

# Physical education survey visits

Supplementary subject-specific guidance for inspectors on making judgements during visits to schools

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Inspectors visit 150 schools each year to inform Ofsted's subject surveys in English, mathematics and science. Survey visits for other subjects are less frequent but continue to take place from time to time.

Where applicable, subject feedback letters, which are sent following survey visits, usually contain separate judgements on:

- the overall effectiveness of the subject
- the achievement of pupils in the subject
- the quality of teaching in the subject
- the quality of the subject curriculum
- the quality of leadership in, and management of the subject.

In coming to these judgements, inspectors draw on the criteria and grade descriptors from the September 2013 School inspection handbook as they can be applied to individual subjects. Supplementary, subject-specific descriptors are provided to give additional guidance for schools and inspectors. This includes guidance on the quality of the curriculum in the subject.

This supplementary guidance is not for use on Section 5 whole-school inspections.

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## Grade descriptors – the overall effectiveness of physical education (PE) provided in the school

*Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach, which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team. The exception is that teaching in PE must be outstanding for overall effectiveness to be outstanding.*

### Outstanding (1)

- Teaching in PE is outstanding and, together with a rich and relevant PE curriculum and a broad extra-curricular sports programme, contributes to pupils' outstanding learning, physical development, participation and achievement. Exceptionally, achievement in PE may be good and rapidly improving.
- Outstanding leadership of PE ensures that pupils, and particular groups of pupils, have excellent educational experiences in lessons and in extra-curricular sport, and these experiences ensure that they are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation ensures that practice consistently reflects the highest expectations of staff and the highest aspirations for all pupils, including disabled pupils or those with special educational needs, those for whom the Pupil Premium provides support and the most able.
- Good practice is spread effectively in a drive for continuous improvement.
- PE makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### Good (2)

- Teaching is at least good and some is outstanding. This promotes pupils' positive attitudes to learning and regular participation, and ensures that their achievement is at least good.
- Good leadership of PE ensures that pupils, and particular groups of pupils, have highly positive experiences in PE lessons and in extra-curricular sport, and are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- The school takes effective action to enable most pupils, including disabled pupils or those with special educational needs, those for whom the Pupil Premium provides support and the most able to reach their full potential in PE and sport.

### Requires improvement (3)

PE in the school requires improvement because one or more of the key judgements for achievement; behaviour and safety; the quality of teaching; the curriculum; and the quality of leadership and management of PE requires improvement.

### Inadequate (4)

PE in the school is likely to be inadequate if inspectors judge any of the following to be inadequate:

- the achievement of pupils in PE
- the behaviour and safety of pupils in PE
- the quality of teaching in PE
- the quality of the curriculum in PE
- the quality of the leadership in, and management of PE.

## Grade descriptors – achievement of pupils in PE

*Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspector.*

*This subject specific guidance is supplementary to the generic grade descriptors which are found in the School Inspection handbook.*

### Supplementary subject-specific guidance

#### Outstanding (1)

- Boys and girls of all ages, abilities and interests acquire new knowledge and skills exceptionally well and develop an in-depth understanding of PE and sport.
- They practise skills in a wide range of activities and apply them in selected activities to achieve exceptionally high levels of performance.
- Pupils are physically fit. They eat sensibly, avoid smoking, drugs and alcohol, and exercise regularly. They can remain active for sustained periods to help promote their health and fitness.
- They think for themselves, take the initiative and become excellent young leaders by organising and officiating sport events for others. They motivate and instil excellent sporting attitudes in other pupils.
- Pupils show exceptional levels of originality, imagination and creativity. They know how to improve their own performance and work for extended periods of time without the need of guidance or support.
- Pupils develop a passion for and a commitment to the subject. They eagerly participate in all lessons and engage fully in extra-curricular sport.
- In primary schools, almost every pupil can swim at least 25 metres and remain safe in and around water by the end of Year 6.
- Achievement in core PE, GCSE, BTEC and other awards is consistently high. A high proportion continues to study and participate in PE and sport in the next stage of their education.

#### Good (2)

- Boys and girls of all ages, abilities and interests acquire new knowledge and skills at a good rate and develop a good understanding of PE and sport.
- They practise skills without the need for much guidance or support. They apply these skills in a wide range of activities and situations, and achieve a high level of performance.
- They have a good level of physical fitness and understand the importance of this in promoting their long-term health. They are able to remain physically active for long periods of time and lead healthy lifestyles by eating sensibly, avoiding smoking, drugs and alcohol and exercising regularly.
- Pupils' enjoyment of PE is shown in their positive attitudes and regular participation in lessons and extra-curricular sport. They acquire the skills needed to organise sport and physical activity for others.
- In primary schools, most pupils can swim 25 metres and know how to remain safe in and around water by the end of Year 6.
- Achievement in core PE, GCSE, BTEC and other awards is high. A significant proportion of students continue to study and participate in PE and sport in the next stage of their education.

#### Requires improvement (3)

- Boys and girls of all ages, abilities and interests participate in most lessons but do not learn activities in sufficient depth to enable them to gain the knowledge and skills needed to make

### Supplementary subject-specific guidance

good progress.

- Pupils cannot work for sustained periods of time without support or guidance.
- Only a few pupils engage in extra-curricular sport or train as young sports leaders.
- Not all pupils lead a healthy lifestyle or maintain a high level of personal fitness. They are unable to remain physically active for long periods of time in lessons. These factors contribute to about one third of pupils being significantly overweight.
- In primary schools, only a minority of pupils are unable to swim at least 25 metres by the end of Year 6.
- Achievement in core PE, GCSE, BTEC and other awards is not high enough based on students' starting points. Only a few students maintain an interest in PE and sport during the next stage of their education.

### Inadequate (4)

Achievement is likely to be inadequate if **any** of the following apply:

- Based on their starting points, pupils or groups of pupils do not make enough progress in lessons or achieve well enough over time.
- PE is under-valued by pupils. They do not engage regularly in PE and show little interest or enthusiasm in extra-curricular activities or train to become young sports leaders.
- Poor personal habits, lack of fitness and negative attitudes towards regular exercise prevent pupils from leading a healthy lifestyle. They give up too easily when faced with vigorous exercise, and these factors contribute to more than half of pupils being significantly overweight.
- In primary schools, a high proportion of pupils cannot swim at least 25 metres by the end of Year 6.
- Achievement in core PE, GCSE, BTEC and other awards is consistently low and show no signs of improving. Very few students continue to study or participate in PE and sport in Key Stage 4.

## Grade descriptors<sup>1</sup> – quality of teaching in PE

*Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspector.*

*This subject specific guidance is supplementary to the generic grade descriptors which are found in the School Inspection handbook.*

### Supplementary subject-specific guidance

#### Outstanding (1)

- Enjoyable and highly effective learning is promoted through excellent relationships, regular praise and feedback. Teachers enthuse, motivate and inspire pupils to achieve their very best.
- Pupils secure outstanding progress because teachers and coaches are organised and well-planned. They use their extensive subject knowledge and expertise to show pupils the step-by-step stages of learning new skills, and how to apply skills in different activities and situations. They question pupils to check their understanding and provide expert advice on how to attain exceptionally high levels of performance.
- Expectations of all pupils are consistently high. Pupils are challenged to work their hardest, even when they begin to tire, and are encouraged improve their performance.
- The pace of learning is rapid. Time in lessons is maximised to engage all pupils in vigorous, physical activity. Pupils are physically active for sustained periods of time.
- A wide range of equipment and resources, including computers and video technology, is used to enable pupils to enhance their learning and performance.
- Pupils' progress is systematically checked throughout all key stages. Assessment data is used by teachers and coaches to plan further challenges for more able pupils and provide additional support for the less able.

#### Good (2)

- Pupils of all abilities are fully included and challenged to achieve their best because learning is planned on the basis of what pupils already know, understand and can do. Teachers and coaches show a detailed understanding of PE and sport and communicate this effectively.
- Specialist coaches and volunteers are deployed effectively by teachers to provide high-quality sports coaching and advice on how to improve performance.
- Relationships are good and expectations are high. Pupils improve their fitness and health as a result of good teaching. Time in lessons is used effectively to engage all pupils in vigorous, physical activity for sustained periods of time and to promote their physical fitness.
- Pupils' learning, progress and enjoyment of PE are effectively enhanced through the use of a range of PE equipment and video technology.
- Teachers and coaches assess how well individual pupils are progressing and identify those who need further challenge or additional support.

#### Requires improvement (3)

- Pupils or groups of pupils do not make good progress because teaching is not good.
- Because tasks are not sufficiently challenging, the most able pupils are prevented from making good progress. Not all teachers have high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving.

<sup>1</sup> These grade descriptors describe the quality of teaching in the subject as a whole, taking account of evidence over time. While they include some characteristics of individual lessons, they are not designed to be used to judge individual lessons.

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Learning does not interest or engage all pupils, or inspire them to try their hardest.

- Gaps in the subject knowledge of teachers and coaches limit their ability to question pupils about their learning or to offer them clear advice on how to improve.
- Pupils' learning is not regularly enhanced through the use of different mediums, such as video or computers.
- In primary schools, responsibility for teaching PE is held by assistants, coaches or other volunteers who are not closely supervised by senior leaders.
- Assessment data is not used well enough to check pupils' progress in all key stages or to inform teacher's future planning.

### Inadequate (4)

- Pupils or groups of pupils do not make sufficient gains during lessons because the quality of teaching is not good enough.
- Pupils spend too long repeating work they have already learnt, and as a result become bored. Teachers' planning takes little or no account of pupils' prior learning, so pupils of different abilities all do the same activities.
- There are significant gaps in the subject knowledge of teachers and coaches. Their expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are too low.
- Long periods of inactivity arise as a consequence of teachers' low expectations of what pupils can already do. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to improve their physical fitness.
- Pupils' progress is not regularly assessed, so teachers and pupils are unaware of how well they are progressing.
- Sports coaches and volunteers do not have enough subject knowledge. Their work is not monitored closely by senior leaders to make sure that pupils' needs are fully met.

## Grade descriptors – quality of the curriculum in PE

*Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspector.*

### Outstanding (1)

- An imaginative and stimulating PE curriculum provides all pupils with an outstanding range of opportunities to participate and excel in PE and sport. Participation rates are very high. Competitive sports fixtures are played at an exceptionally high level.
- The PE curriculum is highly inclusive. It is skilfully designed to meet the needs and interests of all pupils, including disabled pupils or those with special educational needs, those for whom the pupil premium provides support and for the most able pupils. It is suitably adapted to enable significantly overweight pupils to engage fully in physical activity and encourage them to lead an active, healthy lifestyle.
- The PE curriculum is complemented by an outstanding range of traditional and new, alternative sporting activities before, during and after school that captures pupils' interest and enthusiasm and nurtures a life-long commitment to participation in sport and physical activity.
- Primary schools provide regular swimming lessons to enable all pupils to exceed minimum expectations for swimming by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Well-established partnerships with schools, clubs and sports organisations make an excellent contribution to extending the range and quality of opportunities provided for pupils.
- Pupils have at least two hours of core PE lessons each week in all key stages. In schools with significantly less than this in any key stage, all pupils are provided with extra activities during and after school to enable them to make outstanding progress and attain exceptionally high standards.
- Secondary schools provide an excellent programme of examination courses in PE and sport, qualifications in sports coaching and officiating, and awards in sports leadership.
- Outstanding links with other subjects including English, mathematics and science strengthen pupils' learning in PE.
- Rigorous curriculum planning ensures that PE makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

### Good (2)

- A good PE curriculum that enables all pupils to participate regularly and achieve well in a broad range of activities is complemented by an extensive programme of extra-curricular sport, including competitive fixtures against other schools.
- The needs and interests of all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils or those with special educational needs, those for whom the pupil premium provides support and the most able, are met. The PE curriculum is adapted to promote the regular participation of significantly overweight pupils and educate about the importance of leading an active, healthy lifestyle.
- Pupils have two hours of core PE lessons each week in all key stages. In schools with significantly less than this in any key stage, all pupils are provided with a good range of additional awards and qualifications in PE and sport, and a broad enrichment programme enables most pupils to make good progress.
- Primary schools provide regular swimming lessons to enable most pupils to meet minimum expectations for swimming by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Links with other subjects and good partnerships with schools, clubs and sports organisations enhance pupils' learning and participation in PE, sport and physical activity.
- Good opportunities to promote pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are

planned and taught systematically.

### **Requires improvement (3)**

- The PE curriculum requires improvement because it is not good.
- Pupils participate weekly, but not enough time is allocated to core PE lessons to enable them to make good progress. To make up for this shortfall, pupils are expected to study examined awards in PE in Key Stage 4.
- A limited extra-curricular sports programme does not appeal to most pupils or encourage them to participate regularly in school sport.
- Primary schools do not enable pupils to continue to attend swimming lessons until they can swim 25 metres.
- The choice of PE awards and qualifications in secondary schools is too narrow.
- Links with other subjects make little difference to enhancing pupils' achievement in PE.
- PE makes a limited contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

### **Inadequate (4)**

- The PE curriculum does not ensure pupils' entitlement to the subject and does not secure continuity in their learning.
- Not enough time is allocated to core PE in one or more key stages to enable all pupils to make sufficient progress.
- The quality or quantity of PE, the range of qualifications and awards, and extra-curricular activities do not promote pupils' engagement, enjoyment or achievement in PE.
- There are very few opportunities to participate regularly in sport against other schools and competitive school sport is not played to a high standard.
- Opportunities to promote pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development in PE are missed.
- In primary schools, insufficient time is allocated to enable pupils to meet statutory requirements for swimming.
- There are no substantial links between PE and other subjects in the school, or with local schools, clubs and sports organisations.

## Grade descriptors – quality of leadership in, and management of, PE

*Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspector.*

*This subject specific guidance is supplementary to the generic grade descriptors which are found in the School Inspection handbook.*

### Supplementary subject-specific guidance

#### Outstanding (1)

- Leaders articulate a clear vision for the subject. They show a relentless commitment to improving provision and achievement.
- Leaders inspire and enthuse staff and motivate pupils of all ages and abilities to engage fully in PE and do their very best.
- PE has a high profile. There is a strong sporting ethos in the school. Leaders have convinced headteachers and governors of the importance of sufficient time for PE by illustrating how time is used effectively to achieve outstanding outcomes for pupils.
- There is an outstanding track record of innovation and improvement. Leaders are expert practitioners, well informed by current good practice and research in PE and education generally.
- Self-evaluation and improvement planning are accurate and detailed. Rigorous lesson monitoring, staff training and the sharing of best practice have eradicated weaknesses in teaching and made it consistently good and regularly outstanding.
- Clear guidance is provided for all teachers and coaches about assessing pupils' progress, and using this data to raise achievement in PE.
- Highly productive partnerships with other schools support the school's work. Pathways into community sports clubs are firmly established. Young leaders are used well to organise sport and play for others.
- PE makes an excellent contribution to whole-school priorities, including literacy and numeracy policies.
- Governors are highly supportive of the aims and vision for the subject, and promote and celebrate the school's successes in school sport.
- Primary school leaders, including governors, ensure that new funding for PE and sport is used exceptionally well to improve the quality of provision, including regular and sustained participation in PE and sport.

#### Good (2)

- Leaders are fully committed to securing improvements to provision and raising pupils' achievement. They take decisive action to eradicate weaknesses and promote greater consistency.
- They know their subject well. Self-evaluation is accurate and informs detailed plans for improvement. Leaders are receptive to new ideas and innovations in PE.
- Leaders are competent and confident teachers of PE. Their lesson monitoring is routine and well-established. Strengths are shared between teachers and weaknesses are tackled through further challenge and professional development tailored to individual needs.
- Assessment procedures are firmly established in all key stages and are applied consistently to monitor pupils' progress and inform future planning.

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- Sufficient curriculum time for PE has been secured to promote regular participation and enable all pupils to achieve well.
- Good partnerships with other schools and clear pathways to local providers of sport enable pupils to continue to participate after school.
- PE makes a good contribution to whole-school priorities, including literacy and numeracy policies.
- Governors are supportive of the aims and vision of the subject leader and are keen to celebrate the school's successes in school sport.
- Primary school leaders, including governors, ensure that new funding for PE and sport is used well to improve the quality of provision, including regular and sustained participation in PE and sport.

### Requires improvement (3)

- Subject leaders are aware of some of the current developments in PE and sport and incorporate them into their practice.
- Self-evaluation recognises the strengths of PE but does not identify what needs to be done to secure and sustain improvements, particularly to the quality of teaching. Plans to develop PE are not leading to significant improvement.
- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching are not routinely addressed. Teachers and coaches are given minimal guidance to help them plan and teach lessons effectively.
- Assessment procedures are under-developed or are not applied consistently by all staff.
- Good practice is not shared widely. Staff benefit from some involvement in local training and networking with other schools, but wider partnerships are limited.
- PE makes some contribution to whole-school priorities, including literacy and numeracy policies.
- Governors are aware of some aspects of the school's work in PE and school sport.
- Primary school leaders, including governors, ensure that new funding for PE and sport is used to make some improvements to provision and participation in PE and sport.

### Inadequate (4)

- Leaders, including governors, are not well informed about current developments in PE and school sport.
- Leaders do not have a clear vision for the subject and there is no track record of innovation and improvement. Self-evaluation and improvement planning lack rigour.
- Leaders have not done enough to strengthen the quality of teaching. Too much of it requires improvement. Good practice has not been shared to promote greater consistency in teaching.
- The learning environment is not cared for or used well enough to promote pupils' positive attitudes towards PE and sport.
- In primary schools, there is no clear leadership or strategic planning to improve PE. Lesson monitoring is infrequent, so the effectiveness of teachers and coaches is unknown.
- Regular checks are not made to ensure that all pupils can swim 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Teachers or coaches do not have the confidence and competence to teach PE effectively. Opportunities for their professional development are too limited.
- Partnerships with other schools and providers are under-developed. The curriculum and extra-curricular programme do not promote regular participation or enable all pupils to achieve well enough.
- PE makes a minimal contribution to whole-school priorities, including literacy and numeracy

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policies.

- The subject leader has not gained the full commitment of the headteacher and governors to provide enough time for PE.
- Primary school leaders, including governors, are not making effective use of new funding for PE and sport to improve the quality of provision, including regular and sustained participation in PE and sport.