘disturbing’ and highlighted the continued ‘devaluation of physical education’. Consequently, the Scottish Government intervened and made a commitment to ensure that the two-hour target would be met by all primary schools by 2014. Progress towards meeting this target was now more closely monitored with questions about physical education provision in schools included in the national annual healthy living survey. These data suggest that over the last five years, the number of primary schools reaching the two-hour target has risen steadily from 84% in 2012 to 99% in 2016 (Scottish Government, 2016a). With the two-hour commitment in place, the government’s focus is now on the quality of the physical education experiences received by primary school children.

Who delivers physical education?

In Scotland, although generalist class teachers largely assume the responsibility for teaching physical education in primary schools, there has always been significant input by specialist physical education teachers. Most physical education specialist teachers working in Scottish primary schools will have come through an undergraduate or postgraduate physical education teacher education programme which will have placed more emphasis on secondary rather than primary education. In addition, rather than working in one primary school, most primary physical education specialist teachers have responsibility for delivering physical education across a number of schools within a local authority. Although the number of specialist teachers involved in primary physical education has traditionally been higher in the east of the country, exact figures are not available, and it is possible that the current balance may have changed in recent years with the introduction of the postgraduate certificate programmes for primary teachers and the various other initiatives outlined in the next section.

Traditionally, it was common for the itinerant specialist teacher and the class teacher to work together across blocks of time throughout an academic year. Consequently, a pattern often emerged where the class teacher would observe the physical education lessons delivered by the specialist teachers, discuss issues and then deliver a similar follow-up lesson (Carse, 2015). Working cooperatively in this way with the specialist teachers helped support generalist class teachers by providing them with a point of reference for their own teaching of the subject and ‘in situ’ professional learning. Indeed, the HMiE report (2001) highlighted the effective contribution specialist teachers made to the physical education curriculum in primary schools.
However, when ‘A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century’ was published in 2001 (SEED, 2001), it signalled a change in the role of the primary physical education specialist and, in particular, their working relationship with class teachers. The aim of this policy was to improve the conditions of service for teachers by incorporating a reduction in class contact time for primary teachers and also introducing a framework for professional development. With primary teachers being provided with 2.5 hours of non-class contact time each week, both primary schools and local authorities were initially challenged to cover the additional teaching time (Blane, 2004). Despite some initial resistance, a common solution that emerged across much of Scotland was to employ specialist teachers from physical education, art or music to deliver the non-class contact time. Although this may have been perceived as a positive development for physical education, it also meant that generalist primary teachers were no longer expected to observe the specialist’s lessons, had less opportunity to liaise with the specialist and, in many cases, no longer delivered physical education themselves. However, the introduction of CfE and the move towards two hours of curriculum physical education each week has seen the re-emergence of the class teacher’s involvement in the teaching of physical education. In addition, the increased attention on physical education has resulted in some groups and agencies from outside the education profession being employed to contribute to physical education curriculum time within Scottish primary schools. However, unlike the situation in England, (Griggs, 2016), this approach is being resisted at both the local and national level (Scottish Government, 2011b; Lowden et al., 2014). As such, most of the teaching of primary physical education currently remains within the education profession in Scotland, predominantly taught through a combination of generalist class teachers and physical education specialist teachers.

**Teacher education**

Although the recent focus on primary physical education has resulted in increased professional development opportunities for primary class teachers (Elliot & Campbell, 2015), developments within initial teacher education (ITE) have unfortunately been less positive. Although the ITE of primary teachers remains firmly rooted in Scotland’s university sector, teacher education policy has moved towards a more academic focus (Scottish Government, 2011a), which means that the time allotted to curriculum subjects has been reduced. This means that physical education receives a ‘light touch’ through the ITE programmes, and most offer a physical education elective course for final year students with 20 to 30 hours of contact. Typically, these elective courses explore the primary physical education curriculum and pedagogy through a mixture of practical workshops and seminars. Overall, many of the global concerns that have long been reported about ITE in primary physical education (e.g. Harris, Cale & Musson, 2012) appear to also be a feature in Scotland.

Conversely, as discussed by Jess, Carse and Keay in Chapter 10 recent professional development opportunities for primary school teachers in Scotland have been more in evidence. In response to the PERG recommendations, the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow were both commissioned by the Scottish Executive in 2006 to develop, deliver and evaluate the impact of postgraduate certificates in primary physical education. Government funding in the region of 6 million pounds was made available for this project and between 2006 and 2012 led to over 1,100 primary teachers taking the opportunity to develop a specialism in physical education. The programmes had a specific aim of building the confidence and competence of teachers by offering an opportunity to engage with primary physical education in considerably more depth than traditional professional development courses. Instead of providing pre-prepared resources and lesson plans, these programmes helped the teachers explore key theoretical concepts, reflect
on their beliefs, values and contexts and design learning experiences in physical education aligned to the needs of the children in their classes (Thorburn et al., 2011).

Initial findings tracking the impact of these programmes reported increases in teachers’ confidence, subject knowledge and general approach to the teaching of physical education (Jess, McEvilly, Campbell & Elliot, 2012). Given the longer time scale of this professional development experience, many of the teachers began to develop physical education programmes that were contextualised within their individual school settings, and some began to adopt curriculum leadership roles (Carse, 2015). Interestingly, although the teachers acknowledged the positive impact of a supportive policy context, they also experienced considerable autonomy to experiment and develop their physical education ideas because of the ongoing marginal status of physical education within their schools. Conversely, a regular constraint was the feeling of isolation as the teachers tried to collaborate with their colleagues and other physical education practitioners. In particular, the teachers reported how they struggled to overcome the traditional view of physical education as a multi-activity sport and games programme held by most of their colleagues and the children (Carse, 2015).

More recently, and complementary to the postgraduate certificates, joint funding from sportscotland and Education Scotland, £6.8 million and £4.8 million, respectively, across local authorities has supported a package of national initiatives to increase the support available to schools and teachers (Scottish Government, 2016b). The most significant initiatives have been the Core PE fund, discussed earlier, and employing local authority lead officers for physical education (PELOs). Coordinated by Education Scotland, the PELOs have been supported to create a network, which has set a context for professional learning and exchanging ideas and approaches focussed on the enhancement of the quality of physical education within schools, particularly primary schools. A recent report evaluating these initiatives noted the positive impact that the PELOs have had on promoting the two-hour target and on teachers’ learning and teaching practice (Lowden et al., 2014). Although developments in ITE may be a concern at this time, the last decade has seen many generalist class teachers take up the opportunity to engage in more in-depth and long-term professional development in primary physical education.

Assessment

The Curriculum for Excellence guidelines provide the main guidance on assessment. Initially, Curriculum for Excellence attempted to move away from prescriptive curriculum guidelines and testing to provide more open-ended experiences and outcomes as a way to describe the expectations for learning and progression across the curriculum. Broader levels of learning were introduced from 3 to 18 – early, first, second, third and fourth, senior phase – to ‘reflect the stages of maturation of children and young people’ (Scottish Government, 2008: 28). As discussed earlier, teachers have been encouraged to use the experiences and outcomes to develop the curriculum focusing on the development of knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes for learning, life and work (Scottish Government, 2009a). Initially the experiences and outcomes and broader levels appeared to afford teachers greater scope to be curriculum innovators and respond to the learning needs and interests of the children within the specific contexts they were working in (Priestley & Humes, 2010). However, through the implementation of CfE concerns were raised that the experiences and outcomes were too broad to support assessment and that further guidance was required. Building on the experiences and outcomes and in an attempt to further support teachers to assess progress and achievement, Significant Aspects of Learning (SALs) were introduced as part of the CfE guidelines (Education Scotland, 2012).
In relation to assessment within physical education, the aim of the experiences and outcomes is to provide guidance for teachers in planning learning experiences that take into account what children can be expected to achieve at different points in their learning journey. Complementary to the experiences and outcomes the SALs support teachers to provide progressive learning contexts by viewing physical education in a holistic sense. In this respect the integration of four main areas is emphasised: physical competencies; cognitive skills; physical fitness; and personal qualities (see Figure 17.1 for an overview of the SALs) (Education Scotland, 2014). The paper introducing the SALs states that the aim is to:

help practitioners to make judgements as to the achievement of a level across all lines of development, to work with colleagues to create a shared understanding of standards and learners’ progress and to identify key assessment opportunities and forms of assessment.

(Education Scotland, 2014: 1)

Therefore, it is evident that the emphasis is on embedding assessment within teaching and using it to inform the learning process rather than on the measurement of learning. This emphasis on assessment as part of the learning process is also articulated in the focus on progression in learning within physical education through experiential learning which centres around promoting breadth, challenge and application within learning experiences.

However, despite the seeming emphasis on trusting teacher judgement within assessment through CfE, this has been somewhat eroded in recent years with the Scottish Government placing renewed emphasis on standardised testing for assessment through the National Improvement Framework (NIF) (Scottish Government, 2016c). In an attempt to ‘close the attainment gap’ the NIF has seen standardised testing introduced in maths and literacy, which raises questions over the place of curriculum areas not scrutinised by standardised testing and in particular the core status of health and wellbeing within the curriculum.

• Problem solving
• Focus and concentration
• Decision making
• Creativity

• Kinaesthetic awareness
• Balance and control
• Coordination and fluency
• Rhythm and timing
• Gross and fine motor skills

• Motivation
• Confidence and self-esteem
• Determination and resilience
• Responsibility and leadership
• Respect and tolerance
• Communication

• Stamina
• Speed
• Core stability and strength
• Flexibility

Figure 17.1 Overview of Significant Aspects of Learning
Adapted from Education Scotland (2014)
Scotland

Significant factors worth noting

Following its long-term positioning on the margins of Scottish primary education, the last decade has seen a change in fortune for physical education. With new curriculum guidance, considerably more curriculum time for all children and a significant investment in primary teachers’ professional development, physical education in Scotland has passed through one of its more positive and fruitful periods. Acknowledging the complexity of the educational change process, however, the next challenge will be to develop the capacity to sustain this positive development trajectory of primary physical education in the years to come.

Note

1 The Scottish Executive was renamed the Scottish Government in 2006.

References


Introduction

The Republic of Ireland/Éire is an island off the northwestern tip of mainland Europe with a largely English-speaking population of approximately 4.5 million. Traditionally, cultural life in Ireland has been characterised by the centrality of Catholicism, the family, sport, music and alcohol. Although the power of Catholicism has waned considerably in recent years, these motifs of Irishness remain, albeit shaped and influenced by the effects of globalisation. Once a largely homogenous nation-state, in more recent times, Ireland has become increasingly racially, culturally and religiously diverse. Furthermore, in 2015 Ireland became the first country in the world to legalise marriage between same-sex couples by popular vote.

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) is responsible for the Irish education system. Compulsory full-time education for all children between ages 6 and 16 is divided into primary (aged 4/5 to 12 approx.) and post-primary (aged 12 to 18 approx.) levels. The primary education sector consists primarily of state-run schools (3,262 schools) with a small minority of non-state-run private primary schools (34 schools). The state-funded schools include religious schools, non-denominational schools, multi-denominational schools and Gaelscoileanna (Irish-medium schools). The legacy of intertwined relations between church and state is evident in the fact that 96% of all primary schools are owned and governed by religious patrons but continue to be funded by the state.

In the 2015–16 academic year there were 553,380 children in state-funded primary schools in Ireland where the pupil:teacher ratio was 16:1 (www.education.ie). Primary school in Ireland consists of eight class levels. Children in Ireland generally start primary school at age four/five. The academic year begins on September 1 each year and finishes at the end of June. Generally children attend school for five hours a day, Monday to Friday. Younger children at the first two levels have a shorter day. The primary school curriculum is divided into six key learning areas: Language – Irish and English; Mathematics; Social, Environment and Scientific Education; Arts Education, including Visual Arts, Music and Drama; Physical Education; and Social, Personal and Health Education. An ongoing longitudinal national research study, ‘Growing Up in Ireland’, presents a positive picture of the lives of Irish children (The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), Trinity College Dublin, Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, 2009). Children in Ireland are generally positive about their education (ESRI et al., 2009).
Physical education is a compulsory curriculum subject in Irish primary schools. The Department of Education (DES) oversees the organisation and quality of physical education supported by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (for more see MacPhail, O’Sullivan & Halbert, 2008). The current primary physical education curriculum, published in 1999, includes the curriculum document (Government of Ireland, 1999a) and a set of Teacher Guidelines (Government of Ireland, 1999b). The curriculum document provides an overview of the content for each class level. The Teacher Guidelines document advises on the implementation of the curriculum in relation to planning, approaches and methodologies. General guidelines for all subject areas, including physical education, are also provided as they relate to teaching gifted and talented children (NCCA, 2007a), on including children with special educational needs (NCCA, 2007b) and on teaching children up to age six through ‘Aistear’ [Journey], a play-based framework (NCCA, 2009). Reflecting the emphasis on integrated learning across the primary school curriculum, the main priority in the physical education curriculum is on child-centred educational aims. The purpose of physical education is ‘to provide children with learning opportunities through the medium of movement and contribute to their overall development by helping them to lead full, active and healthy lives’ (Government of Ireland, 1999b: 2). Physical education is identified as a distinctive area of the curriculum through its focus on the body and physical experience, ‘without which the education of the child is incomplete’ (Government of Ireland, 1999b: 2). There is no specific strand focused on health-related content in the curriculum as Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is included as a separate curriculum subject. The curriculum document (Government of Ireland, 1999a) outlines curriculum principles that align with aims and objectives to be achieved through six content strands.

The aims of the physical education curriculum are:

• to promote the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of the child;
• to develop positive personal qualities;
• to help in the acquisition of an appropriate range of movement skills in a variety of contexts;
• to promote understanding and knowledge of the various aspects of movement;
• to develop an appreciation of movement and the use of the body as an instrument of expression and creativity;
• to promote enjoyment of, and positive attitudes towards, physical activity and its contribution to lifelong health-related fitness, thus preparing the child for the active and purposeful use of leisure time.

(Government of Ireland, 1999a: 10)

Broad objectives are outlined in relation to social and personal development, physical and motor development, knowledge and understanding, creative and aesthetic development, development of health-related fitness and development of safety in support of these aims. The principles on which curriculum experiences are built illustrate this broad educational emphasis and include the importance of enjoyment and play, the maximum participation by all children in curriculum experiences, providing opportunities for the development of skills and understanding, a balance between competitive and non-competitive activities, contact and non-contact activities, providing opportunities for achievement and providing activities equally suitable for girls and boys (Government of Ireland, 1999b). Unlike curricula in some other parts of the world, the primary physical education curriculum in Ireland is positioned within an educational rather than a sport or health discourse. The
broader holistic development of the child through achievement of the wide range of learning outlined in the aims noted earlier is emphasised. For example, although fundamental motor skill (FMS) learning objectives are outlined, no special mention or prioritisation is given to FMS over other aims. This bucks a trend towards framing primary curricula within physical literacy and FMS discourses in other countries such as Canada and Australia. Given recent research reporting that Irish children leaving primary physical education do not display proficiency across nine basic movement patterns (O’Brien, Belton & Issartel, 2015), the lack of priority on FMS learning might be considered by some to represent an undervaluing of the primary school phase for motor development and motor learning as outlined by Hardman (2008a). In the same way, the curriculum is underpinned by the principle of lifelong participation through the early development of positive attitudes to physical activity fitness, and health goals are not given any special priority over other aims.

The prioritisation of educational values is also clear in how the curriculum documents explicitly distinguish physical education and sport. The term sport is defined as ‘formalised physical activity involving competition or challenges against oneself, others or the environment, with an emphasis on winning’ (Government of Ireland, 1999a: 6). In contrast, physical education is outlined as encompassing a more holistic development of the child encouraging ‘personal and social development, physical growth, and motor development’ (Government of Ireland, 1999a: 6). Distinction is made between physical education’s focus on holistic development and the purposes of sport and other school-based physical activity opportunities. For example, physical education is identified as building on the principles of variety and diversity through participation in a range of developmentally appropriate activities in a broad and balanced curriculum, in contrast to sport which is associated with specialisation. The prioritisation of an educational approach is also reflected in a recommendation that both sport and extra-curricular provision should complement and reflect the values of the physical education curriculum.

The content of the curriculum is presented in ‘strands’ and ‘strand units’ as outlined in Table 18.1. Although the strands outlined in Table 18.1 include content similar to many physical education curricula internationally, the curriculum is distinctive in emphasising generic movement concepts to be applied across a variety of games and activities rather than naming specific games or explicitly tying performance of specific skills to any particular age group. The one exception to this is the special position given to our national games, hurling and Gaelic football, within the games strand. Also, the content of the physical education curriculum has been delineated at four broad levels: infant classes, first and second classes, third and fourth classes and fifth and sixth classes. This illustrates the emphasis on broad developmentally appropriate learning and deemphasises any performance expectations at any specific age. For example, the inclusion of a wide variety of learning objectives within the aquatics strand (as opposed to the identification of specific targets such as the number of lengths of the pool completed) is a good illustration of this approach. Also, the aquatics strand is not delimited by class level. This flexibility is to accommodate both the needs of learners and access to facilities. Schools are encouraged to make the utmost effort to provide the aquatics strand at some point throughout a child’s primary school years. The inclusion of the ‘understanding and appreciation’ strand unit to complement the physical experiences provided is also noteworthy. For example, in a gymnastics lesson children might be enabled to ask and answer questions about movement options, and in an athletics lesson children might discuss the rules of baton passing in a relay or analyse personal performances. This strand unit is not intended to form individual lessons but rather places an explicit emphasis on the value of practical and tactical knowledge of activity, acknowledging the role of the child as a spectator and decision-maker, rather than solely as a participant.
Every primary school is required to have a school plan for physical education that includes details of content, teaching approaches and assessment at each class level. The curriculum (DES, 1999) outlines recommendations for both school and classroom level planning to guide the school plan though this is no guarantee that the plan will be implemented. Decisions in relation to the curriculum implementation are, however, made at a local school level.

### Learning programmes

A typical primary PE lesson in Ireland consists of running and chasing games to warm up, followed by a series of ball games and drill activities in small groups and concluded with small-sided team-based ball games. In 2005, Fahey, Delaney and Gannon (2005: ii) reported that 'the reality of the delivery of [physical education] in schools is less impressive and widely falls short of recommended standards'. Though the curriculum recommends delivery of five strands each year, in reality, many children experience a multi-game programme largely influenced by the experience and interests of the individual teachers. Children consistently report the activities they most participated in are team invasion games such as soccer, Gaelic football, basketball and hurling (Broderick & Shiel, 2000; Fahey et al., 2005). After games, aquatics and Irish dance are the more common strands implemented as part of the PE programme in many primary schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Strand units</th>
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<tr>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>Running</td>
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<td>Jumping</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Throwing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Understanding and appreciation of athletics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dance (Creative and folk)</td>
<td>Exploration, creation and performance of dance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding and appreciation of dance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
<td>Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding and appreciation of gymnastics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>Sending, receiving and travelling</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Creating and playing games</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding and appreciation of games</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*special position for Gaelic football and hurling (national games)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor and Adventure Activities</td>
<td>Walking, cycling and camping activities*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orienteering</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Outdoor challenges</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Water-based activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Understanding and appreciation of outdoor and adventure activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aquatics</td>
<td>Hygiene</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Water safety</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Entry to and exit from the water</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Buoyancy and propulsion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stroke development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Water-based ball games</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding and appreciation of aquatics</td>
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</tbody>
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*Senior classes only*
schools (Fahey et al., 2005). Some of the other strands are taught less widely. For example, in ‘The Children’s Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study’ 50% of primary school children reported experiencing the aquatics strand and 46% reported experiencing dance (Woods, Tannehill, Quinlan, Moyna & Walsh, 2010). This is in comparison to only 11% receiving outdoor and adventure activities and 30% experiencing gymnastics in the same study (Woods et al., 2010). The pervasiveness of games is unsurprising given that teachers are most confident in teaching the games strand (MacPhail et al., 2008; Woods et al., 2010) and their perception that they are inadequately prepared to teach a number of strands including athletics, dance, gymnastics and outdoor and adventure (Broderick & Shiel, 2000). MacPhail and Halbert (2005) concluded that they expected this situation to improve as the revised primary curriculum (1999) was implemented more widely. This expectation was borne out to a degree in an increase of 19% in the teaching of gymnastics and 12% in the teaching of dance and athletics from 2004 to 2009 (Woods et al., 2010). Despite these gains, the breadth and quality of physical education provision continue to vary considerably (Woods et al., 2010) as a result of barriers such as limited content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge (Coulter & Woods, 2012).

The Teacher Guidelines (Government of Ireland, 1999b) recommend the employment of a wider range of approaches, such as direct teaching and guided discovery, is central to successful teaching of physical education. Specific methods to organise the lesson include the use of individual, pair group and team-based activities, station teaching and dividing the playing area into grids. Models-based approaches are not outlined or recommended, although one research study, Kinchin, MacPhail and Ní Chróinín (2012), provides evidence to support the potential of the sport education model in primary schools. Emphasis is placed on the integration of learning with other curricular areas. One recent study (Ní Chróinín, Ní Mhurchú, Ó Ceallaigh, 2016) highlighted the importance of considered approaches to integration to ensure benefits accrue for learning in physical education.

**Resourcing**

Lack of targeted investment and inadequate provision of facilities and equipment are consistently hampering the delivery of physical education in primary schools (Houses of the Oireachtas, 2005; INTO, 2007, 2008; McGuiness & Shelly, 1995; Woods et al., 2010). Although Ireland is not unusual in reporting dissatisfaction with the availability of equipment and facilities for primary school physical education (Hardman, 2008a, 2008b), the weather conditions in Ireland make these deficits particularly challenging. For example, in 2005 less than 24% of schools nationwide reported having access to an on-site indoor sports hall or multi-purpose room (Fahey et al., 2005). The situation has worsened due to government cutbacks coinciding with an increase in pupil numbers in recent years. This has resulted in some schools having to adapt their multi-purpose room into a classroom space, with only 19% of principals reporting that by 2010 they could provide access to an on-site indoor space (Woods et al., 2010). Primary schools are therefore overly dependent on off-site facilities (Fahey et al., 2005). Outdoor facilities are usually limited to basketball courts and grass pitches (Woods et al., 2010). Access to facilities alone does not guarantee delivery of curriculum strands either. Woods et al. (2010) found that that 70% of Irish primary schools have access to swimming pools, but are unable to utilise them due to the additional costs involved. In much the same way, and despite nominal grants from the Department of Education and Science, approximately 50% of schools report poor inadequate gymnastics equipment to deliver this strand. The lack of facilities appears to support the prevalence of games as the major focus of curriculum in schools, as they require less specialised facilities and/or equipment.
Outside of the two main curriculum documents (Government of Ireland, 1999a, 1999b) there are few support resources for delivery of physical education with the exception of the Primary School Sports Initiative (2006) (http://pssi.pdst.ie/clickme.html), a series of exemplar lesson plans in each strand. There are no Ireland-specific textbooks for children or context-specific curriculum-wide resource books for teachers. This gap has been filled in recent years by organisations, both commercial and government related, with an interest in promoting physical activity and sport in children of primary school age who have developed a number of lesson plan resources to support implementation of specific areas of the curriculum. For example, The Irish Heart Foundation (2012) developed the Action for Life package of lesson ideas to assist teachers in planning and teaching part of the physical education curriculum. The Irish Sports Council developed the Buntús programme (Irish Sports Council, 2006) to promote FMS development. National governing bodies have also developed sport-specific programmes to support implementation of the games strand, for example, the Céim ar Aghaidh [A step forward] Resource (GAA, 2014). The lack of curriculum-wide supports combined with the influx of lesson plan resources from specific sporting organisations may well exacerbate the over-delivery of team-based invasion games to the detriment of other strands of the curriculum.

Frequency

Physical education is widely provided on a weekly basis in Irish primary schools (Broderick & Shiel, 2000; Fahey et al., 2005). The recommended (rather than required) time for physical education in Ireland is 60 minutes per week (Government of Ireland, 1999c). Actual time allocated to physical education in Irish primary schools is less than in many other countries (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2013). In 2010 less than 35% of children reported receiving the recommended time for physical education (Woods et al., 2010). The average time allocated to physical education per week in 2010 was 46 minutes (Woods et al., 2010) compared to a European average of typically 60 to 90 minutes of physical education per week (Hardman, 2008b). Recent research (McCoy, Smyth & Banks, 2012) also suggested that boys in single-sex schools receive more physical education than girls in single-sex or co-educational schools. Many schools continue to cite ‘weather permitting’ as being an overarching component affecting the frequency of physical education lessons. The weather alone does not explain the low delivery levels. Reflecting international trends (Hardman, 2008b), increased time allocations for literacy and numeracy has created barriers for teachers to fully implement the physical education curriculum (Coulter & Woods, 2012). On the basis of the discrepancy between recommended and allocated time, PE received a D grade in Ireland’s first Report Card on Physical Activity in Children and Youth (Harrington et al., 2014). Irish children also feel that improvements could be made to the frequency of physical education delivery: they report they do not get enough time for physical education to make it worthwhile and enjoyable (Tannehill, MacPhail, Walsh & Woods, 2015).

Who delivers PE?

In Ireland the entire primary school curriculum, including physical education, is delivered by one generalist classroom teacher. The physical education curriculum is designed so that ‘in order to implement the programme the teacher does not need to be a specialist in the teaching of physical education’ (Government of Ireland, 1999b: 24). The curriculum document emphasises the value of the classroom teacher delivering physical education within the context of an overall integrated child-centred curriculum (Government of Ireland, 1999b). In 2000, however, almost 20% of
children were taught physical education solely by someone other than their class teacher, whereas primary generalist teachers were involved in delivery of some aspects of physical education (Broderick & Shiel, 2000). The Teacher Guidelines (1999b) outline a role for both parents and coaches in supporting the delivery of physical education by the classroom teacher. As reflected in the prevalence of external providers in other countries (Griggs, 2010), there is a consistent trend of national governing bodies such as the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU) and the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) delivering large parts of the physical education programme in many schools. For example, the GAA’s coaching programmes are established in 85% of Irish primary schools and are often conducted instead of teacher-led physical education lessons (Irish Sports Council, 2014). This over-emphasis on team invasion games risks children not experiencing a broad and balanced programme as these NGB coaches may be more concerned with developing the skills of students to partake in a particular sport outside school and promotion of the team game they represent than the holistic development of all children (Bowles & O’Sullivan, 2012).

Arrangements are made at a local school level where it is the principal and teachers who make judgements as to the suitability of external providers to deliver aspects of the physical education curriculum and the appropriateness of the content. The needs of the children are recommended as the main consideration when involving personnel other than the classroom teacher in the delivery of physical education (Government of Ireland, 1999b). Active involvement of classroom teachers when external providers are delivering physical education is also recommended in the curriculum, though evidence suggests this recommendation is not widely implemented (Bowles & O’Sullivan, 2012). The dominance of NGB provision is particularly problematic as there is currently no regulation of what happens, and no Irish NGB has educated their coaches in the curriculum guidelines recommended for use in primary school physical education (Bowles & O’Sullivan, 2012). Also, for other curriculum strands it is not uncommon for parents to pay a weekly contribution to support delivery of physical education by outside providers. Despite the fact that payment for curriculum delivery is against DES regulations, parents are expected to pay for aquatics, as qualified swimming teachers are used to deliver pool-based elements of this strand, and in many instances for lessons in dance and gymnastics.

Teacher preparation

The majority of Irish primary teachers undertake a four-year, Bachelor of Education degree (B.Ed.) (approximately 1,500 graduates each year) or a two-year Professional Masters in Education (PME) (approximately 200 graduates per year). Most primary teachers have limited initial teacher preparation in physical education; approximately 30 to 50 hours in the B.Ed programme (equates to 3.5 European Credit Transfer System credits out of total programme of 240 credits) or 20 to 30 hours on the PME programme for physical education. On graduation they are deemed qualified to teach physical education, along with the 10 other subjects on the curriculum. Recent research (Ní Chróinín & Coulter, 2012) indicates that beginning teachers value physical education and are committed to delivering physical education. The reconfiguration of the primary pre-service teacher education programmes nationally in 2012 from a three-year to a four-year degree allows some primary teachers to develop a specialisation in physical education (<100 students per year nationally). These students complete 90 to 150 additional hours in physical education modules. There is potential for these teachers to support other classroom teachers in their school and lead design and deliver quality physical education programmes (O’Sullivan & Oslin, 2012). In the coming years, as these teachers become more common across primary schools, a gradual shift in delivery patterns may emerge with increased prevalence of
these teachers delivering physical education to other classes through class swapping arrangements to take advantage of this anticipated expertise.

Such developments are encouraging as many Irish generalist classroom teachers struggle to provide the depth and breadth of experience the curriculum aspires to. Similar to other contexts (for example, Morgan & Bourke, 2005; Hardman, 2008a), inadequate initial teacher education and resultant lack of competence and confidence are the most significant obstacles to the delivery of quality physical education programmes (McGuiness & Shelly, 1995). Assessment, differentiation and inclusion (Marron, Murphy & O’Keeffe, 2013; Ni Chróinín & O’Sullivan, 2016) have been highlighted as areas in which generalist teachers need additional support. Systematic and structured CPD has been consistently proposed as one way to support Irish classroom teachers to deliver better-quality physical education (Lunn, Kelly & Fitzpatrick, 2013; O’Sullivan & Oslin, 2012).

The value of CPD opportunities in influencing the delivery of physical education in Irish primary schools is supported by recent research (Coulter & Woods, 2012; Murphy & O’Leary, 2012; Parker, Patton & Tannehill, 2012), and as a result a number of CPD opportunities are open to primary teachers in the area of physical education. At a formalised level, a national in-service initiative to support delivery of the revised curriculum (DES, 1999) was provided for all teachers from 2004 to 2010 and was positively received (Murphy & O’Leary, 2012). This was run through the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), who act as the national support service for teachers, by offering CPD courses in content areas, as well as school visits to support the delivery of physical education in schools.

The PE community has also worked extremely hard to ensure there are CPD opportunities provided to primary school teachers, for example, the option of further study through both taught master’s programmes or through research-based master’s and PhD programmes within the Colleges of Education. The Irish Primary Physical Education Association (IPPEA) is a voluntary organisation that offers regional workshops using a community of practice model (Parker et al., 2012) and holds an annual conference for primary teachers. The year-wide opportunities outlined earlier are supplemented by attendance at voluntary five-day courses at the end of the school year. Physical education and physical activity-based courses are commonly an option in various locations nationwide in this summer CPD programme. To incentivise teachers to complete a summer CPD course, they receive three personal days in lieu during the school year. Apart from the national in-service programme to support curriculum implementation (Government of Ireland, 1999a, 1999b) outlined earlier, all these CPD opportunities are voluntary. There is currently no requirement for any teacher to complete physical education–specific CPD at any point during their teaching careers, so in theory a teacher could receive no physical education CPD from the time of graduation until retirement 40 years later.

Assessment

As outlined in Chapter 7 assessment is a critical aspect of pedagogical practice within primary physical education and can play a central role in determining a child’s progress and development. Reflecting this, assessment is positioned as an integral part of the teaching and learning process in the Irish curriculum (Government of Ireland, 1999a, 1999b) as an aid to planning, in facilitating communication and in monitoring individual progress. Assessment used in this way is proposed as playing an important role in ensuring progression and continuity in children’s physical education experiences. Assessment of learning related to all curriculum objectives is recommended within the spirit of a child-centred curriculum. No formalised approach to assessment and reporting of learning is outlined beyond a generic rating on a five-point scale on an end-of-year
report to parents. No suggested standards or achievement benchmarks are outlined. It is empha-
sised that ‘any form of recording of assessment should not detract from teaching time to hinder
the learning experience of the child’ (DES, 1999: 74). Suggested assessment tools include teacher
observation, teacher-designed tasks and the development of curriculum profiles for each child.
The development of profiles is recommended to involve descriptive statements, for example, ‘uses
simple tactics to outwit an opponent in a games situation’ (Government of Ireland, 1999b: 100),
rather than any quantitative measure of performance. A document titled ‘Assessment in the Pri-
mary School Curriculum’ (NCCA, 2007c) focused on assessment for learning (AfL) strategies
was developed to promote assessment in primary school subjects. The assessment practices rec-
commended for physical education included event sampling, self-assessment and the use of photos
and video recordings.

Despite efforts to promote assessment (NCCA, 2007c), in reality many Irish primary teachers
struggle to assess physical education (Ní Chróinín & Cosgrave, 2013). They struggle to find
time to assess and are unsure of how to assess physical education (NCCA, 2008) due to its prac-
tical nature and the lack of support structures and resources (Ní Chróinín & Cosgrave, 2013).
Recent research studies (Ní Chróinín & Cosgrave, 2013; O’Connor, Mulcahy, Ní Chróinín &
Murtagh, 2011; O’ Loughlin, Ní Chróinín & O’ Grady, 2013) suggest the value of assessment
in promoting a learning culture in Irish primary physical education as well as facilitating and
engaging children in the learning process. For example, the use of digital video permitted
immediate visual feedback and allowed students to independently analyse themselves using
a checklist of predetermined criteria (O’ Loughlin et al., 2013). The urgent need for physi-
cal education–specific resources to support teachers assessing physical education has also been
highlighted (O’Connor et al., 2011). Despite these encouraging findings, no major changes
in approaches to assessment are envisioned due to the absence of any formalised structures or
physical education-specific resources and guidelines.

**Significant factors worth noting**

In common with many countries around the world, primary physical education discourses in
Ireland have not escaped obesity narratives that have resulted in greater attention to the school as
a site of physical activity promotion to address rising obesity levels in children. For example, in
2011 26% of Irish nine-year-olds were reported to be overweight or obese (Layte & McCrory,
2011). These data prompted a renewed interest in primary physical education’s role in promoting
lifelong physical activity with emphasis on physical literacy (Coghlan, 2011). The publication of
Ireland’s Report Card on Physical Activity and Children and Youth (Harrington et al., 2014), and
the launch of the National Physical Activity Plan (Healthy Ireland, 2016) all indicate a growing
emphasis on physical activity promotion and recognition of the role primary physical education
may play in this regard. The Active School Flag (ASF), a whole-school physical activity initiative
(McMullen, Ní Chróinín, Tammelin, Pogorzelska & van der Mars, 2015), is illustrative of this
increased attention. It is designed to recognise schools that strive towards achieving a physically
educated and physically active school community. Currently 713 primary schools, representing
over 20% of all primary schools in Ireland, hold an ASF Recent research (Ní Chróinín, Bowles &
Murtagh, 2012) indicates the value of the ASF in influencing physical education provision, given
that in order to be awarded the flag requires schools demonstrate that they are:

- presenting a broad and balanced physical education programme,
- addressing of deficits in provision of physical education,
- providing at least 60 minutes of physical education each week.
The ASF has been identified as a priority action area of the National Physical Activity Plan (Healthy Ireland, 2016), and as such has the potential to become a more dominant feature of the physical education landscape in coming years.

Overall, there is a gap between the aspirations of the curriculum and reality of teaching and learning experiences in Irish primary schools. Lack of resourcing and inconsistency in relation to delivery of the curriculum, largely as a result of issues with the confidence and competence of generalist teachers due to insufficient preparation and supports, has resulted in narrow, games-dominated physical education experiences for many children in Irish primary schools that lack an explicit developmental learning focus. In recent years increased debate about who is best placed to deliver primary physical education has been driven by issues surrounding inconsistency in the quality and quantity of physical education children receive (Broderick & Shiel, 2000; Fletcher & Mandigo, 2012; Houses of the Oireachtas, 2005; McGuinness & Shelly, 1996; Woods et al., 2010). The integrated nature of the overall primary curriculum and the priority given to one generalist teacher for all areas of the curriculum suggest that the introduction of specialist teachers for physical education is unlikely.

Encouragingly, despite the shortcomings of primary physical education provision outlined, almost all Irish children (98.5%) indicate that they take part in PE classes in school, and many identify physical education as the school subject they most enjoy (Broderick & Shiel, 2000; Coulter & Woods, 2011). Tannehill et al. (2015) suggest Irish children value physical education experiences, suggesting that such experiences allow them to be with friends, try a variety of activities, have fun and be outside. Primary school children in senior classes also overwhelmingly like sport, with almost all primary school children participating in organised sport by age 10 (Lunn et al., 2013). The importance attributed to sport and physical activity in wider Irish culture and widespread participation seems, to an extent, to compensate for the deficits of primary physical education for some, but not all, children.

With no major investment in either physical or human resources imminent, the broad picture of primary physical education is more likely to be shaped into the future by external influences, such as physical activity interest groups and NGBs, rather than by educational motives aligned with the child-centred focus of the physical education curriculum.

References


Introduction

Wales is a small country which is part of the United Kingdom. It has one border with England and is surrounded on three sides by the sea. It has a population of just over 3 million people, the majority of whom live in the more urban and industrial southeast of the country. It has a total area of 20,782² kilometres, which is rich in natural environments, including mountains, cave systems, rivers, sea cliffs, beautiful beaches and rich farmland. There are more castles per square kilometre in Wales than any other country on earth, and this reflects its colourful and rich history of battles and invasions. Although many of the invading forces tried to wipe out the Welsh culture, it remains very strong and proudly maintains the Welsh language, which is the oldest living language in Europe. Wales is bilingual, and all official documentation and signage have to be in both Welsh and English. Approximately 20% of the population speak Welsh as their first language, and all children in Wales from age 3 to 16 study Welsh as either a first or second language. A reported 16% study through the medium of Welsh as a first language with a further 10% attending bilingual schools. Being Welsh has cultural differences beyond the language; it means an upbringing rich in song, poetry and storytelling, a passion for rugby and a yearning for ‘home’ wherever you travel in the world known as hireath.

In 1999, there was a process of devolution in the United Kingdom. In this process although the countries of Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland remained part of the United Kingdom, they were given some measure of independence in relation to some policy making. In Wales, this resulted in the creation of an independent National Assembly for Wales, which is now developed into the Welsh Government. However, Wales is still a part of the United Kingdom.

Education in Wales

In the process of devolution from the United Kingdom, the establishment of the National Assembly for Wales generated ‘home-grown’ education policies, different and distinct from those in England, developed to meet the specific educational, social and cultural needs of the people of Wales (Williams & Wainwright, 2014).
Curriculum phases

Primary school education in Wales is divided into two distinct phases, Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2. In 2008, the Welsh Assembly Government began the implementation of this new curriculum in Wales. This curriculum saw Early Years and Key Stage 1 replaced by a holistic play-based learning continuum for children aged three to seven called the Foundation Phase. The Foundation Phase reflects a worldwide trend within education systems of clustering subject matter into learning areas that extend beyond subjects (Macdonald, 2003). A range of international approaches to Early Years education influenced the development of the Foundation Phase, with ministers drawing on best practice from Reggio Emilia in Northern Italy, Te Whāriki in New Zealand, High Scope in the United States and Forest Schools in Scandinavia. The Welsh Government highlights the importance of play in the Foundation Phase as a way ‘children become self-aware’ and ‘learn social rules’ as well as being ‘fundamental to intellectual development’ (DES, 2015: 6). The recognition of the importance of play has been extended for older pupils up to the age of seven with the Foundation Phase for children aged three to seven years advocating that children ‘learn through first-hand experiential activities with the serious business of play providing the vehicle’ (DES, 2015: 4).

The Foundation Phase is early childhood from ages three to seven and comprises seven areas of learning, which are delivered through practical activities and active learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors. The areas of learning are:

- personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity
- language, literacy and communication skills
- mathematical development
- Welsh language development
- knowledge and understanding of the world
- physical development
- creative development.

(DES, 2015)

The seven areas of learning are planned and delivered in three different aspects (Wainwright, Goodway, Whitehead, Williams & Kirk, 2016). These are the continuous environment, enhanced provision and focused tasks.

Children progress from the Foundation Phase into Key Stage 2 at the age of seven. Key Stage 2 consists of 11 subjects: English, Welsh, mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology, history, geography, art and design, music and physical education. Religious studies is also statutory in the primary school, as is the literacy and numeracy framework (LNF). The LNF was introduced following poor results for Wales in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The LNF is required to be delivered through all subjects in the curriculum and is shown in the curriculum documents in the areas of language literacy and communication and mathematical development in the Foundation Phase and in English and Mathematics in KS 2. However, in the other areas of learning and subjects, teachers are expected to look at the LNF statements and ensure that they include this where appropriate in the pupils’ learning (WG, 2016). The most recent change has seen the introduction of a digital competence framework, which is now also a requirement for teachers to embed across all areas of learning and subjects. As part of the Physical Literacy Programme for Schools, a Physical Literacy Journey has been developed, and this is currently being piloted in schools and will also run alongside areas of learning and subjects.
Industry reports (Skills Active Cymru, 2009) identified that young people were not leaving school with the skills needed in the workforce, and this resulted in the introduction of an underpinning Skills Framework for 3 to 19 year olds (DCELLS, 2008c). This curriculum approach advocated the development of the key skills of thinking, communication, ICT and numbers across all subjects and areas of learning, including physical education, from 3 to 19 years of age.

**Official PE curriculum – rationale and design**

Initially following devolution, primary school physical education remained largely similar to that in England, identifying activities such as games, gymnastics, dance swimming and athletics, with outdoor and adventurous activities being optional. This reflected the cultural significance placed on traditional games like rugby, football and cricket for boys and field hockey and netball for girls. The introduction of a new national curriculum policy in 2008 has equally generated change in how PE is articulated in policy, seeing a move away from a sport-dominated curriculum, at least in the policy and guidance documentation, if not in practice in the schools.

**Physical education in foundation phase**

The result of the play-based holistic approach adopted in the development of the Foundation Phase ‘curriculum’ was that ‘physical education’ as a separate subject on the curriculum disappeared. ‘For the first time since the recognition of Physical Education in the curriculum, children in Wales under the age of seven are no longer taught this as a subject’ (Wainwright et al., 2016: 2). The main aspects of what would have been physical education are now delivered in the areas of physical development and creative development, as can be seen by the overview statement in each of these areas of learning.

**Physical development area of learning**

Children’s physical development, enthusiasm and energy for movement should continually be promoted through helping them to use their bodies effectively, by encouraging spatial awareness, balance, control and coordination, and developing motor and manipulative skills. They should develop their gross and fine motor skills, physical control, mobility and an awareness of space, using large and small equipment, across all Areas of Learning, indoors and outdoors. Children should be encouraged to enjoy physical activity. A developing sense of identity should be linked closely to their own self-image, self-esteem and confidence. They should be introduced to the concepts of health, hygiene and safety, and the importance of diet, rest, sleep and exercise.

*(DES, 2015: 43)*

**Creative development area of learning**

Children should be continually developing their imagination and creativity across the curriculum. Their natural curiosity and disposition to learn should be stimulated by everyday sensory experiences, both indoors and outdoors. Children should engage in creative, imaginative and expressive activities in art, craft, design, music, dance and movement. Children should explore a wide range of stimuli, develop their ability to communicate and express their creative ideas, and reflect on their work.

*(DES, 2015: 46)*
The Foundation Phase curriculum highlights the use of the outdoors as an integral part of all pupils’ learning, and as pupils progress from the Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2 at age seven, they will enter a more traditional teaching approach and have physical education as a subject. This does, however, maintain a focus on outdoor learning, with one of four areas of learning being adventurous activities in a bid to ensure the continued use of the natural resources of Wales.

**Physical education in key stage 2**

In a drive to develop a more inclusive and varied physical education experience for children in Wales, the 2008 curriculum has moved away from the traditional sports-driven focus to a much broader approach with more freedom for interpretation. The physical education ‘curriculum’ at Key Stage 2 consists of four areas of activity: health fitness and wellbeing, creative activities, adventurous activities and competitive activities. The four areas of activity lack high levels of prescription with a short section of skills to be covered a section that outlines the suggested range of experiences and allows schools to interpret the following guidelines in a variety of ways, that best reflect the needs of their students and the local context.

**Health fitness and well being**

This area aims to give pupils the knowledge and understanding and experiences that will result in them understanding how to maintain health by participating in physical activity for life and eating a healthy diet. Schools implement health and safety activities through an integrated approach of reminding pupils that they need to warm up prior to activities. Issues in relation to the effects of exercise are often included as part of other activities where pupils are prompted to notice changes in breathing and temperature as they exercise. Schools have swimming programmes that use pools in local leisure centres, and some have well-established walking/running programmes with mile or half-mile distances marked out in school grounds so pupils can accumulate distances. Schools will often have a block of cycling with children being able to complete ‘cycling proficiency’ tests; however, this does not usually form part of the physical education programme but rather is an additional activity for those pupils who have their own bikes and are able to bring them into school.

**Creative activities**

The curriculum highlights these as “activities that are composed or choreographed and are generally artistic and aesthetic in nature” (DCELLS, 2008a: 13). These can be any creative movements such as dance, synchronised swimming or circus performance, gymnastics and folk dancing. In Wales in late February schools will teach pupils Welsh folk dancing in preparation for Eisteddfods that take place to celebrate St David’s Day on March 1.

The experiences schools offer in creative activities are dependent on the experience of the teachers in the schools. In the best examples schools ensure pupils have a variety of opportunities for dance and creative movement. Creative approaches such as dance ensure pupils have opportunities for inclusive physical education, with some schools using circus skills that develop pupils’ physical skills whilst learning how to build creative performances (i Newspaper, 2016).
Adventurous activities

Building on the emphasis on outdoor learning in the Foundation Phase, physical education at Key Stage 2 has adventurous activities as a statutory part of the curriculum. This area of the curriculum involves problem-solving activities, shelter building and camp craft, map reading and orienteering as well as climbing and walking. This is also the area of the physical education curriculum where swimming is included. Many primary schools have invested in small bouldering walls within the school grounds, some have low ropes courses and trim trails as well as wild areas developed as part of the Foundation Phase provision. These enable a range of outdoor and adventure activities to be developed in both physical education time and as a more cross-curricular approach to learning. Many primary schools also take pupils on residential outdoor education experiences, and these range from a couple of days with local providers to full weeks away in large outdoor centres.²

Competitive activities

This section of the curriculum is concerned with activities that are learned for the purpose of competition between an individual, group or team and others. The principles underpinning the application of these types of activity are generally strategic and tactical, such as game strategies and athletic tactics and involve competing against others.

(DCELLS, 2008a: 15)

The programme of study for this area of activity requires the teaching of skills and techniques for use in competitive games and identifies the use of modified competitive activities at Key Stage 2.

The influence of an ‘outdoors’ focus

Broader health and social policies under the guise of a focus on the outdoors have underpinned changes in PE in Wales. The Welsh Government introduced Climbing Higher (WAG, 2003) and Climbing Higher Next Steps (WAG, 2006) as strategies aimed to redress this and increase its own population’s use of the natural resources of Wales. In doing so, this creates a shift toward a much broader curriculum that lacked the activity-specific prescription of previous programmes (e.g. games, gymnastics, etc.) and saw adventurous activities as a statutory area of activity (focus), along with health fitness and wellbeing, creative activities and competitive activities.

This also signals an emphasis on schools taking ownership of how they interpret and deliver a curriculum in ways that makes it most relevant to the context of the school (DCELLS, 2008b). A reduction in the levels of prescription enabled schools to make the most of their unique local environment, respond to the needs of the local community of the school and organise curriculum activities that maximised the use of the local facilities and clubs in the community. For example, coastal schools could incorporate surfing, sea and beach-based activities, whereas schools near forestry zones could focus on mountain biking, trail running and woodland activities. The freedom that the 2008 curriculum provides gave scope for schools across Wales to develop diverse forms of physical education that directly reflect the communities of the school.

Creating an Active Wales (WAG, 2009) further identified the need to equip young people with the skills and motivation to use a broader range of physical activities by identifying physical
education as a way to develop physical literacy, and was equally viewed as a bid to stem rising health problems associated with a lack of physical activity.

**Learning programmes**

The delivery of physical education in primary schools is highly inconsistent and varies widely from school to school. The lack of training in physical education in initial teacher education means that the majority of primary school teachers lack the expertise to deliver a high-quality, broad and balanced curriculum.

As a result of the lack of specialist expertise in primary schools, the implementation of the 2008 curriculum has had little effect on the experiences of the pupils. Physical education is still delivered as traditional sport, as it was prior to the 2008 curriculum. A typical lesson will have a warm-up, introduction of a skill or task, small games (or large game) situation and a plenary. Where we see more training and some level of expertise there is some introduction of models based practice, such as sport education (Siedentop, 1994) and the use of zones for small-sided games and pupils creating their own games.

Although the Foundation Phase no longer has the subject of physical education, schools do generally retain hall time for physical development sessions. These remain the traditional early childhood movement experiences, with children exploring ways of moving, linking actions, moving to music and being introduced to simple equipment and apparatus. The introduction of the Foundation Phase in 2008 means that this is not the only opportunity for physical development in the curriculum, as all the learning is through a play-based approach. Pupils are able to move throughout a large portion of this learning, and the emphasis on the use of the outdoors in this curriculum means that children have more opportunities to develop locomotor skills and interact with natural environments on a daily basis. Typically learning in language and literacy and mathematical development is done in a way that involves movement and gross motor skills, for example, maths trails around the school grounds and spelling activities on large chalk boards in play grounds.

It is much the same in the programme of study for Key Stage 2. Although this stage includes all of the four areas of activity outlined earlier, in reality most pupils experience a limited programme of physical education that is focused on traditional games. It would not be uncommon to see pupils playing full-sided football and netball during primary physical education lessons despite this not being in the curriculum at this age. The continuation of ‘traditional’ programmes, reflect of the UK/England curriculum is perpetuated due to many influencing factors, including:

- Parents often have an expectation that their children will have the opportunity to represent the school in traditional games and competitions such as Urdd tournaments and inter-school fixtures, which have remained largely unchanged for decades and continue to shape PE programmes. So although sports are the traditional sports such as football, rugby and netball and the games are slightly modified, they are not the modified to the level that is needed to ensure an inclusive and developmentally appropriate experience for primary-age pupils.
- Head teachers, lacking an understanding of the broad nature of physical education, are happy to have unqualified staff delivering sport to ensure that there are teams and schools can enter competitions.
- Teachers who have very few hours of initial training in PE are happy for teaching assistants and coaches to deliver PE, as they feel inadequately prepared.
Wales

However, where there has been some professional development for staff, a programme of multi-skills is delivered. Multi-skills comprises small-sided games and activities that allow the development of fundamental motor skills in small group activities. However, the multi-skills approach tends to be highly resource driven, needing a pack of cards for the activities and a bag of equipment to be purchased. This resource alone does not offer the broad experiences outlined in the curriculum of the four areas of activity.

Resourcing

Facilities in schools in Wales vary widely. There are many modern schools with a range of facilities and appropriate spaces, large indoor halls, all-weather outside spaces, grass areas and woodland. However, there are also very old schools, which are listed buildings (and as such are protected) which have very limited outside space and/or small hall space that is used for lunches and in some cases a classroom. In the majority of schools there is a hall space available for physical education, a yard area and a grass area. Following the introduction of the Foundation Phase schools have also developed the outside spaces to be more varied and stimulating as a space for learning.

With the roll out of the Foundation Phase curriculum, schools received funding from the Welsh Government to ensure that the outdoor areas of schools were appropriate for the new requirements for pupils to be learning outside as well as inside. Foundation Phase classrooms should all have direct access to an outdoor space, and pupils should have daily access to this space as an integral part of their learning. Although this does not mean that the outdoor activities are all focussed on physical development as an explicit outcome, the play-based nature of the activities means that pupils are developing gross motor skills through much of their learning. Many schools in response to the Foundation Phase developed more natural learning spaces, and it is not uncommon in primary schools in Wales to see woodland areas and wild spaces used for forest school activities, climbing frames, low ropes courses, trim trails, bouldering walls, willow-sculpted areas and covered areas for outdoor classrooms. Schools have often zoned the outdoor space to ensure that ball games can be played but do not dominate the playground. Tarmac areas are marked with shapes, number games and hopscotch, large boards and targets are on walls for games and language activities. Resources are also varied in schools, equipment can be from as little as a couple of bags of footballs to a full cupboard of a variety of equipment for pupils of all ages and abilities to be challenged. Often schools have some limited gymnastic equipment such as benches and mats and wall bars, although these are rarely used.

National resources to support areas of the curriculum have been developed through a government-funded Physical Education and Schools Sport project (PESS), and these consist of training days with CDs of resources, units of work and lesson plans for gymnastics, dance and health fitness and wellbeing. There are also resources to support physical and creative development in the Foundation Phase with a Play to Learn pack of books and resources and also a Dragon multi-skills training and resource pack (Sport Wales, 2017a).

Frequency

Physical education does not have a statutory amount of time in the Welsh curriculum, but there is a general aim to have at least two hours of physical education every week. This is usually organised in schools as one lesson in the hall and one outside. However, this varies from school to school, with younger pupils having one structured hall session per week. The decisions about
time and frequency of physical education are made at the school level and as such are determined
by the head teacher. This appears to result in real inconsistency in what learning time students
across primary schools in Wales actually receive in PE.

Who delivers PE?
As with much physical education provision in the UK and across the world, the delivery of PE
in Wales varies from school to school with increasing outsourcing of the provision (Jones &
Green, 2015). In many cases physical education is the responsibility of the class teacher, who has
no specialist subject knowledge. In a few schools there may be a physical education specialist;
however, this is extremely rare. As a result of this, many outside agencies exist that offer to deliver
physical activity in both curriculum time and after school. These outside agencies vary widely,
being private companies, local authority service providers, national governing bodies of sport and
professional sports clubs. Numerous companies offer curriculum PE, PPA cover and after school
uk/ppa-cover/). Although head teachers work with school governors and senior management
in schools, in reality in a primary school it’s the head teacher who makes the decisions in rela-
tion to the day-to-day running of the school, and as highlighted by Rainer, Cropley, Jarvis &
Griffiths (2011) they face many complex challenges in the delivery of high-quality PE. There
are huge implications for the quality of the pupils’ learning as a result of inconsistent provision.
The majority of staff employed by the companies are not qualified teachers. Staff from outside
agencies do not tend to know the pupils and so are unable to ensure that the activities are devel-
opmentally appropriate for individuals with the diverse range of needs who are in all classes.
Coaches from governing bodies of sport and professional clubs are coaches and often not qual-
ified teachers. They deliver a limited experience of sport and not the broad requirements of the
curriculum that should include creative activities such as dance and adventurous activities such
as shelter building and journeying.

Head teachers who have little understanding of the broad nature of physical education may
often interpret physical education as sport and will turn to sports coaches and private companies.
The introduction of PPA3 time for teachers also meant that many head teachers had to find ways
of releasing staff; therefore, coaches and private companies provide a cheaper alternative as they
do not use qualified teachers. It is therefore unsurprising that many head teachers opt not to use
qualified teachers, resulting in pupils having a very narrow experience of traditional games for
their physical education.

Teacher preparation
Teacher education in Wales is closely controlled by the government. Universities are allocated the
courses that award Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), and in Wales all teacher education takes place
in three university–based regional centres. There are two main routes for primary QTS: the three-
year Bachelor of Education (BAEd) and the one-year Post Graduate Certificate (PGCE). It is also
possible to follow a Graduate Training Programme, which is school based in partnership with one
of the teacher education centres. Training for physical education on all of the courses is limited.
On the BAEd this is approximately 20 hours over three years and consists of a combination of
theory and practical activities. The PGCE would typically have between four and eight hours
over the course, and most graduate training programmes have no training for physical education.
Therefore, the only primary teachers who have any specialism in the subject are those who have
done a first degree in physical education and then a primary PGCE.
Professional development for physical education in Wales has primarily been delivered by the Physical Education and School Sport (PESS) programme which was established in 2000 as a result of a task force report which outlined key actions for improving standards in physical education (NAfW, 2001). The PESS programme developed a range of professional development training opportunities and resources, which were rolled out across Wales in universities and local education authorities (Sport Wales, 2017b). The PESS programme came to an end in 2014, and since then no national structured physical education professional development has been available for the majority of schools.

The Physical Literacy Programme for Schools (PLPS) replaced PESS; however, this is targeted at a very small number of schools and linked to socio-economic deprivation. Schools chosen were identified by the Welsh Government as part of the Challenge Cymru schools programme. This “is an acceleration and concentration of the Welsh Government’s school improvement efforts, focused on secondary schools in Wales that face the largest challenge in terms of circumstance and stage of development” (Sport Wales 2014: 4). It also involves their cluster primary schools so that the work builds capacity in a professional learning community for pupils aged 3 through to 19. PLPS has a regionalised approach so that the professional development in each region varies. Local education consortia work in partnership with universities in the regions to support the schools that have been identified for the PLPS. The Wales Institute for Physical Literacy runs a programme of Training in Foundation Phase physical development using Successful Kinaesthetic Instruction for Pre-Schoolers (SKIP) (Goodway & Branta, 2003), training in models-based practice in physical education for teachers and coaches, outdoor and adventurous activities as well as circus skills for the curriculum. Master’s-level modules from the MA Physical Education, Sport and Physical Literacy programme are available as stand-alone professional development or as part of the MA PE, Sport and PL at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

Recent developments resulting from the PLPS programme are generating some changes in the approach to physical activity development and physical education in schools. In particular, in the west region of Wales, drawing on research that identified a lack of understanding of motor development (Wainwright, 2015), the Wales Institute for Physical Literacy has developed a programme of professional development, which incorporates Successful Kinaesthetic Instruction for Pre-schoolers (SKIP) (Goodway & Branta, 2003). In the targeted schools there has been a significant improvement in pupils’ physical skills as well as a considerable change in attitudes of staff, heads and parents towards the physical activity opportunities in the schools, and as such the Physical Education Provision.

Assessment

There is no formal or summative assessment for curriculum physical education in Wales. The national curriculum has statements that are levelled at the end of the key stage, and there are also outcome statements at the end of the Foundation Phase. Guidance materials support the assessment of pupils, which is a ‘best fit’ to a level description. At the Foundation Phase there are levels bronze, silver and gold, followed by levels one to six. The majority of pupils would be expected to be at level four to five leaving the Foundation Phase (at the age of approximately seven). These outcome statements are descriptive in nature as can be seen from the following example that represents the Physical Development level five outcome.

Children are becoming stronger and more agile. They are able to jump off apparatus with confidence and can ride a two-wheeled bike. They are able to bounce a ball with one hand and can catch using two hands. They explore different activities and move
with increasing confidence and physical control. They practise to improve their skills and begin to link actions, such as jumping and landing, or catching and throwing. They work safely with others when using equipment and apparatus and take some responsibility for taking it out and putting it away. They talk about what they and others have done and make simple suggestions about how to improve performance. They recognise and describe the physical changes to their bodies while doing different types of activity. They are able to cut out pictures and difficult shapes. They use a writing hold that is similar to that of an adult.

(Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills. DCELLS, 2015: 59)

The outcome statements are intended to enable teachers to assess pupils’ physical development at the end of four years in the Foundation Phase setting. At KS2, there are levels one to eight and exceptional performance, and the majority of pupils are expected to achieve level four to five at the end of KS2. As with the Foundation Phase outcomes, these level descriptions are to enable teachers to assess the pupil’s level at the end of the Key Stage (aged 11) with the language in each level addressing both subject content and key skills, as in the level five description:

Pupils demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of activities with consistent control and accuracy. They take increasing responsibility for their own learning, and ask relevant questions in order to extend and improve performance. They begin to develop an increasing variety of imaginative ideas. They use compositional principles in creative activities to plan a performance with an awareness of the factors that promote quality. They begin to refine and adapt previously learned tactics, techniques and skills and apply them in new situations. They listen carefully to what others say about their work and use their observations to improve the effectiveness and quality of their own and others’ performances. Increasingly, they take responsibility for the planning of elements of their work. They engage in a variety of appropriate, different activities that positively affect their health, fitness and feelings about themselves.

(DCELLS, 2008a: 21)

Teachers assess the pupils with the help of guidance materials, which advocate they “should use their professional judgment to award a best-fit outcome for each child” (DCELLS, 2011: 10). This judgement is made as an overall judgement based on a description of all the elements outlined in the level descriptions. Many schools use a commercially produced resource called Incerts for assessment (Assessment Foundation, 2016). However, this again highlights the lack of understanding of physical education and early childhood physical development, as the statements in relation to these aspects of the curriculum are limited in their scope. For example, the area for Foundation Phase Physical development in Incerts refers to ‘Physical Development – Sport and Exercise’ (Assessment Foundation, 2016: 41), and ‘Physical, Development-Coordinated Movement’ (Assessment Foundation, 2016: 42). There is no recognition of fundamental movement concepts and the broad physical learning of the Foundation Phase. There is also no recognition of developmental stages of motor development. This reflects a lack of understanding of physical education, with pupils being assessed on aspects such as gymnastic performance and exploring different activities.

All assessment results are passed on to secondary schools as pupils transition at the end of KS2. However, many secondary schools do their own assessments as pupils enter their schools. As part of the Physical Literacy Programme for Schools a Dragon Challenge assessment has been
developed to assess pupils’ physical competence. This is a timed assessment to test a combination of gross motor skills, coordination and balance (Dragon Challenge, 2016). The Dragon Challenge is administered by trained assessors.

Other factors to note

There are many influencing factors on the curriculum in Wales and on what is delivered in schools as well as what is prescribed in the curriculum. Wales has (like the rest of the UK) developed a strong tradition of games dominating the curriculum (Kirk, 2010). This tradition has remained despite the changes in the 2008 curriculum. The Welsh people are passionate supporters of the national sports teams, in particular rugby and increasingly football (soccer). The Welsh media is dominated by the build-up to international rugby games with post-match analysis filling pages of the newspapers. There remains limited coverage of women’s sport or of a diverse range of sporting events. The majority of money in sport in Wales is in football and rugby and as such they continue to dominate not only the media but also influence the curriculum experiences of children. For head teachers with limited understanding of the nature of physical education, the funding of sports officers into schools for these high-profile sports is an offer too good to refuse.

The Future for Physical Education in Wales is, however, becoming even more challenging as a fundamental change in how the education experiences of children are envisaged is currently being undertaken by the Welsh Government. As part of the usual National Curriculum review process, the Welsh Government commissioned an independent review in 2014. This review, Successful Futures (Donaldson, 2015), recommends a curriculum that delivers core purposes through six areas of learning and experience: expressive arts; health and well-being; humanities; languages, literacy and communication; mathematics and numeracy; science and technology (p. 39). This builds on the principles of the Foundation Phase and will see the disappearance of traditional subjects for all phases of the curriculum. Therefore, physical education, as with all subjects, will no longer exist. This raises the question about what this will mean for pupils’ physical learning experiences.

Notes
1 Eisteddfod is a Welsh festival of music, literature and performance. Most schools in Wales hold eisteddfods to celebrate Saint David’s Day (the patron saint of Wales) on March 1. Wales has a large Welsh language youth movement known as the Urdd. Schools compete in regional eisteddfods, and winners go to the National Urdd Eisteddfod. This is one of Europe’s biggest youth festivals with over 15,000 children and young people competing over many days in a celebration of “the Welsh Language, Culture and Talents of the young people of Wales” (Urdd, 2016).

2 In addition to local education authority centres and private centres, the Urdd has two residential outdoor activity centres where many schools in Wales send children to develop their Welsh language through outdoor activities. The centres are located in stunning outdoor locations in both North and South Wales where pupils can experience a range of activities such as sailing, kayaking, canoeing, climbing, gorge walking, orienteering, skiing, horse riding, archery and bushcraft (Urdd, 2016).

3 PPA time is planning prep and assessment time, and each teacher has half a day a week released from teaching for this. The school has to cover the class during this time, and in order to save money qualified teachers rarely cover this time. Usually a teaching assistant or coach covers this, and so often it is PE time that is used for PPA release for staff.

References


Introduction

South Korea, officially the Republic of Korea, is a state in East Asia and constitutes the southern part of the Korean Peninsula. It has long been influenced by the Confucian culture which put strong emphasis on educational attainment as a pathway to a decent life. The structure of the educational system is based on 6-3-3-4, with six years of primary education (age 6 to 12) followed by three years of middle school (age 12 to 15), three years of high school (age 15 to 18), and four years of undergraduate education. The primary and middle school education (grades 1 to 9) are mandatory for all students.

The primary education in Korea is offered to grades 1 to 6, ages from 6 to 12. For curriculum development and implementation purposes, the primary grades are clustered into three groups: grades 1 to 2, grades 3 to 4, and grades 5 to 6. There are three types of primary schools in Korea: national, public and private. Most of the primary schools are public schools. Among 6,001 primary schools, 5,909 schools are public and the number of national and private schools is low, with 17 and 75, respectively (Ministry of Education, 2016). The primary school academic year is composed of a minimum of 34 weeks and a minimum of 190 days.

Official curriculum

The primary school education is targeted for first to sixth graders in Korea, and PE is offered as a mandatory subject for third to sixth graders. The first and second graders participate in an integrated subject of music, art, and PE called Pleasant Life for six hours per week. The curriculum policies and practices are dominated by the Korean National Curriculum for Physical Education (KNCPE) (Ministry of Education, 2015).

Primary PE in Korea focuses on developing physically, cognitively, socially, and psychologically well-rounded children to lead one’s life successfully. Although KNCPE has been revised nine times since 1955, character education and the education of a whole child have continued to be one of the major concepts in primary PE. The rationale for KNCPE is strongly embedded in a vision of an educated person which includes (a) an autonomous person who develops self-identity and pioneers his or her career and life on the basis of holistic development, (b) a creative person who possesses innovative thinking, (c) a cultivated person who enjoys and develops human
customs based on the understanding of cultural knowledge and pluralistic values, and (d) a civic person who practices caring and sharing with community spirit (Hong, 2015; Ministry of Education, 2015). These represent an ideal whole person who is well rounded and contributes to the well-being of self and others.

Based on these rationales, the Korean primary PE has placed a strong emphasis on cultivating creativity, character, and ultimately developing a whole person who is well rounded in terms of psychomotor, cognitive, and affective domains (Choi, 2010). The attainment of a broader educational perspective such as personal and social development, as represented in education through the physical (Arnold, 1979), has been a major goal of the KNCPE for more than two decades.

The focus on broad educational goals has been reflected in the latest revision of the KNCPE (2015), which is characterized as core competency-based PE. The 2015 KNCPE focuses on developing core competencies needed for individuals living in a knowledge-based society. Rather than focusing on accumulating knowledge, it emphasizes the application of knowledge and skills in current and future students’ lives at home, in their community, and in their career. There are six areas of core competency cross-cutting across the school subjects: self-management, information processing, creative thinking, aesthetic appreciation, communication, and community spirit (Ministry of Education, 2015).

Each subject is expected to contribute to the development of these core competencies while maintaining unique values of the subject. Therefore, PE-specific competencies were identified, which were closely related to at least one or multiple aspects of general core competency. Through participation in physical activity and internalizing its values, students are expected to develop the following four areas of PE-specific competency:

- **Health management** refers to the ability to promote physical, social, mental, and environmental health through participation in physical activity. Students should be able to promote physical health, enhance physical fitness, and create a sound and safe environment to promote a healthy lifestyle.
- **Physical training** is a competency which is achieved through understanding and accepting one’s own ability, yet constantly challenging oneself to a better skill level. Goal-setting skills, perseverance, enthusiasm, pushing oneself toward the limit, and a sense of enjoyment can be experienced in the process of physical training.
- **Game performance** is required to play games, and it includes the use of effective strategies, the use of effective physical movements, designing games, problem-solving, cooperation, responsibility, fair play, and caring.
- **Physical expression** refers to the ability to express one’s thoughts and feelings, as well as appreciating other people’s expressions. Using movement as a medium, students are required to express themselves creatively and aesthetically on a chosen topic.

The cultivation of PE-specific competencies such as health management, physical training, game performance, and physical expression will ultimately contribute to the development of a well-rounded person, both individually and socially. The relationship between PE-specific competencies and general core competencies in KNCPE can be seen in Table 20.1.

The learning programs of Korean PE are composed of five content areas from third to ninth grade: These are:

- **Health**: the focus is on building a foundation for maintaining a healthy and active lifestyle by learning about physical growth and development, physical activity, lifestyle, enhancing and maintaining health-enhancing physical fitness, hygiene, disease, and physical activity and
leisure. The goal of the health area is to develop competency in planning and managing a healthy lifestyle by using self-management skills. It is mainly related to health management competence.

- **Challenge**: encourages students to overcome their own limits and set goals for continuous improvement based on their understanding of their current performance level. Students are expected to pursue excellence in their performances through continuous training and effort and to overcome their previous records or outperform others. Students are expected to learn how to set reasonable goals, pursue their goals despite challenges and difficulties, and actively cope with problems and physical limits. The content of challenge activities is closely related to physical training competence.

- **Competition**: includes learning how to compete with others while also demonstrating care and sportsmanship for others. Students are expected to participate in different types of competitions and to achieve common goals with their teammates. It focuses on developing game performance competence.

- **Expression**: students are expected to learn to appreciate the aesthetic dimension of movement and body and to express their thoughts and feelings through body movement. Students fulfill their desire to move through physical expression, and they also enhance the quality of communication and form relationships, which ultimately leads to a more fulfilling life. The content of expression is closely related to physical expression competence.

- **Safety**: stresses the importance of personal and social safety, as well as learning how to maintain a safe learning and living environment. The content of safety is infused into health, challenge, competition, and expression activities. The content of safety is related to health management and game performance competences.

The five content areas are consistently used as a framework to organize content for third to ninth graders in order to provide continuity in learning programs. Students can strengthen and deepen their knowledge and skills based on previous learning outcomes. The KNCPE requires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Sub-components</th>
<th>Relation with general core competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health management</td>
<td>Analytic skills on context, planning, self-esteem, co-existence</td>
<td>Self-management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Creative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical training</td>
<td>Inquiry, game analysis, problem-solving, logical and critical thinking, perseverance, self-confidence,</td>
<td>Self-management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge and information processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Creative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game performance</td>
<td>Inquiry, game analysis, problem-solving, game skills, tactic application, following rules, cooperation, conflict resolution, leadership, respect, caring</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical expression</td>
<td>Appreciation, creative thinking (analytic skills, critique skills, imagination, originality), aesthetic expression, aesthetic insights(cultural receptivity, empathy)</td>
<td>Aesthetic appreciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Creative thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that all five areas of content be covered in each year’s learning programs. The five areas of learning programs are presented based on the grade cluster approach. The specific content and example of activities for third and fourth graders in the 2015 KNCPE are presented in Table 20.2. The learning programs of KNCPE places an emphasis on the continuity and progression of the content. Therefore, the learning programs for fifth and sixth graders are composed of the same five content areas, although the specific examples of activities are different, as can be seen in Table 20.3.

### Learning programmes

A typical primary PE lesson follows the order of warming up, introduction of activity and related competence, practice within a small group setting, and assessment and reflection. The warming-up activity is usually led by a student leader so that the student can take responsibility. After the warming-up activity, teachers introduce what activities students will learn and how those activities are related to the PE-specific competence. Then students are divided into small groups and they practice physical skills and learn activity-related competence such as game performance or physical training. During this activity, students are encouraged to plan, set goals, implement, and analyse their performance in order to develop activity-related competence. After practice, students have opportunities for self-assessment and reflection. During the reflection, teachers encourage students to reflect not only what skills or activities they learned, but also what PE-specific competence they learned throughout the lesson. Special emphasis is placed on helping students to apply core competences which they learned in PE classes to their daily lives. Although all five content areas are covered by teachers as

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**Table 20.2 Learning programs for third and fourth graders (2015 KNCPE, Ministry of Education)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Sub-areas</th>
<th>Examples of physical activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Health and fitness</td>
<td>Fitness activity (jump roping, free exercises, etc.), lifestyle (posture, hygiene)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leisure and methods of</td>
<td>Leisure time physical activity (e.g., walking, cycling), fitness measurement and enhancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>physical activities</td>
<td>(e.g., stretching, push-ups, shuttle run)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>Challenge for speed</td>
<td>Short distance run, relay, long-distance running, freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Challenge for form</td>
<td>Gymnastics (e.g., mat work, balance beam, vaulting, Taekwondo Poomsae)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>Basics of competition</td>
<td>Basic understanding of tag game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Invasion games</td>
<td>Soccer-type game, basketball-type game, handball-type game, rugby-type game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>Movement expression</td>
<td>Expression with locomotor, non-locomotor, manipulative movements, expression with body, effort, space, relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rhythmic expression</td>
<td>Rhythmic gymnastics (ball, rope, ribbon), music jump rope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Physical activity and water safety</td>
<td>Water safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equipment and game safety</td>
<td>Coping with safety hazards, safe use of equipment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 20.3 Learning programs for fifth and sixth graders (2015 KNCPE, Ministry of Education)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Sub-areas</th>
<th>Examples of physical activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Growth and health-related fitness</td>
<td>Growth and health (e.g., physical development, preventing and coping with sexual assault, drinking and smoking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing health-related fitness (e.g., strength, endurance, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure and motor fitness</td>
<td></td>
<td>Outdoor and indoor leisure activities (e.g., skiing, camping, hiking, rafting, skating)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing motor fitness (e.g., power, agility, balance, coordination, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>Challenge for distance</td>
<td>Throwing for distance, long jump, high jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Challenge for target/combats</td>
<td>Bowling, golf, dart, curling/Taekwondo, ssireum, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>Field games</td>
<td>Kickball-type game, baseball-type game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Net games</td>
<td>Volleyball-type game, badminton-type game, table tennis, tennis-type game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>Traditional expression</td>
<td>Korean traditional dance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Foreign traditional dance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thematic expression</td>
<td>Creative dance, creative gymnastics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>First aid, ice and snow safety</td>
<td>First aid (CPR, bleeding, fracture, sprain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prevention and coping with ice and snow safety issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facility and outdoor safety</td>
<td>Assessing safety of sport facilities, preventing and coping with outdoor safety issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

suggested by the KNCPE guidelines, the actual implementation of the learning programs is influenced by the teachers’ and students’ preferences. Studies (Kim, 2014; Park, Lee & Jo, 2015) showed that both students and teachers prefer curricular areas such as competition and challenge to expression, leisure, or health areas. This trend was also identified in a review of primary PE research. Park and Hong (2015) found that most of primary PE research has focused on the competition and challenge areas, while the leisure and expression areas have not been widely explored.

Resourcing

Facilities

Most primary PE classes are held in outdoor playgrounds, which are often shared with several other classes. The heavy dependence on playgrounds makes it difficult for teachers to cope with inclement weather such as rain, snow, and heat. This is one of the most common excuses for teachers to skip or substitute PE for other subjects.

Almost all primary schools in Korea have playgrounds available, and 66.2% of primary schools have standard gyms or multi-purpose rooms (Ministry of Education, 2016). Although 22.0% of schools are equipped with athletic tracks surfaced with urethane, only 1.2% of schools have a swimming pool (Ministry of Education, 2016), which means that swimming can only be taught
through the use of these community facilities. The lack of facilities can affect the delivery of the content areas, such as expression, which cannot be easily taught outdoors.

**Funding**

Funding for primary PE is allotted to each school based on the number of students registered in each school. The budget for equipment and materials purchased is included in the school’s operational expenses. In addition, each school can request extra funding for special projects such as encouraging female physical activity participation, implementing before-school fitness clubs, or obesity prevention programs. Although funding opportunities from national sporting governing bodies are also available, primary school teachers are not very interested in them because most of them are classroom teachers.

**Textbooks**

PE textbooks are used by all primary schools and are considered as a major resource for PE classes. Given that the KNCPE provides only guidelines and major directions, primary teachers depend heavily on PE textbooks for guidance in what to teach and how to teach. The textbooks are developed by private publishers and then reviewed by criteria set by the government. Each school can select its textbooks from a pool of approved textbooks. Textbooks include specific grade-appropriate content, and they also provide companion teaching resources for teachers. Therefore, textbooks play a critical role in primary PE teaching. The teachers’ heavy dependence on PE textbooks sometimes causes teachers to focus more on what activities to teach instead of focusing on the rationales of the KNCPE. Although textbooks are expected to play a role as one of the many PE resources, in many cases, it acts as the ‘bible’ in teaching PE. Given that primary teachers have limited knowledge in physical skills, textbooks can be a good resource for them.

Unlike the teachers’ use of textbooks, students do not utilize PE textbooks as much as other subjects. There has been an on-going effort to make PE textbooks more student friendly by integrating the idea of student-directed learning by providing tips for learning and a workbook to fill and track their progress through continuous recording of their performance.

**Frequency**

Primary PE is a mandatory subject for third to sixth graders. All students should participate in three classes (40 minutes per class) of PE per week, which is 120 minutes per week. The three hours of PE classes are timetabled so that students can participate in PE classes in a specified time of the week. The academic school year is composed of 34 weeks; therefore, in each school year, students should complete 272 hours of PE in primary school to meet the requirements specified by the KNCPE. The time requirement is determined by the Korean Ministry of Education through research and discussion with school teachers and administrators at the time of curriculum revision. As long as the 272 hours of time requirement are met, the school can flexibly adjust the number of classes per week depending on weather, school events, and access to the facility.

**Who delivers PE?**

The delivery of primary PE is conducted by a combination of classroom teachers, specialist PE teachers, and sports instructors who support and assist delivery of PE. Traditionally, primary PE was taught by classroom teachers because holistic education for children was considered to
South Korea

be more important than developing subject specialty (Choi & Lee, 2011). Although classroom teachers are better at understanding children holistically, making good connections with the material, and providing caring relationships with children through extended communication, the quality of PE taught by classroom teachers has often been an issue in primary education.

The issue of the low quality of PE ignited the discussion for the need to enhance subject specialty, especially in the areas of PE, music, art, and English. It has also been fuelled by the teachers’ union and the Korean Federation of Teachers’ Association’s request for ensuring time to plan and prepare for the fifth- and sixth-grade teachers who have to spend more time in the classroom than the lower-grade teachers. In response to this request, the Ministry of Education introduced the PE specialist teacher system in the late 1990s. These specialist teachers, however, were selected from generalist teachers with minimal in-service training. Currently, 46% of primary schools have at least one PE specialist teacher, whereas the other 54% are taught mainly by classroom teachers (Korean Ministry of Education, 2016). When PE specialist teachers are placed, two hours are taught by the PE specialist teacher, whereas any additional PE is taught by classroom teachers. Such an approach has been reported to cause issues in relation to consistency in teaching philosophy and continuity in teaching content (Park et al., 2015). In addition, studies on the effects of PE specialist teachers and their system raised concerns about skill-focused primary PE and lack of rapport with students (Lee & Seo, 2010).

Despite these issues, the specialist teacher system has been gaining more support at the policy level because of the growing number of teachers and their unwillingness to teach PE at their primary school (Lee & Jo, 2016). In addition, with the introduction of PE specialist teachers, classroom teachers lost their competence in teaching PE because they did not have a chance to teach PE in primary school (Lee & Jo, 2016). As a result, the specialist teacher system gained more support, and the Ministry of Education announced that at least one PE specialist teacher will be placed in every school by the end of 2017 (Ministry of Education, 2016).

Sport instructors

The delivery of primary PE has also been influenced by other policies. The rise of childhood obesity, school violence, and students’ behavioural problems associated with highly academic-orientated Korean culture raised the issue of the importance of school sports and physical education. As a way to promote students’ physical activity participation, a school sports club policy has been introduced within primary schools. With this policy, students are encouraged to participate in a sports club of their choice, during, before, or after school hours. With the increased emphasis on school sports and PE, the Ministry of Education placed sports instructors in schools to assist primary PE teaching and to lead school sports clubs. The sports instructors had backgrounds in sports instruction, such as coaching or youth sports, but did not have experience in primary school teaching.

The addition of sports instructors to the primary PE teaching was expected to facilitate students’ participation and motivation in PE classes with additional resources. However, studies (Jeon & Jung, 2015; Ko, 2011) indicated that the role of sport instructors was not limited to assisting classroom teachers and specialist teachers. Some classroom teachers gave up their primary PE teaching responsibilities to sports instructors, and sports instructors often adopted sport-focused and skill-oriented teaching approaches rather than providing developmentally appropriate teaching activities.

In summary, there is a general agreement that enhancing the quality of primary PE is critical to primary education. Little consensus exists whether the specialist teacher and sport instructor systems have made a noticeable difference in enhancing the quality of primary PE. So far, the
focus of the policy has been placed on “who” has to teach primary PE, rather than “how” to prepare, train, and educate each delivery agent. Without an in-depth discussion of how these professionals should be prepared and educated, simply changing the delivery agent of PE or placing additional personnel will not be sufficient to enhance the quality of primary PE.

**Teacher preparation**

*Initial teacher education*

The typical length of primary teacher preparation is four years, including nine weeks of student teaching, which is spread through the second to the fourth year of the programme. When they complete their initial training program, they are certified as a Grade Two primary school teacher. The certification can be upgraded to Grade One after three to four years of teaching experience with 90 hours of additional in-service teacher training.

Given that primary teachers have to cover a wide range of subjects, the insufficient preparation of primary teachers for teaching PE has been a constant issue in primary teacher education. Studies on classroom teacher candidates have shown that teacher candidates have weak identity as teachers of teaching PE due to lack of physical skills, confidence, and their own negative PE experience during school years (Jo & Lee, 2012). During the initial teacher training, teacher candidates have to complete courses in five PE content areas: games, athletics, gymnastics, dance, and health. Each area is composed of one-credit hour course, which constitutes two hours of contact per week throughout the semester. In addition, teacher candidates have to complete a course on primary PE instructional methods. This is to ensure that they obtain the knowledge and skills for teaching developmentally appropriate activities.

Although the coverage of primary PE content seems sufficient, the lack of relevance in teacher preparation has been a constant issue in teacher education (Park et al., 2015; Son, 2006). One of the criticisms was that teacher education courses put more emphasis on subject matter content than on the pedagogy of primary PE. Unlike secondary PE teacher candidates, primary teacher candidates tend to be less likely to have sporting experience and lack certain physical skills, which provide a basis for the content-oriented primary PE teacher education. However, content-focused teacher education has shown to strengthen the negative perception of their own PE experience by emphasizing skill practice. In addition, the content-focused teacher education program has petrified teacher candidates’ perception that a primary PE teacher should be a skilled sport coach rather than be an organizer and deliverer of developmentally appropriate movement activities (Im, 2016; Lee & Jo, 2016).

And so there is a growing consensus that primary teacher education should focus on how to organize and instruct developmentally appropriate movements rather than a traditional, skill-oriented approach. Recently, Lee and Jo (2016) showed an alternative approach by adopting a theoretical framework called “learning to teach” (Feiman-Nemser, 2008) in a primary PE methods course. The course was organized around the four components of the thematic framework of learning to teach: learning to know like a teacher, learning to think like a teacher, learning to act like a teacher, and learning to feel like a teacher. The teacher educator’s modelling behaviour as a good elementary PE teacher and teacher educator, micro-teaching experience, and reflection on teaching were important factors in facilitating teacher candidates’ identity development.
Although finding an ideal balance between content and pedagogy is challenging, many teacher education programs seek to infuse these two into a single course so that teacher candidates have a more contextualized understanding of PE contents and pedagogy. Given the limited time given to PE preparation within a crowded primary teacher education program, integrating methods and contents is considered to be a viable option in Korean context.

**On-going professional development**

The continuing professional development (CPD) has been one of the most critical agendas for providing quality primary education in Korea. The formal professional development (PD) is tied to the acquisition of a certification. For example, all primary teachers have to complete 90 hours of formal training provided by each local office of education in order to obtain a Grade 1 teacher certificate, and only after three to four years of teaching experience. However, the Grade 1 certificate training only includes five hours of primary PE-related contents among 90 hours, which has often been criticized because of the lack of relevance to the needs of in-service teachers (Choi, 2009).

There are different types of 60-hour CPD programs for primary teachers provided by each school district office of education which are not tied to the acquisition of certification. These programs capitalize on the expertise of experienced teachers in school districts, and provide diverse content and pedagogy related courses with primary teachers all year round. Teachers can participate in the program during after-school hours, or more often, during the summer or winter vacations. Studies, however, revealed several issues in the 60-hour in-service CPD program. First, the analysis of the content of CPD revealed that the majority of programs have focused on developing physical skills rather than developing pedagogical content knowledge. Thus, they are replicating the weakness of the initial teacher training that was focused on content knowledge (Park, 2006; Sung & Lee, 2014).

This is related to the second limitation of PE-CPD in that it mainly attracts highly motivated volunteers who have a high level of physical skills and are more likely to work as a subject leader at the school. Meanwhile, the majority of teachers who need support in teaching PE tend to avoid participation due to lower physical skills. Third, most PE-CPD programs have been tied to policy level change, such as the revision of the KNCPE, or the implementation of a school sports clubs. Rather than reflecting the needs of teachers, some of the PE-CPD programs have focused on introducing PE policy changes with a top-down approach. These programs provide better access to the teachers who lead the subjects, teachers who take charge of athletic teams, or PE specialist teachers (Park, 2006). The 60 hours of PE-CPD programs are not aligned well with teachers’ classroom practices, and they don’t provide sufficient content, relevant content, or opportunities to improve teachers’ primary PE teaching practice.

Consequently, for the last three decades there has been an on-going effort to facilitate teacher-directed CPD rather than provider-oriented CPD. One of the approaches is to encourage a formation of a PE Inquiry Group in each school district in order to support their professional development. The group is voluntary in nature. They set their own goals for CPD while sharing and discussing context-specific issues of PE teaching in primary schools (Lee & Chung, 2011; Lee & Jeon, 2010). Compared to formal CPD programs, the PE Inquiry Group expanded teachers’ access to the CPD and helped teachers produce and apply context-specific knowledge relevant to their schools.
Furthermore, there is an increasing interest in a teacher learning community (TLC) to enhance the quality of teaching PE. Teachers with similar goals and interests, such as implementing a specific instructional model (Lee & Choi, 2015), or curriculum implementation (Jo, 2016), meet and set goals for improvement. Studies about teacher learning communities revealed that primary teachers tend to be the active agent in TLC, because it is voluntary in nature, and deals with relevant and practical issues. In addition, it provides ongoing learning opportunities, and empowers teachers to become the active agent of learning rather than the passive recipient of knowledge (Lee & Choi, 2015). The recent increase in school-based CPD programs shows that CPD programs should be context-embedded and growth-oriented rather than focusing on teachers’ weaknesses and transmitting pre-packaged knowledge (Jang & Lee, 2014).

**Assessment**

The guidelines for assessment are closely tied to the KNCPE, which emphasizes the alignment to the curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The assessment requires coverage of all five content areas of curriculum, including health, challenge, competition, expression, and safety. Each area of student learning is assessed against the achievement standards which should be reached throughout the instruction. The achievement standards provide specific guidelines about what to assess in primary PE. The trend of the KNCPE since the late 2000s has shifted the focus of assessment from a skill-dominated approach to assessment of comprehensive ability, including knowledge, attitude, and skills. In the health area, for example, the assessment is supposed to focus on skills, knowledge, and attitude as related to health management. This means the ability to assess their own fitness levels, set goals, and establish a sustainable, healthy lifestyle rather than assessing children’s fitness levels as an indicator of health outcomes.

Another trend is an emphasis on assessment for learning in PE through the adoption of diverse assessment techniques. For example, self-assessment and peer-assessment have been used more often in order to capture the students’ learning process and allow the students to control the learning. The techniques of assessment have been diversified to assess comprehensive ability such as character, creativity, and core competencies rather than discrete physical skills. Physical education journals, game performance observations, checklists, game designs, student portfolios, and an analysis of student movements with video recordings are used for assessment.

It is evident that the contents and techniques of assessment are diversified. What is less evident, however, is how teachers interpret the data collected from diverse sources of assessment in relation to students’ ability and socio-cultural context. The outcomes of assessment are reported to the parents as a way of explaining student achievements. The report card provides simple information with students and parents so that they can identify what needs to be improved in relation to the physical education achievement standards. Both students and parents, however, are commonly disinterested in the outcomes of the student learning assessment in PE, unlike the other academic subjects.

So far, the assessment of student learning in PE does not have the power to guide PE policy changes because it does not have a quantifiable or measureable outcome. Rather than student learning outcomes, objective measures such as students’ fitness levels or obesity levels are more influential for policy changes. These measures are also used as an evaluative indicator for school performance. Knowledge obtained from the assessment of student learning cannot go beyond the individual teachers’ classroom because it does not produce collective and quantifiable outcomes (Mun, Han & Lee, 2016).
Significant factors worth noting

Like any other subject, primary PE is also influenced by other factors. One of the critical factors influencing primary PE in Korea is the academic achievement-oriented school culture (Lee & Choi, 2015). Koreans have long been under the Confucian tradition, which emphasizes academic achievement, resulting in “educational fever” (Kim, Lee & Lee, 2005). The Confucian tradition strengthened the position of academic subjects such as math, Korean, and science while placing less emphasis on PE, art, and music. Consequently, accountability measures are applied to the learning outcomes of the academic subjects, and less attention has been paid to the assessment results of PE. Lack of accountability in PE is related to lack of quality in PE instruction, such as substituting PE for other subjects, or skipping PE classes altogether.

The issues of childhood obesity and youth problems have kept the attention of policy makers, and school sports clubs were introduced as an answer to these issues and problems (Jung, Park & Lee, 2015). Sports have a special importance within primary schools. The increases of school violence, even in the earlier stage of education, student behaviour problems, and the rise of childhood obesity have showcased the importance of sports-based character education. Consequently, the school sports club policy has been introduced as an answer to these problems, and schools have provided additional resources to implement the policy. The addition of school sports clubs has enhanced primary students’ participation in sports clubs during, before, and after school hours. Studies have reported positive physical, psychological, and affective outcomes (Choi, Ahn & Lee, 2014). The newly introduced policies presented better measurable outcomes such as the number of participants and enhancement of fitness.

Despite these positive outcomes, regular school PE has obtained relatively less attention on enhancing physical activity and promoting positive outcomes. As a result funding has been directed away from PE, and instead since 2000, the focus has been on supporting elite sports teams and implementing school sports clubs. The emphasis on school sports clubs exacerbated the issue of finding unique roles and status of regular PE in comparison to school sports clubs.

Finally, the emphasis on fitness and physical activity is another important factor, and it often shapes primary PE in a different direction than intended. The rise of children’s physical inactivity level and obesity caught the attention of policy makers, and the physical activity promotion policy (Sung & Lee, 2014), such as 7560+ (doing more than 60 minutes of physical activity five days per week), was introduced. It facilitated the implementation of many physical activity programs, such as a before-school jogging program, as well as other physical activity enhancement programs that all take place outside of regular physical education classes. In addition, due to increased attention regarding children’s physical fitness, the Ministry of Education, Sport, and Technology developed a physical fitness testing and management program called PAPS (physical activity promotion system). Although the intended goal of the system was to diagnose, assess, and set goals to improve children’s physical fitness, the use of physical fitness level as a school performance indicator distorted its intention and caused many sides effects, such as outcome-driven physical fitness testing and education.

The three factors mentioned earlier show that primary PE is not insulated from culture, health, and sport-related policies. The school sports and health programs can have synergic effects with regular PE when they share common goals and purposes. Ensuring coordinated efforts among different policies is a constant challenge in current primary PE in Korea. Otherwise, primary PE could be pulled in many directions within the changing dynamics of health, sports, and culture.
Several publishing companies produce primary PE textbooks in Korea. Readers can refer to www.donggapublishing.com, www.chunjae.co.kr, and www.jihak.co.kr for some examples.

References


21

ELEMENTARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Melissa Parker and Kevin Patton

Introduction

Physical education was established in United States elementary schools in the early 20th century. Though originally taught by generalists or itinerant teachers with a watered-down secondary curriculum, by the beginning of the 21st century elementary physical education had emerged with its own curriculum and pedagogically appropriate practices for children. The commonly accepted purpose of contemporary physical education in the United States, both at the elementary and secondary levels, is the development of physically literate individuals who have the “motor skills, knowledge and behaviours of active living, physical fitness, sportsmanship, self-efficacy, and emotional intelligence” (SHAPE, 2016: 6). As such, physical education is considered an essential part of the school curriculum and is based on a planned, sequential, standards-based program with written curricula and appropriate instruction.

Physical education provision in the United States, however, is neither clean-cut nor simple. The context of physical education practice differs from state to state as, “no federal law requires minimum standards for physical education in American schools, and there are no federal directives to states or schools to offer physical education programs” (SHAPE, 2016: 6). Instead, the federal government mandates that each state provide free public education. Educational practice, therefore, is state specific and within some states a local practice as schools are clustered into districts and states have relinquished educational control to local governing authorities. Furthermore, there are private (fee-paying schools) that have to report to the state but whose curricula may extend or focus what is offered in public schools. Regardless if public or private, there is no “standard” academic year or school day; however, a common format is a six-hour school day for approximately 180 days per year.

To add to the complexity, whereas physical education curriculum and requirements are decided at the state and local levels, both past and present federal educational legislation, especially in relationship to school accountability, has and does influence and affect physical education provision by allocating funding to districts that follow certain guidelines. Most notable are the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 (U.S. Department of Education) which did not include physical education as a core educational subject in U.S. schools and the more recent Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015) which designated physical education as an integral part of a well-rounded education. Although neither of these legislative
acts mandate physical education, they do allow application for additional federal funding for physical education.

Despite the lack of federal mandates and the complexity of federal policy, 86.4%, or 44 out of 51 states, require physical education in the elementary school. Yet to describe elementary physical education in the United States presents an ongoing challenge as the diversity of state education legislative and regulatory activity and the resulting policies and implementation approaches make it difficult to draw definitive conclusions. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the landscape of elementary physical education in the United States. We will convey both current recommendations and prevailing practices as they are known regarding the context and status of physical education in American elementary schools.

**Official curriculum**

The landscape of elementary physical education in the United States may ultimately reflect the diversity of the country. Nevertheless, physical education is considered an educational subject, with planned curricula, unlinked to sport and sporting agencies and governing bodies. As such the goal is not to develop athletes or promote any one sport, but instead to provide the foundation for individual choice in being physically active for a lifetime. Therefore, there is a focus on the development of curricula based on standards, assessment for and of learning, and physical education taught by subject specialists.

Although there is no national curriculum for physical education in the United States, there is guidance. In fact, as an aspect of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), a national curriculum is explicitly forbidden by the Congress of the United States. Nonetheless in response to educational reform measures of the 1980s and 1990s, physical education, like all academic content areas, developed educational standards establishing what students should be able to accomplish at the specified times during the K–12 school experience. These standards, which have been revised twice since the initial writing (NASPE, 1995, 2004; SHAPE, 2014), were developed by a task force of experts under the auspices of the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE), the professional organization for physical education (renamed in 2014 to the Society of Health and Physical Educators [SHAPE] America). SHAPE America is not a governmental agency, but a private professional body that liaises with the federal government. As the principal professional body, SHAPE America currently advocates five national physical education standards, couched in physical literacy (see Table 21.1) defining “what students should know and be able to do as result of instruction in physical education” (SHAPE, 2014: 3). These

<table>
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<th>Table 21.1 U.S. national physical education standards (2014)</th>
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<td><strong>Standard 1 –</strong> The physically literate individual demonstrates competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.</td>
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<td><strong>Standard 2 –</strong> The physically literate individual applies knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics related to movement and performance.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 3 –</strong> The physically literate individual demonstrates the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.</td>
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<td><strong>Standard 4 –</strong> The physically literate individual exhibits responsible personal and social behaviour that respects self and others.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 5 –</strong> The physically literate individual recognizes the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction.</td>
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standards are further defined through grade-level outcomes, which provide guidance for each standard. Yet although there are national standards, due to the fact that education in the United States is a state prerogative, states and local school districts across the country might accept the SHAPE America standards or they may develop their own. At the state (or local) level standards are adopted by the sanctioned state (or local) governments. It is at this point that the standards become legislative directives regarding the design of curriculum. Although most states have standards of some sort, these standards and their interpretation vary greatly (SHAPE, 2016).

School-based physical education policies in the United States have been identified as ambiguous as they are “permissive in nature, homonymous, and rife with uncertain verbiage” (McCullick et al., 2012: 207). Yet 50 out of 51 states have adopted standards of some sort and over 81% (44 out of 51) of the states are required to comply with the standards. Most states (48) address national standards 1, 2, and 5 in some sense, and 47 states also address Standards 3 and 4. A small majority of states address additional content in their standards.

Importantly, elementary physical education in the United States is fairly autonomous. It reflects the best of what is known about “children’s natural physical, mental and social development” (NASPE, 2009: 4). It is not, in most cases, a “watered down”, sports-based, secondary curriculum.

Learning programmes

Because curricula are determined at the state or local level, encompassing national standards and state standards, physical education in the United States is taught in many different forms and structures (Institute of Medicine [IOM], 2013). Despite some consensus about what constitutes quality elementary physical education, a substantial gap remains between what research says about effective practice and the actual curriculum that is delivered by physical educators (Graber, Locke, Lambdin & Solomon, 2008). Regardless of the curricular model or instructional approach, elementary physical education in the United States does have some common features. For example, lessons are almost exclusively coeducational, and students do not change clothing prior to engaging in physical education. Students (approximately 25 to 30) are typically delivered by their classroom teacher to the gymnasium (or in some instances a multipurpose room or field space) for physical education. Lessons are typically 30 minutes in length and utilize a variety of manipulative and sport-related equipment during lessons. Despite these common characteristics, physical education varies greatly in terms of the curriculum model employed and instruction approach utilized. Therefore, multiple “typical lessons” will be described in what follows.

Many elementary physical education programmes in the United States continue to employ a multi-activity approach, characterized by a wide variety of activities (e.g., sport, fitness, games, and dance) in relatively short units. The content of these programmes is often determined on a weekly basis and therefore there is little progression or consistency between lessons. A typical multi-activity lesson may begin with a generic warm-up activity followed by a short skill practice session (either motor skill or sport related). The lesson would then conclude with extended game play or low organized games (e.g., relay races). Instruction in most instances is largely teacher-directed with direct instruction the predominant instructional model. Although widespread, this approach has received increasing criticism for its lack of depth, inability to engage all students, and failure to offer a truly diverse array of activities (Kulinna, 2008; van der Mars & Tannehill, 2015).

Many professionals advocate that curriculum models provide a framework for the effective delivery of meaningful and coherent physical education programmes (see Lund & Tannehill, 2015). Of these, the curriculum models most frequently used in U.S. elementary physical education include a developmental or movement analysis approach and fitness and wellness education.
approach. Less frequently, teaching games for understanding and sport education may be seen in upper elementary grades. These models offer many viable options for initiating and sustaining quality elementary physical education programmes that support the development of physical literacy. Although indicating promising results, however, a paucity of data are available which demonstrate the relationship between the actual level of physical activity in which students are engaged and the curriculum models adopted by their schools (IOM, 2013) as well as a lack of empirical evidence supporting elementary curricula’s ability to impart the skills, knowledge and dispositions to become physically active for a lifetime (Kulinna, 2008).

**Developmental or movement analysis approach**

A developmental, at times called a movement analysis or skill theme, approach to elementary physical education (Gallahue & Cleland, 2003; Graham, Holt/Hale & Parker, 2013; Rovegno & Bandhauer, 2017) recognizes the “acquisition of motor skills and increased physical confidence unique to the development level of the individual” (Gallahue & Cleland, 2003: 11–12). As such the curriculum is developmentally and instructionally appropriate for children reflecting the needs and interests of children (Holt/Hale & Hall, 2015). Curricula that adhere to a developmental model focus on developing fundamental skills foundational to multiple physical activities. The intent is a set of building blocks of locomotor, non-locomotor, and manipulative skills that are then gradually applied in increasingly complex forms through games, dance, and gymnastics settings. These approaches are generally underpinned by a focus on cooperation and small-sided games in a constructivist learning environment. Typical lessons focus on student exploration and decision making with regard to movement concepts. For example, the teacher might begin a lesson with an instant activity which serves as a warm-up and introduction to the lesson’s focus. Next, the teacher provides a review of a previously explored topic (Who can tell me the cues for striking with a paddle?) and then present students with a new challenge (How many times can you strike it to yourself without a miss?). After students have explored the challenge, the teacher uses a series of well-constructed questions to help students explore the concept further (How might your paddle angle change if you were striking over a net? What happens when you angle the paddle down? Up?). Students make individual decisions about their ability and response to the questions. The lesson continues, largely following Rink’s (2013) task progression of extension, refinement, and application, with more individual and pair practice of various striking tasks; the complexity of which is either determined by the teacher or through invitation to modify based on their abilities. The teachers’ instructional approach is largely student-directed and inquiry in nature.

**Fitness and wellness education**

Fitness education is frequently used to describe a variety of approaches to fitness-centred curriculum. This approach seeks to promote student physical activity and acknowledges that physical education must do more to prepare and motivate students to engage in physical activity behaviours inside and outside of school (McConnell, 2015). A number of conceptually based health-related programmes are used at the elementary level, including Physical Best (SHAPE, 2011a, 2011b) and the Fitness for Life curriculum targeting classroom teachers and other elementary staff (Corbin, LeMasurier, Lambdin & Greiner, 2010). Designed to help students acquire the knowledge and skills for lifelong participation in physical activity for optimal health benefits, dynamic physical education (Pangrazi & Beigle, 2016) is also widely used. Perhaps the most well-known and scientifically documented is Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids! (SPARK).
A typical SPARK lesson may include a fitness and skill activity in a 30-minute lesson beginning with a fitness activity focused on increasing student’s heart rate, followed by skill development time in which students play modified games that improve physical ability as well as provide increased movement opportunities (Kulinna, 2008). SPARK is designed for both skill and physical activity behaviour development (with a skill and fitness activity component in each lesson). The instructional approach within fitness and wellness education varies depending on content and teacher preference.

Teaching games for understanding

TGFU has been described as a viable alternative approach for games teaching by focusing student attention on the problems posed by game situations and the solutions to those problems (Mitchell & Oslin, 2015). Originally developed for secondary school physical education, more recently the model has been further developed and refined for use at the elementary level (Mitchell, Oslin & Griffin, 2013). Key tenets of TGFU include the following: a) games are modified to suit the students’ skills and experience, b) skill learning is tied to developing tactical knowledge, c) tactical problems are foregrounded within learning tasks, and d) students are given multiple opportunities to problem solve and practice the appropriate tactical response (Hastie & Mesquita, 2017).

A typical lesson is likely to begin with small-sided, modified game play designed to create a tactical problem. After game play, the teacher utilizes a question/answer session to elicit elements of game appreciation, tactical awareness, and appropriate decisions. Game-related skill practice follows, providing opportunities to try the potential solutions. Finally, students return to the game to determine their effectiveness (Hastie & Mesquita, 2017). The instructional approach within TGFU is largely teacher focused as the teacher dictates the content selection and managerial control of lessons.

Sport education

Guided by the three long-term goals of supporting students in becoming competent, literate, and enthusiastic sportspersons, the sport education model is largely adopted at the secondary level but has also been embraced at the upper elementary level. Seeking to create an “authentic sporting experience” for students, Siedentop (1994) identified key features of sport education, including a) that sport is structured in seasons, b) players are team members who remain with their team for the entire season, c) seasons are defined by formal competition, interspersed with teacher- and student-directed practice sessions, d) a culminating event concludes each season, e) sport play includes extensive record keeping, and f) a festive atmosphere pervades the season (and particularly the culminating event). A typical lesson involves students transitioning from initial experiences in refining and practicing skills under the guidance of a student coach, through a series of scrimmage games, and ending with a team competition in which the spirit of the competition is to compile points for winning games while showing good sporting behaviour (Hastie & Mesquita, 2017). Teachers are initially central in all aspects of lessons, particularly in the early part of the season. Their involvement lessens and student control increases as the season progresses.

Resourcing

Within the U.S. physical education programmes, resources vary widely. Resources available that support learning programmes include facilities, equipment, and funding, among others. Recently, the Institute of Medicine (2013) indicated that adequate amounts of these types of resources are
The United States

crucial to support quality physical education, noting, however, that school budget cuts and inadequate facilities are major challenges to providing positive learning opportunities for all students.

With respect to physical education facilities, some primary schools have access to gymnasiums with wooden or all-purpose floors as well as playground and field spaces that are safe and conducive to the range of physical activities (Graber et al., 2008). Other schools are limited to a much smaller multi-purpose room or cafeteria that must be shared to accommodate other school activities such as lunch. In the temperate southern regions of the country, most students attend physical education classes on outside playing fields or playgrounds. During severe weather, however, teachers in these regions must use a hallway, multipurpose area, or even their regular classroom for physical education (Graber et al., 2008).

Equipment available to students also differs extensively among schools. Whenever possible, it is recommended that all students should have access to their own developmentally appropriate equipment to avoid waiting time (NASPE, 2009). This equipment should include a variety of small manipulative equipment as well as access to larger equipment that maximizes learning opportunities. Whereas many elementary schools offer adequate equipment to students, many schools may, in fact, not experience the same opportunities (Graber et al., 2008). In fact, according to the most recent SHAPE of the Nation Report (SoN) (2016), only 1 of 51 states, South Carolina, annually assesses the availability of both appropriate equipment and adequate facilities for students to engage in required physical education instruction. Oregon annually assesses facilities required to provide physical education. As Graber et al. (2008) note, even if children are fortunate enough to receive physical education from a certified specialist, and even if the teacher finds creative ways for students to share equipment or provides supplementary homemade equipment, those students will be disadvantaged relative to the number of learning opportunities students from well-equipped schools receive.

Also essential to quality primary school physical education is adequate financial support. Budget cuts have affected schools’ ability to hire physical education teachers, maintain appropriate class sizes, and purchase sufficient equipment. Regarding funding for physical education programmes in school districts and schools, the SoN report (2016) indicated that more than half of states (58.3%, 28 of 48 states) received general education funding, 14 (29.2%) received school district appropriations, and 1 state received a special appropriation. The other five states (10.4%) received another type of funding. Additionally, 15 of 49 (30.6%) of states reported that additional funding, such as competitive grant awards, was available for physical education programmes.

Limited budgets have a negative impact on a school’s ability to purchase enough physical education equipment to engage all students in increasingly large class sizes and cause physical education teachers to abandon quality evidence-based physical education programmes and resort to large-group games and activities. Though the average student–teacher ratio at the elementary level is 28:1, only 16 states report that the state-specified student–teacher ratio applies to physical education (SHAPE, 2016). A NASPE (2009) survey found the median physical education budget for physical education programmes nationally was only $764 per school (with on average only $460 per year going to elementary schools); a very low investment in a programme that has been proven to be valuable for our children’s wellness and academic success (SHAPE, 2016). Further, 64% cite “school budget” for physical education programme funding, followed by school district budget (38%), Parent Teacher Association/Parent Teacher Organization (34%), and grant programmes (28%).

Unfortunately, many students and school districts across the country have not realized the benefits of physical education as a result of widespread funding cuts for these programmes. The previously mentioned Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015), a bill which replaced No Child Left Behind and provides federal funding and the framework for elementary and secondary
education in the United States, has provided U.S. schools some hope. ESSA makes physical education eligible for funding opportunities under the well-rounded education designation, as well as additional state block grant funding opportunities (SHAPE, 2016).

**Frequency**

Recommendations and actuality are distinctly different when it comes to the frequency of physical education, as lesson scheduling is commonly at the discretion of school principals in the United States. SHAPE America has established recommendations for instructional time in its *Essential Components of Physical Education* (2015). The guidelines state that children be provided opportunities to learn, which necessitates at least 150 minutes per week of instruction at the elementary school level. *Appropriate Instructional Practice Guidelines for Elementary School Physical Education* (NASPE, 2009) indicates that within the time allocated the teacher plans for skill and concept instruction and provides adequate time for practice, skill development, and feedback, based on appropriate skill analysis. Furthermore, lessons should be planned to revisit skills and concepts throughout the year and from year to year, to allow for student growth and readiness.

Despite these guidelines, only 33% of the states require a minimum amount of weekly activity time. In one state, classroom-based physical activity breaks are also required. These recommended amounts of instructional time, the nature of that instructional time, and physical activity time are not arbitrary. They reflect the conception that physical activity is neither an equivalent nor substitute for physical education (SHAPE, 2016). Although the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends children receive 60 minutes of physical activity per day, physical education is not solely about being physically active. Furthermore, these recommendations are representative of research findings in the areas of early childhood education and motor behaviour (McCullick et al., 2012).

Recent reports indicate the reality of physical education at the elementary school is far different than the recommendations. Just over 86% of the states require provision of physical education at the elementary level, and of these only 37.3% require a set number of minutes per week; only six states including and the District of Columbia require the recommended 150 minutes per week (SHAPE, 2016). A common scenario in U.S. elementary schools is for children to have physical education twice per week in 30- to 45-minute periods.

**Who delivers physical education?**

The United States has the largest percentage of elementary physical education specialists in the world (Hardman & Marshall, 2000). State licensure/certification and an endorsement to teach physical education in the elementary school is required in 71.4% (35/51) of the states. Yet 66% of states allow elementary classroom generalists to teach physical education. There are no data on the external provision of physical education at the elementary school level and by all accounts it does not appear to be a widely accepted practice.

**Teacher preparation**

Most physical education teachers in the United States are licensed to teach both elementary and secondary physical education. To become certified, prospective teachers are required to complete a pre-service programme in physical education teacher education at the college or university level. These programmes are accredited by either state legislative procedures in individual states or the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) (a non-profit, non-governmental
accrediting body) or both. State legislative requirements most often include courses in general education as well as the disciplines related to physical education (e.g., exercise physiology, motor learning, motor development, child growth and development, sport sociology, etc.), and pedagogy-specific courses either in colleges of education or departments of physical education. The pedagogy-specific courses tend to focus on elementary and secondary curriculum; instruction at the elementary and secondary levels; assessment; inclusion; and physical activity courses that provide content knowledge specific to the common curricular offerings of physical education (e.g., games, dance, gymnastics, aquatics, outdoor pursuits, etc.). As part of their preparation, pre-service teachers will receive approximately 18 to 24 credits (54 to 72 contact hours) in elementary specific content and pedagogy. This includes at least one field-based supervised practicum in schools prior to student teaching and eight weeks of student teaching in elementary physical education. In short, the content these teachers receive at the elementary level is specific to the teaching of young children; it representing developmentally appropriate, holistic learning.

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation accreditation procedures are guided by the 2008 National Initial Physical Education Teacher Education Standards developed by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) within SHAPE America (now under review). These standards indicate that teacher candidates:

• should know and apply discipline-specific scientific and theoretical concepts critical to the development of physically educated individuals.
• are physically educated individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate competent movement performance and health enhancing fitness as delineated in the NASPE K–12 Standards.
• should plan and implement developmentally appropriate learning experiences aligned with local, state, and national standards to address the diverse needs of all students.
• should use effective communication and pedagogical skills and strategies to enhance student engagement and learning.
• should utilize assessments and reflection to foster student learning and inform instructional decisions.
• should demonstrate dispositions essential to becoming effective professionals.

Programmes accredited by CAEP undergo a national review process requiring portfolio documentation of teacher candidates’ ability to meet all of the Initial Physical Education Teacher Education Standards.

Alternatively, when generalist elementary teachers teach physical education in the school their preparation differs significantly. As part of their university preparation, they are usually required to take a one- to three-credit course (15 to 45 contact hours) in elementary physical education. This course content varies widely ranging from elementary physical education content to an appreciation of physical education. Teaching experiences are variable and usually include either peer teaching or limited sessions with children brought to the university campus; rarely are there actual “field experiences”. The implications of generalist teachers are significant. These teachers, often despite the best of intentions, are plagued by a lack of content knowledge, feelings of inadequacy, and concerns for safety (Grabert et al., 2008) that result in the abandonment of learning centred physical education.

Most states in the United States (86%) require on-going professional development to maintain or renew teacher licensure. There is great choice in this professional development, and it is most frequently offered as university credit-carrying courses sometimes provided by school districts and sometimes sourced personally by teachers. Many workshops sponsored by professional
organizations will offer university credit to entice teacher participation. On a promising note, almost two-thirds of the states report offering professional development that is content specific to physical education (SHAPE, 2016). Little is known about the conduct, specific content, or format of these professional development experiences or to what extent they mirror what research indicates regarding effective professional development (see Parker & Patton, 2017). Little is also known about the uptake of professional development by teachers regardless of their status, generalist or specialist. Specialist teachers are more likely to attend content specific professional development from SHAPE America or the constituent state organizations, whereas generalist teachers primarily avail themselves of professional development related to core subjects. School-based professional development is most frequently offered regarding core subjects and not physical education. Scant funding is available for teachers to partake in professional development of their own choice.

**Assessment**

A wide variety of assessments are commonly used in elementary physical education and can include traditional summative assessments and other formative assessments such as exit slips, checklists, rating scales, and rubrics. Appropriate assessments provide concrete evidence of whether students have achieved grade-level outcomes, allow teachers to reflect on effectiveness of instruction, and provide evidence of programme success (SHAPE, 2015). As advocated by SHAPE America (2014: 89), student assessment is aligned with national and/or state physical education standards and established grade-level outcomes, and is included in the written physical education curriculum along with administration protocols:

- Student assessment includes evidence-based practices that measure student achievement in all areas of instruction, including physical fitness.
- Grading is related directly to the student learning objectives identified in the written physical education curriculum.
- The physical education teacher follows school district and school protocols for reporting and communicating student progress to students and parents.

Despite these guidelines, U.S. elementary physical education teachers’ use of formal assessment, in general, is often reported to be lacking due to time constraints, a general disbelief about the necessity of assessment, and a gap between teachers’ knowledge of assessment theory and practice (Veal, 1988). Not unlike results reported in other countries (Annerstedt & Larsson, 2010; Hay & Penney, 2013), physical education assessment practices in the United States are underpinned by little consensus, questionable validity, and a slow ability to change. Although some districts and states have required assessment in physical education, South Carolina and Ohio are among the only states that have designed and implemented a more comprehensive assessment programme with legislated provisions for accountability at the school level (Lorson & Mitchell, 2016; Rink et al., 2013). In both cases, the system requires an assessment of the extent to which students in a programme are competent in the state’s standards (which largely mirror the national NASPE standards). Then scores for each school are reported on a publicly disseminated school report card (Rink & Mitchell, 2003).

Developed to provide assessments that measure student success in meeting critical indicators for U.S. national standards, PE Metrics (NASPE, 2011) was designed as a cognitive and motor skill assessment package, in part to address assessment accountability in the United States. Though widely publicized, adoption of this assessment system is largely unknown. Notwithstanding, the
most recent SoN Report (2016) indicates that almost one-third (32.7%, 16 of 49 states) require student assessment directly related to state physical education standards. More than half (56.5%, 13 of 23 states) send individual student results to parents/guardians. Assessment results are most often in the form of developmental reports related to the standards. For example, indicators of whether children are “below grade level expectations”, “meeting expectations”, or “exceeding expectations” with narrative comments provided to parents/guardians. Fewer states use results for other purposes (p. 15):

- 30.4% use aggregate data to inform school district or school’s long-term strategic planning
- 26.1% use aggregate data to inform wellness policies
- 21.7% send aggregate school data to the state Department of Education
- 21.7% use aggregate data to inform School Improvement Plans
- 17.4% send aggregate school district data to the state Department of Education
- 13.0% share aggregate school district data publicly
- 4.4% use data for a research study

With respect to fitness testing, approximately one-quarter (26.5%, 13 of 49 states) require student physical fitness assessment. Nine states require a particular fitness assessment to be used (i.e., FitnessGram). The most commonly reported elementary grade in which a fitness assessment is conducted is grade 5 (78.6%, 11 of 14 states). Five (12.5%) of 40 states require schools to collect body mass index (BMI) in one or more grades. Ten of 40 states (25.0%) require height and weight collection. Among those 40 states, only one state does not allow collection of BMI data for each student. The most common use of results, reported by 6 of 13 (46.2%) of states, was sending individual student results to parents. Currently the assessment reporting of fitness scores may have some impact on what and how fitness is taught within physical education. Fitness content tends to be health related, based on criterion referenced standards with more emphasis on goal setting.

**Significant other factors**

Because no federal law mandates physical education be provided to students in the U.S. schools, there is limited accountability for states or schools to offer such programmes. Although states define guidelines and establish requirements, implementation is left up to individual school districts. As such some additional external factors influence the nature of physical education in U.S. elementary schools.

Though predominantly occurring in secondary physical education, online physical education (OLPE) is becoming more and more prevalent in the United States (IOM, 2013). Online physical education, however, has unique challenges such as the teaching and learning of motor skills (hopping, skipping, jumping, etc.), sport skills (throwing, catching, kicking, striking with bat, etc.), dance, and fitness (Daum & Buschner, 2014). It is of concern that only just over half (58.8%; 25 of 44 states) require that OLPE be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Perhaps because of a lack of certified teacher in many online courses, some courses fail to adequately address national standards for learning and physical activity guidelines, indicating that some teachers are not committed to holding students accountable for learning (Daum & Buschner, 2012).

It has been advocated that OLPE courses, if designed and implemented appropriately, may serve as an appropriate method of instruction for students who are unable to be in school-based settings, such as students located in remote geographical areas, students with special needs, or working students (SHAPE, 2016). These alternatives to traditional physical education may be particularly advantageous for schools that lack certified teachers or have inadequate facilities.
and equipment (SHAPE, 2016). Online learning, however, is changing the education landscape despite the limited empirical research and conflicting results on its effectiveness in producing student learning, concluding that OLPE is an exciting, yet unproven, option as an alternative method of delivering physical education content (Daum & Buschner, 2014).

At the forefront of conversations regarding physical education in the United States is where physical education is situated within the larger physical activity arena. In 2014, the CDC adopted the Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) as the national physical activity framework. CSPAP is a multi-component programme designed to provide opportunities for students to be physically active during the school day to encourage physical activity outside the school day to help young people achieve the national physical activity recommendations of 60 minutes per day (Rink, Hall & Williams, 2010; SHAPE, 2016). Within CSPAP, physical education is positioned as one of five components (see Figure 21.1).

Physical education is considered foundational in not only providing one venue in which students are able to be physically active, but “develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health enhancing level of physical activity and fitness, while exhibiting personal responsibility and social behaviour that respects self and others” (SHAPE: 13). These programmes should offer meaningful learning opportunities and developmentally appropriate instruction with specific learning outcomes (Chen, Hypnar, Mason, Zalmout & Hammond-Bennett, 2014). Although the effectiveness and practicality of the CSPAP approach remain to be fully tested (Carson et al., 2014), there is beginning evidence to suggest that quality teaching within quality physical education programmes plays a significant role in contributing to students’ daily PA behaviours in and out of school (Chen et al., 2014).

Notes

1 Elementary school is the equivalent of what many European/Commonwealth countries refer to as primary school.
2 Elementary school in the United States encompasses pre-kindergarten to fifth grade and includes children aged 4 to 10 approximately.
The United States

3 Data reported include 50 states plus the District of Columbia; hence the listing of 51 states in places.
4 Curricular models represent a general pattern for designing programs based on a conceptual framework identifying learning goals and program structure (Casey, 2017).

References


Introduction

Australia, officially the Commonwealth of Australia, is commonly dubbed the ‘island continent’ due to being surrounded by the Indian and Pacific oceans in the southern and eastern hemispheres. It has a population of approximately 24 million people and consists of six states (New South Wales [NSW], Queensland [Qld], South Australia [SA], Tasmania [Tas], Victoria [Vic], Western Australia [WA]) and two territories (Australian Capital Territory [ACT], Northern Territory [NT]). Much of the population is located in coastal cities and towns, and heritage is largely British and Irish due to settlements in the 18th century. Acknowledgement of Australia’s Indigenous peoples and contributions is developing with a public apology in 2008, although it remains an area of contention. Christianity is the main religion practiced in Australia and is influential in health, education and welfare. With increasing immigration, Australia is developing as a multicultural nation with several persons born elsewhere, and many with at least one overseas-born parent. Australia is known for its climate, water and adventure activities, wildlife, a love of sun and sport and fair-go attitude.

There are two levels of government – federal and state/territory – with the responsibility for education largely located with the state/territory parliaments. However, a ‘new federalism’ arose with the creation of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) in 1998. MCEETYA consisted of state and territory ministers of education and the federal minister of education. Set with an intention of setting National Goals for Schooling in Australia, MCEETYA created the Hobart Declaration in 1998, the Adelaide Declaration in 2000 and the Melbourne Declaration in 2008. ‘The Melbourne Declaration for Schooling’ (MCEETYA, 2008) focused on discourses of excellence and equity in schooling for Australian children and youth. As a direct consequence of this agreed bipartisan document, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) was established in 2008 with the responsibility of developing a quality Australian curriculum. Three phases of curriculum development (clusters of subjects) occurred from 2010 to 2014 with the intention of full implementation in 2017. Health and physical education (HPE) has held a position within all three declaration documents but with varying status. In addition to the arguments, in 2009 ‘The Future of Sport in Australia’ report (known as the Crawford Report), supported the status of health and physical education status in stating a need to put ‘sport and physical activity back into Education’ (Australian Government, 2009). Through successful lobbying, largely from the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation
(ACHPER), HPE was included in Phase Three of the Australian Curriculum development as a ‘core and mandated’ curriculum area for Foundation (4 to 5 years of age) to Year 10 (15 to 16 years of age). A federal review of the Australian Curriculum in 2014 (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014) led to a revision of the core and mandated subjects to be English, maths, science and history (now termed humanities and social sciences). As a consequence, health and physical education, and therefore physical education, retained its compulsory status but is dependent upon school system and Principal level decisions. Physical education is a continuing subject in the majority of schools in Australia and taught through a variety of methods (see later section).

The development of the Australian Curriculum has been fraught with contestation, including influences of neoliberalism, new federalism and lobbying and discourses about consistency, quality and equity (Reid, 2009, 2010). The curriculum has demonstrated a ‘settlement on the “selective traditions” of school knowledge’ (Luke, 2010: 5) and settlement of discourses (Brady & Kennedy, 2013) to create a national curriculum. Macdonald (2013) has referred to this curriculum-making as ‘an exercise in gradualism’, with consultation occurring in many spaces and places. Further, ‘re-settlements’ of curriculum have occurred at both the federal and state/territory levels, allowing for autonomy but also raising issues of quality.

Additional curriculum ‘re-settlements’ occur at the schooling level, with Australia having a publically funded school system in each state/territory (e.g. Department of Education and Training Queensland), a Catholic school system in each state/territory (e.g. Catholic Education Commission Western Australia) and independent schools. Primary years of schooling generally include Foundation or Prep/Preparatory Year to Year 6, and include children between the ages of 4 and 12. There are approximately 40 weeks in the school year operating between late January to early December, with compulsory attendance at all levels. A five-hour day is the usual commitment between Monday and Friday, and participation in physical education can vary from 30 to 270 minutes per week.

**Official curriculum and rationale**

The Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (AC:HPE) (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA] 2016a), initially released in 2013 and more recently revised in 2016, presents to Australian schools a futures-oriented curriculum that intends to ‘develop knowledge, skills and understandings’ to enable ‘every young Australian . . . to flourish as healthy, safe and active citizens in the 21st Century’ (ACARA, 2016a: 4). With regard to physical education (PE) it states

> at the core . . . is the acquisition of movement skills and concepts to enable students to participate in a range of physical activities – confidently, competently and creatively. As a foundation for lifelong physical activity participation and enhanced performance, students acquire an understanding of how the body moves and develop positive attitudes towards physical activity participation. They develop an appreciation of the significance of physical activity, outdoor recreation and sport in Australian society and globally. Movement is a powerful medium for learning, through which students can practise and refine personal, behavioural, social and cognitive skills.

*(ACARA, 2016a: 4)*

The AC:HPE is structured into two strands: Personal, Social and Community Health (PSCH) and Movement and Physical Activity (MPA). Each strand has content descriptions arranged under three sub-strands. In addition, there are 12 focus areas (e.g. fundamental movement skills, food and nutrition)
that must be addressed in nominated bands of schooling (early childhood, primary, secondary). The HPE propositions focus on educative purposes, take a strengths-based approach, value movement, develop health literacy and a critical inquiry approach and have been informed by research and contemporary pedagogical approaches (Arnold, 1988; Antonovsky, 1996; Nutbeam, 2008; Tinning, 2008; Kirk, 2009; Wright & Macdonald, 2010). Figure 22.1 outlines the AC:HPE structure and is meant to portray the nestedness and interrelationship of all elements and the potential for integration.

**Propositions**

The propositions have informed the content descriptions, the language and syntax and are intended to influence pedagogy. The ‘focus on educative purposes’ prioritises the learner and learning and that a developmentally appropriate curriculum is essential to student achievement and success. Dinan Thompson (2015) has noted previously that this proposition is the ‘bonding agent’ for all other propositions. Taking ‘a strengths-based approach’ calls for a perspective of the learner bringing their knowledge and experiences to HPE, and the teacher is to build on these strengths.
or assets or resources. This approach is commonly located in health and health promotion and challenges the deficit and competency models of pedagogy. ‘Value movement’ is the proposition that most teachers of physical education would recognise. It values the uniqueness and embodiment of learning in, through and about movement (Arnold, 1988), and is most obvious in the structure of the ‘Movement and Physical Activity’ sub-strands of the curriculum (see Table 22.1). It has caused some discussion for primary physical education where teaching may have prioritised ‘Moving our body’ or learning in movement. The ‘develop health literacy’ proposition is closely linked to strengths–based approach and sees individuals (learners) having an ability to access, learn, use and evaluate health information and services to make decisions, enhance and maintain health and wellbeing for self and others. There are three levels of health literacy (functional, interactive and critical) to understand and teach (Nutbeam, 2008). Although some may see this as only pertinent to health information and decisions, the curriculum appreciates that health literacy is part of movement and physical activity understandings and choices as well. Including a ‘critical inquiry approach’ calls for a contextual understanding and analysis and acknowledges diversity, equity, values and culture as having influence on health practices and physical activity participation.

Further to this diagram and the propositions, the Australian Curriculum for all subjects contributes to ‘general capabilities’ that develop a ‘successful learner, confident and creative individual, and active and informed citizen’ (see www.australiancurriculum.edu.au). Capabilities include literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology (ICT) capability, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, ethical understanding and intercultural understanding (ACARA, 2016b). The health and physical education curriculum has been strongly linked to the development of ‘personal and social capabilities’ and contributes to students having ‘a sense of self–worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing’, ‘optimism about their lives and the future’, the ability to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 22.1 Overview of strands and sub-strands of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2016a: 8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strands</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal, Social and Community Health (PSCH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-strands and threads</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Australia

‘form and maintain healthy relationships’ and prepares them ‘for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members’ (MCEETYA, 2008: 9).

Strands and sub-strands

The intention is for health and physical education to be taught in an integrated manner (incorporating learning across strands) and for the two strands (sub-disciplines) not to be siloed. It would appear though that many primary schools have implemented the strands separately, returning to common names of health or health education, and physical education or phys-ed. Details of the strands are outlined in Table 22.1.

In light of the common interpretation of physical education as MPA, and for the purposes of this chapter, the MPA strand will be prioritised. Mentioned earlier was the alignment of Arnold’s (1988) seminal concepts of learning in, through and about movement with the three sub-strands. ‘Moving our body’ outlines the learning and refinement of movement skills, developing concepts and strategies (e.g. spatial awareness and developing attack strategies) and an appreciation of movement of the body. ‘Understanding movement’ calls for in-depth knowledge and understanding about movement elements (e.g. space, objects, time) and developing fitness and understanding of cultural significance in physical activity. ‘Learning through movement’ targets teamwork, fair play and ethics and problem solving and challenge in movement activities. Arnold’s (1988) concepts ask for an integration in authentic and meaningful learning; hence all three sub-strands are valued equally and are intended to interact. However, practices in primary PE in general appear to favour ‘Moving our body’ learning.

Where an integrated model is designed and implemented, it could utilise the PSCH threads of identities, making safe and healthy choices, interacting with others, understanding emotions, community health promotion, connections to the environment and valuing diversity in MPA learning experiences to promote a more holistic understanding of what it means to be a ‘healthy, safe and active citizen’. For example, to examine the benefits of physical activity in Years 3 to 4 (MPA), an integration with outdoor games and activities in the natural, built and outdoor environment (PSHC) and identifying and practicing strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing (PSHC) could create authentic and relevant student learning experiences, and potential for transference to lifelong learning.

Focus areas

Focus areas, or contexts for learning, have been outlined for the bands of schooling (Foundation Year 2 and Years 3 to 6). They ‘must be addressed’ (ACARA, 2016a: 10) in mandated years of schooling to assure the breadth of learning in health and physical education. Relevance to physical education and the band of schooling is noted with a heavy emphasis on active play and minor (modified) games, and rhythmic and expressive activities in the early years. Challenge and adventure activities, games and sports and lifelong physical activities (recreational) are added to the breadth of learning the knowledge, understanding and skills in Years 3 to 6 and become more specialised and advanced in Years 7 to 10.

This breadth of focus areas has the purpose of a more rounded approach to physical activities in physical education rather than the traditional focus on games and sports. Typically, though, an early childhood physical education yearly program would contain experiences of fundamental motor skills and/or perceptual motor programs, circuit-based indoor and outdoor play (e.g. scooters, climbing and balance frames), athletics and running, swimming program, creative movement (e.g. animal walks), cooperative games and dance. In Years 3 to 6, physical education experiences would include swimming, athletics and running, games and traditional
Maree Dinan Thompson

Table 22.2 Overview of focus areas of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2016a: 10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Areas</th>
<th>Foundation – Year 2</th>
<th>Years 3–6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol and other drugs (AD)</td>
<td>✔ Medicines only</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and nutrition (FN)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health benefits of physical activity (HBPA)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health and wellbeing (MH)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships and sexuality (RS)</td>
<td>✔ Relationships only</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active play and minor games (AP)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge and adventure activities (CA)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamental movement skills (FMS)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games and sports (GS)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifelong physical activities (LLPA)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythmic and expressive activities (RE)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N/A: Not applicable

Sports (e.g. cricket, netball, basketball, soccer, Australian Football League [AFL], touch football) and fitness-based activities (e.g. calisthenics, circuits), and some schools have outdoor education programs (e.g. bushwalking, camping). Such experiences and programming is relative to state/territory ‘re-settlements’ of curriculum.

Learning programmes

Re-settlements of the AC: HPE occur at the state/territory, education system and school-based levels to determine the learning programmes. Table 22.3 outlines two states’ (WA and Vic) determination of what primary physical education looks like in Australian schools:

Table 22.3 Excerpts from Australian and State Physical Education Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education</th>
<th>Western Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education</th>
<th>Victorian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strand</td>
<td>Movement and Physical Activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-strands</td>
<td>Moving our body, Understanding movement, Learning through movement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Areas/Contexts for learning</td>
<td>Active play and minor games</td>
<td>Movement skills</td>
<td>Active play and minor games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Challenge and adventure activities</td>
<td>Activity skills, tactics and strategies</td>
<td>Challenge and fundamental activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fundamental movement skills</td>
<td>Group skills</td>
<td>Challenge and fundamental activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Games and sports</td>
<td>Ethical Behaviour</td>
<td>Games and sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lifelong physical activities</td>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>Lifelong physical activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rhythmic and expressive activities</td>
<td>Communication skills</td>
<td>Rhythmic and expressive activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-management skills</td>
<td>Swimming and water safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Decision-making skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

260
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education</th>
<th>Western Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education</th>
<th>Victorian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Strand**

Movement and Physical Activity

**Sub-strands**

Moving our body, Understanding movement, Learning through movement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Description example – Year 2</th>
<th>Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education</th>
<th>Western Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education</th>
<th>Victorian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perform fundamental movement skills in a variety of movement sequences and situations</td>
<td>Body management skills: forward roll</td>
<td>Perform fundamental movement skills in different movement situations in indoor, outdoor and aquatic settings</td>
<td>Perform fundamental movement skills in different movement situations in indoor, outdoor and aquatic settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create and participate in games with and without equipment</td>
<td>Locomotor skills: jump for height</td>
<td>Construct and perform imaginative and original movement sequences in response to stimuli</td>
<td>Construct and perform imaginative and original movement sequences in response to stimuli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Object control skills: overarm throw, punt, two-hand side strike</td>
<td>Create and participate in games</td>
<td>Create and participate in games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fundamental movement skills involving the control of objects in simple games: overarm throw, kick</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simple games that use a combination of movement skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement Standard example – Year 2</th>
<th>Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2016a)</th>
<th>School Curriculum and Standards Authority (2016)</th>
<th>Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (2016)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By the end of Year 2 . . . They identify areas where they can be active and how the body reacts to different physical activities, Students demonstrate positive ways to interact with others . . . They demonstrate fundamental movement skills in a variety of movement sequences and situations and test alternatives to solve movement challenges. They perform movement sequences that incorporate the elements of movement.</td>
<td>Physical Education At Standard, students perform a number of fundamental movement skills, including body management, locomotor and object control skills. They apply a combination of these skills when they participate in simple games or physical activities. Students describe ways their body reacts and the positive feelings they have when participating in physical activity. They demonstrate positive ways to interact with others in games and describe why rules and fair play are important.</td>
<td>By the end of Level 2 . . . They identify areas where they can be active and how the body reacts to different physical activities. Students demonstrate positive ways to interact with others. They demonstrate fundamental movement skills in different movement situations and test alternatives to solve movement challenges. They perform movement sequences that incorporate the elements of movement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Developed by

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2016a)  
School Curriculum and Standards Authority (2016)  
Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (2016)
The NSW Department of Education shows a further re-settlement with the retaining of the subject title Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE), as well as stated sports in core content, for example gymnastics. Although Table 22.3 outlines differences of language and contexts for learning (e.g. road safety, swimming and water safety as a core activity), the learning programme documents are synergistic in their educative intentions in primary physical education. In practice, though, primary physical education classes are largely made up of the development of fundamental movement skills, games and sports, and fitness. Research (Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Ardzieszewska, McMaugh & Coutts, 2010) has shown that this is ‘comfort’ teaching for generalist teachers as confidence is a key factor. Traditional events of swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals are also an influence.

Sample units, lessons and assessment are outlined at the state/territory level (www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/p-10/aciq/p-10-hpe; http://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/p-10-curriculum/curriculum-browser/health-and-physical-education; www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/foundation10/viccurriculum/hpe/hpe.aspx), ranging from examples for teachers to modify to their school priorities and resources, to the prescription of Queensland’s ‘Curriculum to Classroom’ (C2C) units and assessment (Queensland Department of Education and Training, 2015). A typical primary physical education lesson involves a warm-up activity, engagement in a drill or demonstration, practice in both small and large group contexts depending on the content, a conclusion to review and reflect and a cool-down activity. This typical lesson may be interpreted as following a direct or explicit instruction type model of teaching, although due to the emphasis of student-centred approaches and discourses, the promotion of active participation and interactive learning is common across schooling systems and schools in Australia. An emphasis on ‘teaching games for understanding’ or ‘games sense’ (Thorpe & Bunker, 2008; Light, 2014) is evidenced in units, professional development and resources, in the attempt to ‘play with purpose’ (Pill, 2012) and build meaning-making in participation. Such an approach calls for the provision of the game as context (and starting with the game in a lesson), asking questions, allowing students to create, evaluate and take risks in the implementation of skills and strategies, and utilising the teacher as a facilitator for explicit skill development and tactical awareness purposeful to the games. The ‘teaching for personal and social responsibility’ model (Hellison, 1995) is receiving some attention in the latter primary year levels with the emphasis on learning through movement and interpersonal skills. Inclusion and differentiation are made explicit in state/territory policy and align with student-centred and socially just approaches.

Resourcing

Resourcing responsibilities for primary physical education (as per all curriculum areas) is located at both levels of government. ACARA has limited resourcing with the curriculum documents and examples to assist in planning and assessment due to its jurisdictions. ACARA has aligned with Education Services Australia to establish ‘Scootle’ (www.scootle.edu.au) as the national digital repository for the Australian Curriculum materials. Teachers gain access through their education system or school emails. Major responsibilities lie with the state/territory government and education systems for provision of facilities and curriculum plans. For example, Queensland’s Department of Education and Training has produced ‘Curriculum to Classroom’ (C2C) units of work with the mandate of ‘adapt or adopt’ in state schooling. Specific funding for primary physical education is usually school-based, including equipment, maintenance and possibilities for targeted professional development. There are also opportunities for schools to access funding from national and state-based sporting associations and local governments, but this is dependent upon teacher interest.
The professional association ‘Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation’ (ACHPER) is a constant provider of resources and professional development in the promotion of quality health and physical education. There has also been significant growth in external providers in Australia to contribute to the resourcing needs of schools. Hence schools can choose to teach primary physical education through this medium, although potentially at a cost of the ‘educative purpose’ proposition.

Relative to the provision of covered outdoor learning areas, sporting facilities and shade structures due to Australia’s climate, the Building Education Revolution (BER) (2007–2010) established by the federal government has resulted in enhanced teaching areas for primary physical education across Australian schools. As part of this BER the majority of primary schools have a purpose-built undercover area used not only for physical education but also assemblies, wet weather etc. Due to the availability of land it is unusual to have a school without outdoor fields and ovals specific to nominated sports (e.g. AFL, rugby league, netball and/or basketball court), and some schools have a swimming pool. Equipment lists typically contain balls and gear to suit nominated games and sports (usually different sizes for age-related activities), fundamental movement skills mats, beams and ropes, and athletics gear (mats, shotputs and modified throwing equipment, modified hurdles). Rural and remote schools will differ greatly due to location and size of school.

**Frequency**

The AC: HPE (ACARA, 2012) was constructed on a notional time allocation of 120 minutes per week to HPE across mandated years of schooling (Foundation to Year 10). A common interpretation is the allocation of one hour to each of the strands, hence 60 minutes to primary physical education. Nevertheless, due to the slipperiness of physical education not being recognised as ‘core’ curriculum, there is great variance in the frequency of primary physical education with students receiving as little as 20 minutes per week. Principals in schools are accountable for curriculum allocation of primary physical education in their timetables, and it is evidenced that where there is support, more time is allocated (Lynch, 2013b, 2015). Nonetheless, this support may be for specialist physical education or generalist teachers or external providers.

Confusion also exists regarding the alignment of physical education with promotion of moderate to vigorous physical activity arising from health reports, guidelines and strategies across states and territories. For example, NSW’s Healthy Kids policy calls for a minimum of 150 minutes of planned moderate with some vigorous physical activity across the school week. This time includes planned weekly sport (NSW Government, 2017). Primary physical education is routinely a component of this time in schools but there is perceived valuing of physical activity engagement over an ‘educative purpose’.

**Who delivers PE?**

Variance is evident in who delivers primary physical education in Australia with generalists, specialists and external providers. As stated earlier, ‘re-settlement’ occurs in curriculum at the state and territory level, but this is also true for the nature of delivery. It is more likely that primary PE specialist teachers will be appointed in ACT, Queensland and Victorian primary schools, although this appears to be declining. The generalist teacher is more commonly responsible for PE teaching and, due to the prioritisation of the competitive academic curriculum (English, maths, science), the severing of specialist primary PE teachers is taking place. In Queensland, an added complexity for primary PE was the introduction of a weekly two-hour non-contact time
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(NCT) for generalist teachers to plan and network. This led to the segregation of primary specialist teachers to teach in the allocated NCT, therefore isolating the primary physical education teacher and reinforcing marginalisation of PE (Brooks & Dinan Thompson, 2015).

Several studies have investigated the quality of physical education relative to specialist and generalist or classroom teacher delivery. In two different Australian studies, Morgan and Bourke (2008) and Ardzzejewska et al. (2010) both stated that generalist classroom teachers had limited capacity and confidence to teach quality physical education. More recently, though, Callcott, Miller and Wilson-Gahan (2012) contend that generalist classroom teachers are best positioned to provide developmentally appropriate and best practice instruction in early childhood and primary physical education due to their knowledge of the learners, inclusive practices and potential for integration. A recent development in Victoria is the trial of specialist-trained primary physical education teacher attached to a cluster of schools to run professional development for generalist teachers. This trial involves a partnership between university, government and associated agencies and external providers.

The use of external providers has been evidenced in Australian primary physical education from the early 1990s and seen as status quo in such areas as aquatics and gymnastics, and more recently commercialised sports, such as cricket, AFL and rugby league. Researchers (Tinning, Kirk & Evans, 1993; Webster, 2001; Morgan & Hansen, 2007) have raised issues of undervaluing of PE, equity, alignment to curriculum intentions, and inclusiveness. More recently, Williams, Hay and Macdonald (2011: 399) highlighted outsourcing as having ‘the potential to significantly disturb labouring, learning and the politics of expertise as they relate to health, sport and physical education’. Internationally, external providers in physical education (Griggs, 2008; 2010; Irish Primary Physical Education Association, 2011; Dyson, Gordon, Cowan & McKenzie, 2016) have been discussed in light of the emergence of an ‘education services industry’ (Ball, 2007) and privatisation and competition in schools.

Teacher preparation

Historically, specialised teacher education for primary PE was introduced to Qld and Vic in the 1940s (Kirk, 2004). Currently, Queensland, the ACT and Victorian universities have primary Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) programmes. These programmes are accredited by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) as specialised qualifications. In general these primary PETE programmes are four years in length and integrate core Initial Teacher Education (ITE) subjects with discipline-specific subjects accounting for approximately one-third of the programme. Discipline subjects draw on the biophysical, sociocultural and psychological domains of physical education, and many add generic health and health education subjects. Contestation over quality physical education and teacher training is evident in research (Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Ardzzejewska et al., 2010). The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) made a submission to AITSL in 2010 stating it had ‘identified the pre-service training of teachers, particularly primary teachers as a key issue impacting on the teaching of quality PE and sport education programs within schools’ (2010: 5). The ASC also raised a concern for sustained professional development, as did UNESCO (2015) in its call for quality PE and teacher capacity building. Lynch (2013a) surveyed 376 principals in Australia to investigate how to best prepare teachers of health and physical education in primary schools with results calling for specialisation and discipline-specific professional development. ACHPER, the national professional association, has strong representation at the national, state and territory level, and provides professional development opportunities on an annual basis. However, uptake is largely left to teacher interest rather than education system support.
An interesting AITSL development in 2016 is the proposal for ‘primary specialisations’ which has arisen from a review into Initial Teacher Education (TEMAG, 2015). AITSL state: ‘The TEMAG report recommended that all initial teacher education primary graduates be equipped with a subject specialisation, with priority given to science, maths or languages’. It may be opportune for physical education to be included in these subject specialisations and increase visibility in schools.

**Assessment**

Assessment of student achievement in primary PE is informed by the AC:HPE Achievement Standards written for Foundation, Years 1 to 2, Years 3 to 4 and Years 5 to 6. Achievement Standards ‘describe what students are typically able to understand and able to do’, outline ‘expected learning’ and ‘emphasise the depth of conceptual understanding and sophistication of skills’ (ACARA, 2012: 19). The Years 3 to 4 Achievement Standard (ACARA, 2016a: 33) relevant to primary physical education states:

> By the end of Year 4 . . . understand how to interact positively with others in a variety of situations . . . They understand the benefits of being healthy and physically active. They describe the connections they have to their community and identify local resources to support their health, wellbeing, safety and physical activity.

> Students apply strategies for working cooperatively and apply rules fairly. They use decision-making and problem-solving skills to select and demonstrate strategies that help them stay safe, healthy and active. They refine fundamental movement skills and apply movement concepts and strategies in a variety of physical activities and to solve movement challenges. They create and perform movement sequences using fundamental movement skills and the elements of movement.

Students are graded using the A, B, C, D and E standards and are reported twice yearly to parents for each year of schooling where the achievement standard is commonly aligned to the C standard. For the early years (Foundation, Years 1 to 2) a modification of the A to E standards may be used to fit with the developmental nature of learning. Such standards may be applying, making connections, working with, exploring and becoming aware (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2015). In some schools, teachers substitute the terms outstanding, high, sound, basic and limited instead of A to E. Reporting to parents may also vary across schools due to the implementation of health and physical education, physical education and health education and sometimes only physical education.

To support teachers in making assessment decisions, each state/territory provides assessment guidelines and standards, and terminology is relative to the ‘re-settlements’ in the curriculum. For example, WA refers to standards of achievement, Qld provides standards elaborations to support achievement standards and NSW states syllabus outcomes and standards. The AC:HPE achievement standards have been used to inform these re-settled statements appropriate to state/territory policies and legislations.

Primary physical education assessment has been discussed as ‘low-stakes assessment’ (Dinan Thompson & Penney, 2015) due to the physical education subject and teachers being on the periphery of the competitive academic curriculum in primary schools. This allows for autonomy and potential for student engagement in the curriculum and assessment, but at the same time may reinforce the marginalisation of primary physical education and lack of resourcing. Technology is having some impact in primary physical education assessment with teachers utilising apps and
devices for students to create and record their learning and participation, which supports the student-centredness ideology and self-regulation (Marzano, 2007). However, it is fraught with resourcing and ethical implications. Much of the discussion about assessment in physical education in Australia has been focused on senior secondary school due to its contribution to tertiary and career pathways.

**Significant factors worth noting**

Primary physical education is affected by many contextual factors, including historical, social, cultural, environmental and political influences. Historically, Australia is known for its love for and success in sports internationally. Australia’s sporting background and commercialisation of sport is significant to the content choices made in primary physical education teaching. For example, the Australian Football League [AFL] business model takes development officers to schools to teach and market their sport. Although the AC:HPE purports learning in, through and about movement and physical activity across a variety of contexts (e.g. challenge and adventure activities), and the research into The Future of Australian Sport (Hajkowicz, Cook, Wilhelmseder & Boughen, 2013) states that participation is moving away from organised sports to more individualised, health-related, recreational and even extreme sports, primary physical education routinely focuses on games and sports teaching (Dinan Thompson & Penney, 2015, Lynch, 2013b). The swing towards health-related physical activity participation is relative to the health discourses about obesity and sedentary lifestyle patterns in Australia, and primary physical education has not escaped its influence. The explicitness of state/territory government policy outlining required engagement in 120 to 150 minutes of vigorous physical activity (e.g. NSW Healthy Kids) is a sign of the impact on primary physical education. A more recent influence is the concept of ‘physical literacy’ (Whitehead, 2010) that has also grown internationally (see SHAPE America, PHE Canada). Although interpretation of physical literacy appear altered to Whitehead’s intentions, physical literacy interest has led to the creation of a ‘Getting Australia moving: establishing a physically literate and active nation (game plan)’ (Keegan, Keegan, Daley, Ordway & Edwards, 2013) and the development of a Physical Literacy Continuum for use in NSW public schools (NSW Department of Education, 2016). For teachers, there is much confusion across the terms and purposes of primary physical education, vigorous physical activity engagement, sport and physical literacy amidst the social, cultural and political contexts of education.

The competitive academic curriculum and performance in the National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy testing (NAPLAN) has had a significant impact in primary schools. An overcrowded curriculum (Reid, 2010) and performance score accountability has led to a perception of primary physical education as ‘the other’ subject (Brooks, PhD thesis in press). Dollman, Boshoff and Dodd investigated time allocated to physical education and impact on achievement scores to which they found (2006: 151) ‘no evidence that schools with relatively high physical education time were disadvantaging students in the traditionally academic subjects’. In the period 2005–2009, the Queensland government initiated a strategy titled ‘Eat Well, Be Active Action Plan’ that increased primary physical education time in trial schools which showed no negative impact on academic achievement but a positive impact on behaviour and relationships (Marks et al., 2010). More recently, though, a Telford, Cunningham, Telford and Abhavaratna (2012) study found that ‘schools with fitter children achieve better literacy and numeracy results’ relative to the ‘school culture’ supporting two primary physical education lessons taught by specialist physical education teachers per week. Hence, it is an ongoing dilemma for primary physical education is to prove its value in students’ success in schools.
External providers in Australian primary physical education has been raised in earlier sections in this chapter. The continued focus on privatisation, market share and performativity will create opportunities for external providers to interact in the primary physical education space. As most decisions are school based, principals will continue to decide the role that external providers will play in schools. On the flip side there may be opportunity for primary physical education to collaborate and utilise this external provision to build advocacy and jointly create the educative purpose. Advocacy from primary physical education teachers themselves has been highlighted as an issue in Australia (Brooks, PhD thesis, in press). It appears that teachers of physical education, specialists and generalists could promote their profession with principals and education systems and create opportunities for collaborative professional development. However, a limitation is the geographical spread of teachers across Australia.

With a diverse population of many cultures, primary physical education in Australia is influenced by community and ethnicity. The ‘Yulunga: Traditional Indigenous Games’ resource (Edwards, 2008) values the rich history of games and activities recorded by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, explorers, missionaries and alike. Embedding Indigenous perspectives in curriculum is a priority for the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012) and states/territories (e.g. EATSIPS, 2015). Traditional Indigenous games show potential for this integration and acknowledgment although, as reported by Dinan Thompson, Meldrum and Sellwood (2015), valuing and attaining ‘cultural significance’ requires Indigenous community engagement and protocol. Due to the growing multicultural population, research has also called for consideration of religious and cultural perceptions and limitations to participating in physical education (Kanwal & Jorgensen, 2014; Pang & Macdonald, 2015; Pang, Macdonald & Hay, 2015).

Green (2014) used the phrase ‘mission impossible’ when searching for the ‘PE effect’ and saw many variables affecting the relationship between physical education, youth sport and physical activity participation. In Australia, primary physical education as described in this chapter might suggest a ‘mission impossible’ due to the diversity, variance, ‘re-settlements’ and mixed social, cultural and political agendas. There is call for a coordinated effort in the policy and practice dynamic across government layers and education systems, and a necessity to focus on the ‘educative purpose’ of primary physical education.

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PRIMARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

*Kirsten Petrie and Denise Atkins*

**Introduction**

Aotearoa\(^1\) New Zealand (NZ) is situated in the South Pacific. With a landmass of 269,000 square km and 14,000 km of coastline, it is a similar size to the United Kingdom, Japan, or California. The landmass is split across two main islands (the North and South Islands), as well as a number of smaller islands. The population is 4.4 million people (2013 Census – Stats NZ), with an ethnic profile of NZ European (68%), Māori\(^2\) (15%), Asian (10%), and Pacific (7%). The population resides mostly around the coastlines, with about 77% living in the North Island.

Aotearoa NZ was discovered by the ancestors of Māori, the tangata whenua (indigenous people) around the 13th century. Following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi\(^3\) between the chiefs of NZ and the British Crown, large-scale European settlement occurred from the 1840s onwards. In more recent times, although remaining a member of the Commonwealth, Aotearoa NZ has grown from a colonial outpost to a multicultural Pacific nation.

**Education in Aotearoa NZ**

In Aotearoa NZ, schooling is compulsory from 6 to 16 years of age, although typically children begin school as soon as they turn 5 years old (they do not have to wait until the start of a new school year). The primary school phase includes schools in the form of primary schools (Year Levels 1 to 6), intermediate schools (Year Levels 7 to 8), full primary (Year Levels 1 to 8), and in few instances students may move into middle schools (Year Levels 7 to 10 – which includes two years of what would be deemed secondary school).

Most schools in NZ are owned and funded by the state. They teach *The New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC) (Ministry of Education, 2007), are secular (non-religious), and provide a free education to all who attend. There are two other types of schools: state integrated and private. These are schools with a special character. They may have their own sets of aims and objectives to reflect their own particular values. They may teach a specific philosophy or religion. However, state-integrated schools come under the state education system, are government funded (supplemented by compulsory attendance dues), and are required to teach the NZC. In contrast, private schools are funded mostly through the charging of school fees, only get some government funding, and have the scope to develop their own learning programmes that may or may not align with NZC. In addition, parents and caregivers have the option of enrolling their children
in Māori-medium education (Kura Kaupapa Māori), which are schools that teach in Te Reo Māori (Māori language), with an education based on Māori culture and values. Kura Kaupapa Māori schools are owned and funded by the state and follow the Māori-medium curriculum, Tē Marautanga o Aotearoa (Ministry of Education, 2008).

It is most common for a generalist primary school classroom teacher to take responsibility for delivery of all subjects to a single class of students, collected together according to age. In intermediate schools, specialist teachers for aspects of technology education (hard and soft materials, traditionally referred to as metalwork, woodwork, home economics, and sewing), as well as teachers of the arts (music and visual art), have commonly been employed, and more recently there has been a rise anecdotally in the number of primary PE ‘specialists’.

Official Curriculum

In 2007, The NZ Curriculum (NZC) (Ministry of Education, 2007) was launched, followed closely by Tē Marautanga o Aotearoa (TMoA) (Ministry of Education, 2008). These are guiding curriculum documents for new entrants to Year 13, and each incorporates eight learning areas. The NZC includes health and physical education (HPE) and TMoA includes Hauora as one of the eight learning areas.

The NZC and TMoA establish the common direction for schools (mainstream and kura kaupapa Māori), regardless of type, size, or location and are viewed as guiding frameworks with a vision, values, and principles rather than a detailed plan. This means that although every school curriculum must be clearly aligned with the intent of this document, schools have considerable flexibility when determining the detail of programmes taught in each of the learning areas (Ministry of Education, 2007: 37). In addition, the NZC and TMoA are outcomes focused, with specific achievement objectives set for each learning level, for each learning area. For the remainder of this chapter we will focus on the NZC.

(Health) and physical education curriculum

HPE as a learning area in the NZC closely aligns with the articulation of HPE that was presented in more detail in Health and Physical Education in the NZ Curriculum [HPE Curriculum] (Ministry of Education, 1999). Curriculum stocktakes (McGee et al., 2004; Ministry of Education, 2002) signalled that there was no mandate for major changes in relation to the learning area between the 1999 HPE curriculum and the development of the NZC. The introduction of the HPE curriculum promoted a philosophical shift from the previous PE curriculum that reflected a performance pedagogy orientation (Culpan, 2000) underpinned by sporting discourses to a more holistic and socio-cultural and socio-critical approach. In the HPE curriculum, PE was positioned alongside health education and aspects of home economics, with each of these three subjects conceived as separate disciplines underpinned by a shared philosophy and shared underlying concepts, all of which focused on outcomes and capabilities for learners. The structural framework of the HPE curriculum was made up of general aims (further broken down as strands and achievement objectives), along with key areas of learning, all of which reinforce the underpinning philosophical shift. Four underlying and interdependent concepts provide a foundation from which teaching and learning can be constructed:

- Hauora – a Māori philosophy of well-being that includes the dimensions taha wairua (spirituality), taha hinengaro (mental/emotional), taha tinana (physical), and taha whānau, (social) each one influencing and supporting the others.
• Attitudes and values – a positive, responsible attitude on the part of students to their own well-being; respect, care, and concern for other people and the environment; and a sense of social justice.

• The socio-ecological perspective – a way of viewing and understanding the interrelationships that exist between the individual, others, and society.

• Health promotion – a process that helps to develop and maintain supportive physical and emotional environments and that involves students in personal and collective action.

(Ministry of Education, 2007: 22, English translations inserted)

These underlying concepts play a central role in the framing of the aims, achievement objectives, and key areas of learning that provide teachers with more pragmatic guidance for designing their learning programmes. The four general aims of the HPE curriculum focus on students learning to:

• develop the knowledge, understandings, skills and attitudes needed to maintain and enhance personal health and physical development (known as Strand A);

• develop motor skills through movement, acquire knowledge and understandings about movement, and develop positive attitudes towards physical activity (Strand B);

• develop understandings, skills, and attitudes that enhance interactions and relationships with other people (Strand C);

• participate in creating healthy communities and environments by taking responsible and critical action (Strand D).

(Ministry of Education, 1999: 7)

These general aims are further broken down to provide teachers with 15 achievement aims to guide teachers in planning and programming in HPE. For each achievement aim, achievement objectives were “expressed at eight progressive levels, appropriate to students’ development and maturity at successive stages as they moved through junior primary to secondary school” (Ministry of Education, 1999: 13). Achievement objectives are descriptive in nature and can be drawn on for teaching in health, physical education, or home economics, with the exception of Strand B (movement concepts and motor skills), which is seen as the preserve of PE. Teachers are encouraged to ensure that they address all objectives at least once every two years in either a health- or movement-related (PE) context. At Levels 1 and 2 (used mainly in primary schools) the number of achievement objectives is reduced to reflect the complexity and demands of the generalist teacher responsible for up to eight learning areas within the NZC. The following are examples drawn from the NZC of one achievement objective from each strand to provide a sense of the scope of learning expected when schools plan their curriculum. The full range of achievement objects can be accessed at (http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/The-New-Zealand-Curriculum/Health-and-physical-education/Achievement-objectives).

• Describe their stages of growth and their development needs and demonstrate increasing responsibility for self-care (Level 2 – Strand A)

• Participate in a range of games and activities and identify the factors that make participation safe and enjoyable (Level 1 – Strand B)

• Identify and demonstrate ways of maintaining and enhancing relationships between individuals and within groups (Level 2 – Strand C)

• Take individual and collective action to contribute to environments that can be enjoyed by all (Level 1 – Strand D)
Seven key areas of learning (KAL) were identified during the development of the HPE curriculum to highlight “the current health and physical education needs of NZ students” (Ministry of Education, 1999: 35). The KAL are sexuality education, mental health, body care and physical safety, food and nutrition, physical activity, sports studies, and outdoor education. The HPE curriculum provided a detailed breakdown of what learning opportunities under each KAL should be designed to develop. With the exception of sexuality, it is intended that teachers provide learning opportunities in PE that relates to all of the other six KAL. The KAL are required to be addressed in programmes at all levels and revised at different levels and in a relation to a range of contexts during the compulsory schooling experience (up until the end of year 10). Of significance for how teachers think about learning in PE is the way in which the KAL, physical activity, and sports studies are framed. These two KAL are underpinned by holistic notions of the movement and the movement culture, as opposed to a focus dominated by sporting or health discourses (as detailed in Chapters 1 and 2). The KAL physical activity is framed in relation to Arnold’s (1979) theory of learning in, through and about movement in a desire to encourage “students to enjoy movement, to learn about the movement culture, and to develop positive attitudes towards regular participation in physical activities” (Ministry of Education, 1999: 42). There is also a desire to embrace Māori ways of knowing and engaging in movement, with teachers encouraged to embed ngā toanga takaro (traditional Māori games) and te ao kori (the world of movement from a Māori worldview) in their programmes and practices. In contrast to a focus on the skills and rules associated with sport or team games which may be how many read a heading such as sport studies, the KAL sport studies is focused on “students identify how sporting experiences influence the development of people’s physical and social skills. They investigate and critically appraise the educative value of sport and consider the effects of sport from social, cultural, and scientific perspectives” (Ministry of Education, 1999: 44).

Unlike some countries that prescribe the content or contexts for learning in PE, the nature of the NZC makes no mention of specific context, although it is “expected that all students will have had opportunities to learn basic aquatics skills by the end of year 6 and . . . outdoor education programmes must follow safe practice and meet legal requirements” (Ministry of Education, 2007: 22). As a descriptive curriculum statement the 1999 HPE curriculum provided the scope and encouragement for individual schools and teachers to design programmes of learning that reflected the unique needs of their learners; however despite the introduction 15 years ago, there has been limited evidence of this occurring in practice (see the following section on learning programmes). As Fitzpatrick (2006) noted, the process of summing “up the intentions and content of a 64 page document (the 1999 HPE curriculum) in, what turned out to be, less than two pages, with additional pages being left for the achievement objectives” (p. 9) was highly problematic. Without the additional detail and the provision of state-funded professional learning, what was a complex philosophical curriculum statement has become evidently more challenging to make sense of and would appear to be a contributing factor in why there was been limited evidence of change in learning programmes in primary (and secondary) schools.

**Learning programmes**

The 1999 HPE curriculum challenged teachers to rethink their philosophical understanding of PE and pedagogical practices associated with a move from their traditional motor skill and sport-based programmes to teach a wider range of curriculum aims in a way that was meaningful for learners. And yet, nearly 20 years after this was released and reinforced as policy in the NZC in 2007, it is still common to see primary school physical education programmes based on sport (reflective of the 1960s syllabus) and more recently health discourses that are based on
bio-medical outcomes, which primarily focus on physical wellbeing as influenced by popular health discourses such as obesity (Atkins, 2015a, 2015b).

When detailing what constitutes learning programmes in PE in NZ primary schools, it is important to note that principals, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders use a range of terms in relation to what they deem to be part of the PE learning programmes. These terms encompass the range of physical activity opportunities, both planned and unplanned, that occur during class time, regardless of whether these were linked in any way to NZC. These included:

- skill-based PE lessons;
- the Perceptual Motor Programme (PMP);
- syndicate/class sport and sports afternoons;
- tabloids (interclass games-based competitions – excluding formalised sports);
- daily fitness including ‘brain’ breaks;
- incidental physical activity opportunities such as games;
- external activity programmes undertaken in class time by other agencies.

Despite PE being a long-standing curriculum learning area originally based on the Syllabus of Physical Training (Board of Education, 1919), or maybe due to the nature of the descriptive of the current curriculum, there is a remarkable lack of clarity for teachers about what PE means and should include/focus on in primary school curriculum programmes.

**Learning focus**

Researchers (Atkins, 2015b; Dyson, Gordon & Cowan, 2011; Gordon, Cowan, McKenzie & Dyson, 2013; Penney, Pope, lisahunter, Phillips & Dewar, 2013; Petrie, 2011; Petrie, Jones & McKim, 2007) in the PE community in NZ have reported similar findings in relation to what constitutes the learning area of HPE in NZ primary schools, and in doing so highlight widespread similarities in programmes and practices related to learning in and through PE. Few primary school programmes demonstrate the integration of the HPE underlying concepts as stated in the NZC through their learning programmes or through teacher practice (Petrie & lisahunter, 2011). Teachers report that for them PE is primarily about three things: preparing students for games and sport, both school and interschool events; getting children physically fit; and providing students with fun opportunities to play and be active (Petrie, 2008). Within these three agendas, teachers identified their role as helping students to learn physical skills for participation in games/sport; develop their knowledge and understanding of how their bodies work and move and how to look after them; and develop positive attitudes toward physical activity. Such attitudes are reflected in the PE programmes that are delivered (both by teachers and external agencies) in school contexts throughout Aotearoa NZ.

**School PE curriculum**

Primary school curriculum PE in Aotearoa NZ has been framed by historical and traditional curriculum models based on a one- or two-year plan where the learning aims are achieved through sports-based and multi-activity oriented programmes. With few exceptions, PE programmes across the country predominantly cover particular topics at set times during the year in preparation for school-wide and inter-school events, such as cross-country, swimming, and athletic sports. Curriculum programmes are “generally seasonally oriented and reflect a multi-activity model of physical education curriculum and historical patterns of provision” (Penney et al.,
A range of topics is common to all schools and remain largely unchanged across the year levels, apart from some advancement in level or a slight change of focus. These include:

- aquatics or more commonly ‘swimming’;
- small ball skills, alternatively referred to as summer games (e.g. cricket, softball, paddle tennis);
- large ball skills, alternatively referred to as winter games (e.g. netball, basketball, soccer, volleyball);
- gymnastics;
- cross-country, athletics (including run, jump, throw), and in some schools, triathlon;
- dance and movement, folk dancing, and/or creative dance;
- fitness (typically in the form of skipping, running, or Jump Jam®).

These topics, excluding Te Reo Kori and PMP, reflect the programme detailed in earlier PE syllabi, namely Standard 2 to Form 2 Teachers Handbook (Department of Education, 1964) and the Physical Education: Syllabus for junior classes to Form 7 (Education, 1987b) and Guide to Success (Education, 1987a).

It would appear that schools continue to frame their programmes and syndicate overviews around a particular sport, which is often closely aligned with inter-school sport events and is usually determined seasonally (Penney et al., 2013). Such an approach does little to ensure that primary school students are provided with opportunities to address all the required NZCHPE achievement objectives or reflect the opportunity schools have to design curriculum that is contextually specific and reflective of the needs of their learners. Instead the sport-based programme appears to favour just one of the seven key areas of learning, that is, sport studies (Penney et al., 2013; Petrie, 2008; Petrie, Penney & Fellows, 2014).

What continues to be disconcerting is the lack of progression evident in the HPE learning programmes or evidence of clearly defined scaffolding across the years of schooling in response to the changing needs and abilities of the learners. As a result is it not uncommon to see students in junior classes being involved in activities, sports, or games that their counterparts in senior classes are also engaging in. For example, most students in Aotearoa NZ would have similar experiences of learning in athletics (including doing high jump, long jump, and throwing events) every year of their schooling experience without any sense of development or clearly differentiated learning outcomes. As a result the essence of physical education in the primary school still remains unclear (Dyson et al., 2011; Petrie, 2008).

Students therefore are likely to experience physical education lessons that reflect one of the two following examples. We have drawn these examples from our collective research and experiences in schools in our roles as teacher educators.

Case study A. The unconfident teacher: The primary school teacher may or may not plan a lesson for physical education. Instead what is often taught is a mixture of a game or activity that the teacher is familiar with and feels confident teaching. This usually takes on a format where the teacher reproduces a traditional pedagogy dominant in sport coaching. This usually consists of a warm-up (huffing and puffing activity) with light stretching, a set of drills in small groups that focus on physical skills, and lastly a game or large group activity.

Case Study B: The teacher who has had some recent exposure to games-based teaching models such as Teaching Games for Understanding or Games Sense. If a lesson is prepared, there would be clear learning objectives, activities planned, and assessment practices evident. The teacher would focus on using a cooperative learning pedagogy.
whereby students would primarily be in small groups working together to achieve set goals. The lesson would usually involve invasion games and adopt student-centred learning activities where students are able to make decisions and apply strategies guided by the teacher. The learning focus is often directed by the teacher, who despite the learning environment being conducive to a humanistic pedagogy, still adopts a behaviourist approach as they feel they still need to be in control.

Further examples of what learning looks like can be viewed on the Ministry of Education’s website for teachers (Te Kete Ipurangi), which is a receptacle for subject-specific teaching resources housed in learning area communities. The Health and Physical Education community page contains snapshots of good practice designed and implemented by teachers (see http://health.tki.org.nz/Key-collections/Healthy-lifestyles).

**Resourcing**

PE curriculum programmes remain strongly framed by the physical resources (facilities and equipment) available. The range and quality of facilities and equipment vary significantly between schools, and this has a significant influence on programmes. In saying that, the majority of NZ primary schools do have access to large amounts of green field space (at a minimum the size of one football field but commonly more), hard courts (marked for two tennis courts, interchanged with two basketball/netball courts), a junior and senior adventure playground (not often viewed as a learning space), and access to a school hall (used only when available). Aotearoa NZ was the first country in the world to introduce the ‘L shaped’ learner pool in the 1950s (Stothart, 2000), and if a school has a swimming pool then aquatics or swimming is often taught outdoors in the summer months (Terms 1 and 4). It is important to note that the age and deterioration of the learner pools in primary schools has been an issue in recent years, and this has seen a move away from school-based swimming in areas where they have not been able to secure financial support to maintain the pool. To ensure students still get access to swimming, a school will outsource a swimming programme (usually up to 10 lessons) to a local swimming pool/centre and offer a condensed and/or intensive swim programme, as opposed to the daily swimming that occurs when there is a school pool.

Bad weather often means students are precluded from physical education because no suitable indoor facility was available or the school grounds were unusable. In the absence of a designated indoor space, the influence of weather can render outdoor facilities useless for physical education. Bad weather can thus mean that physical education lessons are cancelled (Petrie et al., 2007; Powell & Fitzpatrick, 2015). Access to nearby community hall facilities can help to alleviate the impact of weather on physical education classes, although the ways in which such facilities can be utilised may be limited (due, for example, to an absence of line markings or location of the community facility).

As Petrie (2016) highlighted, the physical education equipment shed in Aotearoa NZ is full of resources necessary to participate in sports and team games. For example, in a scan around most PE sheds you would see rugby, soccer, netballs, and basketballs, along with equipment for cricket, softball, tennis, athletics, and hockey, as well as there being some gymnastics equipment (vault, beam, mats, and maybe a mini trampoline) stored in the school hall. Teachers would also have access to team bands/bibs and cones, and in the junior school there would also be some forms of adapted equipment related to PMP programmes. Many schools also have made use of the Jump Jam (children’s aerobics) to ‘support’ (Powell & Fitzpatrick, 2015) their PE programme.
With the release of the 1999 HPE curriculum the Ministry of Education also funded the development of the *Curriculum in Action Series* (Ministry of Education & Learning Media, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 1999d, 2003) of resource books to help teachers in their implementation of the ‘new’ curriculum. These resources provided guidance in relation to coverage of key areas of learning, learning objectives, and activities, as well as making links to the underlying concepts clear. The use of these appears to have been limited by each school only receiving an allocated amount (based on the number of teachers in each school) of each of the published documents.

Teachers also have access to a range of resources developed to ‘support’ the delivery of ‘physical education’ provided by other government departments, national sporting organisations, and for-profit organisations. As detailed in (Petrie et al., 2014) resources such as *Developing Fundamental Movement Skills* (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2007), *Kiwidex* (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2007), and *Be Healthy Be Active: Kia Ora, Kia Korikori* (Nestle New Zealand, 2011) reinforce a particularly narrow notion of PE. Such resources have done little to extend teachers’ understandings of HPE as it has been articulated in the 1999 and 2007 curriculum documents. Indeed, in the last decade there has been a decline in government-funded professional development for teachers in HPE, resulting in schools resorting to external agencies to either provide them with programme resources, or for external agencies to provide an ‘expert’ to come into their school to teach their students in HPE related areas (Atkins, 2015a; Powell, 2015).

**Frequency**

As previously stated, the NZC guides programmes of learning in PE, and as it is needs based, no school programme will or should be the same as all others. The NZC does not specify a specific learning and teaching time for any subject area; however, priority is often given to literacy and numeracy, and consequently these subjects are given the most allocation in a school’s timetable. Notwithstanding teachers’ assurances that PE, in particular the physical development aspects, is important for all students, teachers continue to report that PE is not always delivered regularly as part of their classroom programme. There have been no nationwide studies that clearly evidence how much PE students in primary schools actually get as part of their school programmes; however, evidence from Dyson et al. (2011) suggests that time spent for PE is not consistent across schools, and teachers report as little as two sessions of up to 30 minutes per week is usual.

Teachers identified a range of pressures or factors that compromised the time given to PE, including: the weather; whole school commitments, such as productions; unfinished topic studies or other classroom tasks. For many teachers, PE appears to be something that happens when all the other ‘academic’ work is complete or the students needed a break from the classroom.

(Petrie, 2008: 68)

In a recent primary and intermediate schools survey conducted by the NZ Council for Education Research (NZCER) one-third of teachers and principals said the focus on English and mathematics and statistics had taken their attention away from other aspects of the NZC (Wylie & Bonne, 2013). In addition, 21% of teachers said that national standards were driving the school. Gordon, Dyson, Cowan, McKenzie and Shulruf’s (2016) most recent research on the influences on the teaching of PE in primary schools inform us that teachers are putting off PE because they have run out of time for learning due to the time required for developing reading and writing, as these are measured by national standards (common assessments across multiple levels at primary
school). In addition, the evidence suggests that generalist teachers marginalise PE in order to give time to more ‘important’ subjects, and as a result PE gets delivered poorly or not at all (Dyson et al., 2011). We know the curriculum and the learning environment of the primary classroom are complex, with eight learning areas and STEM subjects (not to mention assessing against literacy and numeracy national standards) – all contesting for curriculum time. This marginalisation of physical education is not unique to NZ, as Jess, Carse and Keay (2016) concur that globally there is concern about the state of primary school physical education programmes.

Who delivers physical education?

In Aotearoa NZ, a generalist primary school classroom teacher takes responsibility for delivery of all eight learning areas, including HPE, to a single class of students, collected together according to age [5 to 12 years]. In only a small number of schools, PE ‘specialists’ (teachers who have an undergraduate degree in PE alongside a teaching qualification) take responsibility for delivering aspects of the PE programme, for example, one out of two lessons per week. These specialist teachers frequently are also charged with the responsibility of organising school and inter-school sports events and teams. Such an approach appears to enhance the blurring of what constitutes curriculum PE and co- or extra-curricular sport.

In the last 10 years there has been a significant increase in outside providers as delivers of PE in primary schools in Aotearoa (Dyson et al., 2011; Penney et al., 2013; Petrie et al., 2014) as the marketplace is ripe to provide a service that is perceived to be beyond the capabilities of teachers to fulfil. Pope (2014) suggests that this is the result of a neoliberal education system whereby the market controls the demand for services. In Aotearoa NZ government policies such as Kiwisport (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2011) and the Childhood Obesity Plan (Ministry of Health, 2015) have supported the teaching of sport both in-curricular and co-curricular time in primary schools. Although this is intended to strengthen and promote partnerships between sports clubs, community groups, and schools, it does compromise the integrity of PE, which is defined more broadly than the sport agenda such programmes promote. Of significant concern to researchers in Aotearoa NZ is the substitution of physical education in primary school teaching and learning programmes with topics and programmes related to ‘sports’, ‘fitness’, and activity designed to combat obesity in children (Atkins, 2015a; Gordon et al., 2016; Petrie & lisahunter, 2011; Petrie et al., 2014; Pope, 2014; Powell & Fitzpatrick, 2015).

Principals reported in a recent survey of primary and intermediate schools that almost half of them can readily access external expertise or knowledge in the learning area of health and physical education (Wylie & Bonne, 2013). However, 19% of principals said that external expertise or knowledge was not needed, and from this we can assume that their teachers had sufficient knowledge to develop and teach HPE programmes in their school.

Initial teacher preparation

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes for primary school teaching are offered through a range of pathways. The most common ITE pathways are an undergraduate degree is gained in teaching (three years) or a graduate pathway (one year) after a person has completed an undergraduate degree. More recently the government has piloted two ‘exemplar’ programmes, one a research-based Master of Teaching and the other a FastStart (similar to TeachFirst), although these are not yet the most common pathways to teaching in primary schools. Entry requirements for all pathways require students to be interviewed in accordance with national ITE policy as prescribed by the NZ Education Council, the governing body that determines the regulatory
framework and disciplinary regimen for teaching (see https://educationcouncil.org.nz/content/about-education-council). These requirements ensure future teachers have the dispositions and personal qualities suitable for teaching.

The combining of HPE as one curriculum learning area has resulted in most primary ITE programmes a merging of what had been two distinct subjects and subject-related papers into one. This, with a range of other factors, including the merging of teachers colleges into the university system and the introduction of government-led priorities (numeracy, literacy, and STEM), have resulted in a significant reduction of hours available in ITE programmes for HPE courses. Generalist teacher education students undertake varying hours of tuition within their PE ITE courses, with few receiving more than 40 hours. The following provides some examples of the hours NZ ITE providers allocate for the study of teaching PE in a generalist teacher-training programme:

- Institution One: 27 hrs (BTchg – HPE 7.5 credit paper), 50 hrs (Grad Dip Tchg – HPE 15 credit paper), 9 hrs (Masters of Teaching – component in curriculum studies 30 credit paper);
- Institution Two: 40 hrs (BTchln PE course, over 2 years) and 18 hrs (Grad Dip Tchg PE course); and
- Institution Three: 52 hours (BEd – Primary).

The focus of learning in the HPE, or in the few instances where the papers are split between health and physical education, is determined by the teaching staff of each of the recognised providers of primary ITE programmes. There is no expectation that every institution focuses on the same content or outcomes. Although there is monitoring every three years of each programme in accordance with the Tertiary Education Commission’s audit and monitoring programme, there are no set requirements and there is no uniformity in the learning foci nationally for each provider of primary ITE programmes. For example, at the University of Waikato that focus is on moving beyond traditional perspectives of health and physical education; understanding how to maintain and enhance the learning environment through use of a wide range of inclusive practices, teaching styles, and reflective practices; and planning for learning. In contrast, other institutions may prioritise curriculum models (cooperative learning, teaching games for understanding) and PE-related content, alongside other related courses at the undergraduate level as evident in AUT’s Bachelor of Sport and Recreation and Bachelor of Education (Primary). The variation in time allocated to learning to teach PE as part of ITE programmes and each lecturing team’s personal perspectives appear to play a significant role in framing the focus and delivery of the primary teacher education PE paper(s).

Anecdotally, there is a sense that in Aotearoa NZ the reduction in ITE provision has affected the quality of specific HPE pedagogical content knowledge of graduating primary school teachers. This is problematic, as primary generalist teachers are required to have professional knowledge – knowing what to teach, how to teach, and how learners learn in all eight learning areas detailed in the NZC.

Teacher certification

In Aotearoa NZ the Education Act (New Zealand Government, 1989) requires all teachers to be registered with the Education Council of NZ and hold a practicing certificate to work in NZ state and integrated schools. All students who graduate with a Master, Bachelor, or Diploma of Teaching from a tertiary institution are required to demonstrate the Graduating Teacher Standards
(New Zealand Teachers Council, 2007). These seven standards exemplify the critical role teachers’ play in enabling the education achievement of all learners. They also recognize that the Treaty of Waitangi extends equal status and rights to Māori and Pakeha alike. Meeting this criterion will allow beginning teachers to gain provisional certification with the Education Council Aotearoa NZ. After a two-year induction and mentoring period, provisionally registered teachers are required to evidence that they have the essential knowledge and skills to meet the Practicing Teacher Criteria (Education Council New Zealand, 2010) and therefore be eligible to apply for a full practising certificate. Having attained this status all teachers are required to engage in ongoing professional learning and be assessed against these criteria as part of a school’s performance management system when they renew their practices certificate every three years. The criteria on which teachers are ‘assessed’ relate to two areas: professional relationships and professional values and professional knowledge in practice. More detail on these criteria can be viewed at https://educationcouncil.org.nz/sites/default/files/Practising%20teacher%20criteria%20English.pdf. There are no specific measures to ensure teachers (including generalists) are current with PE curriculum, pedagogies, or broader developments, as measurement against the criteria are done at the discretion of the school principal.

Assessment

Primary school–aged students’ achievement in physical education is not formally measured in relation to any form of national standard (Gordon et al., 2013). In line with the curriculum it is expected that student achievement will be measured by their classroom teacher in relation to the specific achievement objectives the class is focused on. Given the desire to have differentiated and contextually relevant school PE programmes, this model of teacher/school-framed assessment allows teachers to design assessments that will best ‘measure’ student progress. That said, given the low status of PE in the primary school setting, there appears to be little monitoring of student progress; instead, anecdotal evidence indicates that teachers and schools focus primarily on students’ attitude/engagement in PE lessons and fitness levels in their reporting to parents. Although there has been a range of discussion about the role standardised testing might play in enhancing the credibility of PE in Aotearoa NZ, this is not a desired approach given the potential for further narrowing and reinforcement of a focus only on the physical aspects of PE.

At a national level, since the implementation of the curriculum statement HPE Curriculum in 1999, the learning area of HPE has been part of a national monitoring project on student learning, as well as part of the three-year national quality assurance cycle each school is subjected to. This latter quality assurance monitoring is undertaken by the independent Crown organisation the Education Review Office (ERO). This ensures that school policies and processes, along with student learning across the breadth of the learning areas of the NZC, are measured. One weakness of this process is the lack of subject-specific expertise of the ERO auditors and assessors. This sometimes means knowledge of what makes good physical education teaching and learning is sometimes missed.

One measure of student achievement that does have some assessment rigor is the monitoring of each learning area on a four-year cycle by another independent entity provided by the government. This monitoring project provides a snapshot specifically of student achievement against the NZC at two levels (level 2 or year 4 and level 4 or year 8). The latest National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (NMSSA) was undertaken in 2013 (see www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/series/nmssa/health-and-physical-education). NMSSA assessed achievement in HPE in two ways: by using a measure of critical thinking in HPE and descriptive reporting of students’ understanding of wellbeing, and the demonstration of a range of movement and strategic
action skills within the contexts of games and movement sequences. Over the last two decades the results of the earlier monitoring of student achievement in HPE showed a comparable increase in student achievement (2%) which was congruent with other learning areas. The most recent 2013 NMSSA results have highlighted a number of strengths and weaknesses in student achievement in HPE. Strengths identified were that students’ movement skills developed considerably from Year 4 to Year 8. Boys scored higher on a range of movement skills and strategic action skills that included rotation, agility, and balance in the context of games. Girls scored slightly higher on performing movement sequences skills that included control and use of equipment, change of pace, level, and use of their bodies, as well as variations in movements and use of space. One significant weakness highlighted was that by Year 8 only 50% of students were achieving at Level 4 of the curriculum. To achieve at Level 4 of the curriculum the NMSSA report stated that students need to have been exposed to specific health and physical education teaching, implying that the exposure to teachers using pedagogical content knowledge in HPE may be missing in a significant number of schools. NMSSA has the potential to be useful for teachers, researchers, and policy makers alike as it enables discussion and action to be taken both at a macro (school) level as well as ministerial level, if the Ministry of Education choose to focus on this area.

Other significant factors worth noting

Hijacked by health agendas and sporting discourses, these and other policies affect what teachers focus on within their learning programmes. As was previously mentioned, the contexts of sport and physical literacy have been predominant in recent years. This is largely as a result of the Ministry of Education providing resource and focus on the STEM subjects and driving the need for schools to report against national reading, writing, and mathematics standards. However, there is potential to adopt a strengths-based approach and utilise a conceptual framework for considering PE in the primary school (Jess et al., 2016; McCuaig, Quennerstedt & Macdonald, 2013).

Notes

1 Aotearoa is the Māori name for NZ, Māori being the indigenous people.
2 Māori are the indigenous people of Aotearoa NZ.
3 The Treaty of Waitangi is the founding document of New Zealand. It is an agreement entered into by representatives of the Crown and of Māori iwi (tribes) and hapū (sub-tribes). It is named after the place in the Bay of Islands where the treaty was first signed on 6 February 1840.
4 The eight specific learning areas in the NZC and correspondingly in TMoA are English, mathematics and statistics, learning language, science, technology, social studies, health and physical education, and the arts.
5 PMP is a motor coordination programme for school-age children.
6 Jump Jam is an aerobic program developed in 2000 as a ‘Kidz Aerobix’ resource kit for schools. It was created by two-time World Aerobic Champion Brett Fairweather specifically for primary and intermediate students and teachers.
7 Te Reo Kori is Māori for the language of movement, and as a learning focus relates to games, pastimes, and movement activities traditionally practiced as part of the Māori way of being.
8 Many of these can be viewed at http://health.tki.org.nz/Key-collections/Curriculum-in-action.
9 Māori word to denote a foreigner English or European descent.

References

Aotearoa New Zealand


Introduction

Spain is a member of the European Union, located in Western Europe and North Africa. It is a social and democratic state of law, whose territory is organized in seventeen Autonomous Communities (Andalucía, Aragón, Islas Baleares, Canarias, Cantabria, Castilla-La Mancha, Castilla y León, Cataluña, Comunidad de Madrid, Comunidad Foral de Navarra, Comunidad Valenciana, Extremadura, Galicia, País Vasco, Principado de Asturias, Región de Murcia and La Rioja) and two Autonomous Cities (Ceuta and Melilla).

With regard to the structure of the Spanish educational system, we must indicate that since the organic law 1/1990 of October 3, the Education System, called LOGSE (Ministry of Education and Science¹ [MEC], 1990) has been divided into four stages, two of which are mandatory, and the other two are non-binding:

- Nursery and preschool (Educación Infantil, ages 3 to 5 years) – non-binding
- Primary education (Educación Primaria, ages 6 to 11 years) – mandatory
- Compulsory secondary education (Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, ages 12 to 15 years) – mandatory
- Upper secondary education (Bachillerato, 16 to 17 years) – non-binding

The organic law 8/2013 of December 9, for the Improvement of Educational Quality (Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport² [MECD], 2013a), known as LOMCE, is the current national education law. The LOMCE is a partial modification of the LOE: organic law 2/2006 of May 3 of Education. The Royal Decree 126/2014 (MECD, 2014) establishes core rules for primary education. This school stage begins at age 6 and ends at age 11. It has six educational levels, one for each age of the student. The school calendar is set by the Autonomous Communities, comprising a minimum of 175 school days. The school year starts in September and finishes in June and includes two breaks at Christmas (two to three weeks) and Easter (one week). The basic curriculum of primary education is established by the Royal Decree 126/2014 (MECD, 2014) and is based on specific objectives of this stage of education and general competencies, establishing blocks of content in core areas and evaluation criteria and learning standards in all areas. The official curriculum differentiates between two kinds of subjects: core subjects and specific subjects. Core
subjects (mathematics, social sciences, natural sciences, Spanish language and literature and first foreign language) are those which let students acquire knowledge and competencies. They are the foundation of a solid education and the guarantee of success in the next educative stages in those subjects. Frequency and contents of these core subjects are established in this national curriculum by the MECD of the government of Spain. The Education Administrations (Autonomous Communities) are responsible for complementing these contents. Otherwise, the frequency and contents of specific subjects such as physical education (those which will not be assessed at the end of primary and secondary school) are established by every autonomous community. Furthermore, for specific subjects the national government only determines the learning standards and assessment criteria each student must meet at the end of the educational stage.

There are three categories of schools in the Spanish education system: public schools (colegios públicos), charter schools (colegios concertados) and private schools (colegios privados). Because some private schools are publicly funded, the line between public and private is blurred. In 2015 there were 10.375 public primary schools and 3.513 private and charter primary schools in Spain. The biggest financial support for private and charter schools comes from local (city councils) and regional governments (Autonomous Communities). Schools are autonomous when distributing funding among different areas.

**Official curriculum**

Physical education (PE) was slowly introduced into the Spanish primary school during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In 1989, the Primary School Physical Education Specialist Teacher degree was started as a result of the Law of Physical Culture and Sport (Ministry of Education and Culture [MEC], 1980). In 1990, the LOGSE (MECD, 1990) established PE as an academic subject, which should be taught by PE specialists. Since then, Spain has suffered a continuous change of education laws (four in 25 years, including LOGSE) that has forced teachers to constantly adapt to curriculum reforms. In summary, and perhaps in a reductionist way, the main pedagogical changes that legislative changes have led to are a process of teaching and learning that is more process oriented than product oriented, the pursuit of development in the student of abilities first and of competences second and the introduction of evaluation criteria and learning standards. In any case, this has meant for the teacher a great adaptation to the new paperwork demanded by each new law.

However, the PE curriculum has not suffered many deep changes until the last law. As with other subjects, all laws have proposed a progressive development of the curriculum (Stenhouse, 1975), in which the first level of curriculum is done by the government of the Spanish state, the second level is done by the Autonomous Communities and the third level is done by teachers at school.

The LOMCE (MECD, 2013a) stipulates that student assessment should be continuous, overall (referring to all subjects) and based on objective criteria. Moreover, it details that the purpose of assessment is to know to what extent the educational goals and key competences have been achieved. In order to evaluate the educational objectives and key competencies, teachers have to take as a reference two curricular elements: assessment criteria and learning standards. The evaluation criteria are specific benchmarks to assess student learning. They describe what teachers have to assess and what students must achieve, both related to knowledge and competencies. Meanwhile the learning standards are specifications of the assessment criteria and allow learning outcomes to be defined and specify what students should know and understand in each subject. They should be observable, measurable and assessable and allow teachers to grade the performance or achievement reached. They should contribute to and facilitate the design of standardised and comparable tests.
The LOMCE set for the subject of physical education thirteen assessment criteria, which are specified in forty-four learning standards (each assessment criterion is specified using two to five learning standards). Most Autonomous Communities have chosen to sequence these two performance indicators, as well as determine the contents for each school year, setting a fairly closed curriculum. However, a few Autonomous Communities have chosen to leave this competence to primary schools.

By the end of their schooling all students are required to demonstrate that they have the knowledge and skills described by the following assessment criteria:

- **AC1.** Solve motor situation with variety of stimulus and space-temporal constraints, selecting and combining the fundamental motor skills and adapting them to the context effectively.
- **AC2.** Use the body language and the movement, aesthetically and creatively, communicating feelings, emotions and ideas.
- **AC3.** Solve elementary tactical challenges characteristic of games and physical activities, with or without opposition, applying principles and rules to solve the motor situations, working individually, coordinated and cooperatively and performing different roles implicit in games and activities.
- **AC4.** Connect both specific physical education and other subject concepts with the practice of games, sports, physical activities and expressive activities.
- **AC5.** Recognise the effects that physical exercise, hygiene, diet and postural habits have on health and well-being, expressing a responsible attitude towards oneself.
- **AC6.** Improve the level of their physical abilities, regulating and measuring out the intensity and duration of the effort, considering its possibilities and its relation with health.
- **AC7.** Value, accept and respect your own and the others’ body reality, showing a reflective and critical attitude.
- **AC8.** Know and appreciate the diversity of physical, recreational, sport and artistic activities.
- **AC9.** Give a coherent opinion with critical attitude both from the participant and spectator perspective about possible conflictive situations, taking part in discussion, and accepting others’ opinions.
- **AC10.** Respect the environment during games and outdoor activities, identifying and taking part in actions targeted on their preservation.
- **AC11.** Identify and embrace the importance of prevention, recovery and security measures when carrying out physical activities.
- **AC12.** Search, process and share information related to topics of interest to the stage of primary education, using certain information sources and making use of information and communications technology as a resource to support the subject.
- **AC13.** Demonstrate personal and social responsible behaviour, respecting both yourself and others during physical activities and games, accepting norms and rules and acting with interest and individual initiative and teamwork spirit.

As was said earlier, each Assessment Criterion is specified in different learning standards, and it will be the learning standards that actually will be used by teachers to evaluate their students’ performance. To understand the grade of concretion of this curricular element, three examples of the forty-four learning standards are given here:

- **LS1.2.** (specification of AC1): Adapt the fundamental motor skills of jumping to different types of environments and to sports, physical and artistic activities, adjusting its performance to the spatiotemporal constrains, while maintaining the postural balance.
• LS2.3. (specification of AC2): Know and perform simple dances representative of different cultures and different times, following an established choreography.
• LS6.3. (specification of CE6): Adapt the intensity of his or her effort to the duration of the activity.

The only indication about how the assessment tools should be used is reflected in the definition of learning standards: “learning standards should contribute to and facilitate the design of standardized and comparable tests” (MECD, 2013a).

In order to achieve these learning standards, the national curriculum proposes that curricular contents of PE plans should be classified depending on the main characteristic of the motor situation. There are five categories: (a) motor actions in stable environments (e.g., athletics, swimming, gymnastics); (b) motor actions in opposition context (e.g., judo, badminton); (c) motor actions in a cooperation context (e.g., acrogym, basketball, relay race); (d) motor actions in situations of adaptation to environment (e.g., orienteering, skiing, climbing); and (e) expressive or artistic motor actions (e.g., dance, drama). The proposal of this classification of contents is the result of the obsolete influence of Parlebas (1988) in Spain, who analysed motor actions from a structural view and with few pedagogical implications, during the 1970s and 1980s. This approach ignores current pedagogical models such as game-centred approaches (Osli & Mitchell, 2006).

It is then the responsibility of each Autonomous Community to determine the learning focus that will be used to provide students opportunities to attain these learning standards. The main goal set by national curriculum Royal Decree (2014) for Primary School Physical Education (PSPE) is “to develop students’ motor competence, defined as the integration of knowledge, procedures, attitudes and feelings linked to motor behaviour” (p. 19406). From this view, students should not only practice different types of physical activities, but also be able to critically analyse their values and attitudes related to body in everyday life. Some examples of the contributions of PE are the understanding of action movements (knowing what, how, when and with whom to do every action) and the development of social skills and fair play. Health has a central role in PSPE in the Spanish national curriculum, mainly because PE is considered an appropriate way of developing healthy habits and critical attitudes towards social unhealthy practices.

The curricula designed by each of the Autonomous Communities have similar core ideas to those reflected in the national curriculum. All Autonomous Communities highlight the need of developing the motor competence and healthy habits as a way to combat child sedentarism. Ten Autonomous Communities also note physical education as a means of transmitting cultural manifestations such as traditional games and dances. Only one Autonomous Community has adopted the games-centred criterion to classify learning in PE, so we assume this approach is not being put into practice by most of the PEPS teachers.

Learning programmes

It is difficult to know what actually gets accomplished in the name of PE in Spain, as studies about what is really taught in schools are limited and done in very few Autonomous Communities. With this in mind and drawing from a few sources available, including documentation from each of the Autonomous Communities and our work across Spain, we can only surmise what is actually happening in primary school PE. To this end, we note that the variance in the focus for learning that is offered across the Autonomous Communities, which is represented by the number of times a specific learning focus is noted in the official documentation (included in the brackets of examples detailed in the following). Where the content is less obvious we have also included more extensive descriptions.
• Fundamental motor skills (13)
• Health-related exercise (14)
• Perception (12): body image, laterality, senses, exploration of body relaxation and tension, balance, posture, and spatial and temporal relationships.
• Play and games (10): focused on traditional games of the Autonomous Communities; games oriented to the development of skills, coordination and physical condition; sports; fair play and social values.
• Body language (15): learning in this category is focused on how to express feelings, emotions and other information through the body. Drama and dance are the main tools.
• Adventure education (2): learning in this category is focused on motor actions in the natural environment, aiming for students to regulate their energy throughout the activity, take information and references to build the most economic displacement, establish correspondences between the map and the environment, appreciate distances, directions, reliefs and times, etc. This includes practising orienteering, canoeing.
• Social values and skills (3): learning in this category is focused on communication skills, individual and social values, personal and social responsibility, the acceptance of one’s own limits and of others, the norms of coexistence, and the use of physical activity and sport as a means of positive use of leisure time, personal enjoyment and social relationship.
• Key competences-related contents (2): learning in this category is focused on procedural and attitudinal contents common to all disciplinary areas.
• Play (1): traditional games of the Autonomous Communities and sports; games oriented to the development of skills, coordination and physical condition.
• Individual motor actions (1): they request the adaptation of students to achieve increasingly effective motor behaviour, depending on the demands of the environment. Some examples of these actions are those oriented to body schema, body awareness (relaxation, breathing, etc.), acquisition of individual skills, fitness, etc.; athletics, swimming, gymnastics, skating.
• Motor actions in an opposition context (1): the students are committed to interact in a situation of one versus one, whose purpose is to overcome the opponent. These actions correspond to the activities of confrontation in which there may be corporal contact between adversaries (wrestling games, ground judo, fencing, etc.) or net modified games (badminton, mini-tennis, etc.), among others.
• Motor actions in a cooperation and cooperation-opposition context (1): cooperative actions involve a collective activity with positive interdependence that demands collaboration, mutual assistance, communication and coordination of action among the participants in the search and implementation of motor solutions that respond to the problem situations that arise (activities adapted from the circus world, traditional games, cooperative games, etc.). In cooperation-opposition actions, participants are in stable environments to achieve one goal through establishing collaborative relationships and overcoming opposition from another group. The selective attention, the interpretation of the actions of the rest of the participants, the respect to the rules, the capacity of spatio-temporal structuring, the resolution of problems and team work, are capacities that acquire a significant dimension in these actions. In this group of motor experience, it will be convenient respect, dialogue and solidarity among the playmates. Traditional games, emerging sports (kin-ball, etc.), striking-fielding games (baseball, etc.) and invasion games (hockey, etc.) as well as actions within the sports education (SE) are activities belonging to this group.
• Body reality and motor behaviour (1): Canarias (Autonomous Community) does an only inclusive approach to implementation of PE learnings in different contexts taking as main axes body and motor skills. This would include all previous focuses of learning.
The first thing we can see is that games do not appear in seven Autonomous Communities, but note that this is often being integrated in these cases in other areas of content, mainly in motor skill or under a generic name of “play”. The reason for this is an attempt to embrace the significant influence of sport and games in Spain, while trying to balance this with other foci such as health, body language or fundamental motor skills (FMS). However, we cannot agree on going against what we consider a child’s needs and basic PE content. If games are a social phenomenon that invades the child’s life, this phenomenon must be approached from the school directly and openly, encouraging its positive aspects and fighting to mitigate the negative.

It is of particular interest that three Autonomous Communities have incorporated a specific focus on social values and skills. We are not clear about why they would separate these out as opposed to ensuring these were considered in every single PE lesson, because it is a way to highlight the importance of personal and social responsibility. We feel this approach would encourage more teachers to make it explicit in their lessons.

Finally, two Autonomous Communities have introduced a focus on key competencies: communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology, digital competence, learning to learn, social and civic competences, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, cultural awareness and expression (European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2006). This would suggest an endeavour to use PE as a context for learning across the curriculum. However, it is not clear how this translates into practice.

Méndez-Alonso, Fernández-Río, Méndez-Giménez and Prieto-Saborit (2015) found that in Asturias (Autonomous Community) the selection of learning foci was influenced by PEPS teachers’ pre-service education and professional development, work experience and motivation. In this study, it was shown that the focus was predominantly games. A deeper analysis shows that males give more weight to games and females give more weight to FMS, health and body language (Méndez-Alonso et al., 2015). Conte-Marín and Moreno-Murcia (2003) note that in the first few grades of primary school a focus on skills and movement concepts was more prevalent, whereas games became more dominant in the last grades of primary school.

If we pay attention to each content in relation to games, García-López, Gutiérrez, Del Rey Alcaraz and Sánchez-Mora (2015) describe how most PEPS teachers from six Autonomous Communities (Andalucía, Aragón, Castilla-La Mancha, Cataluña, Comunidad Valenciana and Murcia) teach both skills and tactics, although most of them use skills as the main learning progression criterion. Some considerations about games teaching are the following (García-López et al., 2015): the use of thematic approaches (Mitchell, Oslin & Griffin, 2003) by nearly 50% of teachers; the use of questioning when teaching tactics (78.1%) and skills (84.7%); and skills, decision-making and attitudes are key aspects of assessing games.

Health-oriented exercise is a key concept in the Spanish national curriculum. All dimensions of health are included in the PE national curriculum (biological, sociological and psychological), although a greater role is given to the biological component (Pastor-Vicedo, Gil-Madrona, Prieto-Ayuso and González-Villora (2015). Adventure education has been reintroduced in the national curriculum by the current royal decree. However, its development is usually done through extra-curricular activities (Peñarrubia, Guillén & Lapetra, 2015). Finally, although twelve Autonomous Communities include body language as a content category in their curricula, it is still considered a second-class content among teachers (Montávez, 2011). The category of body language in Spain traditionally includes other physical activities that involve expression, like dance and drama.
Every Spanish school must have an educational project, which includes programme plans for every subject in every educational grade. Every autonomous community states which elements should be included in their programme plans. As an example, the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha established the following elements (Education, Culture and Sport Department of Castilla-La Mancha, 2014):

1. Introduction on the characteristics of the subject.
2. Sequence and timing of the contents.
3. Evaluation criteria and their corresponding learning standards.
4. Integration of key competencies in the curriculum elements, through the relationship between the learning standards and key competencies.
6. Assessment criteria.
8. Curriculum materials and teaching resources.
9. Complementary activities plan.

To summarize, we can say that learning programs usually have a multi-activity approach resulting from the combination of the regional curriculum and characteristics of schools and teachers. More research is needed for an accurate description of this situation.

**Resourcing**

The Spanish regulation regarding physical spaces in physical education states that schools must have at least one outdoor $44 \times 22\text{m}^2$ space and an indoor $480\text{m}^2$ space (Royal Decree, 1004/1991). The Sports Law (1975) provided other requirements such as ceiling height, temperature, lighting, etc. Both regulations are in force despite their age, but clearly need to be updated. In the study carried out by Gil, Burillo, Gallardo and García-Tascón (2010), teachers pose that the principal needs are the following: the insufficient number of sports facilities (20% of schools still do not have an indoor facility); reduced dimensions of facilities in relation to the number of students; sports equipment does not meet the needs of teachers, being designed more for extra-curricular sport than for PE; spaces that are not suited to the diverse climate of the Spanish geography (wind, extreme heat or cold, rain); and finally, improving aspects of lighting, temperature and ventilation of indoor facilities. Funding for Spanish primary schools depends on the nature of the ownership. As a result, resources in each school depend on the principal’s sensibility towards PE needs.

At least eight publishers offer student books, activity books and teacher books to develop PE classes in Spain. However, very few schools use them. It is a bit more usual to find teachers who design their own curriculum materials (Contreras-Jordán & García-López, 2011) for their classes using other resources (videos, Internet, newspapers, etc.). Teachers’ national meetings like FEADef Conferences (2005–15) or ConEFPados (2014–15) promote the use of these kinds of resources. More research is needed to know what teachers really do in relation to this topic.

At least eleven publishers offer programme plans for primary schools. In order to avoid paperwork and due to teachers’ difficulties adapting their way of planning to key competences and learning standards (Lleixà, Gómez-Arévalo & Braz-Vieira, 2016; Méndez-Alonso, Méndez-Giménez & Fernández-Río, 2015), many teachers use these programme plans which are
not adapted to their real context of teaching. More research is needed in order to clarify how Spanish PE teachers do their programme plans.

Frequency

Although previous regulations in Spain set a minimum of two hours per week of PE in all primary school grades, the last national decree (2013) let every autonomous community set their own PE frequency, which is timetabled in so they automatically and always have it. There is a wide range of responses to this question in communities’ curricula. Although most of them have two sessions of one hour per week, some Autonomous Communities set three sessions of one hour per week (Extremadura: grades one to three) and other communities set only two sessions of forty-five minutes per week (Pais Vasco: grades three to six) in determined grades. As shown in these examples, the number of hours and sessions per week can also vary for each grade within a single Autonomous Community.

Who delivers PE?

In Spain, primary school teachers must have a degree in teaching, which enables them to teach generalist areas (mathematics, social sciences, natural sciences, and Spanish language and literature). In addition, teachers who want to teach music, foreign language or PE have to meet additional requirements. To become a PE specialist, the graduated teacher has to fulfil one of the following requirements (Royal Decrees, 476/2013 [MECD, 2013b] and 1594/2011 [MECD, 2011]):

- Have a degree in teaching in primary education with specialty in physical education. The specialty consists in an optional training itinerary. Before the recent transformation of the teacher education syllabus from three to four years, the PE teacher education program was not an optional itinerary, but a full degree, which also accredited the teacher as generalist teacher.
- Pass the exercises of the phase of competitive exams of the PE specialty.
- Have a degree in sport science.

Depending on the needs of the centre, PE teachers, like any other teacher, may combine their teaching in PE with the teaching of generalist areas.

Although these requirements are the same regardless of ownership of the school (public or private), the selection of the teaching staff is quite different. Recruitment to teach in public schools is regulated by the national and regional governments (Royal Decree, 276/2007). To become a practitioner, applicants must pass a selection process consisting of several theoretical and practical exams and the evaluation of their curricula/merits. The regional governments determine the selection tests, which are very similar throughout the country. If the candidate passes all the tests, he or she becomes a civil servant. If they fail the exams, applicants are added to a list and may be called to fill vacancies or to cover sick leave. In either case, teachers choose their job destination among the available schools; thus, the school principal has no possibility of choosing his or her work team. On the contrary, in private and charter schools the selection is made directly by the school management company under the criterion they understand to be the most suitable.

These selection systems have several implications. Teachers in public schools demonstrate their knowledge in the competitive exam, and this could be considered as a quality filter. Furthermore, they will have autonomy in their teaching, since their job does not depend on the centre’s
Spain

administrator or principal. The weaknesses of this system are low supervision of the teachers’ work, and specifically the difficulty of establishing compatible and long-term teams.

In the case of private and charter schools the implications are just the opposite, as school administrators get to appoint teachers they view as quality. As a result, the school leaders have more control over whom they employ in line with their needs (school projects and educational philosophy), as well as over the suitability of the candidate to work on a specific educational project and team.

Teacher preparation

The current state of the PE teacher training in Spain is the result of two major changes. The first is derived from the enactment of the 1990 Organic Act on the General Organization of the Education System (LOGSE). This educational law introduced PE as compulsory in all educational stages. It was also the origin of the creation of the specialty of PE in schools of education (RD, 1440/1991). The second major change was the conversion of the teacher training bachelor’s degree (three years) to the teacher training university degree (four years), a process that ended in the 2010. This change also involved an increase in the research profile of the teaching staff of these studies.

The current teaching degree program consists of at least three modules: foundations (60 credits), pedagogical content related (100 credits) and practicum (50 credits). The foundations module comprises those subjects that are considered the base of teaching in school contexts: educational psychology, sociology and school organization. The pedagogical content module comprises those subjects that focus on the content and didactic aspects (methodology) of seven areas: social sciences, experimental sciences, mathematics, Spanish, and foreign languages, music, art and PE. The practicum module consists in internships and a final project. Internships must be completed in primary schools with the supervision of two teachers, one from the Faculty of Education and the other from the school. In addition to these three modules, universities can offer, through optional itineraries, specialties between thirty and sixty credits.

Through the completion of the PE core subjects in the pedagogical content related module, teacher education students are required by national prescription to:

[Understand] the principles that contribute to cultural, personal and social education through physical education. Knowing the curriculum of physical education. Acquire resources to encourage participation throughout life in sports activities inside and outside school. Develop and evaluate curriculum content through appropriate teaching resources and promote relevant skills in students


Therefore, there is no national guideline on what other content should be taught in the specialty in physical education.

After studying the curriculum of the Faculties of Education of nine of the seventeen Autonomous Communities, we can report some patterns in PEPS training programs. There are two kind of PE subjects: core subjects (six to twelve credits), which are compulsory for all teaching students, whether these students choose to study the PE specialty or not, and optional subjects (twenty-four to thirty credits), which enable to get the specialty of PE. Core subjects summarize PE and focus more on curricular knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and programming than on content knowledge. Credits, number and denomination of core subjects differ among universities. For example, the Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha includes two subjects of six credits (Physical Education as a School Subject, and Curriculum Design and Development), whereas the
Universidad Complutense de Madrid includes just one of six credits (Physical Education and Its Didactic). On the other hand, the subjects included in the optional itinerary in the PE specialty are dedicated to deepen specific content and their associated methodological aspects. Most of the optional subjects can be grouped into the traditional categories that have framed the focus of PE in Spain since 1990: sports and games, adventure education, body language, health-related exercise and fundamental motor skills, although these last two blocks can be also mixed. Subjects related to sports and games are the most common in PE training programs, with more than one subject in several programs. Apart from these main categories, some programmes include subjects dedicated to attention to diversity, interdisciplinary work and values.

As described, the PE teacher education program is dominated by a focus on general pedagogical skills and knowledge. This gives PE teachers good foundations in general aspects of education, but limited specific guidance in relation to PE content knowledge, which influences their ability in the design of specific tasks (Gutiérrez et al., 2017).

**Assessment**

The assessment directives introduced in the LOMCE (MECD, 2013a), described in the curriculum section, have been criticized in two respects. First, the high number of learning standards greatly increases the “bureaucratic” time that teachers should devote to verify all specific learning described by standards of learning (Julián-Clemente, Abarca-Sos, Zaragoza & Aibar, 2016). This spending of time and effort results in less time devoted to long-term educational goals and individual needs. Second, the concern for collecting objective and comparable information and the indication of designing standardized and comparable tests seems to lead back to an outdated pedagogy by objectives. This educational line also relegates to a secondary role, the competence-based approach, introduced in 2006 and which is still valid. This approach implies that education should emphasize the mobilization of practical skills, knowledge, motivation, ethical values, attitudes, emotions and other social components and behaviour; furthermore, the content learnt has to be applicable to particular contexts and foster transversality and interdisciplinarity (Lleixà et al., 2016). The application of the competence-based approach in PE began to mean a necessary methodological renewal. This renewal may be slowed by this move towards standards-based pedagogy.

The PE teacher, or more commonly the classroom teacher, informs the families of the students’ academic progress through report letters and through tutorials. The academic year is divided into three regular assessments (quarterly) and a final evaluation. In each evaluation the class group tutor informs the parents about the students’ academic progress and grades.

The grades are detailed in qualitative and quantitative terms. The results of the evaluation shall be expressed in terms of Insufficient (IN) for negative ratings, Sufficient (SU), Good (BI), Very good (NT) or Outstanding (SB) for positive ratings. These terms shall be accompanied by a numerical score without using decimals, on a scale of one to ten, with the following: unsatisfactory 1, 2, 3 or 4; sufficient: 5; good: 6; very good: 7 or 8; outstanding: 9 or 10.

Unlike the results of evaluations of other materials, as far as we know PE results are not used by government institutions with objectives as a measurement of health, knowledge or motor competence of the Spanish population.

**Significant factors worth noting**

In addition to the already explained autonomy that Autonomous Communities have in the selection of PE contents and the diversity in PE teaching degree programs, there is another aspect that increases the diversification of PE throughout Spain. Spain is a country with great geographical,
Spain
cultural and climatic diversity, causing the variation in part of the contents taught in PE. One of the objectives of PE is to show students the cultural and practical aspects of those physical-sport activities that are specific to their area; in this sense there will be differences in the contents that are conditioned by a geographic component (water sports, mountain activities, etc.) and those associated with cultural aspects as traditional games.

Finally, it is necessary to indicate the epidemic of childhood obesity as an external factor with influence on PE. The prevalence of overweight/obesity is at alarming rates in Spain, both in childhood (Pérez-Farinós et al., 2013) and adolescence (Gulías-González et al., 2014). The social alarm generated by this data has influenced the increase of health-related contents in more recent education laws. However, this increase seems to have had little influence on the habits and health levels of the school population (Muñoz, Fernández & Navarro, 2015).

Notes
1 Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia.
2 Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte.
3 Ministerio de Educación y Cultura.

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25

PRIMARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN CYPRUS

Ermis Kyriakides and Niki Tsangaridou

Introduction

Cyprus is an island country situated at the northeastern end of the Mediterranean sea, having an area of 9,251 km² and population size of 847,000 (Statistical Service of the Republic of Cyprus, 2014). Cyprus has been a member state of the European Union since 2004, and its culture is deemed comparable to European countries. As is the case with the majority of European countries, education in Cyprus is compulsory until the age of 15 years (EACEA, 2016a), and it aims to provide equal opportunities to all students.

The administration of the educational system in Cyprus is centralized. All schools are under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC), which is responsible for all forms of educational planning and policy (Karagiorgi & Nicolaidou, 2010). In addition, the MoEC is responsible for the enforcement of educational laws and for the prescription and supervision of curricula and textbooks used in schools (EACEA, 2016b).

The primary education sector

As far as the primary education is concerned, six-year schooling is provided for children from 6 (Grade 1) to 12 (Grade 6) years old. The academic year begins in early September and it typically comprises 37 weeks (it ends in mid-June). The daily timetable, which is common for all the primary schools and all grades, begins at 7:45 in the morning and ends at 13:05. It comprises seven 40-minute teaching periods and three breaks (one 20-minute and two 10-minute breaks).

However, about one-third of the primary schools also function as all-day schools on a voluntary basis. All-day schools operate from October to May, offering to students 12 additional afternoon teaching periods per week (the daily timetable ends at 16:00). During the afternoon timetable, students carry out their assigned homework or they have supportive teaching (four periods per week), and they attend to lessons of their interest (eight periods per week), such as English, Information Technology, “Life Education” activities, Music, Physical Education (PE), Art, Design and Technology, and Drama (MoEC, 2014). In both the regular and the all-day school, the maximum number of pupils in each class does not exceed 25.
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Official curriculum

During the last years, a notable attempt has been undertaken by the MoEC and other stakeholders (e.g., inspectors, teachers, parents) to design and implement new curricula and educational material for all the subject matters in all school levels. Within this context, the new Physical Education Curriculum-2010 (PEC-2010) (see MoEC, 2010) has been developed for the subject of PE, which is a required subject in all primary grades in Cyprus. The PEC-2010 is organized on the basis of six main aims/standards, which are common for all educational levels, and they cover the essential knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and behaviours that students are expected to develop through their participation in PE lessons (MoEC, 2010). Each of these aims is accompanied by a number of benchmarks and indicators for each grade level (MoEC, 2013). Benchmarks determine the minimum threshold that a student should achieve at the end of the academic year, and the grade-level indicators refer to what a student should be taught to be able to achieve the expected outcomes (see Table 25.1).

Table 25.1 The six main aims of the PEC-2010 and examples of benchmarks and indicators for grades 2 and 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development and competent performance of psychomotor skills</td>
<td>Students should be able to competently perform fundamental motor skills (Grade 2)</td>
<td>• Students should be able to perform gallop in a mature manner (Grade 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students should be able to perform a combination of fundamental motor skills and concepts (Grade 5)</td>
<td>• Students should be able to perform various locomotor skills (e.g., running, gallop, skipping) in different directions, levels, etc. and produce their own movement pattern or choreography (Grade 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition and application of athletic science knowledge in present and future opportunities of physical activity</td>
<td>Students should be able to name and apply the movement concepts while they move (Grade 2)</td>
<td>• Students should be able to name their body parts and involve them in their movement according to teacher’s instruction (Grade 2)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Students should be able to recognize and apply simple tactics in games (e.g., defence and attack, target games) (Grade 5)</td>
<td>• Students should be able to apply the ready position (defence) and the “give and go” (attack) tactics in games (Grade 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and development of a health-enhancing level of physical fitness</td>
<td>Students should be able to explain the benefits of frequent exercise (Grade 2)</td>
<td>• Students should be able to mention and explain exercises that promote muscle strength, endurance, and flexibility (Grade 2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Students should be able to set and assess personal goals that pertain to health-enhancing exercise (Grade 5)</td>
<td>• Students should be able to create their own exercise calendar within which they should involve some health-enhancing exercises (Grade 5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Aim Benchmark Indicator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition of positive experience through physical activity and development of self-expression and social interaction</td>
<td>Students should be able to produce routines (movement patterns) that promote self-expression (Grade 2)</td>
<td>• Students should be able to produce a movement pattern based on certain criteria (Grade 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students should be able to give and receive help and feedback based on given criteria (Grade 5)</td>
<td>• Students should be able to employ peer teaching, and try to help their pair correctly perform the emphasized skill based on a given card that involves the main learning cues (Grade 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding and respect of diversity and cooperation with all the students</td>
<td>Students should be able to cooperate with all their classmates regardless of individual differences (e.g., gender, competence, ethnicity, etc.) (Grade 2)</td>
<td>• Students should be able to cooperate with every classmate as a pair or a small group, based on random separation by the teacher (Grade 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students should be able to positively reinforce others’ effort (Grade 5)</td>
<td>• Students should be able to answer in ethical-dilemma scenarios in such a way that indicates their intention to cooperate with all the students (e.g., avoiding conflicts, providing help to less talented teammates) (Grade 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration of responsible athletic and social behaviour, during participating in physical activities</td>
<td>Students should be able to demonstrate appropriate athletic behaviour (Grade 2)</td>
<td>• Students should be able to abide to fair-play principles such as win or lose acceptance, congratulating own and opponent team (Grade 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students should be able to demonstrate appropriate social behaviour (Grade 5)</td>
<td>• Students should be able to undertake (and alternate) roles and responsibilities (Grade 5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be observed from Table 25.1, PE is a multidimensional subject matter, which aims at the all-round development of students. As it is described in the PEC-2010, PE uses psychomotor movement as a vehicle to achieve the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional growth of each child. Put differently, the PE curriculum does not only aim to help students learn to move, but also to learn through movement (Gallahue & Donnelly, 2003).

The primary PE curriculum is divided into two circles. Throughout the first circle (grades 1 to 3), emphasis is placed on the development of fundamental movement skills, (i.e., loco-motor, non-locomotor, and manipulative), the combination of those skills with movement concepts, the application of those skills in educational games, and creative dance; whereas throughout the second circle (grades 4 to 6) the focus shifts on the development of more advanced and qualitative movement, which is achieved through the participation in activities that relate to five large content areas (i.e., educational gymnastics, dance, games, track and field, and life activities).
Learning programmes

Despite the fact that the PEC-2010 determines the content areas that teachers should deliver, it does not, however, specify the sequence in which the emphasized content should be taught, nor how much time should be allocated for each activity area, allowing in that way teachers to select content and time allocation for each content area. Unavoidably, then, this selection is based on the knowledge and expertise of the PE teachers and/or the available facilities/equipment of each school.

In addition, although the PEC-2010 encourages teachers to plan and implement long units that will develop the content in more depth, evidence suggests that a typical PE programme seems to involve lessons that are structured and delivered based on the multi-activity model (i.e., a series of short units) (Kyriakides, 2016; Kyriakides & Tsangaridou, 2008), something that is not uncommon in other countries as well (Hardman, 2008; Siedentop & Tannehill, 2000). Moreover, despite the fact that the PEC-2010 recommends teachers to employ teaching methods that promote critical thinking (e.g., problem-solving strategies) or alternative instructional models (e.g., Sport Education, Teaching Games for Understanding), the dominant pedagogical approach which is generally used in PE classes is the direct teaching, a teacher-centred approach that requires from students to mainly practise the assigned task(s) as demonstrated and/or explained by the teacher (Siedentop & Tannehill, 2000). It seems that PE teachers choose this pedagogical approach mainly for two reasons. First, because direct teaching helps teachers create a controlled and safe environment within which students can perform the emphasized skills and experience high success rates; and, second, because the direct teaching is deemed more effective for teaching psychomotor skills (Pangrazi & Beighle, 2013; Siedentop & Tannehill, 2000), which, as described above, are the main emphasis of the PE curriculum. Yet it should be mentioned that some notable attempts do exist by individual teachers, who employ other teaching styles as well.

A typical primary PE lesson usually includes objectives from the three main learning domains (i.e., psychomotor, cognitive, and affective). However, most of the time, a PE lesson mainly emphasizes the development of a psychomotor skill. According to a recent large-scale study (Kyriakides, 2016), which examined the quality of PE lessons in Cypriot primary schools, a typical PE lesson begins with a brief overview of the lesson’s objectives, followed by some warming-up activities. Then, the teacher or/and a student demonstrate(s) the correct form of the skill, and the teacher provides explanations about the techniques of the skill. During the main phase of the lesson, the teacher usually engages students in a series of instructional tasks, which typically have the form of informing, extending, and applying tasks.2 In particular, according to the aforementioned study, teachers initially present informing tasks, then add extensions, and, in some cases, they finally provide applying tasks opportunities. Specifically, results from the above study indicated that from a total of 147 observed PE lessons, 39.8% included only two types of instructional tasks (typically informing and extending tasks), and 36.4% involved three types of tasks (usually informing, extending, and applying tasks). In the meantime, while students are practicing, the teacher observes and provides feedback and reinforcement to the students. At the end of the lesson, the teacher usually provides a summary review.

Beyond the regular school PE programme, during an academic year other PA-related programmes/events/opportunities run as well during the school day programme (MoEC, 2014). For instance, schools are encouraged to organize PA activities during break time. The “active school breaks” programme encourages students to take part in a variety of physical activities during break time, and in doing so, it gives the opportunity to students to not only increase their PA, but also to develop appropriate social behaviour. The schedule and the type of these activities are developed by the teacher(s) who is/are responsible for teaching school’s PE. In an effort to promote
this PA programme, the MoEC has presented to schools good practices for organizing school breaks through in-service seminars.

In addition, the MoEC in cooperation with other organizations, such as the Cyprus Sport Organisation (CSO), the Cyprus Olympic Committee and the Sport Federations, schedules visits at schools during which they present information on related sports and organize activities that aim at encouraging students’ involvement in PE and PA. Moreover, in cooperation with these organizations, the MoEC organizes special PE and/or PA programmes for students. In particular, during the school year of 2013–2014 two such programmes were run: a) the ‘Olympic Education Programme’, which aimed at promoting the Olympic values and ideas, and b) the ‘Olympic Programme – Sports Days/Events of Summer and Winter Sports’, which aimed at encouraging students to adopt exercise as a lifetime habit, through their participation in several sports. Furthermore, during the last two years, the MoEC in cooperation with the CSO and the European Commission organize the ‘European Week of Sport’ event, which aims to promote students’ participation in sports and PA. Within this context, a series of PE and PA activities and events are organized within and outside the school context. For primary school students, such activities involve among others: a week of break time activity play, a teaching period during which students inform their classmates about their participation in out-of-school training programmes, a morning walk, an orientation game in nature, and a water sports day – only for sixth graders.

**Resourcing**

Given that a large number of primary schools have no gymnasium/multipurpose hall (or if they have it is often used for other purposes than PE), PE lessons are usually conducted in moderate to adequate outdoors facilities, which typically involve a soccer court and one or two open-air basketball grounds, which also serve as volleyball, handball, and multi-activity grounds. Consequently, teaching quality might be affected by weather conditions, when during inclement weather PE either takes place in the classroom, where simple games can be practiced or a relevant PE topic is discussed; alternatively PE lessons are cancelled (Tsangaridou & Yiallourides, 2008).

As far as the equipment is concerned, the majority of primary schools are equipped with the basic resources to adequately deliver the majority of the PE units described in PE curriculum. However, according to its needs, each school can obtain PE equipment from the MoEC and it can conserve or upgrade its facilities and equipment using its own funds or funds given by the parents’ committee. Usually, the teachers who are responsible for delivering PE are also in charge of identifying school’s PE needs and ordering the appropriate equipment in cooperation with school’s principal.

Turning to the available resources, beyond the PEC-2010, no other educational material (i.e., books or CDs) has been provided to teachers to help them deliver the PE lessons more effectively. However, an attempt to develop such material (e.g., daily lesson plans) is currently being undertaken by the team of MoEC that is responsible for the PE in primary schools, and which develops, pilot-tests, refines, and finally uploads the final form of the material into the MoEC webpage. Nevertheless, for the time being, the website is under construction and it only involves educational material that pertains to the first grade.

**Frequency**

As it is the case with all subject matters, the MoEC determines the time allocated for PE in each stage of education and no changes are permitted by the schools. According to a new policy, from the school year 2015–2016 and onwards, the allocated time for PE for the first to fourth grade
is two 40-minute lessons per week, whereas three 40-minute lessons per week are offered for the fifth and sixth graders. However, before this change, the allocated time for PE was two 40-minute periods per week for all grade levels, an amount that is below the global ($\bar{x} = 97$ minutes per week) and Europe ($\bar{x} = 109$ minutes per week) mean of weekly PE time allocation in primary schools (UNESCO, 2014); something that still applies for the first four grade levels.

**Who delivers PE?**

Moreover, in Cyprus, as it applies for primary PE for the majority of countries around the world (Fletcher & Mandigo, 2012; UNESCO, 2014), there is a policy indicating that the generalist teachers are responsible for teaching PE in primary schools. Thus, PE lessons are taught either by the students’ regular classroom teacher or by another generalist teacher who is responsible to teach PE. According to Kyriakides and Tsangaridou (2008), generalist teachers who teach PE in Cypriot primary schools can be classified into three groups. The first group refers to classroom teachers who teach most of the subject matters to the students of their class including PE; the second group concerns classroom teachers who teach some subject matters to the students of their class including PE, but they are also teaching PE to students of other classrooms; and the third group involves PE coordinators who do not teach any other subject but PE to students of their own school or other schools as well.

However, anecdotal evidence suggests that during the last few years, there seems to be an increase in PE coordinators, as schools prefer to have a teacher(s) responsible for all matters that relate to PE. In addition, this increase cannot be dissociated from what relevant literature underlines as the most frequent challenge that the first two aforementioned groups of teachers face, when it comes to teaching PE. This challenge concerns the crowded curriculum (DeCorby, Halas, Dixon, Wintrup & Janzen, 2005; Morgan & Hansen, 2008a) and the negative impact that this might have on the quality of PE lessons. Classroom teachers are responsible for planning and delivering a number of different subject matters, something which adversely affects preparation time, teaching quality, and teacher’s willingness to teach PE (Morgan & Hansen, 2008b). In conjunction with this, keeping in mind that PE is considered as a low-priority subject matter, especially when compared to mathematics and language arts (Christodoulou, 2010), sometimes Cypriot classroom teachers use PE lessons to teach other subject matters, trying to “cover” the prescribed curriculum (Yiallourides, 1998); a phenomenon that is not uncommon in other countries as well (Ennis, 2006; Morgan & Hansen, 2008a).

**Teacher preparation**

Usually, generalist teachers attend one required course during their undergraduate studies which addresses both the content to be covered in primary PE as well as effective teaching methods that help teachers deliver PE. This is the case with the majority of Cypriot generalist teachers who teach PE in primary school. Teachers who graduate from the Department of Education at the University of Cyprus attend this course for a total of 39 hours (i.e., they attend two one-and-a-half-hour sessions per week for 13 weeks; the course corresponds to six ECTS – European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System). The sessions aim at familiarizing students with the content of PE in primary school, equipping them with effective instructional and managerial skills, and helping them develop effective PE units and lesson plans. More specifically, emphasis is placed on the analysis and harmonization of effective teaching skills with the content of PE in primary school. Nevertheless, the number of the
contact hours as well as the content delivered during this course depends on the corresponding department of education of each university. During their undergraduate studies, Cypriot generalist teachers might also have the option to take an extra course in PE. However, as Tsangaridou and Yiiallourides (2008) mention, there are some teachers who have other qualifications, such as postgraduate certificates in PE, or they have attended PE-related seminars or professional development programmes.

Undoubtedly, attending to one undergraduate course is not enough for preparing a teacher to effectively deliver the demanding subject of PE. With this in mind, in 2008, the Department of Education at University of Cyprus has restructured its teacher education programme, giving the opportunity to students to choose one specialization from each of the following two paths: (a) Specialization A: Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science Education, and (b) Specialization B: Special Education, Art, Music, and Physical Education. The specialization in PE involves three courses relative to the content and pedagogy of PE in primary school (3 courses * 39 hours = 117 hours; each of these courses corresponds to 6 ECTS). Particularly, the first course, entitled “The content of PE”, aims at familiarizing students with the content of PE in primary school, and helping them develop and successfully perform all the psychomotor skills that are being targeted in the primary PE curriculum. The second course, entitled “Methodology of PE”, reviews the effective pedagogical skills and teaching practices that promote student learning in PE, and guides students to plan, develop, and effectively deliver a PE unit. Finally, the course “Current trends in PE” offers an in-depth examination of the current PE issues from around the world, and explores how such issues influence student learning and attitude towards PE and PA. However, this specialization seems to partially solve the problem, as teachers who work at primary schools might be graduates from other universities as well, and might not attend any PE-related undergraduate course.

As far as the in-service training of teachers is concerned, the MoEC organizes a series of professional development courses every year, which aim to help teachers develop their knowledge on several PE-related areas. During the last years, these courses are organised during the two-day in-service training that takes place at the beginning of the school year, and all teachers who teach PE attend these courses. For instance, during the academic year 2013–2014, emphasis was given on the content area of Games (i.e., categories, tactics, manipulative skills), and specifically, teachers were trained on how to approach and teach games in all grades, by using associated activity cards (MoEC, 2014). In conjunction with this, PE inspectors and PE counsellors are visiting schools to provide support to and receive feedback from the PE teachers on several PE-related issues.

Assessment

Assessment remains one of the greatest challenges for primary PE in Cyprus. The problem seems to be at a practical level, as teachers find it difficult to employ quick and reliable ways to assess student learning in PE. A notable attempt to address this problem has been undertaken by the MoEC, which incorporated in the PEC-2010 several alternative assessment methods (e.g., checklists, student logs and journals, self- and peer-assessment) with specific examples that can be used by teachers to measure the expected learning outcomes for each grade level. Yet it remains unknown whether teachers find these assessment methods useful and employ them in their PE lessons.

Beyond the previously mentioned difficulties that pertain to the employment of assessment in the daily PE lessons, another challenge that relates to the measurement of student learning remains unaddressed. What seems to largely be missing from primary PE in Cyprus
is a formal accountability system for the student learning. Put differently, there are no valid and reliable assessment rubrics that can measure student learning in the six national PE aims and the associated benchmarks. The absence of such an accountability system may be related to the fact that in primary education no grades are assigned to any of the school subject matters. However, a common practice that takes place for other subject matters is for parents to get informed about their child’s progress throughout the scheduled tests or meetings that teachers have with parents to discuss about their child’s progress. Yet in PE such tests are not used, and as a result parents cannot adequately be informed about the progress of their child in PE.

Undoubtedly, the development of such assessment rubrics and instruments would help teachers reliably measure student learning in PE and form a more accurate picture of the needs of each student. Such an attempt was observed in Cyprus in a large-scale research study (e.g., Kyriakides & Tsangaridou, 2008), during which students were pre- and post-tested using a criterion-reference test and associated rubrics. The emphasis of this study was on the first aim of the national PE curriculum, as it examined the development of student psychomotor skills.

**Significant factors worth noting**

Beyond PE and PA programmes that run during the school day, students have the opportunity to participate in PE through their participation in some after-school PE programmes. One such opportunity is offered through their participation in the all-day school programme. In particular, the primary schools that function as all-day schools give students the option of choosing PE among other elective subject matters. As MoEC (2014) reports, PE is among the most frequently selected subject matters, as about 70% of students who participate in all-day schools choose to participate in PE lessons. Due to the huge interest, the MoEC provides all-day schools with extra funds to purchase the necessary PE equipment. The content of these afternoon PE lessons is similar to the content that is taught during the school day. However, due to the fact that the responsible PE teacher is someone other than the school PE teacher, the content of PE afternoon activities is not necessarily consistent with what is taught in PE during the school day.

Finally, another popular after-school PE programme concerns the “Sports for all” programme, which was established by the CSO in 1985 and functions separately from school PE. This programme is delivered by PE specialists and takes two forms. The first form, entitled “general sports”, takes place in schools’ PE facilities and aims to help students develop several psychomotor skills through their participation in various sports, which, in turn, will enable students successfully participate in future PE activities. The second form, entitled “specific sports”, takes place in out-of-school facilities and gives students the opportunity to select their favourite sport from a large gamut of sports (e.g., basketball, soccer, handball, volleyball, tennis, badminton, track and field, martial arts, gymnastics, swimming, archery, dance, etc.). Statistics obtained from the CSO indicate that for the academic year of 2016–2017 about 2,600 primary school students were enrolled in the general sports form, whereas about 3,900 were enrolled in the specific form (the total number of primary school students that participate in the “Sports for all” programme corresponds approximately to 15% of the primary student population).

**Notes**

1 In addition, from the academic year 2006–2007 and onwards, a few primary schools (about 5%) function as all-day schools on a compulsory basis.

2 According to Rink (2010), informing tasks engage students in practice by describing the skill with no focus other than just to do it; refining tasks target the qualitative improvement of the psychomotor skill...
performance; extending tasks alter the conditions under which practice is performed, usually to make practice more complex or difficult; and applying tasks require practice in situations similar to those in which the emphasized skill will be used in games or other performance settings.

3 The basic PE resources usually involve an adequate number of soccer, basketball, volleyball, and handball balls; tennis and badminton rackets and balls; throwing balls, rings, and bean bags; small hurdles; batons; gymnastic mats and ropes; hoops; and different kinds of cones.

4 www.schools.ac.cy/klimakio/Themata/fysiki_agogi/ypost_yliko_a_taxi.html.

**References**


Introduction

In Norway, all children have 10 years of compulsory school starting at age 6, and almost all pupils continue on to three years of upper secondary school. Physical education (PE) is a mandatory subject throughout these 13 years. Following a brief presentation of the educational context focusing on primary school PE, this chapter will concentrate on grades 1 to 7 (ages 6 to 12 years).

Norway has shared much of its history with its Scandinavian neighbours. It was a part of Denmark for 400 years and thereafter in a union with Sweden from 1814 until 1905. This history is reflected in the countries’ common basic values and democratic ideals, as well as in their school systems and educational principles (Lysne, 2006). In all three countries, national authorities regulate education at the national level and 98 per cent of all children attend state schools, which are free. Even higher education is generally free. In Norway, this system is assumed to create comparable conditions for all children.

Norway has a population of 5.2 million, and a geography characterised by calm river valleys surrounded by woods, mountains and highlands; fjords cut deeply into the extensive coastline facing the Atlantic Ocean and Barents Sea. In the eastern part of the country, the inland terrain is characterised by hills and forests. Partly due to these geographical conditions, the population is widely dispersed, and many schools in Norway are rather small. About 30 per cent of schools have fewer than 100 pupils; only 7 per cent have more than 500. In 2015, 427,000 pupils attended primary school, grades 1 to 7. The ordinary school day is five hours, but a majority of the children in grades 1 to 4 also attend an after-school programme. The school year is 190 days long, typically beginning in mid-August and ending the following June. It is divided into two semesters.

Education is a major public concern in Norway. From the 1970s, both pedagogical thinking and teacher education were deeply influenced by the work of Piaget and Vygotsky. However, in the 21st century, the educational system in Norway, as in many other countries, has been influenced by neo-liberal ideas. The two major characteristics of this shift have been greater decentralisation and local responsibility on the one hand, and an emphasis on accountability and national monitoring of school results and learning outcomes on the other (Tveit, 2014; Aasen, 2012).
Official curriculum

PE (in Norwegian, Kroppsøving) has been a compulsory subject for all girls and boys in Norway since 1936. Over the years, the subject has gone through significant curricular reforms, shifting its primary focus from raising decent citizens capable of contributing to their society to meeting children’s need for physical activity (1974), supporting children’s personal growth and development (1987), and further encouraging children to be physically active (1997). The curricular reform of 2006 mandated that PE should support the physical, mental and social development of children and young people help them to develop positive attitudes toward their own body and to establish a healthy lifestyle (Annerstedt, 2008). This curriculum was further revised in 2012. With minor changes, it is the one Norwegian primary schools use today (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2012).

The first sentence of the current curriculum declares that ‘PE as a general study subject shall inspire physical activity in all aspects of life and inspire lifelong enjoyment of being physically active’ (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2015a). In other words, PE should be integrated into children’s general education and facilitate an active lifestyle. In support of the first goal, the curriculum states that physical activity is fundamental for human beings and suggests that physical culture in the form of play, sports, dance and outdoor life is part of children’s and young peoples’ identity formation (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2015a). The goals of the curriculum are intended to have an important impact on the lives and development of children. Annerstedt (2008) have noted that compared to the curriculums in other Scandinavian countries, Norwegian PE particularly emphasises social learning processes and acquisition of specified values, norms, and attitudes. For example, one of the central changes in the curricular revision of 2012 was an increased emphasis on the role of fair play and respect for others. The concept of fair play in this context refers to following rules for positive interactions, respect for others, and mutual support in PE practice. In the current guidance for curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2015b), the rationale for social learning in physical activity is the premise that physical activity, self-esteem, and identity are intimately connected. The emphasis on social learning processes in turn reflects the high priority which Norwegian society places on integration and equality. Consistent with this emphasis, all PE is co-educational and the curriculum guidance mandates that it should be inclusive and contribute to multicultural understanding among children and young people. The curriculum notes the importance of taking children’s different capacities into account and including all of them in decision-making processes. Children with special educational needs are included in ordinary PE.

The second underlying goal of the curriculum is to inspire children to adopt lasting, active lifestyles by highlighting the health benefits of physical activity (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2015a). However, as Annerstedt (2008) has noted, the word health is only mentioned twice in the curriculum, evidence for his argument that Norway does not give it the same importance in PE as its Scandinavian neighbours do. He nevertheless acknowledges that health is and always has been an important part of Norwegian PE, a conclusion corroborated in a report from the Directorate of Health (2003). Several other Norwegian and international scholars and sources have confirmed that the current curriculum, as well as current practices, clearly reflect the prevailing health discourse (Dowling, 2010; Elnan & Sando, 2014). They note, for example, that physical activity is consistently equated with a healthy and active lifestyle and the good life. As Elnan and Sando (2014) have observed, considering the limited time resources Norway allocates to PE, it is unrealistic to expect that the school hours devoted to it could completely counteract the substantial and increasing amount of time that most children today devote to sedentary activities. Thus, the curriculum places a strong emphasis on enjoyment, as this is believed to be a key factor in lifelong engagement in an activity. (Annerstedt, 2008; Säfvenbom, Haugen & Bulie, 2015). Consistent with Annerstedt
(2008), Borgen and Engelsrud (2015) have argued that this practice has led to a focus on activity in PE classes and subsequently weakened their educational component. Confirming this would require more empirical research, particularly in primary schools (Jonskås, 2010).

Several scholars and participants have argued that Norwegian PE is also influenced by sporting, fitness, vigorous activity, and/or military discourses (Engelso, 2010; Borgen & Engelsrud, 2015; Säfvenbom et al., 2015; Walseth, Aartun & Engelsrud, 2015; Aasland, Walseth & Engelsrud, forthcoming). Säfvenbom et al. (2015) found that PE in Norway follows a sporting logic and primarily meets the needs of children who are engaged in competitive sport outside of school. In her doctoral dissertation, Moen (2011) notes that much of the focus of Norwegian PE teacher education is on learning basic techniques in a wide spectrum of sporting activities. According to Säfvenbom et al. (2015) and Engelso (2010), sport techniques seem to be incorporated into and even constitute PE practices, at least at the secondary school level. Säfvenbom et al. (2015) attributes this in large part to the central role that the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee has played in Norwegian society since World War II. They assert that the committee has not restricted itself to contributing to and facilitating youth sport outside school; it has influenced the educational system. This argument is supported by the findings of Moen and Frenning (2015) concerning the approach to sports and physical activity taken in the written plans for PE used in general primary teacher education. The claims of military influence on PE practice are based on the subject’s historical origins in Norwegian education and the lingering tendency to use physical activity to discipline children (Aasland, Walseth & Engelsrud, forthcoming; Augestad, 2003). However, as in analyses of the link between Norwegian PE and health discourse, too little empirical research has been done to support firm conclusions, particularly concerning the primary school curriculum (Jonskås, 2010).

Annerstedt (2008) has characterised the Norwegian PE curriculum as a multi-activity programme. Since the last school reform (2006), PE has been divided into four main subject areas: ‘physical activity in various environments and settings’, ‘sports activities’, ‘outdoor life’, and ‘exercise and lifestyle’. These subject areas are weighted differently according to grade level, as described in Table 26.1.

At the primary school level, the emphasis is on the first three subject areas listed previously, as spelled out in the curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2015a):

- **Physical activity in various environments and settings.** This covers natural basic movements in indoor and outdoor environments as organized and spontaneous play.
- **Sport activities** includes a wide selection of sports, as well as dance and alternative physical activities.
- **Outdoor life** is concerned with teaching children and young adults safe practices in nature and the value of visiting natural environments. Here, we should point that outdoor life (*fri-luftsliv* in Norwegian) has been an important part of Norwegian culture since the mid-19th century.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade level</th>
<th>Main subject area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–4 (6–9 years)</td>
<td>Physical activity in various environments and settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–7 (10–12 years)</td>
<td>Sport activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8–10 (13–15 years)</td>
<td>Sport activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper secondary (16–18 years)</td>
<td>Sport activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise and lifestyle, which becomes a focus at the secondary school level, is concerned with deepening knowledge of and reflections on issues related to exercise and fitness, as well as building motivation and capacity to be active.

In practice, the current curriculum is less proscriptive than its predecessors and gives individual teachers greater responsibility (Annerstedt, 2008). The goals are formulated as competencies, where competence is understood as a capacity to meet challenges and perform complex activities or tasks. Competency goals are scaffolded to increase in complexity in successive grade levels. Children and young adults are expected to encounter and be challenged by gradually more complex activities throughout their education and thus develop the competence to take part in and perform in all of them. (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2015b). For example, one of the competence goals to be achieved by the completion of fourth grade is to be able to:

- play and participate in activities in various environments where senses, motor functions and coordination are put to the test and to perform basic activities such as crawling, walking, jumping, hopping, sprinting, landing, turning and rolling in gymnastics and organized activities.

The corresponding goal by the completion of seventh grade is to be able to:

- perform various physical activities that strengthen the body in different ways that promote stamina, coordination and other physical development, and to use orienteering maps in familiar terrain.

Learning programmes

In Norway, a first to fourth grade PE lesson might look like this: The teacher begins with a group activity and then introduces the day’s activity and a related social theme, in this case ball games and fair play. She or he divides the class into four groups and explains a system of rotation among four different stations, with six to eight minutes at each. Two of the stations are football-like games using cones as goals, another asks participants to knock over a row of cones, and the fourth involves participants in creative play with one ball, individually and/or in pairs – for example, passing and receiving the ball using different movements. At the end of the lesson, the children help the teacher collect the equipment and then gather to sum up what they have learned. In our diverse roles as PE researchers, teacher educators, and PE teachers, we have found that lessons such as this are typical. Nevertheless, we have also observed that the content and organization of PE lessons vary greatly from school to school, due to local interpretations of the curriculum and differences in the space and environment available for PE.

So far, research on Norwegian PE teaching practices and learning processes has been limited (Jonskás, 2010; Borgen & Engelsrud, 2015; Säfvenbom, 2010). As Borgen and Engelsrud (2015) note, the pool of master’s theses examining PE at the secondary level is relatively solid and growing, but the number of doctoral theses and international, peer-reviewed articles remains modest. Furthermore, almost no research has been done on PE at primary level. Up to 2010, the scholarly work most often addressed questions concerning differentiation, integration, curriculum and history of PE, assessment, and motivation (Jonskás, 2010). Since then, the number of doctoral dissertations and peer-reviewed articles has increased somewhat and the Norwegian Network for Research in PE now provides a regularly updated synthesis. Even today, however, few scholars are doing research on primary school PE.
The currently available scholarship on PE in Norway indicates that the aims and purposes laid out in the curriculum may differ from actual practices (Borgen & Engelsrud, 2015). Whatever their actual experiences may be, media debates and current research show that many Norwegian children and young adults enjoy PE. In fact, most seem to associate PE with play, self-expression, and the joy of movement (Säfvenbom, 2010). Those who are engaged in competitive sport outside the school seem to enjoy PE most, at least at the secondary level (Säfvenbom et al., 2015). However, a 2005 study by Andrew and Johansen found that many children and young people do not enjoy PE (Andrew & Johansen, 2005). Consistent with this study, several other scholars and practitioners have reported that many children and young people exhibit feelings of low mastery and frustration with what they regard as a heavy focus on performance (Elnan & Sando, 2014). In addition, Haarberg (2012) found that many children feel uncomfortable about showering with their peers and seem unhappy with what they consider to be an emphasis on ball games.

Much of this dissatisfaction was apparent in a study by Andrews and Johansen (2005), based on their interviews with a group of high school girls who disliked PE. They note that these girls felt that at the primary level, PE had been about play (an impression supported by the findings of Arnesen & Aadland, 2013), but as they progressed to higher grades, the emphasis on performance and competition had steadily intensified. The researchers also reported that these girls were unhappy about group showering, complained that ball games dominated PE content, and claimed that the teachers paid more attention to boys’ wishes than to girls’. They concluded that feelings of being less competent, disparaging comments from other children, and dysfunctional relationships with teachers all created negative experiences.

At the primary level, both teachers and pupils typically rank PE as a joyful experience, and one of their most important subjects (Moen, Westlie, Brattli, Bjørke & Våtksjøl, 2015; Moser, Jacobsen & Erdman, 2005). In a study of 57 teachers responsible for PE and 751 pupils in one Norwegian municipality (Moen et al., 2015), 56 of 57 teachers agreed with the proposition that ‘most pupils think that PE is fun.’ An overwhelming 92 per cent of the pupils agreed with the statement ‘it is fun to have PE’, and 77 per cent responded ‘yes’ to the statement, ‘I think that I am good at PE’. Nevertheless, a small group of children, between 5 and 7 per cent, admitted that they dreaded PE. New perspectives and a deeper understanding of how the youngest schoolchildren in Norway experience PE and what they learn in it will require additional empirical studies on their learning processes and responses.

### Resourcing

In general, Norwegian schools provide good facilities for teaching PE. Most have their own gymnasium, as well as an outdoor sporting arena. Outdoor education and *friluftsliv* are included in the PE curriculum, and nearly all schools have access to nearby nature and recreational areas – in a study in the western part of Norway, 92 per cent of the primary school PE teachers reported that at least one suitable outdoor area was within short walking distance (Arnesen & Aadland, 2013). Furthermore, all pupils are formally entitled to participate in a PE programme that includes swimming, which requires access to a swimming pool. Recent studies, however, indicate that this mandate is not honoured (Ipsos, 2013): Even though an ability to swim is an expected learning outcome in the competence goals established for pupils who have completed grade 4, fully half of all pupils in grade 5 had not achieved this.

Although Arnesen and Aadland (2013) would argue that PE needs greater resources to reach its full potential, Moser et al. (2005) note that unlike their peers in many countries, PE teachers in Norway seem satisfied with their physical and budgetary resources – indicating
more generous investment over the last 15 to 20 years. This is particularly noteworthy at a time when school budgets are becoming tighter and tighter: Traditionally, PE has been an expensive subject.

Local schools, or schools in the same municipality, are expected to develop detailed programme plans for all subjects, PE included, with no possibility of obtaining additional funding from educational authorities. In determining the budget allocation, the school's only tool is an online guide for PE teachers on how to interpret the national curriculum for their subject (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2015b).

Frequency

The required amount/frequency of PE is set in the national curriculum. The curriculums of both 1974 and 1987 assigned two 45-minute lessons per week from first to seventh grade (at that time, children started first grade at age 7). The national curriculum of 1997 adjusted the requirement to 494 45-minute PE lessons (calculated as 370.5 hours) for grades 1–7. The 2006 reform raised the allocation significantly to 478 hours, though most of this increase can be attributed to the elimination in grade levels 1–4 of 247 lessons of ‘free time’, which often included physical activity.

Currently, the national curriculum simply specifies the number of PE hours required over the course of the regular school year (38 weeks). Local schools determine how this time is distributed. Consequently, the hour and frequency of PE classes can vary considerably from school to school. Often, practical issues, including limited access to a swimming pool or other sport facility, play a major role in determining schedules (Arnesen & Aadland, 2013).

In Norway, the issue of increasing the time dedicated to PE or physical activity in schools has generated considerable interest, sparked by recent research indicating that this would be beneficial to students (Resaland, Andersen, Mamen & Anderssen, 2011; Resaland et al., 2016). In response, since 2009 the Norwegian government has allocated 76 additional hours for physical activity from fifth to seventh grade, without imposing any curricular obligations or pedagogical requirements. The rationales were to offer children more varied schooldays (Utdanningsforbundet, 2009) and to improve pupils’ health (Standal, 2016). Recently, several primary schools have increased physical activity up to 60 minutes per day on their own initiative. The primary focus has been on experimenting with new approaches, such as combining physical activity with academic learning, rather than on expanding PE (Drammen kommune, 2015; Fysioterapeuten, 2014; Resaland et al., 2011; Resaland et al., 2016). The growing interest in this type of school-based physical activity may lead some to question whether PE as a discrete activity with its own pedagogical goals is necessary at all. We believe this issue merits much more debate in our community than it has generated so far.

Who delivers PE?

Norway provides specialised PE teacher education, but most of the students taking this course hope to work in a secondary school. In grades 1 to 7, PE is typically taught by generalists. Indeed, teachers of PE at any grade level are not required to have any specialised training, and less than half (48 per cent) have earned credits in PE as part of their teacher education qualification (Leirhaug & Midthaugen, 2014). Within levels 1 to 7, teachers with specialised qualifications are concentrated in the fifth through seventh grades, according to Arnesen and Aadland (2013).

Norway has no tradition of using outside providers in primary school PE, but attitudes appear to be changing due to growing concern that swimming instruction has been so inadequate that
nearly half the country’s children are struggling to meet required competencies and curriculum goals in this area (Ipsos, 2013).

**Teacher preparation**

The ordinary Norwegian teacher education course takes four years (240 credits). All education students are, in theory, offered an opportunity to take 30 or 60 credits in PE. Although demand for PE courses appears to be growing among education students hoping to teach in a secondary school, several teacher education institutions are struggling to recruit enough students interested in teaching PE in grades 1 to 7. Furthermore, research indicates that PE teacher education is not always adapted to the pedagogy of primary school PE (Moen & Frenning, 2015).

Teacher education in Norway has traditionally been designed to produce generalists capable of teaching all subjects. In recent years, this has been changing. The latest reform in teacher education allocated 30 credits to the study of mathematics and made Norwegian language study mandatory for all students enrolled in a primary teacher education course. Starting in 2017, teacher education will be extended to a five-year programme, ending with a subject-oriented master’s degree. Hopefully one result will be that more PE teachers at the primary level will have earned PE teaching credits.

For teachers already in service, support for continuous professional development and learning in PE is virtually non-existent. Furthermore, PE teachers have few opportunities to meet and discuss their everyday practice, even though participants in a study expressed a strong desire to participate in groups to discuss and develop PE teaching and assessment practices (Engvik, 2013). The same study also found that PE teachers who have worked, or are currently collaborating, in an interpretation team develop a clearer understanding of their assessment practices and how the assessment process can promote student learning and development (Engvik, 2013).

**Assessment**

The 2006 reform was justified and underpinned both by Norway’s relatively weak performance in international comparative studies of student achievement (such as PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS), and an evaluation of the school reforms of the 1990s that showed subject feedback to learners was inadequate and practice was not always aligned with the criterion-referenced assessment system (Tveit, 2014; Aasen, 2012). The 2006 reform introduced new curriculums for all subjects. It was designed to increase school focus on pupil learning and the implementation of formative assessment practices. Both the new regulations and the overall objectives for assessment were directly informed by the research of Black and Wiliam (1998); the educational authorities made a strong effort to shift from what they perceived to be an over-emphasis on assessment of learning to an emphasis on assessment for learning (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2011). The impact of the assessment aspect of this reform on the teaching and assessment practices of PE teachers has been convincingly documented (Arnesen, Nilsen & Leirhaug, 2013; Engvik, 2013).

All pupils are entitled to both formative and summative assessments at every stage of their school career; from grade 8 onwards (age 12) they receive grades twice a year. In primary school PE, pupils are only entitled to a verbal assessment, but an individual school or teacher can choose to provide written evaluations. There is no formal system for providing parents with information about PE learning outcomes and progress. Parents meet with their child’s contact teacher at least once a year. The attention devoted to PE in this meeting is unclear and may vary considerably. If they request it, parents have the right to meet the PE teacher personally.
Educational assessment and the organization of teaching is highly decentralized in Norway. Schools develop their own local work plan, which includes the criteria for assessment and grading. The competence goals in the curriculum define the expected learning outcomes at each grade level and constitute the basis for all (formative and summative) assessments in each subject. In practice, this means that the integrity and quality of the system is heavily dependent upon the professionalism of teachers in their adherence to curriculum and assessment standards. This is a particular challenge in PE at primary level, where half the teachers lack any formal educational training in the subject.

Even though the 2006 reform has placed the emphasis in formative assessment on giving pupils regular feedback on their development and achievements, grades given at the end of compulsory school and after upper secondary school are ‘high-stakes’ – a sorting instrument determining entry into higher levels of the education system and consequently future careers. Since 1983, the grade in PE at the end of compulsory school has had the same value as the grade in any other school subject. The responsibility of national authorities in high-stakes assessment has traditionally been limited to the examination system, but as in most other countries around the world, (cf. Pühse & Gerber, 2005) Norway has no systemic, large-scale competence measure or final exam in PE. Thus teachers are solely responsible for both making formative assessments and assigning high-stake grades. Norway’s assessment system generates continuous tension between formative and summative responsibilities (Tveit, 2014; Aasen, 2012). In PE, both have traditionally been based on continuous observations by the teacher. At the secondary level, these observations are often supplemented with various technical and physical fitness tests (Engvik, 2013; Leirhaug & MacPhail, 2015).

Although there are indications that the practice of giving grades in secondary PE takes the focus away from assessment for learning, implementation of formative practices may be easier at the primary level. In general, research is lacking on assessment practices in primary school PE (Jonskås, 2010). However, like the Irish primary school teachers interviewed in a study on implementing formative assessment (Ní Chróinín & Cosgrave, 2013), Norwegian teachers at primary level “claimed that the school’s long-term work on assessment for learning has strengthened teaching and learning in PE” (Engvik, 2013: 90; authors’ translation). Implementing assessment for learning in schools requires rethinking assessment and pedagogy from the ground up. To develop their skills in it, most teachers will need substantial time and support, as well as considerable motivation. Happily, primary school teachers in Norway seem to be on track.

**Significant factors worth noting**

Even while the curriculum for PE in Norway emphasises joyful movement, fair play, and social and mutual support and its teachers aspire to a high ethical standard, the discipline confronts a variety of formidable challenges: meeting expectations to take responsibility for a variety of public health issues; remnants of its military origins; pressures from competitive sports; and the dominance of academic learning in both schools and society in general. To cite just one example of where PE currently falls short, Arnesen and Aadland (2013) and Mattson (2016) have observed that although dance and aesthetic experience are central to its curriculum on paper, they are barely evident in practice. In both these studies, pupils made it clear that they would like an opportunity to express themselves through movement in a non-judgemental and non-competitive learning environment.

We are concerned about signs indicating that the challenges cited earlier continue to exert a negative influence on PE in Norway and that it continues be characterised by “more activity than learning” as Kirk (2010) has described PE internationally. Even in the relatively enlightened
context of PE, physical activity often becomes understood narrowly, through biomedical lenses, or as a forum for sporting performance, with too little attention to the significance this might have on a child’s developing identity. Major problems in meeting these challenges include a lack of formal competence among PE teachers and confusion even among formally qualified PE teachers about the contribution their subject can and should make to the educational objectives and social goals of their school. We are worried, in other words, that many important educational aspects of PE could be neglected, and consequently the benefits of experiencing and exploring one’s bodily capacities in varying movements and movement contexts could be lost. If, on the other hand, the value of these experiences and explorations of bodily capacities in strengthening children’s developing identities and building their capacity for useful movement as well as other competences is recognized, their future lives could be considerably enhanced. In addition to the additional empirical research we have called for in this chapter, we hope we have made it clear that the development and use of relevant theories and perspectives in PE teaching and learning is essential if we are to shift the focus back to its most important educational and developmental goals.

References


Introduction

Chile, the territory located in the most western part of South America, is the longest country of the world, with a total length of 4,329 km. It is as narrow as 90 km at its southernmost point and extends to 468 km in width. This results in Chile being one of the most ecologically and culturally varied parts of the American continent. The government considers all the inhabitants as Chileans (although there are different ethnic groups) with the prominent groups being the Mapuches, Aymaras and Quechuas. Culturally, politically and economically, Chile has recently undergone much upheaval related to the political transition from a dictatorship to a democracy, and also with the process of going from an authoritarian liberal economic model to a democratic liberal economic one (Castells, 2006). In the Chilean context, there has been strong and constant economic growth since 1984, with a small recession in that year and another one with the current economic crisis. It is important to point out that the poverty level has decreased by 50% and that there has been educational progress in relation to more people gaining access (Castells, 2006). Despite this, there are still two development models according to Castells (2006): an “excluding liberal authoritarian” model and an “including liberal democratic” one. The second model is the current one in the Chilean society (Castells, 2006). However, this model has a logic that comes from the model that was followed during the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. This is the reason why there are still such strong inequalities in the country.

Social and economic inequalities in Chile are undeniable. (López, Figueroa & Gutiérrez, 2013; Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional [CASEN], 2009; Mayol, 2012; Carnoy, 2010) The Chilean population, divided into five groups (quintiles),\(^1\) shows some differences, although not very noticeable, in relation to the income received by each of these quintiles. This methodological strategy creates a false impression that there is little inequality, which appears to support the government to demonstrate progress. However, when dividing that same population into ten groups (deciles), the disparities become much more obvious. For example: Using quintiles, group five only has an average income 20 times higher than group one, but in comparing deciles the difference between groups one and ten is 100 times higher (Mayol, 2012). With this aberrant reality, it makes sense when the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2013) points out that Chile is the most unequal country among its members.
Education in Chile

Compulsory school attendance in Chile lasts 12 years. The primary school level corresponds to the first six years of this process. Children start the first year of primary school at the age of six. There are 11 compulsory subjects in the educational level, and PEH is among these 11 (Gobierno de Chile, 2010).

At the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, the military-led government was established and worked to decentralize the education system. This resulted in the schools reporting directly to the municipalities/local governments instead of to the Ministry of Education. The school system is divided into fully private schools, private schools partially funded by the government and public municipality schools. Parents can choose the schools their children will attend; however, it is interesting to point out that both partially funded government schools and public municipality schools receive the same amount of money from the central government based on number of students enrolled. This generated a situation in which these two types of schools are competing for the same students and increased the levels of disparity in the country.

After the return of democracy (1990), the different governments tried to correct the inequalities generated by the logic of the military-led government, based on the "market system" (Carnoy, 2010; Oliva, 2008). In order to do that, resources were provided (as a compensation) to rural schools, to the most disadvantaged primary schools and to secondary schools with low-income levels. Apart from this, a more coherent and uniform national programme was generated. The full school day was established, free books were also provided and an Internet connection network was created (Red Enlaces), with the goal of reaching higher levels of equality.

Education economist Martin Carnoy believes that in spite of the efforts of the current democratic governments, "the educational market system inherited from the military government kept influencing Chilean educational policies during the 90's in a stronger way compared to any other Latin-American country" (Carnoy, 2010: 47). Evidence of this is that 47% of the children during the 1990s attended fully private or semi-private schools, and this ratio keeps increasing.

Accepting the fact that Chile is one of the countries in which these policies were stronger (Sader, 2006), it is important to point out some of the neoliberal agenda applied to the education field (Observatorio Chileno de Políticas Educativas [OPECH], 2009):

- A single and uniform financial system with government funding based on the number of students that attend a specific school.
- Ability for schools to charge an extra fee (shared financing) to the families and to select the students they want to teach to.
- Huge growth of the private schools with partial funding from the government (in the last years).
- Transfer of primary and secondary schools from the Ministry of Education to the municipalities/local governments.

In Chile, from the emphasis laid on the increase of the educational coverage, there is an increase (at least in the discourse) in the attention paid to quality and equity as the main focus of the educational system. In a context of transformations in the epistemological, anthropological, social and didactical models originated in the Chilean education, it seems as if the mechanical, technocratic and dichotomic physical education (PE) vision was changing into a more complex and democratic perspective of the subject (Moreno, 2011).
Official curriculum

Chilean PE has undergone many and important changes in the last years. Of note for their impact on curriculum PE has been:

- An excessive emphasis on the academic results obtained in standardized tests including TIMSS, PISA has resulted in the nationwide implementation of a System for Measuring the Educational Quality (SIMCE) introduced by Agencia de Calidad de la Educación [ACE] (2013), which in PE results in the measurement of students physical condition and BMI as criteria for the assessment.
- There has been an increase in the number of hours assigned to PE. From the first to the fourth primary school years, the number of hours has changed from two hours a week to four hours of compulsory PE.
  
  \[\text{(Gobierno de Chile, 2012)}\]

- Standard practices have been defined for teachers’ education in relation to the PE subject.
  
  \[\text{(Centro de Perfeccionamiento, Experimentación e Investigaciones Pedagógicas [CPEIP], 2013)}\]

- New curriculum foundations have been created with an emphasis on active and healthy lifestyles.
  
  \[\text{(Ministerio de Educación [MINEDUC], 2013)}\]

- The name of the subject has also changed, becoming physical education and health (PEH).
  
  \[\text{(MINEDUC, 2013)}\]

- In 2013, the Ministry of Sports was created, and a social program was designed and implemented named Elige Vivir Sano in order to address data that indicated concerns about children’s health in Chile, including high levels of child obesity and overweight, low levels of regular physical activity and unhealthy nutritional habits.
  
  \[\text{(Ministerio de Salud [MINSAL], 2009–2010)}\]

According to the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC, 2013) PEH should encourage the development of an analytical and critical attitude with regard to physical activities and also with regard to the understanding of the biological and psychological changes that children go through in their growth and development. To encourage this development and understanding, the main goal of PEH is to create opportunities for all students to acquire the necessary knowledge, movement skills and positive attitudes that will contribute to them engaging in an active and healthy lifestyle. PEH as a subject is based on three main central concepts: motor skills; active lifestyles; and security, fair play and leadership. Each one of these concepts is extended for teacher understanding into contents and goals, as detailed in Table 27.1.

The curriculum model is focused on the regular practice of physical activity, and students will then be able to develop motor skills and fair play, leadership and self-control attitudes (MINEDUC, 2013). In our previous analyses (Moreno, Rivera & Trigueros, 2014) we show how the PEH is oriented towards the “performance”, becoming fully developed with each of the concepts and contents: importance of movement, development of the physical condition, expressive features, introduction to sports, conjunction of factors for an active life, following the game rules, cooperation and team work.
Although the main goal for PEH, expressed by the MINEDUC, signals a broad curriculum, when articulated as concepts and learning goals the focus becomes narrowly associated with anatomical functioning, performance and bio-physical agendas (Moreno et al., 2014). This lack of coherence is problematic. As an example, there are 11 proposed learning goals for the PEH subject for the first year of primary school, but the only three verbs used are show, carry out and practice. These three actions remind us of the approach focused on the acritical doing of the biomedical PE. Three actions linked more to the act of doing than to the acts of thinking and assessing the physical activity as a cultural construction that should be contextualized in the communities in which it happens. Some authors (Moreno & Poblete, 2015; Toro, 2007) think this is caused by a PE linked to the motor activism (just doing), rather than linked to a physical activity in which the degree of understanding is a higher one.

### Learning programmes

On paper, the approach is to focus on an integral preparation of the person, but in reality the practice of PEH in primary schools is quite different. The obsession with “achievement” (Pérez & Soto, 2011) and “accountability”, reinforced by the SIMCE, means the focus in practice has continued, for the last 20 years, to be on success in sports and attainment of the ‘perfect’ body. As such, the goals do not appear to be those articulated by the curriculum and instead are focused on being thin (in order to eradicate obesity) and on sports. Sports is viewed as a panacea, with a double goal of creating conditions that allow the world to recognise our sports excellence and as a way to create an environment where people enjoy the consumption of active leisure. Such
an approach ignores broader notions of health, neglects to support a focus on inter and intrapersonal skills (Devis, 2000) and allows for discrimination based on motor competence and body mass index (BMI) to become evident (Moreno et al., 2013). As Evans suggests (2013), only the extremes are admitted; either motor competence is shown or the student will be qualified as clumsy, overweight or thin; there is no intermediate position in the “performance” segment. PE teachers (with the increase into four hours of class) are therefore charged with helping young people transform fat into muscle and obesity into thinness.

Drawing on the voices of the PE teachers in primary schools, our research (Moreno, Valencia & Rivera, 2016; Moreno et al., 2014; Moreno et al., 2013) has highlighted that sports are almost exclusively the backbone of the offerings presented to students in primary school PEH. This may also be a reflection of the teacher education programs. Teachers indicate that the sport experience is positive, and reaching a “good sport level” is associated to better integration in work teams. In line with this, teachers suggest that the interest awakened in students by sport activities is the reason why other types of contents (more related to body expression) are less evident across the PE lessons provided.

The development of the physical condition is the second biggest priority in PEH programs. Teachers believe that improving students’ quality of life is synonymous with increasing physical condition levels. PE classes normally include activities that are oriented to the achievement of an “effective movement” (uniform for everyone), and this must be achieved from some specific levels of motor skills training. Health is understood as the result of the adequate working condition of the various organic systems, and the body becomes then just a physical reality open to being measured, manipulated and controlled without taking the students into account.

It would appear that teachers adopt the following practices as part of a typical PE lesson:

- In line with a coaching session, lessons typically follow the pattern of warm-up, main training and cooling down;
- Teacher-directed approaches are the most common, with the teacher as the motor skills role model.
- Sporting achievement and the associated extrinsic motivation frame is the basis of students’ experiences.
- Other learning of concepts become the focus of homework that normally consists of written essays about topics linked to the biomedical perspective: healthy eating habits, oxygen consumption, sports injuries, etc.

**Resourcing**

In line with how the dominant neoliberal economic agenda plays out in the education system, the quality of facilities for PEH in primary schools is not uniform. The greater the number of students, the higher the financing for the improvement of infrastructures and the creation of new pedagogical spaces, as well as what different teaching/learning materials are obtained. The poorest municipalities/local governments have fewer options in terms of having adequate infrastructures.

Taking into account the earlier mentioned comments, it is easy to understand the lack of exclusive places for PEH. Not all schools have the same physical space for teaching PEH in the primary school years, as there are no rules about it. There is a regulation for playground areas, but the criteria for this regulation is the number of students per square metre and not a pedagogical one. That is the reason why PEH classes happen in such different places depending on the school. Playgrounds are normally used for PE, mainly in public schools. In other educational centres,
especially in partially funded private schools, it is usual to find outdoor multi-sport facilities. In centres with more resources (fully private) indoor multi-sport areas and gyms can be found, even areas with artificial grass.

Obtaining equipment and materials for PEH classes depends on the economic resources available in each school. Each public school and each school with shared financing receive a yearly amount of money for equipment and pedagogical materials. The money received is for the whole concept (equipment and materials), and then the different schools have to decide how these resources are distributed among the different curricular areas. Teachers are asked about the needs they have for the classes, but the management team has the final word. Taking into account that mathematics and language are considered as the relevant subjects in Chile, the resources are mainly used for these two curricular areas. When money is used for the PEH subject, materials for psychomotor development and balls for practising different sports are the most expensive items. It should also be mentioned that there is no required equipment for all educational centres. This means that the acquisition of equipment will always depend on the available resources and also on the perspective of the PEH teachers.

In relation to textbooks, PEH teachers do not have specific books for the subject, although they have curricular bases with many examples of motor exercises. These motor exercises (considered as didactical orientations) are used in many occasions without a contextualization of the educational communities in which PEH is happening.

**Frequency**

The Ministry of Education has general study plans and programs and curricular bases for each of the curricular areas. The schools can work with these plans and programs or they can create their own ones, as long as the achievement of learning goals defined in the curricular bases are taken into account. Schools that have their own study plans and programs should consider 30% of the school time as free disposition time, whereas schools with plans and programs from the ministry should consider 15% of the school time as free disposition. This free disposition time is relevant, as it will affect the amount of hours dedicated to PEH. “Language and communication” and “mathematics” are considered the two most important subjects in primary school. For the first one, schools are required to allocate, at a minimum, six hours weekly (from the first to the fourth year) and five hours in the fifth and sixth years. For “mathematics”, the requirement is to allocate five hours weekly from the first year to the sixth. According to regulation, from the first to the fourth year of primary school, there should be four hours of PEH weekly. Schools can increase that number of hours for PEH if part of the free disposition time was used for that purpose, although this does not normally happen as that time is usually used for mathematics and language and communication. In the fifth and sixth years of primary school, just two hours weekly are compulsory for PEH.

PEH hours can be complemented with sports workshops outside school hours, but that will depend on each school and on the decisions taken by them. The school management team are responsible for making these decisions, in the majority of the cases.

**Who delivers PE?**

Only in secondary schools is there is a legal requirement to contract a specialist teacher. Regardless, in primary schools it is common to find a PE professional teaching classes, although they are also often taught by a generalist teacher (with or without specialisation). This might be the reason why PE teachers have not complained about a potential change in the corresponding laws.
From a commonsense perspective, and also with some professional conviction, one might think that it should be a requirement to have PE teachers in primary schools. However, there is no research that would indicate that there are differences between the PE carried out by generalist teachers and the ones carried out by specialists. Existing research (Moreno et al., 2016; Moreno et al., 2014; Toro, 2007) shows that both specialist and generalist teachers subscribe to a bio-medical foci when teaching PE. The only difference found is that technical knowledge is better among specialist teachers, but classes are very similar.

Teacher preparation

The Institute of Technical and Physical Education (Instituto de Educación Física y Técnica–IEFT) at the University of Chile was, until 1962, the only centre in which specialist PE professionals were educated. This unique and exclusive education role in the capital city of Chile was not limited to the national level, as IEFT offered the same program in neighbouring countries, such as Uruguay, Peru and Cuba. The IEFT held presentations focused on gymnastic and athletic exercises and folk dances, underpinned by the principles of Swedish gymnastics. These principles remained an essential part of the teacher education program (Gutiérrez, 1933; Salas, 2009). In 1963 a branch of the IEFT started operating in the city of Valparaíso and a new School of Physical Education was established at the Catholic University of Valparaíso. In 1981, as a result of the educational reform, the administration of the University of Chile was divided and some of the branches became independent education schools. Under military dictatorship and in line with the neoliberal agenda, more than 60 private education schools for PE professionals were created.

During the 1990s, a new scientific-educational approach drawn from Portugal became a stronger focus in teacher education programs. This approach is known as the paradigm of human motricity (Sergio, 2009; Trigo & Montoya, 2007; Toro, 2007), which is focused on “intentional movement of transcendence” (Sergio, 2009: 31), with attention on the body, the mind, the desire, the nature and the society. The science of human motricity is “the body in action, potentiality for the action, is the intentional movement of transcendence” (Sergio, 2009: 31). One of the main ideas of human motricity science is that PE, as long as it includes the “physical” noun in it, will keep alienating bodies, and because bodies and individuals are inseparable, it will keep alienating individuals. In doing so, it will not be true education (Trigo & Montoya, 2007).

Because of this, all academic teams from the different universities where PE studies were, and are, taught started a deep reconfiguration job regarding the study plans in order to adapt to this new intentionality. This meant going into detail about an education approach for PE teachers more related to critical plans and less related to the body. The inequality situation in the country encouraged education for PE teachers with a strong social orientation. However, due to a series of scientific and political reasons, this approach changed into a different one, more focused on the concept of physical activity with a biomedical approach mentioned earlier. After having Portugal as a reference for a short period, Spain became the reference for most of the postgraduate studies that were taught in Chile. Sports and physical condition are the main focus now.

All universities offer a degree that qualifies individuals to become PE teachers (prerequisite to work on secondary schools), although in the competitive market each university tries to generate some kind of uniqueness in order to have the highest enrolment rate, given that university study is not free. Therefore, it is possible to find universities that offer PE degrees with different specializations: nursery schools, elderly, primary schools, special educational requirements, etc. Studies to become PE teachers normally last from four to five years. The name of the degree is primary education teacher, with or without specialization. And the academic qualification is degree in education. In Chile, there is a difference between the professional degree and the academic
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qualification. The difference between a generalist teacher and a specialist (PEH, for example) is between 6 and 12 months of classes (a semester or a full year, depending on the university).

Due to the great variety of study plans and with the intention of standardizing the quality levels of the different PE education plans in schools, pedagogical and curricular standards were created for PE education in 2013. The intention is to offer some specific orientation/guidance about pedagogical and curricular contents that any PE teacher should know in order to work as such (CPEIP, 2013).

Assessment

The background for these assessment models in Chile can be found in the 1990s with the arrival of democracy. During those years, the first steps were taken to work on an assessment proposal for the educational system that could help to make it better and fairer. This is why in 1988 the decision was made to use an assessment system based on national exams (system for measuring the educational quality, SIMCE). The original intention was to assess in order to improve, but now this system is used as a way to detect schools with a low academic performance and to stigmatize them, which aligns more with the competition criteria born in the neoconservative policies that originated when Chile was last under military rule (Carnoy, 2010). The view is that SIMCE and international exams (TIMSS, PISA) provide a clear example of where the country is going in terms of education.

In the specific case of PE, the system for measuring the educational quality was first applied in 2010, and a second application was carried out in 2011 with a representative sample of students from the eighth year of primary school (13 to 14 years old). Theoretically, SIMCE results:

show information about the learning standards achieved by students in the different educational levels, and serve as a complement to the analysis carried out by each school with their own assessments, as the achievements of the students are considered into a national context. In this way, SIMCE test results provide key information so that each educational community can reflect on the learning achieved by the students and can identify challenges and strengths that will contribute to the preparation or reformulation of learning strategies with the goal of improving the learning processes.

(ACE, 2013: 1)

The SIMCE in PE is applied by measuring four parameters (anthropometry, muscle performance, flexibility and cardiorespiratory endurance). A brief analysis of the latest results shows a map of Chilean school population with high indexes of overweight and obesity. This could lead in the future to heart and metabolic diseases, but at the same time, most students show acceptable levels of muscle and cardiorespiratory endurance.

What is surprising is the focus on the physical condition of children in the SIMCE does not reflect the focus of the curriculum. The Ministry of Education itself points out that the foundation of the curricular area should be the “development of a critical and analytical attitude, in opposition to the physical activities, and the understanding of the biological and psychological changes that youngsters are going through” (MINEDUC, 2010: 1). And yet, the assessment model works to narrow the focus of learning and assessment back to the bio-physical, as SIMCE is not a tool to measure quality in this curricular area, but a tool to measure the level of students’ physical condition. There have been important consequences for the teaching work, conditioning everyday tasks and making teachers to work more on the preparation of the assessments and not so much on the educational goals (Moreno et al., 2013). PE quality is “unfairly
simplified” (Santos, 2003: 21) and distorted in the SIMCE when physical condition or student bio-physiological performance is tested. It is obvious that the current situation with obesity and sedentary lifestyles, along with the inappropriate physical condition of children and youngsters, is an international concern (Hardman & Marshall, 2009), but it would be naïve to think that PE quality should be measured with these criteria.

**Significant factors worth noting**

To finish, we would like to show how two programs focused on the body—health and sports—accompany Chilean PE. These are carried out at the same time as the PEH subject. For us, it is important to point this out because these are existing proposals that are carried out along with the PE, and in many cases, by the same professionals.

- A program called *Corporalidad y Movimiento*¹² (MINEDUC, 2011). This program is carried out in a total of 126 schools in the country. It begins at the age of 4 years old and lasts until the second year of primary school. Currently, the intention is to make this program a more official one so that it is implemented more widely at the national level. This program follows an educational logic focused on games, freedom and autonomy, which is quite different from the more technocratic approach of the PE that is presented in most primary schools.
- The *Escuelas Deportivas Integrales*¹³ are carried out at schools after the school hours, and its main purpose is to encourage physical activity and sports. During 2015, more than 159,000 children (2 to 14 years old) attended these activities (http://edi.ind.cl/).

The three proposals (PEH subject, Corporalidad y Movimiento and Escuelas Deportivas Integrales) are carried out by different Chilean state institutions, almost with no coordination between them. This has led us to see that it is usual that, under three different programs, some similar teaching practices are used, and in many occasions, by the same professionals. This is a problem because the approaches in the different programs do not match the background learning of the teachers, and consequently, the teaching institutions are focusing on different specialties for the learning programs.

**Notes**

1 That is the methodological strategy used by current public policies to show the differences in income in the population.
2 The 11 compulsory subjects are language and communication; mathematics; history, geography and social sciences; natural sciences; visual arts; music; physical education and health; orientation; technology; religion; English as a foreign language.
3 Translated as The Chilean Government.
4 Translated as Chilean Observatory for Educational Policies.
5 Translated as Third International Mathematics and Science. Estudio Internacional de Tendencias en Matemáticas y Ciencias.
6 Program for International Student Assessment. Programa Internacional para la Evaluación de Estudiantes.
7 Translated as Agency for Educational Quality.
8 Translated as Centre for Pedagogical Perfection, Experimentation and Research.
9 Translated as Ministry of Education.
10 Translated as Choose a Healthy Lifestyle.
11 Translated as the Health Ministry.
12 Translated as Body and Movement.
13 Translated as Integral Sport Schools.
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As is evidenced across the chapters in this handbook, the primary school physical education landscape is a contested and complex space, full of challenges and potential. In this final chapter, we reflect on the work of all the contributors to explore a number of interconnected themes designed to provide some sense of an overview.

The same but different

We would expect that individuals across the world would have varied interpretations of the nature and purpose of physical education in primary schools based in their own cultural context. And yet, it would appear from the Global Context section that tenets of tradition mixed with the impacts of globalisation appear to have led to limited variation in practice across the countries included in this Handbook. As the chapters in Parts I and II of the Handbook demonstrate, many of the challenges for primary school physical education are common across the world, as we all wrestle with the domination of health and sports agendas, the dilemma of who should teach physical education, and what a quality programme should include. It could be argued that consistency and ‘standardisation’ across the world lend themselves to the primary physical community having a stronger platform on which to stand and push for change. There have been occasions at international conferences (e.g. AIESEP Limerick 2011 and Madrid 2015) where we as a primary school physical education community have discussed the usefulness of common and consistent approaches to physical education across the globe as a way to help us advocate for quality programming, delivery, and experiences for all learners. There is no doubt that shared understandings, alongside access to a wide range of ways of thinking about what constitutes best practice, have the potential to enhance programmes and the experiences of young people in physical education across the world. However, it is essential that we continue to advocate for culturally responsive, contextually relevant primary school physical education programmes that meet the unique needs of children in each specific context. Although we may be part of a global economy, no two countries are the same, as are no two schools or learners, and therefore we should celebrate diversity and the richness that each unique setting offers, and this should be evident in how individual teachers, schools, and countries (states) articulate and practice physical education. Primary school physical education should look different in every classroom, school, community, and country.
Reframing priorities

Across the chapters in the Handbook a range of perspectives are presented about what priorities should be the focus for physical education ‘curriculum’ in primary school settings. Of course, your own dispositions and beliefs will shape how you read the various chapters, what you agree with, and what you choose to dismiss. However, in reading part or all of the Handbook, individuals will have been challenged to consider what the focus on physical education should be. We challenge you to ask yourself, and your colleagues, Who do your current programmes serve? Are they designed to appease the teachers who have been teaching the same thing forever, and therefore it is easier to keep doing what you have always done? Is it about keeping parents, coaches, and school leaders happy by ensuring the programme is easy to resource or means children are active or ready to represent the school? Or do you teach to fit with economic or health imperatives at the direction of local or national governments?

Where do the learners fit in the process of deciding what learning will look and feel like for them and their peers? If we want programmes that engage young people and help them find pleasure in moving and being active for life, then it is essential that we work alongside young people in the development of curriculum. This requires that we move beyond the rhetoric of student voice and ensure that it is evident in the development of school-based curriculum.

Equally significant is the need for learning opportunities to be framed in ways that are equitable for all learners regardless of size, ability, gender, ethnicity, etc. This requires that at all levels we consider what sort of learning environments we create, our pedagogical decisions, and our ability to move beyond narrow elitist, healthiest agendas, where we not only recognise diversity but celebrate it. It is not as simple as working to address inequality, as we also need to contribute to dismantling systemic factors/issues that continue to allow inequities to be reproduced in our primary physical education lessons and in society.

These changes alone will not be enough unless we simultaneously continue to debate the role physical education has in young children’s wellbeing. Progression toward a model of health-oriented physical education and a continued prioritisation of sports and games may do more harm than good, as children are turned off engaging in physical activity as they associate it with measurement, moralising and judgement, as opposed to pleasure. As work across this Handbook and other research in physical education more broadly highlights, there is a real danger that physical education is presented as the panacea for perceived physical health ‘issues’, as a catalyst for the development of elite performers, or as a context to focus learning in numeracy and literacy. We have a responsibility to ensure that physical education in primary school context is focused on broad notions of wellbeing, where children feel valued and have opportunities to develop a wide range of confidences and literacies.

Changing the learning and outcomes will only occur when we see a change in how teachers understand and practice physical education. Therefore, it is beholden on those of us in teacher education (pre- and in-service) to take a lead role in supporting all teachers of physical education in primary schools, be they specialist or generalist, to develop confidence, competence, and passion for this learning area. Although the end goal of professional learning is to enhance the learning for children, this will only occur if we ensure teachers’ learning opportunities are equally positive, meaningful, and engaging. We need to prioritise teacher learning in the same way we focus on student learning, by putting the teacher’s learning needs at the centre of focus in professional learning.

Research specific to primary schools

It has been exciting in recent years to see a revival in research specifically focused on physical in primary schools. For too long secondary and tertiary understandings and ‘expertise’ have been used to inform thinking and practice. As part of this reflection, it is interesting to
consider who has been responsible for leading curriculum developments in each respective country and where the voice of the primary physical education researcher and/or practitioner has been in these conversations. This Handbook, a number of special issues of peer reviewed journals, and cross-country networks focused on primary school physical education have helped focus attention and research on this crucial and unique context. In these endeavours, it has become more and more evident that the primary school is a different context from secondary schooling where research has traditionally been focused/privileged. It is rarely appropriate for us to rely on an understanding of secondary school physical education practices to inform what we do in primary; we have a responsibility as researchers to ensure we take a lead in developing research programmes and initiatives that advance developments in this unique context.

For those of us who are committed to the primary school physical education field, we need to continually challenge notions of what or whose expertise and knowledge counts. In doing so we have a responsibility to support the teachers of physical education in primary schools to recognise their own expertise and practice knowledge and ensure we do not contribute to the undermining of primary teachers as professionals by privileging theory as the most valued form of knowledge, and particularly theory that is abstract from the realities of primary school settings.

There is much work to be done – research programmes need to be developed to ensure that primary school physical education practice is evidence informed and based on contextually relevant research located in primary school settings.

### Professionalism

Regardless if we identify as a specialist, generalist, teacher educator or researcher, or a collection of these, the ideas, challenges, and questions posed throughout this handbook are equally relevant, and our responses should look and feel different in our own communities and practice. The status of physical education often results in the positioning of teachers in this area as less than other professionals. We have a responsibility as professionals in this field, wherever we are in the world, to make a difference in how physical education in primary schools is practiced and therefore perceived. To do this we need to:

- question current practice(s), asking whose needs are these really meeting;
- ensure that physical education is educative and the focus is on learning, not simply activities;
- prioritise the needs of learners, be they children or teacher;
- engage in regular and on-going learning to enhance our own abilities to contribute to making a difference;
- work at making a difference for our learners amongst the competing demands that appear to constrain our decisions and practice;
- see ourselves as activist professionals charged with educating not only children and teachers, but also communities, economists, politicians, whomever about the important role physical education in primary schools has for the wellbeing of children and their communities.

This is a short list, and each of you will be able to add to this in ways that reflect the challenges in your own setting. That is what being professional entails – asking questions of ourselves and others so that we ensure we are doing the best possible job for the students, teachers, and communities we serve.

The contributors in this book have provided a useful platform for us all to reflect on primary school physical education as it is understood and practiced in different parts of the world. Where
we as a community of educators take this from here, and the future of physical education in primary schools, is now in the hands of everyone who has ventured into this Handbook.

Ko te ahurei o te tamaiti arahia o tatou mahi
Let the uniqueness of the child guide our work.
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