

# Going the extra mile

Excellence in competitive school sport





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# Foreword by Sir Michael Wilshaw, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector

**Sporting success lives long in the memory. The World Cup in Brazil is a great excuse for football fans to argue endlessly about the best games, the best players and the chances of England carrying off the trophy for a second time. Closer to home, Glasgow's hosting of the Commonwealth Games a month later will remind us of the fantastic success that Team GB enjoyed at London 2012.**

Our Olympic achievements, however, prompted questions as well as plaudits: why did so many of our successful athletes come from independent schools? Forty one per cent of UK medallists at London 2012 were educated in the private sector even though it caters to a small minority of children. That in turn sparked other questions. What is the state of competitive sport in maintained schools? Is there a link between the quality of school sport and later sporting success? Does competition on the track, in the pool or on the field have a bearing on a school's academic achievements?

Ask our most successful sportsmen and sportswomen to list their greatest influences on the road to sporting glory and many will volunteer the name of a teacher. A 14-year-old Somali-born, state-educated pupil called Mo Farah was struggling academically and had dreams of becoming a professional footballer. His London physical education (PE) teacher, Alan Watkinson, wasn't sure about his footballing prowess, but he was certain of the boy's running talents and the rest, as we know, is sporting history.

Regrettably, although some of our state schools are good at developing the talents of the next generation of Mo Farahs, not enough are. Outside of football, a disproportionately high number of athletes and tennis, rugby union and cricket players honed their talent on the fields and in the sports halls of England's independent schools.

This comes as no surprise when you look at the central role sport plays in these institutions. In independent schools, competitive sport isn't an optional extra; it's a key component in building self-esteem, confidence, school ethos and academic excellence. The drive to compete and excel in sport shapes a youngster's character, binds the school together and reinforces the drive to compete and excel academically.

Of course, many independent schools enjoy financial advantages not available to their state-funded cousins. As this report makes clear, it is not resource that is the key to independent school success but attitude. Children are expected to compete, train and practise secure in the knowledge that teachers will go the extra mile to help them.

Some state schools echo the success of their independent peers. They use competitive sport to energise the entire school culture; their leaders understand its value and continually promote it. Pride in a team, the thrill of a new challenge, encouraging every pupil to have a go all pay academic dividends. As a result, attainment across these schools tends to be high.

If these schools can do it, so can many more. As things stand, many state schools treat competitive sport as an optional extra or fail to offer it any meaningful way. They get on the bus but fail to turn up on the pitch.

This matters not because I expect every school to produce a Mo Farah, but because children's education is the poorer if they are deprived of the chance to compete. Children enjoy competition. It pushes them to do better and try harder. Of course, it also carries with it the risk of defeat, but how better to prepare pupils for the setbacks that life will inevitably throw at them? Not every child can or will go on to become a world champion, but every child will experience victories and defeats. And every student, wherever they are educated, deserves the opportunity to have their sporting passion identified and nurtured.

We could not have produced this report without the help and support of the Top Foundation, UK Sport and the national governing bodies of many of the major sports. I'm grateful for their help and delighted that we are also able to publish alongside this report more in-depth information about the beneficial effects of competitive sport, the educational backgrounds of elite athletes and the relative success of independent and state schools in school sports competitions.

Yes, it would be wonderful if our athletes brought back another record haul of medals from Rio; if our footballers won the World Cup in Russia, as well as Brazil; and if Australia learned to tremble in fear as they took on our cricket and rugby players. But the real value of competitive sport is the positive effect it has on education. Schools that win on the field win in the exam hall.



## Executive summary

# Executive summary

**The London 2012 Olympic Games resulted in record success for Team GB athletes across a large range of sports. It also brought into sharp focus the high proportion of English competitors who had been educated in independent schools.**

To determine whether this was indicative of wider over-representation of independent schools in elite sport, we commissioned external research into the educational background of those who participate in sports at the elite level. We were particularly interested in whether there was a link between the quality of competitive school sport and later sporting success. This research also explored the relative success of independent and state schools in a range of school sports competitions. In addition, we visited 10 independent schools and 35 state schools and collected views of over 500 headteachers and 1,000 young people aged 11–18 on competitive school sport through online surveys.

Independent schools do produce proportionally more elite athletes and have greater success in sporting competitions than maintained schools and academies do. In these independent schools, competitive sport is part of a wider and established culture that promotes individual academic and sporting excellence. But maintained schools and academies can be just as successful as schools in the independent sector. The best state schools recognise the wider benefits of participation in competitive sport in building a strong ethos and helping children to develop into well-rounded and successful individuals.

We visited 10 independent schools with a strong track record of sporting excellence to explore the factors underpinning their sporting success. In all these schools, there was a strong sporting ethos and culture based on the sustained commitment of school leaders and teachers to provide the ideal conditions for students to practise, train for and take part in competitive sport.

A variety of other interlocking elements underpin sporting success in these independent schools. Investment in excellent sports facilities and effective coaching staff is a key component. However, the expectations placed on students and staff to participate in competitive sport is also crucial in delivering success. The independent schools

separated responsibility for teaching physical education (PE) and coaching sport, which gave PE teachers and coaches the time to do both well. In the majority of these schools, there was a director of sport – a full-time position with responsibility for organising teams and coaches. Teams of teachers and coaches ran house competitions and school teams that all students were expected to take part in. There was a strong recognition of the wider benefits of competitive school sport in building school culture and identity, ensuring academic achievement and developing well-rounded individuals. Sporting success was aspired to and celebrated.

Another important factor contributing to the success of independent schools in school sports is the use of sports scholarships. These are offered to students with exceptional talent who strengthen school teams and contribute towards school sporting success. Ofsted's research showed that 15% of the international athletes surveyed had some form of sport scholarship when they were at school. About half of the scholarships were awarded by independent schools to students from state schools. Only one scholarship was given by a state school to a student transferring from an independent school.

In the 35 maintained schools and academies we visited, the picture was very mixed. Some of these schools were matching the success seen in some of the best schools in the independent sector. However, in many schools, the quality of competitive sport was average at best and in a significant number it was weak.

Our inspection visits and the results from our online headteacher survey also highlighted that competitive sport remains optional in the vast majority of state schools. Only half of the 1,000 young people (11–18) we surveyed reported that they regularly played sport in school either against their peers or against other schools and only 40% of them reported regularly playing sport outside of school.

In 15 of the maintained schools and academies we visited, competitive sport flourished largely because the headteacher and governors value it. Simply put, these schools were successful because headteachers and governors put in place the people, time and facilities to develop and maintain the school's sporting traditions. They, like their independent



school counterparts, use competitive sport to build the school culture and ethos. Thirteen of these schools were judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at their last full section 5 inspection. All had good or outstanding leadership and academic attainment was generally high.

These maintained schools and academies offer a range of competitive sports but focus on a few and do them well. They invest in specialist teachers and expert coaches and build strong links with local and professional sports clubs. Students and staff commit to competitive sport and actively demonstrate this – being well turned out in the schools' PE clothing, always attending training and fixtures on time and exhibiting high standards of behaviour on and off the field. The sporting achievements of individual students and teams are rewarded and celebrated regularly and this is central to school life. This builds confidence and self-esteem and engages parents. It gives sport a high profile in schools and helps to maintain the school's winning tradition. In these schools, staff 'go the extra mile' for students by dedicating much of their own time to organising sport before, during and after school and by running teams that play weekly competitive fixtures against other schools.

In the most successful maintained schools and academies, well-qualified coaches are employed, often on a permanent basis, to work alongside teachers in lessons and to coach school teams. Maintained schools and academies that employ sports coaches in this way place emphasis on both maximising participation and achieving high standards of performance. Teachers of academic subjects also dedicated their own time to providing regular fitness training or coaching and running school teams. This enhanced the schools' capacity to provide sport for children of different abilities and interests.

In these schools, there are robust procedures for recognising sporting talent and ensuring that this is developed. Teachers and coaches recognise talent early and steer the students towards lunchtime and after-school sport and into school teams. Special provision is made for them and they are

expected to do more than others in PE lessons. Links between these schools and local and professional sports clubs are well-established, enabling the better-motivated and more able children to play competitively and improve their performance outside of school time.

However, in too many of the other maintained schools and academies we visited, students had few opportunities to excel in competitive sport because it was not seen as a priority. It was undervalued by school leaders, who were not investing in it. These schools were less likely to be good or better and academic attainment was lower, typically, than in those with better competitive sport.

These weaker schools struggled to provide students with regular opportunities to play and excel in competitive sport. They did not have enough teachers willing to organise activities and run teams and were unable to provide enough time to coach or play high quality sport. Without the 'enthusiasts' and 'organisers' – the people on the ground to organise school sport – these schools struggled to enable students to compete regularly and excel. In some schools, we found that limited facilities had led to difficulties in playing matches against other schools. Lack of playing fields or all-weather playing surfaces were noted as significant barriers in some of these schools.

We also found that considerable inequalities can exist in competitive sport provision between schools in close proximity to each other. The quality of sport in maintained schools and academies differs widely between schools that are in the same area and that have children from the same social and economic backgrounds. In two areas visited, there was a vast gulf in the quality of the competitive school sport programmes between schools within a few miles of each other.

The government framework for competitive school sport, the School Games, offers all schools the opportunity to participate in competitive sport, at a range of levels from participatory to elite level (see Annex B). It also offers



the opportunity for schools to field multiple teams to ensure that students of differing abilities can benefit from competitive sport. Some maintained schools and academies take full advantage of the opportunities afforded at all levels of these competitions, to stretch their most talented students and provide the wider benefits of sport to all. But not enough do.

The success in competitive sport achieved by some maintained schools and academies shows that it is possible for the state sector to replicate the success seen in the best independent schools. In doing so, schools can reap wider benefits as well as ensure that students' sporting talent is recognised and nurtured.

We believe that students attending maintained schools and academies deserve the same opportunities to excel as those in the independent sector and want to encourage schools, the government and other organisations to do more to make this happen.

A woman in a white lab coat is running through a hospital hallway. She is carrying a bag and looking back over her shoulder. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. The word "Recommendations" is written in white text on the right side of the image.

## Recommendations

# Recommendations

To help maintained schools and academies provide better and regular competitive sport for their students we make the following recommendations.

**Maintained schools and academies should recognise the wider benefits that competitive sport can bring to their school and students. They should learn from the schools that teach PE and coach sport well and put in place the conditions to enable competitive school sport to thrive.**

## **In particular, maintained schools and academies should:**

- recognise the role competitive sport plays in building the whole person, enriching the student experience and improving the school ethos
- embed competitive sport firmly in the school culture and ethos and make it a central part of school life, involving staff, parents, students and governors, and taking every opportunity to celebrate and reward success
- ensure that there is a well-structured and supported competitive sports programme that provides opportunities for all students to participate in competitive sport and stretches the most able
- expect all students to participate in regular competitive sport and ensure that there is provision to meet this demand
- ensure that the most able students have access to the range of high quality support and facilities needed to develop their skills and fitness
- foster meaningful sporting links with local and professional sports clubs to encourage more students to regularly compete in sport in their own time
- develop the partnerships needed to build sporting pathways – from primary school to secondary school and with the local and professional sports clubs
- improve the quality of competitive school sports programmes by learning from the best about how to produce high quality sports programmes:

- offer a range of sports but prioritise a few to excel at
- provide enough time in both the PE curriculum and the sports enrichment programme to attain high standards in these sports
- utilise expert coaches to work alongside teachers to coach more able students and school teams, holding them to account for the success achieved by students.

## **The government should:**

- ensure that the national strategy for improving competitive sport in maintained secondary schools and academies has a specific focus on improving the proportions of athletes reaching elite levels from state schools
- monitor and report on the proportions of elite athletes from different educational backgrounds to determine whether the national strategy is having an impact; in particular, it should report on these proportions prior to the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic games to raise public awareness of this issue.

## **National governing bodies, school sport associations and sports agencies should:**

- review their current whole-sport plans to reflect the importance of competitive school sport – this should include consideration of how effective their competition formats and events are in providing for both their talent and participation pathways
- spread the exceptional practice seen in elite sports academies on school sites to enable a higher proportion of talented students to excel in high quality competition, and prepare for a career in sport
- help sports clubs to forge meaningful links with their local schools so that students of all ages, gender and abilities compete regularly in sport within and outside of school.

# Independent schools produce proportionally more elite sportspeople

**1** Only 7% of school-aged pupils attend an independent school in England at any point in time and only up to 14% of students aged 16 or above are reported to have attended an independent school at any point in their schooling.<sup>1</sup> If maintained schools and independent schools were equally successful in nurturing sporting talent, we would expect approximately 86–93% of elite sportspeople to have been educated in a state school. However, 41% of the medallists from the UK team from the London 2012 Olympic Games were reported to have attended an independent school.<sup>1</sup>

**2** Additional surveys and desktop research commissioned by Ofsted investigated the school backgrounds of elite male and female athletes from England who compete at the highest levels: the Olympics and Paralympics and the national teams and highest level English competitions in football, rugby union, hockey, netball and cricket. The results from these analyses are outlined in detail in the accompanying National Governing Body of Sport Survey Report.<sup>1</sup>

**3** Despite state schools educating 86–93% of the population, based on the data we collected, they only produce about two thirds of elite sportspeople across a range of disciplines (see Figure 1 and the accompanying National Governing Body of Sport survey report). The only arena where state school-educated athletes are represented at the levels expected were the competitors at the London 2012 Paralympics and those currently funded to compete at the elite level in Paralympic sports.

**Figure 1: The type of school attended by elite athletes<sup>1</sup>:**

	Number of athletes		Percentage of athletes	
	Total number of athletes	Number of athletes in sample	State school only	Independent school at any time
Current Internationals from 19 sports (England) <sup>2,3</sup>	Unknown	224	67	31
London 2012 summer Olympic Team	443	279	65	29
London 2012 summer Paralympic Team	291	106	83	16
National League Players (2012/13 season) <sup>2</sup>	760	543	67	34
World Class Programme athletes (2013) Olympic sports <sup>4,5</sup>	956	606	67	26
World Class Programme athletes (2013) Paralympic sports <sup>6</sup>	324	247	79	15

<sup>1</sup> *National Governing Bodies of Sport Survey*, Summary report for Ofsted, Figure 3.1.a, TOP Foundation, June 2014; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-research-top-foundation-prepared-for-ofsted](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-research-top-foundation-prepared-for-ofsted).

<sup>2</sup> Includes football, rugby union, netball, hockey and cricket.

<sup>3</sup> A further 1.3% of the sample included pupils educated at overseas schools. These have not been included in either the state or independent figures.

<sup>4</sup> A further 7.4% of the sample of athletes did not report what type of school they attended. These have not been included in either the state or the independent figures.

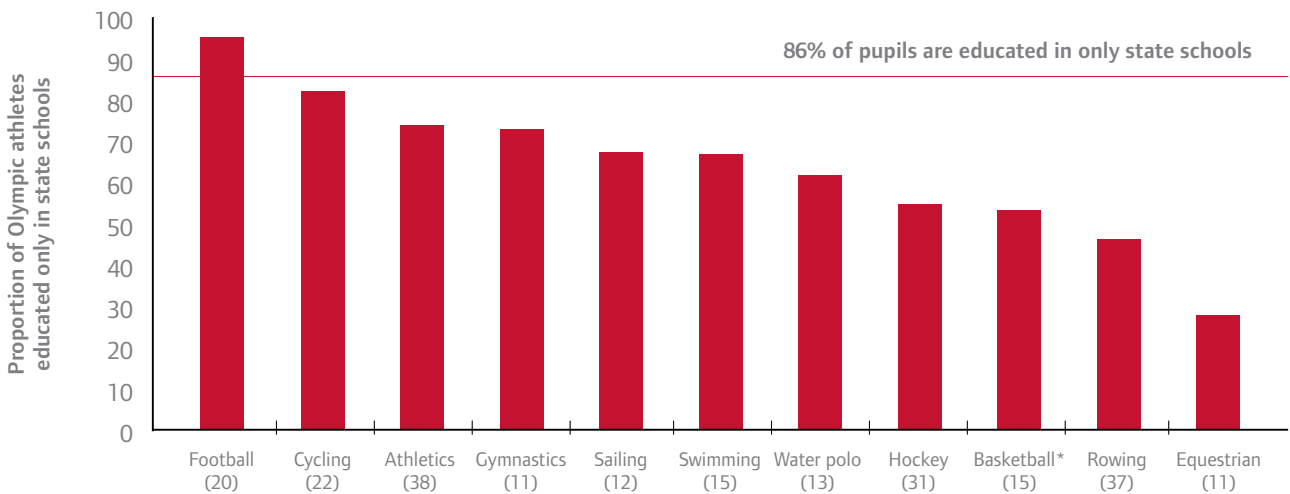
<sup>5</sup> The 'World Class programme' is the programme through which UK support to the UK's leading athletes in selected Olympic and Paralympic sports is provided.

<sup>6</sup> A further 6.1% of the sample of athletes did not report what type of school they attended. These have not been included in either the state or the independent figures.

**4** These overall figures mask considerable diversity in the school background of elite competitors in different sports. For example, according to the data we collected, 45% of the hockey players, 54% of the rowing team and 73% of the equestrian team competing at the London 2012 Olympics were educated at independent schools. In contrast, all those competing in boxing, badminton, taekwondo and judo were educated at state schools (although the numbers of competitors were small). Football, canoeing and cycling were the sports closest to a demographically representative split of state school- to independent school-educated athletes, with 95%, 89% and 82% of competitors from a state school background, respectively. In other high-profile sports such as athletics, gymnastics and swimming, athletes with an independent school background were all over-represented (see Figure 2).

‘Almost all children go to a state school but only two thirds of our elite athletes did.’

**Figure 2: The proportion of 2012 British Olympians educated in only state schools<sup>1 2 3 4</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Source: *National Governing Bodies of Sport Survey, Summary report for Ofsted, Appendix 1, Figure 4.1.c, TOP Foundation, June 2014;* [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-research-top-foundation-prepared-for-ofsted](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-research-top-foundation-prepared-for-ofsted).

<sup>2</sup> Percentages only for those athletes for which data are available. The TOP report provides further details of the data collection methods.

<sup>3</sup> Sports where data was available for fewer than 10 athletes or less than a quarter of participating athletes have not been included.

<sup>4</sup> Where the number of athletes is small percentages should be treated with caution.

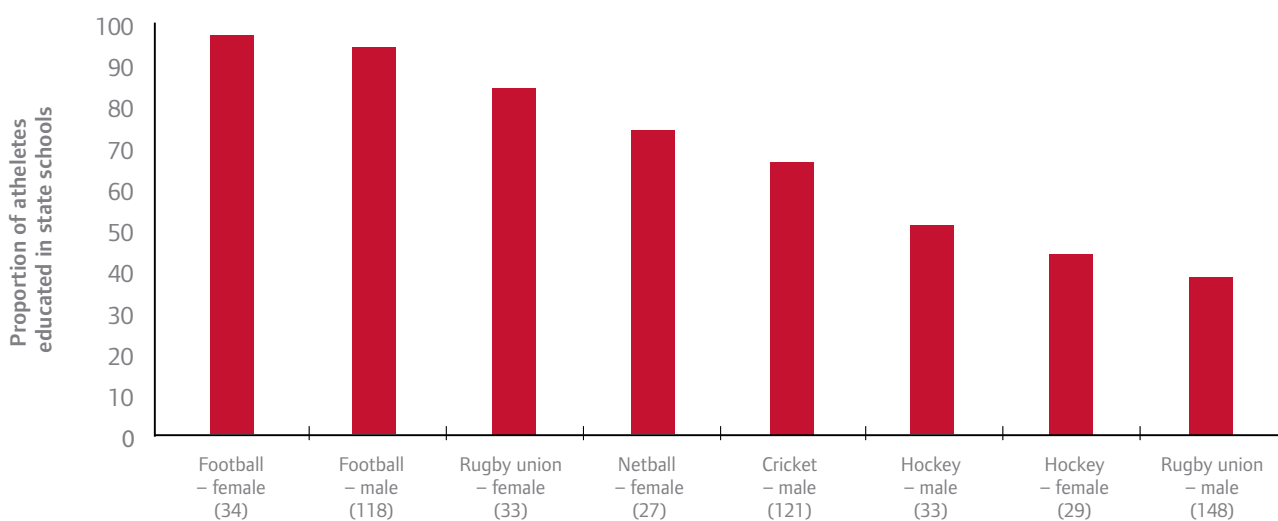
\* Please note, while only 53% of basketball athletes were educated in state schools, no athletes had been educated in independent schools. The remaining 47% of athletes were educated in schools overseas.

5 There were similar findings for a range of other major professional and semi-professional sports examined, for both men and women (see Figure 3). Based on the data we collected, football is the most demographically representative sport, with 94% of English footballers competing in the Premier League having been educated at state schools. The elite women’s rugby union competition is also dominated by those educated at state schools (85%) in stark contrast to the English men in the Rugby Union English Premiership, where 61% of players had attended an independent school at some point during their schooling. Cricket and hockey have more state-schooled elite players in their national leagues than men’s rugby union, but there is still a considerable over-representation by independent-schooled players in these competitions.

6 The awarding of sports scholarships to talented athletes clearly has an impact on these figures. We found that of the 224 current international athletes that answered our athlete survey, 33 (15%) had some form of sport scholarship when they were at school. Overall, rugby union players received the most sports scholarships (45%). A more in-depth look showed that 16 out of the 33 scholarships took the athletes from state to independent schools, while only one scholarship saw the transfer the other way.

7 Overall, independent schools are producing far more elite athletes across a range of sports than we would expect given the proportion of the population in England that they actually educate. This indicates that these schools are more effective at recognising, supporting and nurturing sporting talent than maintained schools and academies.

**Figure 3: Proportion of athletes playing in top national leagues that were educated in a state school<sup>1 2</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Source: *National Governing Bodies of Sport Survey*, Summary report for Ofsted, Appendix 1, Section 3.2, TOP Foundation, June 2014; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-research-top-foundation-prepared-for-ofsted](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-research-top-foundation-prepared-for-ofsted).

<sup>2</sup> Where the number of athletes is small percentages should be treated with caution.

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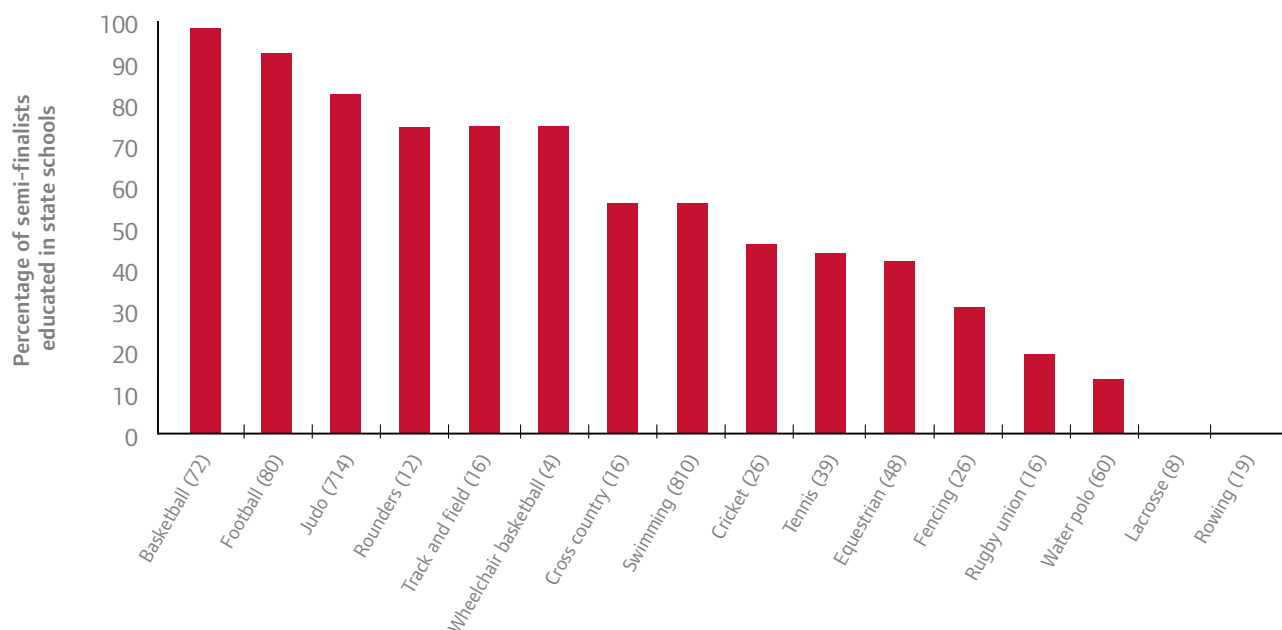
# Independent schools are more successful in school sports competitions

**8** The independent school sector is generally considered to place emphasis on participation in competitive school sport. Certainly, greater proportions of independent schools enter and reach the final stages of competitions and win them.<sup>2</sup>

**9** In the sports examined, 43% of winners and 32% of semi-finalists in inter-school competitions were independent schools. Sports such as swimming, hockey, rugby union, cricket and tennis have a high percentage of independent school winners. Sports such as football, rugby league, basketball, track and field, and badminton have a high percentage of state schools winning their school teams competitions. These differences often reflect

the proportion of schools from the different sectors that regularly enter the competitions. For example, nearly all schools entering national basketball competitions are state schools, whereas 80% of schools entering national rowing competitions are independent schools. However, this disparity in participation rates does not fully explain the success of independent schools in all sports. For example, only 24% of entrants to schools' rugby union competitions are independent schools, but they have provided 52% of the winners. Independent schools dominate some sports not because state maintained schools and academies do not compete but because independent schools play to a higher standard.

**Figure 4: The proportion of state maintained school semi-finalists in major school competitions<sup>1 2</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Source: *National Governing Bodies of Sport Survey*, Summary report for Ofsted, Appendix 3, Figure 14, TOP Foundation, June 2014; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-research-top-foundation-prepared-for-ofsted](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-research-top-foundation-prepared-for-ofsted).

<sup>2</sup> The data is based on information supplied by the national governing bodies for each sport. Sports will have differing competition structures.

<sup>3</sup> This data is primarily school team competitions and does not always include the talent pathway competitions.

Excellence in competitive school sport



# Factors that underpin the achievement of sporting success by independent schools and their students

**10** Ten independent schools with successful competitive school sports programmes (see Annex C) were visited as part of this study. These schools were chosen because they were highly successful in a range of competitive school sports competitions and have produced a number of elite sports people who compete at the highest levels.

## Values, culture and expectation

**11** All the independent schools visited as part of this study take competitive school sport seriously, invest in it and see it as central to their school culture and ethos. A key reason why school leaders invest in, and value, competitive sport is the wider benefits they believe it brings in 'developing the whole person' and developing a 'culture of success'. All of these schools are highly successful academically, as well competitive on the sports field.

**12** School leaders and staff said that they believe that the values students develop in sport, such as discipline, resilience and commitment, carry across into their academic work – 'commitment on the pitch/court is carried across into the exam hall' and beyond. In these schools, competitive sport is viewed as part of a broad curriculum. All students are expected to participate in house sports competitions and school teams. Their other wider interests in music, choir, creative and performing arts, technology, and other clubs and societies are equally valued, but sport is given an exceptionally high profile in school life.

**13** Competitive sport is used in these schools as a vehicle to build school spirit and develop responsibility. For example, the position of team/sports captain is seen as a privileged position, one to aspire to and that carries significant responsibility. Team captains and senior players are expected to act as role models for younger students and in most of these schools they are given responsibility and ownership of their teams. Team captains are encouraged to set the standards expected of the teams – they frequently take responsibility for organising inter-house competitions and, with other senior players, are involved in coaching younger students. In many of these schools, sports mentoring systems are in place to provide effective links between older and younger pupils. These approaches help improve sporting performance, but they also help build a cohesive and achieving culture across the school.

**14** All students are expected and supported to take part in competitive sport. In most schools, there is an expectation that all students will play in a minimum number of inter-house and school matches. Regular fixtures against other schools are played mid-week and on Saturday mornings, often at A, B, C, and D team level, so students of all abilities can represent the school.

**15** A common theme across the schools visited was the high standards set for the behaviour and attitudes of students, expecting them to work as a team, support one another and not undermine each other's efforts or complain. Self-discipline and striving were encouraged – showing 'grit and determination' and 'giving everything you've got' were common phrases used by teachers and students. The principles of honesty, respect and fair play were values that were actively instilled in students through the medium of sport in these schools. Students were taught how to remain focused and committed during high intensity competition, to respect their teammates, opponents and officials, and to play fairly.

**16** Reporting on, and celebrating, sporting performance is regular and high profile. This happens in many ways. Sports reports and awards feature prominently in weekly assemblies, with team captains often announcing results. School 'colours' across a range of sports and ability ranges are awarded at assemblies. All this has a central role in building the culture of the school. As one headteacher put it:

*'End of upper sixth pupils are presented with awards for success in sport from new starter pupils from Year 3 – this is very emotional and represents a changing of the guard and the introduction of new blood to maintain the school's traditions.'*

**17** There are prominent displays around the school of team photographs, trophies, honour rolls and other memorabilia. There is regular reporting to parents and governors on the progress and success of school teams through a variety of mediums such as specific sports reports, parental newsletters and sports celebration events. All 10 of the schools visited do these things and more, giving competitive school sport a place at the heart of the school and ensuring that students understand it to be a manifestation of a successful school.

### Resources, structures and approaches that support sporting excellence

**18** The resources put into competitive sport by these independent schools have a considerable influence on the success that they achieve. School leaders invest in first-class sports facilities, teams of specialist teachers, expert coaches and support staff. However, success is not just a result of spending money.

**19** These schools give ample time within the curriculum (and outside it) for students to play regular, competitive sport. Games afternoons, often up to two hours, enable staff to teach and coach sport in-depth and prepare teams for competitive play. They also enable students to play competitive fixtures during school time. Further time is provided in boarding schools where students benefit from structured daily opportunities to do their own personal training or play recreational sport.

**20** School leaders choose to actively maintain the school's sporting culture and tradition by appointing staff with expertise in the sports that have always been played in the school. It is not left to teachers' individual interests to determine what sports are prioritised or how much of it is provided. These schools may specialise in particular sports that they offer to a high level or make provision for particularly talented individuals to be able to play a sport not commonly offered on their curriculum. However, in all of these schools, a core of traditional team games and sports are prioritised and played at the highest levels, and usually with great success. The most common sports include rugby union, cricket, hockey, netball, rounders, lacrosse, tennis, swimming, athletics and cross country. Noticeably,

many of these are among the sports that have the highest proportion of elite senior athletes from an independent school background.

**21** Most of the 10 schools have a director of sport, teachers of PE who have responsibility for teaching GCSE and A-level PE, and lead coaches for each core sport offered as part of their competitive sport programme. Coaches improve individual and team performance in lessons and run teams. They provide training to update staff about new training methods and coaching techniques. This approach allows the different staff sufficient time to carry out their specific roles and responsibilities well. It avoids a small number of staff specialising in too many areas and is fundamental to generating high standards of performance in sport.

**22** Schools with preparatory departments or junior schools on site provide children with a great 'head start' in sport. Specialist PE teachers and coaches are used to teach weekly PE and sport from a very early age. By the time students enter Year 7, they 'hit the ground running' because they are fit and have already played regular, competitive sport. Directors of sport in most of the independent schools visited believe this is the key reason why their schools do so well in competitive sport.

**23** This combination of high quality facilities and well-resourced staffing for sport, a focus on the sports that matter to the school and a high level of commitment from all concerned, combine to breed sporting success. All of these schools have produced substantial numbers of athletes, across a range of disciplines, who have gone on to play at regional, national and international levels.

# Provision of competitive school sport in state maintained schools and academies

**24** We visited 35 state maintained schools and academies to determine whether the key factors seen in successful independent schools were also prevalent in the state sector. Ten of these schools were chosen specifically because they are known for their sporting excellence. The other 25 schools were randomly selected and clustered around the schools of sporting excellence to provide a comparator, both regionally and from a demographic perspective. Schools with a range of overall effectiveness judgements were chosen in these clusters.

**25** Only 15 of the 35 maintained schools and academies visited as part of this study played high quality competitive sport regularly and were successful in regional and national schools' competitions. In other words, only five of the 25 schools not chosen specifically for their sporting excellence had provision equivalent to that seen in the independent schools we visited.

**26** In the schools with vibrant and successful competitive sports programmes, there is a strong sporting ethos and reputation for sport that is based on the commitment of their headteacher, teaching and pastoral staff and sports coaches, who work collectively as a team to organise regular training and play competitive fixtures against other schools.

**27** Headteachers and governors in these schools put in place the people, time and facilities needed to maintain the school's sporting traditions, and use sport to promote its culture of achievement. The time that PE staff, other teachers and coaches dedicate to organising sport before, during and after school and at weekends is one of fundamental reasons why these maintained schools and academies are able to match what the independent schools we visited achieve.

**28** Disappointingly, 20 of the maintained schools and academies we visited did not provide students with regular opportunities to excel in competitive sport. In 10 of these schools, provision was weak: competitive sport was not seen as a priority and was undervalued by school leaders who did not invest in it. They did not have enough teachers willing to organise activities and run teams, and were unable to provide enough time to coach or play high quality sport. Without the 'enthusiasts' and 'organisers' – the people on the ground to run school sport – these schools struggled to help students compete regularly or excel.

**29** In many of these schools, PE staff focus time and commitment on engaging as many students as possible in PE. Consequently, participation rates are high. However, very few students compete and excel in high quality, competitive school sport. Participation is very important for health and well-being, but students in these schools lose out on the other benefits associated with playing and being successful in competitive sport.



# Excellence in competitive school sport



# The relationship between competitive sport and wider achievement

<sup>30</sup> As in the independent schools, there was an association between the wider success of the school and the quality of its competitive sports programmes. Academic attainment and quality of leadership were generally better in those schools with strong sport provision. In the two schools judged as requires improvement with strong competitive sports programmes, leadership had been judged good or better. The proportion of students achieving five or more GCSEs grades A\* to C including English and mathematics was also higher in schools with stronger competitive sport than in those with weaker sport provision. All of the schools visited because of their reputation for excellent competitive sport provision were rated good or outstanding, but they were not chosen for this reason.

**Figure 5: Number of schools visited by overall effectiveness judgement and the quality of the provision**

Overall effectiveness	Quality of sporting provision		
	Strong	Average	Weak
Outstanding	7	4	1
Good	6	3	5
Requires improvement	2	3	4

<sup>1</sup> Inspection judgement of the maintained schools and academies when they were visited as part of this study.  
<sup>2</sup> An overall judgement about the quality of competitive sport provision was made by the inspector after the visit had been completed.

**Figure 6: Percentage of students in the maintained schools sample attaining five or more A\* to C grades including English and mathematics at GCSE, by the quality of their sports provision<sup>1</sup>**



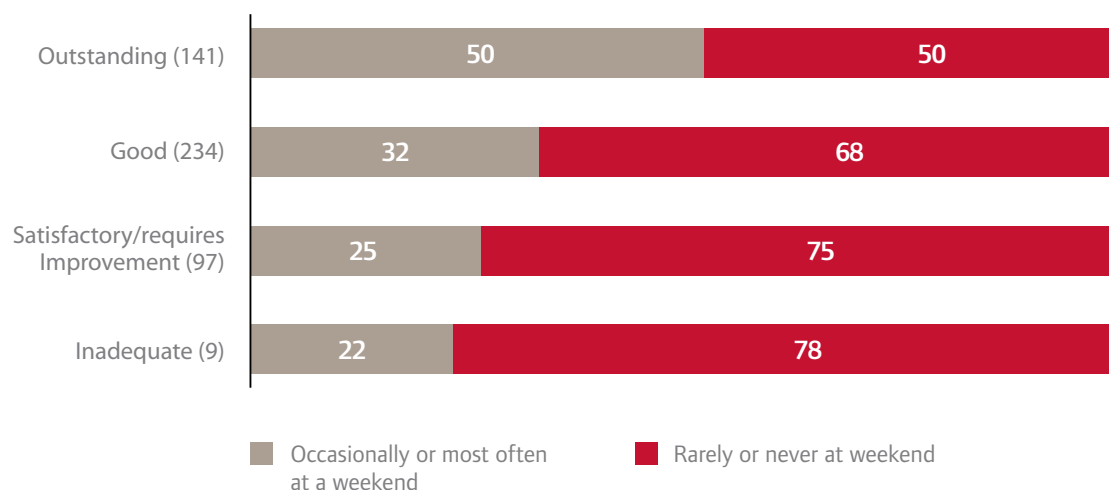
<sup>1</sup> Attainment figures retrieved from RAISEonline validated data 2013 for each school.

<sup>2</sup> A judgement about the quality of competitive sport provision was made by the inspector after the visit had been completed.

<sup>31</sup> Findings from our accompanying survey of headteachers add further weight to the observed association between competitive sport, student achievement and the quality of school leadership. We identified a number of factors indicative of greater support for competitive sport that were more prevalent in the outstanding schools who responded to our survey. This also correlated with academic attainment of pupils in the schools who responded to our survey. These included a wider range of sports being played competitively, more direct involvement of senior leaders in competitive sport, more time being made for competitive sport, especially at weekends, and a greater expectation for all students to be involved in competitive sport.



**Figure 7: Proportion of headteachers reporting that they hold weekend fixtures, by the overall effectiveness of the school<sup>1,2</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Based on the most recent section 5 inspection of schools as at 31 December 2013. This excludes independent schools and schools that have not had a section 5 inspection.

<sup>2</sup> Where the number of respondents is small the percentage should be treated with caution.

## Competitive school sport: integral to success or an indicator of an already successful school?

**32** We found evidence of an overall positive association between the quality of provision of competitive sport and academic attainment, and the overall school effectiveness judgement in the schools we visited. However, a key question is whether good schools are in better position than struggling schools to develop excellence in competitive sport.

**33** Only two of the schools judged as requires improvement in our sample had strong provision, but this did show that it can be done. These schools had good leadership and were using competitive sport to bring about improvement in academic attainment, behaviour and attendance. They ensured that competitive sport was valued and well supported.

**34** Another school we visited had used competitive sport as a key way of improving the school. The leadership team were explicit about the impact that competitive sport has on improving behaviour and attendance, building the school ethos and community and improving academic attainment.

‘Our academic success is largely due to sport, the students love it. It has helped to improve their behaviour and attitudes and their attendance has risen because sport gets them into school.’

Headteacher, Eastbury Comprehensive School

# Case Study: Aiming for outstanding – using competitive sport to build an ambitious and achieving school culture

Eastbury Comprehensive School is a much larger than average secondary school, with over 1,750 students on roll. The school caters to an ethnically diverse population and pupils from a highly socio-economically deprived background. The proportion of students eligible for pupil premium is twice the national average at 57.5% (vs 28.2%). The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups (78%) and the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language (over 65%) is also well above the national average. There is additional resource provision for deaf children on the school site that is run jointly by the school and local authority.

The school enters borough competitions in all major games on the curriculum (specialising in football, futsal, netball, rounders and table tennis), as well as badminton, volleyball, cricket, trampolining and athletics. They field more than one team in a number of sports to enable as many students as possible to play competitively and represent the school. The school is highly successful in county, regional and national competitive sport. For example, they were the under-16 boys' futsal national champions in 2013, the under-13 boys' football county cup winners and national finalists in 2011 and the under-13 and under-16 boys' table tennis county winners in 2013. The school was selected by the English Schools' Football Association (ESFA) to represent England in the World School Futsal Championships in Sardinia in May 2014, securing a world ranking of 14th. They have produced a number of elite sporting alumni across a range of disciplines, including John Terry (England football captain), Jack Baldwin (Peterborough FC), Craig Hardy (England Boxing), Crystal Lane (Team GB paralympian – cycling) and Kleber Silva (National League table tennis player).

The headteacher has high aspirations for the school and all of its students. The school has improved steadily since 2009, moving from an inspection grade of satisfactory to good and seeing academic attainment move from well below the national average to at or above it during that time. Many students come from a challenging environment and the headteacher speaks passionately about the impact sport has on transforming pupils lives and contributing to whole school improvement. In May 2014, the school was shortlisted for the TES Secondary School of the year award.

The headteacher's aspiration for students is 'to be the best at everything you do'. He firmly believes that sport makes a big contribution to helping students achieve this, saying: 'Our academic success is largely due to sport, the students love it. It has helped to improve their behaviour and attitudes and their attendance has risen because sport gets them into school.' Absences and exclusions at the school have been consistently decreasing over the last three to four years and are now below the national average.

There is a strong culture of developing leadership and responsibility among students in the school and the PE department has led on developing this through sport. The school has a 'Sports Excellence Programme', which identifies talented students in Year 7 who have the potential to become Sports Leaders. They are assessed and are expected to commit to the programme to have good attendance, positive attitudes and behaviour. They are trained as Sports Leaders (at UK Level 1) and, once identified and qualified in Year 7, in Years 8 and 9, students are placed into one of six 'Olympic' teams that go out into primary schools to organise and lead sport for younger students. This develops leadership and builds a sense of community, exemplifying the school motto: 'Community and learning'. The programme continues in Year 10 and into Year 11, where these students are expected to lead after-school sport (including on weekends and during holidays as sports mentors), follow a BTEC in sport and continue to volunteer and lead sport in their own time. Sixth form students who have been through the programme mentor the younger students to develop their leadership skills fully. Sixth formers who have been trained this way are encouraged to lead B teams for staff and to coach and referee games. They have the opportunity to acquire Level 1 and 2 coaching awards organised by the school. Over 200 students have become Sports Leaders and this model of developing young leaders has spread to other areas of the school – for example in English, mathematics and humanities.

The headteacher recognises that the success achieved in local and national competitions is due to the commitment and dedication of PE staff who 'work their socks off'. Students say, 'PE is where we get the bug, we enjoy it so much we start going to after-school clubs and get involved in teams'. The school also works with local charities, sports clubs and other organisations, such as:

- Greenhouse to develop table tennis
- the FA and Essex FA on schemes such as Football Futures, Team 16 and Vauxhall Football Mash Up
- sports clubs such as West Ham, Dagenham and Redbridge and Scintilla Cricket Club
- the Barking and Dagenham Sports Development Team
- the University of East London.

Utilising these partnerships, the schools develop sporting talent within the school and encourage students to play sport outside of school and broaden their horizons and aspirations.

The head of PE puts the school's sporting success down to 'having the right people in the right places who are passionate about sport, who know students well and use sport to help them to aspire and be ambitious'.

# Variability in provision within an area

**35** A comparison of the schools within the geographical clusters in our sample shows that the picture within a localised area can be complex. In four of the six clusters of schools examined, there was a mixture of schools with overall effectiveness judgements ranging from outstanding to requires improvement. In two of these clusters, we found average to strong competitive sport provision in all the schools, even those judged as requires improvement overall. However, in two other clusters, we found that most of the schools, even outstanding ones, had only average or weak competitive sport provision.

**36** In one cluster, four of the five schools visited had been judged as requires improvement overall and all these schools had average to weak competitive sport provision. The remaining school in the cluster, however, had strong competitive sport provision and was rated outstanding overall. These schools are in an area of relatively high socio-economic deprivation – generally having close to or above the national proportion of students eligible for pupil premium. The outstanding school also has substantially more students from ethnic minority backgrounds and with English as an additional language than the other schools in the cluster. The success of the outstanding school in this cluster demonstrates that being in an area of social disadvantage does not have to be an obstacle to achieving excellence in competitive sport or to wider achievement.

**37** In a few otherwise good or outstanding schools, provision for competitive sport was weak. In one cluster, students from two schools only three miles apart and with similar student populations and academic attainment had a completely different experience of competitive sport. In one of these schools, competitive sport provision was strong: students were challenged and stretched, sporting talent was recognised and students were steered towards success. In the other, despite good academic results, students were not stretched or developed in a sporting sense, recognition of sporting talent was weak and students were missing out on the wider range of benefits sporting competition can bring.

**38** The distinguishing feature between schools with excellent provision and weaker provision was the recognition given by senior leaders to the wider role of competitive sport within the school. They particularly highlighted its role in developing school ethos and culture, and in developing well-rounded individuals with a strong sense of leadership and responsibility.

‘The quality of provision of competitive sport in state schools is too mixed. In some areas there was a vast gulf in the quality of the competitive school sport programmes between schools within a few miles of each other.’

# Ethos, culture, expectations and success

**39** In the maintained schools and academies we visited that had strong competitive sport provision, school leaders highlighted that they value sport because they understand the role it plays in instilling in students the qualities of hard work, commitment, determination, self-discipline and team spirit. They believe that students apply these personal qualities to all aspects of school life, including in their academic studies. They expressed the same views about the role of sport as we found in the schools we visited in the independent sector. Many of them reported the positive effects on behaviour, attendance and academic achievement that competitive sport has brought.

**40** Similarly, many of the 509 headteachers who responded to our online survey commented at length about the significant contribution that competitive sport makes to developing students' personal skills and fostering team spirit.

**41** More worryingly, considerably fewer headteachers commented about the wider benefits of competitive sport such as promoting school culture and ethos, improving students' behaviour and self-control and improving academic performance. Only small numbers expressed a view about the importance of competitive school sport in promoting participation in sports clubs, giving opportunities for more able students, and developing sportsmanship and fair play. There was insufficient recognition among headteachers of maintained schools and academies of the wide range of benefits that competitive school sport can bring.

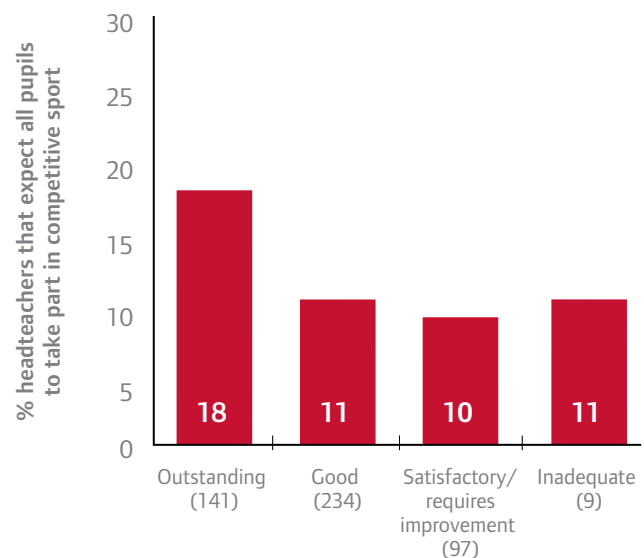
**42** In just under a third of schools that responded to our online survey, headteachers and senior leaders report that they get involved in running school sport. Senior leaders in outstanding schools were more likely to report being involved in running clubs or organising fixtures, suggesting that they place greater emphasis on getting involved in leading sport.

**43** These findings support what was seen in some of the maintained schools and academies with the strongest provision that were visited as part of this study. Headteachers in these schools support PE and sports staff by running a sports team or organising after-school sport themselves. They take pride in the school's reputation

for sport and show a genuine interest in students' achievements by talking with them and watching them play in competitive matches from the touchlines.

**44** A key factor in the success of the independent schools visited was the expectation that all students compete in sport and represent the school and they fielded multiple teams to enable this. We saw this approach mirrored in the maintained schools and academies with strong sporting provision. But in many of the weaker schools we visited, there was no such expectation. Our survey of headteachers' views confirmed this picture, with only 13% of respondents reporting that they expected all students to take part in competitive sport. The majority of respondents indicated that only those expressing an interest in sport were expected to take part in competition and a few indicated that no students were expected to take part. In the vast majority of state schools, competitive sport remains optional.

**Figure 8: The proportion of headteachers that expect all pupils to participate in competitive school sport, by most recent effectiveness judgement of their school<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Based on the most recent section 5 inspection of schools as at 31 December 2013. This excludes independent schools and schools that have not had a section 5 inspection.

<sup>2</sup> Where the number of respondents was small, the percentage should be treated with caution.

**45** The results of a survey of 1,005 young people aged 11–18 bear out these findings. Fewer than half the young people reported that they played sport in school against their peers or against other schools. Only 40% of them reported playing sport outside of school at a sports club, mostly football or swimming. In the other 13 common sports surveyed, participation was very low. Less than 5% of young people reported they competed in games like netball, hockey, rugby, tennis or cricket outside of school. This has significant implications for life-long participation in sporting activity and the health benefits that this can bring.

**46** Just as we saw in the independent schools visited, there was a strong emphasis, in the maintained schools and academies with the strongest provision, on using sport to develop the whole person and embed this within the school. In all of these schools, students were trained as leaders and sports ambassadors and this helped uphold the school's sporting values and traditions. They took responsibility for training their teammates, coaching younger students and organising inter-house sports competitions. They championed school sport and showed younger students where they could go to play sport outside of school.

**47** In these maintained schools and academies, students respond to the high expectations of teachers and coaches by arriving to lessons and practice sessions on time, in the right PE clothing, with the right equipment, showing positive attitudes and behaviour, and training hard to improve their performance. Success in school sport is fully celebrated and used to build cohesion and expectation among the student body. Results of weekend matches are known by Monday mornings because staff and students have shared them using a range of social media. Winning teams and individuals are held in high esteem by younger students. All students know of the reputations of older students who do well in sport and are encouraged to emulate their achievements. Special kit, school colours, halls of fame, annual sports dinners for students and their parents and newsletters are all used to recognise students' achievements. Celebrating and rewarding sporting achievement in this way makes it fashionable to achieve. It gives students the self-belief that they can aim high, improve further and enjoy equal success in their academic studies.

**48** Independent and state schools with the strongest competitive sport recognise the wider benefits of competitive sport and share a broadly common approach to embedding them. The challenge is to spread this good practice so that more students in the state sector have the opportunity to enjoy these wider benefits and that more sporting talent can be recognised and nurtured.

Students in one school say: 'the characteristics we learn through playing sport like team spirit, being competitive, determined, organising ourselves and playing fairly helps us improve in the classroom. Being selected for school teams gives us more confidence and the willingness to try hard and speak-up for ourselves.'

# How do successful maintained schools and academies match the independent sector?

**49** Some of the maintained schools and academies we visited were matching the sporting excellence and achievement we saw in high-achieving independent schools. This was due to headteachers and governors putting in place the people, time and facilities to develop and maintain the school's sporting traditions. Underpinning this overarching commitment to provide the right conditions for competitive sport to flourish were a range of different factors, strategies and approaches.

## The importance of teaching staff 'going the extra mile'

**50** The time that PE staff, other teachers and coaches dedicate to organising sport before, during and after school and at weekends is one of the fundamental reasons why some maintained schools and academies match what independent schools do. Competitive sport thrives in those schools where there is a large, well-organised team of PE staff, coaches and academic subject teachers involved in organising fixtures, running sports clubs, coaching skills and taking fitness training. Put simply, those schools that do not have enough teachers willing to organise activities or run teams are unable to provide enough time to coach or play high quality sport.

**51** Many of the schools visited with strong provision reported on the importance of ensuring staff continuity in order to maintain the sporting traditions of the school. These schools take active steps to recruit staff with expertise in the sports that they specialise in. Conversely, in a few of the schools we visited, we found that the schools' sporting traditions had not been maintained because a change in key personnel led to a loss of impetus. For example, a change in the leadership of PE led to sports that had been taught and played competitively in the past being discontinued. In some cases, teachers or coaches who led specific sports were not replaced with staff qualified well enough to maintain the quality of team performance.

**52** In schools with weaker competitive sport, it is often left to teachers to determine what sports are taught and played competitively and how much time they dedicate to them. Some choose to focus on increasing participation in a wide range of activities played at a much more rudimentary level, rather than preparing students for high quality, competitive sport. Students attend lunchtime and after-school clubs, and play in fixtures against other schools provided for them, but standards of performance are often low.

**53** We asked headteachers, both in our visits to schools and in our online survey, about incentivising their staff to lead and support competitive sport in the school. In the majority of cases, headteachers report that their staff are not formally incentivised in any way.<sup>3</sup> They were generally keen to emphasise that competitive sport was part of the school ethos and that staff were motivated volunteers going out of their way to fulfil a vocational duty to their students. In many cases, they also stated that there was an expectation on staff to participate in the extra-curricular life of the school. Typical quotes from headteachers responding to our survey include:

*'Sport is part of our culture of 'going the extra mile' in order to provide additional opportunities for students, hence staff volunteer to help. Coaches are paid for their work, but teaching staff are not, regarding volunteering their time as part of the education of the whole person.'*

and

*'Staff see volunteering to provide competitive sport as part of their profession. They are highly committed.'*

**54** Most of the maintained schools and academies visited continue to rely on the willingness of staff to organise school sport. Only seven of the 35 schools visited reported providing any incentives for staff to organise school sport. The type of incentive used varied, but often related to ensuring that there was sufficient time for key personnel to devote to supporting competitive sport. For example, one maintained school with a long-standing reputation for rugby union provides an allowance for a teacher to take full responsibility for the game. Another school provides a supernumerary teacher in the PE department to reduce class sizes and reduce the workload of staff who also commit to providing school sport. In one school, the director of sport has a reduced teaching commitment, giving him time to work more strategically to promote school sport. In another school, governors reduce the teaching commitment of those staff who engage in enrichment activities.

**55** This was also reflected in the online survey of headteachers. Almost 60% of those who responded reported that they offered no incentives to staff. The most common incentive reported – almost 40% of respondents – was a free lunch. Fewer than 10% of respondents reported offering incentives such as time off in lieu, additional allowances, extra staffing or additional non-teaching time in return for active involvement in supporting the school's competitive sports programme.

**56** Responses did show that around 20% of schools included organising competitive sport or running a team in the performance objectives and/or the contract of PE staff. However, it was rare for this approach to be used with other subject teachers, with only around 5% of respondents reporting including this in performance objectives of this group of staff and only 1% reporting including it in their employment contracts.

**57** In the schools with the strongest provision of competitive sport, we found that leaders of PE lead by example, organising sports activities before, during and after school, and at weekends, and expecting fellow teachers and coaches to do the same. In these schools, it was not unusual for competitive sport to begin well before the start of the school day and finish long after it ends.

These heads of PE set the standards expected of their colleagues, are well-organised, arrive on time for lessons and training sessions, and never cancel fixtures. Many of them continue to play competitive sport themselves and act as excellent role models for students.

**58** In all the better schools we visited, highly qualified coaches are used to support competitive sport and this enhances the work of the school staff. They are used extremely effectively to coach alongside teachers in lessons, organise team practices at lunchtimes and after school, and run sports teams to play fixtures after school and on Saturday mornings. Sports coaches complement the work of PE teachers by using their expert knowledge to teach specific skills and tactics. They bring into schools the latest coaching ideas and techniques, and professional attitudes towards training and fitness. Without this specialist knowledge, and the pathways into the local clubs that coaches have links with, most schools struggle to generate high standards of competitive play.

**59** Although over 83% of headteachers who responded to our online survey reported using coaches to support competitive sport, very few reported employing a permanent sports coach (only around 12%). The majority of respondents reported that coaches are used to run lunchtime or after-school sports clubs (54%) or to coach specific activities such as tennis or swimming (53%). Around a third of respondents reported using them to coach school teams (32%) and to train gifted and talented students (27%), but only a small proportion reported using them to teach PE (7%).



## Overcoming the barriers and maximising strengths

**60** In the schools with the strongest sporting provision, leaders of PE have a clear vision for school sport. Barriers to success are tackled head on and overcome. For example, students arriving in Year 7 who have not played much sport prior to joining the school are given intensive coaching in basic skills to help them catch up with others. Specialist kit is provided for those from less well-off families. Students attend training sessions before school begins to maximise the time available to improve their fitness and performance. Late buses are provided to enable students to attend after-school sports clubs and play in fixtures.

**61** In these schools, sports enrichment programmes include a broad range of sports, but a few sports are prioritised to enable students to practise and improve, and achieve high standards of performance. These core sports are taught in depth in PE lessons and in lunchtime and after-school sports clubs to reinforce students' knowledge and understanding. Students are shown how to apply skills in competitive situations and perform them at pace and against opposing players to replicate match conditions. Regular inter-form or house competitions provide an ideal stepping stone from regular participation into highly competitive play against other schools.

**62** In the schools with the strongest provision, teachers expect students to train intensively and 'gain the edge' in competitive sport by being stronger, faster and fitter than opposing teams. Fitness training takes place before school begins, at lunchtimes and after school. All PE lessons include periods of vigorous, sustained exercise. Talented students are expected to do their own strength and conditioning training to improve their personal fitness. Teachers liaise with club coaches to design suitable programmes for them to follow, and improve their fitness and avoid injury. In schools with weaker provision, the PE curriculum does not provide a firm foundation for attaining high standards in competitive sport because too

many sports, especially team games, are taught at only a superficial level. There is no continuity between which sports are taught in lessons, practised during lunchtime and after-school clubs, and played competitively against other schools. Students compete against other schools but experience only limited success because they have not gained sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding in lessons and in practice sessions to succeed at that level of competition.

**63** For some maintained schools and academies, limited facilities for sport are a factor in preventing them from enabling students to excel in sport. Only eight of the 35 maintained schools and academies schools visited have a swimming pool. This may explain the finding from our online survey of headteachers that less than one third of schools regularly compete against other schools in swimming. Sixteen of the 35 schools visited do not have a multi-use games area with an all-weather surface for teaching and playing sport. One academy does not have playing fields. Being able to support students to train outside of school hours and play sport is likely to be easier if good quality sporting facilities are at hand. In schools lacking these facilities, supporting competitive sport is that much more difficult.

At one school students are encouraged to get fit to play sport rather than play sport to get fit. Their headteacher tells them: 'success is a choice, anyone can succeed if they apply themselves and are self-disciplined and organised. You may not hope to win an Olympic medal but you can be the best you can be. You have the choice.'

### A partnership approach

**64** To match the 'head start' students in independent schools get in sport, PE teachers in the best schools work with their local primary schools to strengthen their PE and sports provision. Twenty of the maintained schools and academies visited reported that they continue to fund aspects of their local school sport partnerships, enabling one of their specialist PE teachers to teach sport in primary schools, organise mini-competitions and bring students onto the secondary site for sport.

**65** In schools with the strongest provision, sporting talent is recognised and nurtured. Students are given expert, personalised coaching to help them improve their performance. Expectations for them are much higher and they do more than others. Teachers' thorough knowledge of local and national school competitions enables them to nominate talented students for county and regional trials and competitions to ensure that they compete at a high level.

**66** In these schools, more able students are also steered into local and professional sports clubs, where they can play sport more regularly and to a higher standard. This is essential if maintained schools and academies want students to excel in competitive school sport. Participating and playing sport in school alone is not enough to generate high standards. Staff build successful school teams around a core of these students, to raise the quality of play and enable others to learn from them and improve their own performance.

**67** Teachers liaise with professional clubs, sports academies and governing bodies of sport to release talented students from lessons to join regional and national team training and competitions. Mentors are provided to liaise with their coaches and with parents and ensure that they attend well, catch up on work missed and do not lose out on their academic studies.

**68** Headteachers and governors in four maintained schools and academies visited have established partnerships with sports clubs or with governing bodies of sport to provide elite sports academies on their school site. These academies attract talented students to play competitive rugby union, football, basketball, netball and golf to a very high standard. They also provide students with the academic qualifications they need to pursue a career in sport.

**69** In schools with weaker provision, procedures for recognising and nurturing talent are under-developed, so talent goes unnoticed. Students are not shown how to improve their performance by teachers or coaches with specialist knowledge in their sports. Students participate regularly in sport but are not adequately challenged. The schools are not active enough in working with local sports clubs to nurture and develop these students. This may result in potentially very talented athletes in the state sector failing to reach their potential.

# Notes

This study looked at what secondary schools do to enable students to compete and excel in high quality, competitive sport. It also examined the relationship between the provision of competitive school sport in maintained and independent schools and the impact this has on developing a culture of academic and sporting achievement.

## Fieldwork

A total of 45 schools were visited by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) as part of the study (see Annex C for details of the participating schools). Twenty of these schools were visited to identify good practice in competitive school sport. Inspectors made one-day visits to 10 independent schools identified by the Independent Schools Inspectorate and 10 maintained secondary schools identified by Ofsted as having achieved previously high performance in national school sport competitions.

To establish whether the range of sporting provision found within schools in similar locations varies greatly, a further 25 maintained schools were also visited. These were clustered in close proximity to six of the good practice maintained schools visited. In five of these clusters, the schools were randomly selected from a pool of schools within close proximity to the good practice school. This provided a varied selection of schools featuring a range of overall effectiveness judgements (from requires improvement to outstanding). In the final cluster, four schools judged as requires improvement at their last inspection were purposely selected in addition to the good practice school.<sup>4</sup> During visits, HMI:

- undertook lesson observations of PE classes and observations of extra-curricular sporting activities
- collected data on the range, scope and success in competitive sport, along with information on sporting alumni and staffing profiles
- conducted semi-structured interviews with staff and students to gather information on participation in, and attitudes to, competitive sport.

To assess the quality of competitive sport in each school inspectors categorised the overall findings as strong, average or weak. The following criteria are a guide to how inspectors applied these categories:

### Strong

- Schools regularly produce competitive school teams capable of entering and winning national competitions.
- They have exceptional leaders, teachers or coaches capable of producing exceptional performers/teams.
- They have established a regional or national reputation for high quality competitive sport.
- They have excelled in one or more sports over the past three to five years.
- They operate a regular fixture list, playing competitive matches against quality opposition after school and on weekends.
- There are well established links with local and professional clubs.
- Sport has an extremely high profile in school life.
- There is depth in the number of teams fielded in competitive sports, e.g. A, B and C teams competing.

### Average

- Schools enter competitive teams in a range of sports and may have recently won competitions at county level, but not beyond this.
- They make only limited use of expert coaches to generate high standards of performance.
- They organise weekly fixtures or enter tournaments regularly, but don't regularly win them.
- Reasonably high numbers of students are engaged in competitive after-school clubs and teams.
- Sport is popular with students and there is some evidence of a sporting ethos within the school.

## Weak

- Schools focus on generating high participation rather than high achievement.
- They can point to only a few examples of sporting success at county or regional level.
- They rely too much on students that play sport outside of school, rather than coach their own high standards.
- There is limited capacity (people) to provide high quality competitive sport.
- Other barriers (time, facilities, culture, commitment) to promoting competitive sport are present.
- There are few established links with clubs.

## Headteacher survey

Further evidence was collected from an online questionnaire about competitive school sport. Ofsted invited all maintained secondary school headteachers to respond. This survey captured information on:

- the range of competitive sports offered by schools
- the expectations on student participation
- the ways in which schools support and provide competitive sport
- the perceived benefits of it.

Useable responses were received from 509 headteachers. A copy of the questionnaire and the dataset generated can be found at: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-surveys-of-head-teachers-and-young-people](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-surveys-of-head-teachers-and-young-people). Where possible, the responses were linked to validated 2013 RAISEonline data.

## Commissioned research

External research was commissioned from the TOP Foundation to identify and synthesise existing published evidence (both in the UK and internationally) on the impact of competitive school sport on students' performance in the sports they play competitively and for developing future careers as elite athletes. This included evidence on the impact of competitive sport and physical education on students' academic performance within school, as well as other factors such as improved diet, health and well-being. The reports generated are available on the Ofsted website at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-research-top-foundation-prepared-for-ofsted](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-research-top-foundation-prepared-for-ofsted).

The study also contains evidence gained from an external research study conducted by the TOP Foundation to provide a wide range of data and information on the school backgrounds of those competing at the elite levels in a range of sports at different age-groups, professionally, and at national and international levels. This research also collated information from national governing bodies of sport across a range of disciplines to identify schools competitions at local, regional and county levels and those schools reaching the semi-final and final stages of these competitions. As much of the information was self-reported by the national governing body, care should be taken when comparing the information regarding different sports. The final report and supporting annexes can be found at: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-research-top-foundation-prepared-for-ofsted](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-research-top-foundation-prepared-for-ofsted)

TNS-BRMB were also commissioned to undertake an online survey of 1,005 young people aged 11–18 to explore their experiences of competitive sport within and outside of school, including their reasons for not participating. A copy of the questionnaire and dataset obtained from the survey is published at: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-surveys-of-head-teachers-and-young-people](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/competitive-school-sport-surveys-of-head-teachers-and-young-people).

# Case Study

## Annex A. Good practice case studies

1. Using sport to shape a school's sporting ethos and culture of achievement
2. Building character by playing regular, competitive sport
3. Building on community tradition to develop boys' and girls' competitive sport
4. Providing elite students with a stepping-stone into a career in sport
5. Leading and managing specialist PE teachers to provide high quality sport
6. Investing in specialist coaches to generate excellence in school sport
7. The benefits of specialist teaching of PE and sport to primary-aged pupils
8. Achieving high standards by specialising in selected sports and doing them well
9. Ensuring that students are fully prepared for high quality, competitive sport
10. Providing sporting pathways for talented students

## Case study 1: Using sport to shape a school's sporting ethos and culture of achievement

### St. Mary's College

**Type:**

Large 11–18 RC Aided secondary school in Hull

**Last inspection:**

2010 – Outstanding

**Alumni:**

Mike Burnett – Rugby league professional player  
Joshua Guzdek – Rugby league professional player  
Matthew Killen – Golf professional player  
Steven Patterson – Yorkshire County Cricket player  
Hayley Rumkee – England representative in tenpin bowling

**Sporting achievements:**

Under-12, Under-13 and Under-16 boys' Hull Schools' FA League Champions 2013/14  
Under-16 and Under-19 boys' Football Humberside Schools' Cup Champions 2013/14  
Under-14 and Under-16 girls' Netball Hull Schools' League Champions 2013/14  
Under-13 and Under-16 Hull Schools' Goalball Champions 2013/14

Under-13 boys', Under-13 girls' and Under-16 boys' Hull and Humberside Schools' Table Tennis Champions 2013/14  
Under-19 boys' Table Tennis Hull schools winners 2012  
Under-12 boys', Under-12 mixed, Under-13 girls', Under-14 mixed, Under-15 mixed, Under-15 girls', Under-16 mixed, Under-18 boys' Hull and East Riding Schools' Badminton Champions  
Under-13 Rugby League Hull Schools Cup Champions, Yorkshire Cup Finalists and National Cup Semi-Finalists 2013/14  
Under-13 Hull Schools' Rugby Union Champions 2013/14  
Under-18 boys' Hull and East Riding Schools' Badminton Champions 2013/14  
Under-13 boys, ESTTA Zonal, Regional and National Team Table Tennis Champions 2013/14  
Under-13 girls' ESTTA Regional Team Table Tennis Champions 2013/14  
Under-12, Under-13 and Under-14 Hull Schools' Swimming Champions 2013/14  
Under-16 Hull Schools' Softball Champions 2013/14

The school has been a specialist sports college since 2001 where the headteacher and governors have maintained a shared vision in which sport remains central. The college's culture of high academic and sporting achievement is firmly based around sport. It is used to motivate and inspire students, improve their behaviour, attitudes and attendance, and instil a spirit of teamwork and community in the college.

The headteacher fully understands the qualities students need to achieve their personal best in sport, and how these transfer into their academic achievement. Students say, 'the characteristics we learn through playing sport, like team spirit, being competitive, determined, organising ourselves and playing fairly, helps us improve in the classroom. Being selected for school teams gives us more confidence, the willingness to try hard, and speak up for ourselves'.

School leaders harness students' enthusiasm for sport to foster the right attitudes and good behaviour expected in the college. Those wanting to play sport sign a written code of conduct agreeing to meet teachers' high expectations of them. If their behaviour or attendance falls below expectations, they do not play.

A strong sporting ethos has been achieved by embedding the good practice developed over time in PE and sport. PE teachers have been promoted to leadership posts and several past students have been employed as PE teachers or coaches. There is a common identity and pride amongst staff. They are all committed to using sport to achieving the college's aims.

The headteacher and governors have put in place the right conditions to enable sport to flourish by investing in world-class sports facilities and establishing an elite sports academy on-site. All students in Key Stages 3 and 4 have two hours of high quality PE each week and there is specialist sports provision in the sixth form. There is an extensive programme of sport at lunchtimes and after school, and regular competitive fixtures are played at local, regional and national levels. Of particular note is the depth and quality of the inclusive/disability sports offer.

High numbers of students compete in sport because staff dedicate their own time to provide after-school clubs and run teams. A director of sport leads a large team of 15 PE staff, three of whom are deployed full-time in the college's sports village. All of them lead after-school clubs or run

## Case study 1: Using sport to shape a school's sporting ethos and culture of achievement

sports teams. Ten coaches are employed directly by the college to coach sport to a high level, in lessons and after school. Twenty teachers of academic subjects and support staff organise after-school clubs or run sports teams. Most of them do this voluntarily. A few are paid an incentive to get involved. Senior leaders also find the time to run sports teams.

There is also a dynamic sports leadership and volunteering strategy that supports the delivery of much of the intra- and inter-school competition. Students can embark on a sports leadership pathway in Key Stage 3 that will take them all the way to gaining valuable coaching and officiating qualifications later on. This provides the college with a strong cohort of sports leaders who are regularly deployed across partner schools and community clubs.

Partnerships with other schools, local and professional sports clubs, governing bodies of sport, Humber Sports Partnership and the Youth Sport Trust are strong because the director of sports' teaching commitment is reduced, giving him time each week to foster these links. He liaises with local clubs, many of them based on the college site, to maintain clear pathways for students to follow into community sport. He is also given time to maintain the college's strategic role in coordinating inter-school sport in the surrounding area, and in supporting other schools in raising achievement in PE.

The vision and sustained investment of school leaders, and the dedication and commitment of staff ensures that sport has a very high profile among students. Assemblies, an end-of-year awards evening, team awards evenings, notice boards, digital screens, trophy cabinets, termly newsletters, the college's website and a dedicated sports Twitter account also contribute to this. Students say, 'it's cool to take part in sport, there is something for everyone. It's a way of life at St Mary's College.'



## Case study 2: Building character by playing regular, competitive sport

### Dauntsey's school

**Type:**

11–18 independent co-ed day and boarding school

**Alumni:**

Rugby: Will Britton – England Under-16

Hockey: Harry Prosser – Wales Under-18 2006

Hockey: Lewis Prosser – Wales Under-18 2006–07

Hockey: Andy Machin – England Under-18 2008

Hockey: Emma Channon – Cambridge Blue 2013

Cricket: Jon Lodwick – Oxford Blue 2011, Cambridge Blue 2012

Guin and Miriam Batten – Olympic rowers

Ericson Kwan, Eleanor Tsang – England Schools shots 2012

Alston Cheung – England Schools shot 2013

Diana Yarosh – British Summer League top shot nationally 2013

Diana Yarosh, Nat King, Lloyd Ollerhead – England Schools shots 2014

Adam Lassiter – Wales Schools shot 2014

**Sporting achievements:**

Daily Mail School's Rugby Under-15 vase winners 2012

Hockey: National Quarter Finalists Under-16 2005, Under-18 2006, 2008

Cricket PS League Winners 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013

Cricket Lord's Taverners Winners (Under-14) 2009

Cricket ECB/ESCA T20 (Under-15) 2012, 2013

Dauntsey's headmaster is a committed sportsman dedicated to preserving the school's long tradition and reputation for sport. He is a regular supporter from the touchlines. He firmly believes that sport plays an essential role in building character by developing students' physical skills and fitness, building confidence, resilience and mental toughness, extending their leadership skills and teaching them the importance of teamwork and discipline. His message to students joining the school is, 'do your very best in all that you do, respect and help everyone else and come with a spirit of adventure'.

This nurtures a distinctive ethos in which sport is part of daily life at school. Students have a PE lesson and two games afternoons each week. The school day extends to 5.30pm, providing further time for them to practise and enjoy sport. Those who board in school have an additional hour of sport each day. An established list of games fixtures, which are played mid-week and on Saturdays, enable students of all abilities to represent the school. Talented students playing for the first teams wear their special kit with honour. House competitions ensure that all students, whether they play at A, B or C team level for the school, get the opportunity to compete. The benefits of playing team sports are accessible to all.

The pastoral system, based around day or boarding houses with their own house room, instils a family ethos in which individual students are known well. This builds friendship and camaraderie among students, fosters team spirit and promotes the right attitudes and behaviours needed to play

competitive sport well. Students are proud to represent their house in sport.

To sustain this commitment to sport, the school provides first-class sports facilities and employs a large team of specialist teachers and coaches. The director of sport oversees the work of the heads of PE at GCSE and A level, a team of expert coaches in rugby, hockey, netball, cricket, athletics, tennis, swimming and riding, and the sports coordinator, who is responsible for organising fixtures and arranging the catering and transport. Giving staff these distinct roles and making them fully accountable for their areas of responsibility adds stability, ensures loyalty and helps to maintain the school's sporting traditions. It also gives leaders of PE and of each sport the time they need to concentrate on their own roles and responsibilities, rather than trying to manage all aspects of the department's work.

Each year, the school employs young graduates with a strong background in sport to support the pastoral needs of boarding students and assist staff with the competitive sport programme. These young staff are keen, enthusiastic and know their sports well. They contribute to school sport by coaching teams, refereeing games, transporting students to matches and filming competitive games so that coaches and games captains can analyse the team's performances.

Pastoral leaders help too. Many of them organise after-school sports activities and run sports teams. Teachers of academic subjects are also expected to get involved. They are asked at interview what else they can provide and

# 2

## Case study 2: Building character by playing regular, competitive sport

how they can contribute to the wider aims of the school. When they take up their roles, they are reminded of the commitment made at interview. Staff seeking promotion are expected to show that they have made a significant contribution to maintaining the school's ethos.

All staff have the highest expectations of students' attitudes and behaviour, timekeeping and personal responsibility. Students realise what is expected of them. Older sports captains value the school's long tradition in sport, seeing part of their role to maintain the traditions of the school by 'holding the badge for a season then handing on to the next captain'. Representing school teams on Saturday afternoons is not viewed as an option, but an expectation and privilege. This enables the school to put out large numbers of competitive teams at weekends. Parents understand this is a part of school life.

The sporting character of students is clearly evident on match days. Students play hard, play to win, and show that they can win and lose graciously. At the end of the game they share refreshments with the opposition in the school dining room, maintaining a true sporting tradition and fostering team spirit and friendship.

## Case study 3: Building on community tradition to develop boys' and girls' competitive sport

### Castleford Academy

**Type:**

Large 11–18 secondary academy in West Yorkshire

**Last inspection:**

2012 – Good

**Alumni:**

Tim Bresnan – England cricket international  
Craig Huby – Castleford Tigers RLFC  
Brett Ferres – Bradford Bulls, Castleford Tigers and Huddersfield Giants RLFC  
Kyle Wood – Castleford Tigers, Wakefield Wildcats and Huddersfield Giants RLFC  
Kyle Bibb – Hull FC and Doncaster RLFC  
Bridie Fox – England Women's Football  
Joe Arundel – Castleford Tigers, Hull FC and Bradford Bulls RLFC  
Matty Dawson – St. Helens RLFC  
Greg Eden – Castleford Tigers, Huddersfield, Hull KR and Salford RLFC  
Daniel Smith – South Sydney Rabbitohs (Under-19s) and Wakefield Wildcats RLFC  
Kelsey Morgan – England women's rugby league 2009–11  
George Marchant – Ipswich Jets RLFC (Queensland, Australia)  
Mason Tonks – Leeds Rhinos and New Zealand Warriors RLFC  
Curtis Macdonald – Scotland rugby league Under-19s

Liam Smith – Yorkshire cricket

Ellie Smith – England women's rugby league 2013

Brogan Churm – England women's rugby league and rugby union 2013

Jake Connelly – Scotland rugby league Under-19s

Morgan Smith – Leeds Rhinos rugby league Under-16s and England rugby league Under-16s

Masie Thornton – Yorkshire women's cricket

Cameron Smith – Leeds Rhinos rugby league Under-16s and England rugby league Under-16s

**Sporting achievements:**

Under-15 and under-16 girls' rugby league national winners 2013

Under-12 boys' rugby league national finalists 2012 and 2013

Under-14 and under-15 boys' rugby league Yorkshire schools' winners 2013

Under-13 girls' rugby league Yorkshire schools' winners 2013

Under-14 girls' rugby league national winners 2012

Under-15 and under-16 girls' rugby league national finalists 2012

Under-12 girls' rugby league national finalists 2012

Under-16 girls' rugby league Yorkshire schools' winners 2012

Under-13 girls' rugby league national winners 2011

Under-14, 15 and 16 girls' rugby league national finalists 2011

Under-12, 13, 14 and 15 girls' rugby league Yorkshire schools' winners 2011

Situated in Castleford, the academy is steeped in rugby league. Boys and girls of all ages, parents, teachers and coaches all share a passion for the game. Parents and grandparents support students from the touchlines and help to raise funds for sports tours. The headteacher and his chair of governors are equally passionate about sport. They use it to instil good discipline and respect in students and to meet the academy's aims, enshrined in its motto and in its nickname of 'CAS': to Care, Aspire and Succeed.

Students understand the local tradition. They say, 'this is a top rugby league school. Rugby league is really important in Castleford. Our parents have played it and are keen for us to play it too.' Students also know about the academy's reputation and long tradition of winning. They say, 'when we arrive in Year 7 we all want to play the game, go to the national finals in London, win a scholarship to a local

club and go on rugby tour'. Harnessing this enthusiasm for playing and supporting the game has led to a long tradition of sporting success. The academy has dominated the schools' rugby league national competitions for boys and for girls over the past nine years.

Senior leaders take every opportunity to celebrate students' successes in sport to reinforce the academy's aims and values. Success is celebrated in an annual awards evening and in a hall of fame displaying trophies, awards and photographs of elite teams and players. A monthly 'ABC award' is presented to students who demonstrate good attitudes, behaviour and commitment in sport. They value the praise received from staff, especially from the headteacher when they have played well.

# 3

## Case study 3: Building on community tradition to develop boys' and girls' competitive sport

Senior leaders and governors feel that the academy's sporting ethos and success in rugby league is based on good care, high expectations and the dedicated hard work of staff over a number of years. The willingness of teachers and coaches, including a few teachers of academic subjects, to lead training sessions, run teams, organise regular fixtures and arrange sports tours enables students to play competitively and excel in rugby league.

Success in sport begins in PE lessons. Students receive high quality teaching and coaching in three hours of weekly PE and acquire the knowledge and skills needed to play competitively in weekly fixtures against other schools. Students say, 'it all starts in lessons, we get the attitude right and show respect for teachers. They spend a lot of time with us and are in every day ready for us.'

PE staff run rugby league camps during school holidays to identify primary-aged pupils with talent. From Year 7 onwards, more able students are steered towards school teams and local clubs. Boys and girls know that if they work hard they can win scholarships to local rugby league clubs. Each year, a small group of elite students are selected to join the academy's exchange programme with a school in Australia. They spend the summer months in the school's rugby league academy, improving their performance by playing competitive school and club competitions in Australia. This outstanding experience also helps them to learn about different cultures and broadens their understanding of the wider world.

## Case study 4: Providing elite students with a stepping-stone into a career in sport

### Barking Abbey School

**Type:**

Large 11–18 secondary school in Essex

**Last inspection:**

2012 – Good

**Alumni:**

Shequila Joseph – University of Mississippi basketball 2014  
Kaela Greig – Belhaven University basketball 2014  
Melita Emanuel-Carr – University of Illinois basketball 2014  
Alicia Gallagher – Lamar Community college basketball 2014  
Markella Suka Iowa – Western college basketball 2014  
Ella Clark – Great Britain Ladies' basketball 2014  
Joe Lockwood – Great Britain under-20 basketball 2012  
Zak Wells – Great Britain under-20 basketball 2012  
Clodagh Scannell – Boston University basketball 2011–12  
Chantel Charles – University of Maine basketball 2010–12  
Michelle Turner – South Carolina basketball 2010–12  
Lana Doran – Gardner Webb college basketball 2010–12

Liliana Almeida – Columbia College basketball 2010–12  
Vanessa Akra – Darton College basketball 2009–12  
Mantas Adomaitis – Casper College basketball 2010–12

**Sporting achievements:**

Senior Women's Division 1 Basketball National Club Championships runners up 2013  
Under-19 girls' basketball national winners 2007–14  
Under 19 boys' basketball national winners 2014  
Under 16 girls' basketball national winners 2009–11  
Under-16 boys' basketball national winners 2010–12  
Under-15 boys' basketball national winners 2011–12  
Under 14 boys' basketball national winners 2011  
Under-19 girls' netball national winners 2012–13  
Under 19 girls' netball national schools winners 2011–12  
Under-18 boys' ESFA national runners up 2014  
Under-18 boys' football Youth Conference league winners 2012

Like many schools, PE teachers provide students with a broad programme of competitive sport, including regular fixtures against other schools. Barking Abbey school goes much further than this. It operates its own elite sports academies alongside, but separate to, the PE department, led by a team of permanent, high quality coaches. They provide talented students with a unique blend of academic study, expert coaching, personalised training and high quality competition. The Football Academy programme was introduced in 2003, with the Basketball Academy commencing in 2005. The school regularly excels in basketball at a national level. The academy's success has led to further elite academies being established on the school site in netball and golf.

Since 2011, the school has been a Regional Institute for Basketball, funded jointly between the school and England Basketball. It attracts talented male and female students into its academies who are eager to study and compete in basketball and netball at national league level. The school arranges accommodation with local families who are willing to host students from all over the UK, Ireland, Bulgaria and Lithuania.

Most of them join in Years 12 and 13 to study a range of A levels or vocational awards. They receive intensive coaching, sports kit, medical support, accommodation and regular competition. Students must attend 15 hours of fitness training and personalised conditioning each week. High quality coaches match provision to their individual needs, set them personal fitness targets and highlight weakness in their play that they need to improve on. Students are monitored closely so that they manage their time well and balance their academic and sporting commitments effectively.

Most students join the academy having already played at a high level. They benefit from playing with others of similar ability and competing against adults in the senior men's and ladies' national leagues. Standards are very high. In 2012, the school won the national schools' basketball championships at three different age groups, and won the under-19 national netball championships. The school regularly provides male and female players for national squads in both sports.

# 4

## Case study 4: Providing elite students with a stepping-stone into a career in sport

For over 40 students, the academy has been a stepping-stone into professional basketball, mostly in the United States of America. Students understand that to gain a professional contract they must achieve in the classroom as well as on the basketball court. Good qualifications are essential to win a scholarship to play abroad. Students see them as 'a passport to success', saying, 'without the grades we won't get in to the States'.

The school's outstanding success is founded on the vision of the headteacher and his governors to work in partnership with governing bodies of sport to invest in elite sport, and on the total commitment of coaches. The basketball and netball programmes provide students with an ideal environment to develop their academic and sporting interests, and for the very best performers, to begin a career in sport.



## Case study 5: Leading and managing specialist PE teachers to provide high quality sport

### The FitzWimarc School

**Type:**

Large 11–16 secondary school in Essex

**Last inspection:**

2012 – Outstanding

**Alumni:**

Alex Brown – England Under-20 rugby union international

Mitch Welfridge – England Under-17 international athlete

Liam Yarwood – England Under-17 international athlete

Joe Lockwood – England junior international basketball

**Sporting achievements:**

Under-19 boys' athletics world schools' championships 4th place 2013

Under-16 boys' athletics national schools' winners for the past four years

Under-14 boys' athletics national schools' winners 2012

Under-14 girls' athletics national schools' winners 2013

Under-14 girls' netball national schools' finalists 2014

Under-14 and under-16 boys' cross country national finalists 2012

Under-14 and under-19 boys' gymnastics English schools finalists 2012, 2013 and 2014

English schools' trampolining national finalists 2012 and 2013

The school's head of PE believes that, 'if you take care of the PE curriculum, then extra-curricular sport will take care of itself'. High quality PE provides a firm foundation for regular success in school sport. This, coupled with the unwavering commitment of enthusiastic and knowledgeable PE teachers and other staff to organise school sport, fosters a strong sporting ethos and sustains the school's long tradition of winning.

All PE teachers are excellent role models who keep up to date with current practice by playing competitive sport themselves and sharing their knowledge and experience with their colleagues. They are shown the 'FitzWimarc way' of doing things by the head of PE. Teachers work collectively as a team. Little use is made of specialist coaches as they are not needed. All of them are expected to provide daily practices and regular fixtures. Arrangements remain unchanged so students know exactly what activities are happening, where and when they take place, and what fixtures they are due to play in. Students know what to expect. They bring the right kit at the right time, and are ready and fully prepared to compete.

Teachers use their specialist knowledge and experience to maximise participation and generate high standards of performance. Teachers of academic subjects support PE staff by dedicating their own time to teach students throwing techniques in athletics. In technical athletic events such as pole-vaulting, they invite their former elite students into school to work alongside them to coach students.

Competitive sport begins early, before school starts and ends long after the school day finishes. Students arrive at 7.30am, ready for fitness training and specialist coaching. Training is taken very seriously. Teachers' expectations are high. Students work hard and persevere to improve their performance. Training together in this way promotes friendship, dedication and commitment and engenders excellent teamwork and spirit amongst students. Teachers motivate them by saying, 'no other school is doing this, that's why you are fitter than students in other schools'. In competitive matches during weekdays and on Saturday mornings, students play hard, play to win and never give up.

Teachers are experts in spotting talent and channelling more-able students into a range of competitive training, team games and athletic events. They spot talent early by inviting pupils in Year 6 in local primary schools to a two-week programme of after-school sport before they join in Year 7. Younger students know of its sporting reputation long before they join the school.

Established links with local sport clubs enable students to continue to learn and improve their performance outside of school. Pathways into community sports clubs are well-worn and well-used. Elite students act as sports ambassadors to tell other students where to go to play sport, and act as friendly faces when they first arrive in local clubs. Younger students view older, elite performers as sporting heroes and aspire to emulate them.

# 5

## Case study 5: Leading and managing specialist PE teachers to provide high quality sport

Students sum up the reasons why they do so well in sport at The FitzWimarc school by saying, 'staff believe in us, they are always here for us, every day. We are pushed really hard because they make it really challenging. At Fitz we stick together, we train together as a team and have a good team spirit. If you mess about you don't play. There's no 'geek culture' where students criticise others for working hard. Achievement in sport and in our academic work is really important.'

## Case study 6: Investing in specialist coaches to generate excellence in school sport

### Surbiton High School

**Type:**

Large 4–18 selective independent girls' day school in London

**Alumni:**

Chemmy Alcott – Olympic skier

Darcie Mead – British alpine skiing national champion

Abi Ralph – Great Britain Gymnast

Danusia Francis – Great Britain Gymnast

**Sporting achievements:**

British schools' gymnastics national finalists 2013 and 2014

Acrobatic Gymnastics National Champions 2014

British Schools' Ski Title 2014

British schools' Skiing national champions 2013

National schools' Rowing silver medallists 2013

Surbiton High School has a very clear goal for its Vision of Sport – Sport for All, coupled with the Pursuit of Excellence. The headmistress believes that students who regularly compete in sport 'carry their commitment from the sports pitch or court into the examination hall' by applying the personal qualities of self-discipline, resilience, commitment and hard work to their academic studies. Her vision for the school combines regular participation in sport with a professional approach to generating elite sporting performance so students can 'be the best they can be'.

To realise this vision, sport is taken seriously. The school invests in expert coaches and first-class facilities. Its director of sport leads a team of four PE staff including a technician to organise fixtures and transport. The school has identified its 'Super Six Sports' netball, hockey, gymnastics, rowing, tennis and skiing and appointed a Head of Sport to lead in each discipline. This has produced a team of dedicated specialists whose objective is to foster wider participation at foundation level and detail a clear path to elite performance for those with aspirations. The headmistress sets clear expectations of winning, and holds heads of sport accountable for students' sporting achievements.

At the centre of the Vision of Sport is the sports participation pyramid, which every girl accesses at the foundation level. Pupils choosing to attend co-curricular clubs progress to the participation stage. It is a core value that those committed to training will represent the school whether in the A team or the F team. Many stretch themselves to performance level: the A/B squads, girls pursuing a passion to achieve, motivated to attend multiple development sessions – these will be the girls winning at regional and national level. The pyramid's pinnacle demonstrates excellence in sport, competing nationally or internationally.

The Heads of Sport are exceptional role models who set high expectations. Their specialist skills and strategy knowledge is being cascaded through the PE department. In rowing, elite students are expected to dedicate up to 12 hours each week to training. In tennis, students in Year 7 are expected to practise between 12 to 14 hours each week. The head of netball tells her students, 'your academic work comes first, netball is second, the rest of your life is third' to emphasise the commitment and dedication she expects from them. The head of hockey promotes 'SHS', sweat, humility and swagger, to encourage students to work hard, understand others but also be much more confident about their abilities. Students are constantly reminded to 'believe in yourselves and never ever give up'.

Learning in PE lessons is reinforced by practice sessions before, during and after school, enabling students to study one or more of the 6 selected sports in-depth and prepare fully for regional and national competitions. Regular house competitions and weekend sports fixtures played at A, B, C and D team level, give students of all abilities the opportunity to play competitive sport for their school. These activities are viewed as the co-curricular, rather than an extra-curricular activity and students are expected to engage fully in them. The staff believe the lessons being learnt from sport – effort and reward, discipline and teamwork, success and failure – are noticeably improving other areas of the girls' lives.

The school also invests in boarding accommodation to accommodate talented gymnasts, enabling them to train regularly before and after school and travel as a team to regional competitions at weekends. Talented skiers who need time out of school to train and compete abroad are given intensive support and mentoring to enable them to maintain their progress in sport and in their academic

# 6

## Case study 6: Investing in specialist coaches to generate excellence in school sport

studies. Sporting scholarships are offered to attract exceptional performers to the school. They benefit from the high quality coaching available and inspire others during competitive play by leading by example.

In this challenging and ambitious environment, high quality school sport thrives. Standards are very high. Investing in sport has put in place the right conditions for students to participate and to excel in sport. Students understand the expectations of them and enjoy the challenge. They say that, 'team spirit shines through because there is lots of encouragement and everyone including senior teachers wants us to do well.'

## Case study 7: The benefits of specialist teaching of PE and sport to primary-aged pupils

### Colfe's School

**Type:**

Medium-size 3–18 co-ed selective independent day school in London

**Alumni:**

Millie Bach – Great Britain under-16 World biathlon 2012  
Tom Chapman – England under-18 rugby union player 2012  
Matt Gallager – England under-16 rugby union player 2012  
Matt Stiddard – Surrey county cricket under-13 and under-15 cup winner

**Sporting achievements:**

Under-15 girls' Netball National quarter-finalists 2013  
Independent schools' netball winners 2011 and 2012

The words of the early 20th-century sports writer Grantland Rice, inscribed in the school's sports pavilion, exemplify the school's sporting ethos, tradition and culture of high expectations:

*'For when the One Great Scorer comes to mark against your name, he writes not that you won or lost, but how you played the game'*

Most students are taught in the school's preparatory department before they transfer to the senior school. Specialist PE teaching in excellent facilities and opportunities to start playing competitive sport early combine to ensure that as they transfer into Year 7, students 'hit the ground running' and go from strength to strength in school sport.

PE staff teach children a broad range of ball and movement skills and encourage positive attitudes towards sport from a very young age. Young children walk up to the senior school daily for lunch, and for weekly swimming and PE lessons, so they quickly become familiar with staff and the sports facilities. They see older students playing sport and quickly learn that sport is good fun to do. From Year 3 onwards, they are taught games by specialist PE staff from the senior school and begin to play competitive sport in netball and rugby matches and in a swimming gala against other schools. At this early stage they learn how to play competitively in the right spirit, and the importance of teamwork and fair play.

In Years 5 and 6, they play in competitive league matches in netball, hockey, football and rugby, and compete in cross country and swimming events. In 2012, girls in Year 6 had their first experience of a sports tour, travelling away from home for a weekend of competitive netball against other schools.

By the time they enter senior school in Year 7, they already have a good knowledge of games and have played competitive sport. Teachers build on this 'head start' in weekly games afternoons, which enable students to continue to improve their personal fitness and their team-play. Those of similar ability are grouped together and matched with specialist teachers and coaches, enabling staff to identify talent early and steer them into games teams. All students in Year 7 are expected to attend at least one after-school sports practice during the first term.

Students of all abilities have regular opportunities to represent the school at A or B-team level in competitive matches against other schools during the week and on Saturday mornings. An established list of competitive fixtures is published at the start of the year for students and their parents. By the end of each sporting year, there is an expectation that all students will have taken part in at least one sporting event for their house.

The school's director of sport believes that the school's sporting success is firmly based on specialist teaching in the primary phase. She says, 'the PE curriculum delivered in the prep school provides children with a wide range of elementary sports skills and ensures that they are ready for the games curriculum in senior school. It gives us time to develop their skills and sporting interests early, and the impact of this shines through in Key Stage 3. The school's size means that we have a relatively small number of students to choose from. We make up for this by getting in early with the students and teaching and coaching them from a very young age to develop high standards.'

<sup>4</sup> *Alumnus Football* by Grantland Rice (1957).

## Case study 8: Achieving high standards by specialising in selected sports and doing them well

### John Cleveland College

**Type:**

Large 14–19 secondary school in Leicestershire

**Last inspection:**

2012 – Good

**Alumni:**

Dean Richards – England rugby, British Lions

Graham Rowntree – England rugby, British Lions

Ollie Smith – England rugby, British Lions

Manu Tuilagi – England rugby, British Lions

Sam Vesty – England rugby international

Davina Manship – GB Track and Field, 3,000m

David Eaton – GB Gymnastics Men's Champion

**Sporting achievements:**

Under-15 boys' rugby county cup winners 2013

Under-16 girls' netball county league winners 2013

Under-19 girls' netball county league winners 2012

Under-16 girls' netball county league winners 2012

Under-16 boys' rugby county cup winners 2011

Under-19 girls' netball county finalists 2011

The college's sporting success is due to the sustained commitment of its teachers to dedicate their time to teaching and coaching rugby and netball, and the links it has established with local rugby and netball clubs. Many students join the college having played competitive sport in their previous schools and for local clubs. They know of the successes of previous teams and that 12 former students have represented England in rugby over the past 10 years. They are eager to maintain this tradition.

PE staff are equally keen to maintain this tradition. Both sports are taught in-depth in PE lessons to consolidate students' basic skills. Talented players are steered towards after-school training to prepare them for regular competition. Mid-week and Saturday morning rugby fixtures are part of school life. The headteacher's views reflect the professional approach taken in rugby when he says, 'this is not about participation, the best players are put out to win games. The school ethos is play hard, but play fair in the right spirit of the game and accept defeat with honour.'

To achieve this high standard of play, a lead teacher is paid an allowance to take full responsibility for rugby. He is held accountable for the results achieved. Students respect him, describing him as 'a bit of a legend; an ex-player who knows his stuff'. When asked why the college is so successful in sport, he states, 'there's no magic formula, just hard work and the sustained commitment of staff to provide weekly training and travel to Saturday morning fixtures. It's a long process. It has taken us 30 years to get where we are today.'

He coordinates the coaching of teams led by four other teachers, including a teacher of mathematics with a strong interest in the game. His contact with coaches in local rugby clubs means he is able to call on professional players to attend team practices and lead coaching sessions. The presence of international players at after-school training heightens boys' eagerness to train hard and improve their game.

This long tradition in rugby has inspired girls to catch up, especially in netball. A member of the PE staff is a former student and an ex-international player who still plays competitive netball locally. Having seen the success achieved in rugby, she has replicated the intensity of training and coaching, and the competitiveness of fixtures in netball, to gain a similar reputation for girls' sport. To help her do this, the school employs a specialist netball coach one evening a week to develop competitive team-play. She encourages talented students to join her at her club to improve their game.

When asked about the college's recent success in netball, she feels that it is because 'we make it a 'club, so the girls feel that they are special and can be the best. The under-16 team train with the under-18 team to generate a more competitive club atmosphere. We focus on fitness, making the girls faster, stronger and sharper on court so they can outperform the opposition. Our training programmes are based on drills and activities developed by the national teams. We never





## Case study 8: Achieving high standards by specialising in selected sports and doing them well

cancel practices or fixtures, to show we are reliable, so they must be reliable too.’

The commitment of teachers is epitomised by their willingness to raise funds to take students on tours abroad. Established exchange links with a school in Canada enable rugby teams to tour abroad, hosted by Canadian students. In return, the following year, the college hosts Canadian school players. The college has played abroad in this way for the past 20 years to reward boys for their dedication and commitment and to improve the quality of their rugby. Similarly, a girls’ netball team toured South Africa in 2012, playing four competitive games against local schools and visiting younger students in a local township. Touring has also broadened students’ horizons, helping to forge friendships and develop an understanding of different countries and cultures.

## Case study 9: Ensuring that students are fully prepared for high quality, competitive sport

### Southend High School for Boys

**Type:**

11–18 selective boys' grammar school

**Last inspection:**

2010 – Outstanding

**Alumni:**

Jonty Clarke – Great Britain hockey international  
Simon Thomas – Great Britain senior boys international athlete  
Neil Scriviner – English schools' athletics international  
Adam Hickey – Great Britain international athlete  
Cameron Irwin – England under-14 athletics international  
Sam Sutcliffe – England schools' under-16 rugby international  
Josh Rees – Football professional  
Morgan Fox – Football professional  
Tom Frith – Great Britain junior cross country international  
Alex Short – Great Britain under-21 cross country international

**Sporting achievements:**

Winner of 16 ESAA national track and field cups 2000–13  
Winner of six ESAA cross country cup titles 2000–13  
Appearances in five ISF World Schools' cross country and athletics Championships 2000–13  
Essex finals in seven different sports in 2013–14: football, basketball, hockey, cricket, rugby, cross country, badminton  
Under-13 boys' cross country English Schools winners 2011  
Under-13 boys' athletics English Schools runners-up 2012 and 2013  
Under-15 boys athletics English Schools runners-up 2011, 2012 and 2013  
Under 12 boys' cross country county winners 2012 and 2013  
Under-13 boys' cross country county winners 2011 and 2013  
Under-12 boys' basketball county winners 2012 and 2013  
Under-13 boys' basketball county winners 2013  
Under-12 boys' football county winners 2013  
Under-15 boys' rugby county winners 2013  
Under-16 boys' football county winners 2012

At Southend High School, boys are encouraged to get fit to play sport rather than play sport to get fit. PE staff believe that engaging them in regular vigorous exercise helps students understand the long-term benefits of an active, healthy lifestyle and also gives them 'the edge' in competitive sport because they become stronger, faster and fitter than opposing teams. The school's record of success in national cross country and track and field athletics competitions illustrates the impact of preparing students for high quality, competitive sport.

The school's head of PE explains to new students that, 'props in rugby, forwards in basketball and centre backs in football need to run. You don't need to be in the school team for cross country, you just need to be fitter than their version of you.' So every student does four cross country runs in four weeks, aiming to try to improve on their previous performance and achieve a personal best time. The tradition of the whole school competing in this way breeds a strong sporting ethos. Students say it encourages teamwork and a sense of identity because 'we all work to the same goal, and want to do well for each other and ourselves.'

In weekly PE lessons, students improve their fitness by engaging in high-intensity, sustained, vigorous activity.

Students accept this as the norm and work hard to improve. Teachers feel that this approach pays dividends when competing in games fixtures, as school teams often win in the last minute of matches due to their higher standards of fitness.

Those who show a talent for running are encouraged to join practices before, during and after school, compete in inter-house cross country events and represent the school in regular fixtures played mid-week and on Saturday mornings. Elite performers are steered towards local running clubs to maintain their training and compete against high quality opposition outside of school.

Students appreciate it when the headteacher watches them compete, praises them for their effort and achievement and talks in assemblies about the importance of competitive sport. He reminds them they must 'strive to win, be humble in victory and accept defeat as a learning opportunity'. He also tells them, 'success is a choice, anyone can succeed if they apply themselves and are self-disciplined and organised. You may not hope to win an Olympic medal but you can be the best you can be. You have the choice.'

## Case study 10: Providing sporting pathways for talented students

### St Peter's RC High School and Sixth Form Centre

**Type:**

Large 11–18 secondary academy in Gloucestershire

**Last inspection:**

2012 – Good

**Alumni:**

Loraine Shaw – Olympic and Commonwealth athlete

Lisa Daley – National league hockey

Marcel Garvey – Rugby union professional

Ryan Lamb – England rugby international

Charlie Sharples – England rugby international

Adam Eustace – Gloucester Rugby

Shaun Knight – Gloucester Rugby

Joe Hanks – Cheltenham Town football

**Sporting achievements:**

Under-13 boys' football county cup winners 2013

Under-18 boys' football county cup finalist 2013

Under-14 boys' football county cup finalist 2012

Under-14 boys' rugby league South-West regional winner 2012

Under-15 boys' rugby league Midlands regional winner 2013

Under-13 and 15 boys' tennis county winners 2013

Under-18 boys' tennis regional finalists 2013

Gloucester schools' gymnastics champions 2012

St Peter's has a long tradition of competitive sport. Its specialist PE teachers hold high-level coaching awards and do most of the coaching of school sport themselves, to a high standard. In PE in Key Stage 3, students are given a thorough grounding in basic skills, which inspires them to get involved in a wide range of sports activities before, during and after school. At this early stage, teachers use their knowledge and experience to identify students with talent in sport and steer them into school teams to play competitive fixtures during the week and on Saturday mornings.

In Key Stage 4, talented performers in rugby, hockey and tennis follow an 'elite sport pathway'. They study eight GCSE subjects alongside a personalised training programme in their chosen sport. Elite students follow a programme of intensive fitness training, skill development and regular high quality competition. PE staff liaise with students' club coaches to ensure the suitability of the programme designed for them. They are mentored closely by PE staff and given advice and guidance to improve their sporting and academic progress.

Students have regular access to the school's fitness gym to do their own personal training. They receive tuition from a strength and conditioning specialist and have access to physiotherapy on the school site. Good links with local and professional sports clubs and the University of

Gloucester enable PE staff to arrange additional, specialised coaching and technical support for students where needed. Expectations are very high. For example, elite tennis players have four hours of individual coaching, 12 hours of squad-training and an hour of strength and conditioning work each week in school. In addition, they are expected to represent the school team in competitive tennis matches and compete in regional and national tournaments for their clubs.

This elite pathway provides the ideal conditions for talented students to excel in school by combining weekly opportunities to practise and improve their game, train and play competitively in school, and maintain their focus on their academic studies. Talent is not wasted by simply expecting students to do the same PE and sports activities as other students. The school provides them with the challenge and support they need to improve their performance and excel in their chosen sport.

# Annex B.

## Framework for Competitive School Sport

### School Games

The Sainsbury's School Games is the government's framework for competitive school sport. It was established in 2011. It is organised by the Youth Sport Trust and supported by National Lottery and exchequer funding. The School Games aims to enable every school and child to participate in competitive sport, including meaningful opportunities for young people with disabilities. Designed across four levels for primary and secondary pupils in all schools including independent schools, it offers opportunities for young people to compete in intra-school, inter-school and county-level competitions.

The School Games consists of four levels of activity involving:

- regular intra-school competition at level 1
- regular inter-school competition between schools at a local level at level 2
- County Festivals of Sport at level 3
- School Games National Finals with UK-wide representation at level 4.

Pupils compete against their fellow pupils at level 1. Schools then compete against schools at level 2 (where schools are encouraged to set up B, C and D teams to allow everyone who wants to the chance to compete to do so). The best athletes/teams from levels 1 and 2 will represent their school at their regional/county Festival of Sport (level 3) and the very best young athletes, selected by the National Governing Bodies, experience a major sporting competition at the School Games' pinnacle event – The National Finals (level 4). The organisation of events is supported by 450 School Games Organisers. The National Finals 2013 were held in Sheffield, where 1,439 athletes took part, 170 (12%) of whom had a disability. Project Ability is a bespoke project within the School Games that is aimed at driving and increasing competitive opportunities for young disabled people.

### Satellite clubs

Satellite clubs, mainly based on school or college sites, are outposts of existing community sports clubs. The purpose of the clubs is to bridge the gaps between school, college and community sport by creating strong links to an existing community club(s) on school and other sites and to provide new opportunities for young people to compete and create lifelong sporting habits.

Sport England will offer every secondary school the opportunity to host a multi-sport satellite club, with the aim of creating 5,000 by 2017. Each club will have a direct link to one or more national governing bodies for sport, depending on the clubs in its local area. Satellite clubs are available to young people aged 11–25. Sport England is investing £49 million into the development of satellite clubs over the period 2012–17 to ensure that more young people are able to continue to take part in sport as they transition from school to community sport. At present, there are over 2,000 satellite clubs in place, of which around 80% are based on a school or college site. Around 200 (or 10%) of these are girl-only satellite clubs.

# Annex C.

## Providers visited

### Maintained schools and academies

Thomas Telford School  
Canon Slade School  
The Harefield Academy  
The FitzWimarc School  
Castle View School  
The Sweyne Park School  
Southend High School for Boys  
Shoeburyness High School  
Barking Abbey School  
Wright Robinson College  
Oasis Academy  
St Paul's Catholic High School  
Altrincham College of Arts  
Prestwich Arts College  
King Alfred's Academy  
John Cleveland College  
The Albany School  
The Francis Bardsley Academy  
Valentines High School  
Eastbury Comprehensive School  
St Peter's RC High School and Sixth Form Centre  
Rednock School  
The Crypt School  
Balcarras School  
Thomas Keble School  
Castleford Academy  
Minsthorpe Community College  
Horbury Academy  
Outwood Grange Academy  
Cockburn School  
St Mary's College  
Winifred Holtby Academy  
Kelvin Hall School  
Cottingham High School  
Hessle High School

### Local authority area

Telford and Wrekin  
Bolton  
Hillingdon  
Essex  
Essex  
Essex  
Southend-on-Sea  
Southend-on-Sea  
Barking and Dagenham  
Manchester  
North East Lincolnshire  
Manchester  
Trafford  
Bury  
Oxfordshire  
Leicestershire  
Havering  
Havering  
Redbridge  
Barking and Dagenham  
Gloucestershire  
Gloucestershire  
Gloucestershire  
Gloucestershire  
Gloucestershire  
Wakefield  
Wakefield  
Wakefield  
Wakefield  
Leeds  
Kingston upon Hull City of  
Kingston upon Hull City of  
Kingston upon Hull City of  
East Riding of Yorkshire  
East Riding of Yorkshire

# Annex C.

## Providers visited

### Independent schools

Colfe's School  
Solihull School  
Dauntsey's School  
St Swithun's School  
Lady Eleanor Holles School  
Loughborough Boys' Grammar School  
Warwick School  
Shrewsbury House School  
Surbiton High School  
Bury Girls' Grammar School

### Local authority area

Greenwich  
Solihull  
Wiltshire  
Hampshire  
Richmond upon Thames  
Leicestershire  
Warwickshire  
Kingston upon Thames  
Kingston upon Thames  
Bury





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