1. CONTENTS

PAGE 4 | ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
6 | FOREWORD
8 | WHO WE ARE
8 | MISSION
8 | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
9 | afPE TASKFORCE MEMBERS
18 | STATED OBJECTIVES OF THE TASKFORCE
19 | EVIDENCE SESSIONS
20 | THE CONTEXT
22 | HEADLINE RECOMMENDATION
22 | FURTHER RECOMMENDATION
24 | ACTION PLAN
25 | HOW WE WILL DO THIS
26 | WHEN CAN THIS HAPPEN
26 | OUR PART TO PLAY
27 | FINDINGS IN MORE DETAIL
32 | SWIMMING
34 | HIGH QUALITY PE DIRECTLY CONTRIBUTES TO SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all taskforce members; to those who gave written and oral evidence; to the many throughout our sector and beyond who have supported this work and to Association for Physical Education (afPE).

We would also like to extend our thanks to the afPE Board and, in particular, our recently-retired Chair, Michael Crichton.

This report is dedicated to the nation’s physical education workforce and their tireless efforts to bring the full benefits of our discipline to every generation of children and young people.
3. FOREWORD

Physical Education (PE) is a subject taught to, and experienced by, all children and young people in our schools as part of the curriculum. As the only subject that educates through the physical domain, understanding its movement and how it can be used to build an active and healthy lifestyle—that also helps develop other key life skills and improve academic attainment—PE should rightly sit at the heart of school life.

Yet in a worrying turn, as the worst of the pandemic has passed, evidence is beginning to emerge of some schools, since their reopening, reducing PE time in order to focus on catch-up in other subject areas. The consequences of this approach are hugely concerning for the future health and wellbeing of our children. We already know of the worrying consequences to children’s health through sedentary lifestyles, not least in relation to childhood obesity and poor body weight management.

It is also the case that at the end of 2019, 150,000 children left primary school unable to meet the Physical Education National Curriculum minimum requirements to swim 25 metres and be able to carry out a safe self-rescue: a key life skill in itself. This will only exacerbate the shocking statistic of one in three adults in England being unable to swim.

This situation clearly needs addressing, both urgently as part of the welcome catch-up programme, and more systematically over the longer-term, to ensure no child misses out on receiving excellent PE throughout their school years, providing the springboard to a life of physical activity and sport. PE is ‘for life’, with irrefutable research demonstrating the lifelong impact on physical, social, emotional and cognitive development.

Currently PE is not a core subject within the school curriculum, with its foundation status making it vulnerable to being de-prioritised. However, if we
can ensure that PE is taught by highly-skilled teachers in every school, and there is more available time on the curriculum, this will put PE at the school life in the immediate term.

Our longer-term ambition is for it to become a core subject within in a few years. There is no doubt that it will have a powerful and positive impact on not just the recovery, but also on the longer-term excellence of our school offer to all children and young people—be that academic, physical, mental, emotional, or social.

Including PE in the suite of National Professional Qualifications (NQs) will provide a route to improve the quality of PE teaching. The PE qualification is very flexible and locally grown, meaning it can adapt to what pupils need most in any given school or area. In addition, for it to be appropriately reported on alongside literacy and numeracy, would demonstrate that we are all committed to improving the physical and emotional wellbeing of all children and young people.

A targeted summer swimming catch-up for year 5 and 6 pupils using local facilities—or schools across all sectors opening up theirs to other pupils—would also start to help teachers address this stigmatising threat to our children’s access to water activities and, crucially, water safety.

We believe that PE must be part of the ‘recovery offer’, and sit at the heart of every school offer and experience. Without doubt, research from across the world highlights the importance of physical and emotional wellbeing. If this is prioritised long term, outcomes for all children and young people will be improved. We have a unique opportunity and responsibility to be the world’s first nation to take strident action on this global evidence base. The pandemic has exposed both the lack of understanding of, confidence in, and commitment to PE across parts of our school system, as well as demonstrating the huge importance and potential of PE to be a core contributor to the improved health and wellbeing of our nation’s children. We believe that this can be a key part of the levelling-up agenda, giving opportunities for all to thrive—and not just survive—in a challenging world.
INTRODUCTION TO ASSOCIATION FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION (afPE)

4. WHO WE ARE

4.1 The Association for Physical Education (afPE) is the representative subject association for Physical Education (PE) in the UK.

4.1.1 Our purpose is to promote and maintain high standards and safe practice in all aspects and at all levels of physical education, school sport and physical activity—influencing developments at national and local levels that will impact on pupils’ physical health and emotional wellbeing.

4.1.2 MISSION

Support the teaching of physical education and its contribution to whole school improvement; to develop health and wellbeing to help transform life chances; and to ensure that physical education is at the heart of school life to enable all pupils to lead and benefit from active lifestyles.

4.1.3 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

4.1.3.1 Demonstrate the distinctive role of physical education in all children and young people’s learning, development and achievement.

4.1.3.2 Establish and sustain physical education at the heart of school life and whole-school development, through support for high quality learning and teaching; research; ethical leadership; and politically informed advocacy and representation.

4.1.3.3 Raise awareness of physical education’s contribution to public health and well-being and increased participation.

4.1.3.4 Play a leading role in the development of a workforce with the skills and qualities required to assure high quality physical education and sport in schools and in the wider community.

4.1.3.5 Provide high quality, professional and sustainable services for members and partners.
Edward Timpson CBE MP has been the Member of Parliament for Eddisbury since December 2019. He previously served as MP for Crewe and Nantwich.

At Westminster, Edward sat on the Children, Schools and Families Select Committee and the Joint Committee on Human Rights, and was also Chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) on Adoption & Fostering and on Looked After Children & Care Leavers, Secretary of the APPG for Dairy Farmers, Vice Chairman on the APPG for Runaway Missing Children, and Vice Chairman of the APPG on Epilepsy.

This policy expertise and his former job as a family law barrister led to him becoming Minister for Children & Families in September 2012 until May 2017.

Edward was named ‘Minister of the Year’ in 2014, with his decision to raise the age that children and young people leave foster care from 18 to 21 being cited in particular as an example of his work as Minister for Children & Families.

In 2018 he received the CBE from The Queen for Parliamentary and Public Service, and also published an independent review for the Government into school exclusions.

Edward was chair of Cafcass and the National Child Safeguarding Panel between 2018 and 2019, and was an advisor to the Board of Trade.
JASON ROBINSON OBE

Jason Robinson OBE is a sporting legend who reached the summit in both Rugby League and Rugby Union. He played in three world cup finals, scoring England’s only try to help secure the 2003 Rugby Union World Cup.

He was awarded the MBE for his role in the 2003 World Cup and the OBE for services to rugby in 2008.

Jason’s Rugby League career started at Wigan in 1992 after being spotted whilst playing for Hunslett Boys’ Club. During his Rugby League career he played 281 games, scoring an incredible 171 tries. During his time with Wigan, his wins included a Super League title, four Championships, three Challenge Cups, three Regal Trophy wins, 4 premiership titles and an away win against Brisbane Broncos to win the World Club championship in 1994. He also represented England, Great Britain and the British Lions, finishing as runner up in the England versus Australia Rugby League World Cup Final in 1995.

In 2000 Jason switched codes and joined Sale Sharks. Following his appointment as captain in 2004, Sale Sharks finished third in the table and won the European Challenge Cup. The most successful period in the club’s history culminated with a table topping performance backed up by winning the 2005-06 Guinness Premiership final, and reaching the quarter finals of the Heineken Cup. Jason was drafted into Sir Clive Woodward’s England setup. His speed and agility made him a natural choice for the 2001 British and Irish Lions’ tour, scoring five tries in his opening tour match, and scoring a scintillating try to set up a memorable first test victory for the tourists. Jason had secured his place as a Lions legend, also touring in 2005.

There followed an England career in which he scored 28 tries in 51 caps, the highlight of which was that memorable try in the 2003 World Cup Final. He was appointed captain for his country in 2004 before retiring from international rugby in 2005.

He was tempted back to England for the 2007 World Cup campaign in France, reaching a second consecutive final where England lost to South Africa. Since retiring from rugby, Jason has had a successful and wide-ranging professional career. He plays an active role in many charities and
Social development programmes, and is proud to support afPE and the Taskforce.

Sue Wilkinson MBE FRSA was secondary trained in Human Movement Studies and taught in secondary schools, including outreach work in local schools. Having then been selected to take a lead on a Training & Development Agency (TDA) initiative for a local authority in training primary colleagues as specialists in physical education, she then went on to become an advisory teacher responsible for first, middle and primary school physical education.

Sue trained as an Estyn and Ofsted team inspector for primary physical education. Whilst working in a local authority she was seconded to several universities working on Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes, both in England and Hong Kong. Sue loved this work and became a Director of PE ITE, and then an assistant Director of Teaching and Learning at a university in the Midlands. From there she was then seconded by the British Association of Advisers and Lecturers (BAALPE) and the Youth Sport Trust (YST) to work on a national strategy for professional development, including the design of the PE, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) programme.

In 2003 Sue became the full time Professional Development Manager for BAALPE and in 2006 when BAALPE, and PEA UK merged, she became the national Business Development Manager. Having overseen several national strategies for PE and school sport, and becoming a technical adviser to the TDA, Sue became the Association for Physical Education Strategic Lead in 2011. She has authored and co-authored several publications, and is currently leading the Association’s initiatives for Quality Mark, effective use of the Primary PE & Sport Premium, and the new trailblazing Level 5 and 6 qualification for primary generalists in PE.

In 2017 Sue was promoted to the role of Chief Executive Officer of afPE, and subsequently received an MBE for her services to education. In July 2019, Sue received an Honorary Doctorate in Science from the University of Bedfordshire for her outstanding services to physical education.
Professor Jo Harris is Professor in Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy, and Director of Teacher Education at Loughborough University.

Jo taught in secondary schools for 12 years, and has been a teacher educator for 29 years. As Director of Teacher Education at Loughborough, Jo has led her team through consecutive Ofsted inspections in which teacher education has consistently been judged ‘outstanding’.

Jo has held prominent roles within, and been the recipient of a number of awards from, national physical education subject associations for her significant and sustained contribution to the profession.

Jo’s research focuses on health-related learning in physical education and the promotion of active lifestyles in schools, and she regularly publishes in professional and academic journals and presents at national and international conferences.

In recent years, Jo has attained the status of Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, received awards for research-informed teaching and high quality postgraduate supervision, and co-published a book with Human Kinetics on ‘promoting active lifestyles in schools’.

Baroness Amanda Sater is a member of the House of Lords and is Vice Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Sport, and has been a Member of the House of Lords Select Committee on Food, Poverty, Health and Environment.

Amanda has chaired several sports charities including Streetgames, and she is Chair of The Queen’s Club Foundation. She has considerable experience in the charitable sector having sat as a trustee on a number of charity boards including Addaction and The British Lung Foundation, and has served as a School Governor.

As a keen tennis player, including playing for the Junior National Welsh team, Amanda has seen first-hand the power of sport in building confidence and life skills, whatever level of sport is played. She is a strong advocate of
BARONESS AMANDA SATER (CONT.)

how sport and physical activity can transform lives and communities and create positive change.

As a Youth Magistrate for over 20 years, and as a member of the Youth Justice Board and the Metropolitan Police Authority, she has seen how effective sport can be, particularly when used in early intervention with young people to divert them away from youth crime, as well as in the use of rehabilitation more widely in the criminal justice system.

DR ANDY DALY-SMITH

Dr Andy Daly-Smith is a Reader in Physical Activity and Healthy Childhood at the University of Bradford. On behalf of the University he leads the healthy childhood theme within the Wolfson Centre for Applied Research, and is the Deputy Director for the Centre for Applied Educational Research.

His research focuses on the co-development of impactful and sustainable physical activity interventions for children and young people, with a specific focus on the school environment. In addition Andy has fifteen years of experience in lecturing and course management in higher education. He has led the design and delivery of a range of degree programmes, the most recent being a Physical Activity, Exercise and Health degree.

Currently, Andy is leading three national and international projects focussed on whole-systems change for physical activity in children and young people. He is the co-research Director on the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot in Bradford; JU:MP. This ambitious £10 million project is seeking to implement the first UK-based whole-system change programme to improve physical activity levels of children and young people aged five to 14. A central strand of the JU:MP project is the work around schools. Andy led the co-development of the UK’s first framework for whole-school physical activity.

The ground-breaking Creating Active Schools Framework has now been adopted by over 25 localities within the UK to create organisational change for physical in primary schools.
DR ANDY-DALY SMITH (CONT.)

Andy is a visiting Associate Professor at the Centre for Physically Activity learning (SEFAL) at the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences. In this role he is leading a European Project on the development of a European Wide curriculum and online teacher training programme for Physically Active Learning.

DR ALISON MORAG MURRAY

Dr Alison Morag Murray collaborates with a wide variety of pre-service and in-service practitioners to facilitate lifelong developmentally appropriate movement through early years across primary and secondary.

The heart of her practice lies with primary physical education (teacher education) with which she shares with many amazing colleagues beyond her home base of the University of Roehampton, across the UK, Europe and the US.

Alison studied at Strathclyde University (The Scottish School of Physical Education), Loughborough University and the University of New Mexico, and transferred her teaching qualifications to gain certification in Texas for teaching of PE across all levels. She has supported and/or directed Physical Education Teacher Education across a superb set of schools (University of New Mexico, New Mexico State University, Texas A&M) in the US, and now at Roehampton.

Having developed practice through voluntary and paid collegiate and professional coaching performance enhancement roles (gymnastics, swimming and track and field) in Mexico, the US and the UK, Alison sees even greater value in playing an active and informed role across the progression of fundamental movement, essential knowledge and competencies in earlier developmental phases.

Alison researches the school curriculum to better understand how children and youth develop a tacit awareness of their way of being, and learning as they acquire motor skills and competencies and knowledge in contextually and culturally relevant ways.
Miss Samantha Tross is a Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon practicing in London. She specialises in treating conditions of the hip and knee and is the first female of Afro-Caribbean descent to become a consultant orthopaedic surgeon in the UK. She scored another first in 2018, becoming the first woman in Europe to perform Mako Robotic Hip Surgery.

Miss Tross was born in Guyana, South America, and moved to England aged 11. She graduated from University College London. Her basic surgical training was on the Royal London rotation, and higher surgical training on the South-East Thames rotation via Guy’s & St. Thomas’s Hospitals. She undertook sub-specialisation fellowships in Toronto, Canada and Sydney, Australia.

Apart from her clinical work, she is the current department lead at Ealing Hospital, and in charge of training of junior surgeons in her department and the hospital. She is an Associate Editor of the Journal of Medical Case Reports, Medical Examiner for Imperial College, London, and University of the West Indies in Trinidad. She is an Associate Professor of Orthopaedics for the American University of the Caribbean, and recipient of a Black British Business Award for her work promoting science and medical careers to her community. She has been included in the Powerlist of 100 most Influential Black Britons since 2011, and is a recipient of the WINTRADE Award for Woman in the Public Sector in 2019.

Miss Tross is passionate about promoting diversity in surgery and sport, and was part of the recent Diversity Review Panel set up by the Royal College of Surgeons of England to investigate the College’s performance with respect to diversity, and suggest ways it could improve. She is also a member of the Cultural and Diversity Committee of the British Hip Society.

Miss Tross strongly believes in the importance of physical education in schools. It enabled her to integrate on arrival to the UK as a child, and winning the Victrix Ludorum and becoming National Champion in the long jump influenced her consultants to appoint her to prestigious jobs in her early medical career.
Shaun Dowling is Head of Sport at United Learning—a national group of primary, secondary and all-through schools across the state and independent sectors. In this role he supports Heads of PE and Directors of Sport in further improving the quality of their PE curriculum, school sport programmes and physical activity provision, and ensures they are using the power of sport to assist young people with their wider educational development.

United Learning schools are located in cities, urban and coastal towns and villages across the country, from Cumbria to Dorset. Many are embedded in or host their local school sport partnerships. 36 secondary schools are involved in the Sport England Teacher Training CPD programme; all schools are members of afPE; and many schools are progressing in their Quality Mark awards for the School Games.

In 2016–17 Shaun led the Working Group of the PE/sport network of United Learning as they produced their PE and Health Curriculum and Assessment Framework.

The United Learning PE/sport network has collaborated on an inclusive girls’ project (X-Elle); RideABC for Sport Relief in 2018; and ‘Challenge 2020’, a project aiming to increase levels of physical activity ahead of the Tokyo Paralympic and Olympic Games.

Shaun is a former Head of PE and Director of Specialism who progressed to Deputy Headship in two specialist sports colleges. Having trained at the West Sussex Institute of Higher Education, Shaun later gained his MA(Ed) from Southampton University. He achieved his NPQH before the opportunity arose to undertake a national role in the education team at the Youth Sport Trust (YST).

He has other wide-ranging experience, including:

She believes learning to care for your joints at an early age and maintaining a healthy lifestyle will positively impact the burden on the NHS by improving health and reducing joint disease.
Shaun Dowling (CONT.)

● Undertaking curriculum, teacher-training and sports & school leadership work in America, South Africa and Iraq

● Appearing before the Education Select Committee to give evidence on ‘School Sport following London 2012’

● Co-authoring and editing ‘The A-Z of School Improvement through PE and Sport: Principles and Practice’

Shaun is Chair of SLQ Sports Leaders, and several of his articles have been published in PEA/afPE journals, particularly on the theme of Specialist Sports Colleges.

Shannon Hussain is in her second year of teaching Physical Education.

Shannon read for her BSc in Sport and Physical Education at the University of Bedfordshire, followed by a PGCE Secondary Physical Education at the same university.

Shannon has recently completed her newly-qualified teacher year at Biddenham International School and Sports College, and is passionate about her role on the afPE National Task Force, as it is important to review and improve the current education and opportunities being provided for young people.

Shannon looks forward to the opportunity to join a fantastic team of experts during this early stage of her career, and the chance to research how we as educators can improve students’ lives physically, and how we educate them to maintain a healthy active lifestyle throughout the rest of their lives.

Shannon joined the Taskforce to offer an insight into current delivery in education, and to ensure that as we move forward as a profession, we can implement the right policies pragmatically. Shannon believes that PE is a vital part of the curriculum due to the significant impact it can have on everyone’s life, and developing a love for sports and physical activity is something PE teachers strive for.
5.1 STATED OBJECTIVES OF THE TASKFORCE

5.1.1 Positively influence future public policy around PE.

5.1.2 Provide government (and ultimately schools) with practical, actionable recommendations for change.

5.1.3 To support afPE’s ambition of putting PE at the heart of school life—understanding and articulating why PE matters and its contribution across the curriculum and to wider social issues.

5.1.4 To celebrate high quality PE and teachers and to encourage the replication and spread of best practice.

5.1.5 Allow leading research and insight to be presented in a consolidated way—bringing more focus to the issues that really matter.

6. METHODOLOGY

6.1 The Taskforce completed a series of meetings to define parameters and priorities and to sign off on key findings and recommendations.

6.2 Evidence was gathered through an online survey, evidence sessions and thorough desk research.

6.3 Questioning covered a variety of key areas for the subject.

6.3.1 Immediate issues in relation to supporting government and schools in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.4 The Taskforce additionally considered:

6.4.1 Influencing a future curriculum review.
6.4.2 The future of teacher training.
6.4.3 The role of PE in achieving broader outcomes – including the health and wellbeing of children, tackling obesity, building character and resilience.
6.4.4 Extra-curricular provision.
7. EVIDENCE SESSIONS

7.1 Paul Collin
Headteacher, City Academy, Norwich

7.2 Vanessa King
Primary PE Consultant

7.3 Richard Norman
CEO, Sports Leaders

7.4 Neil Rollings
Managing Director, Independent Coach Education

7.5 Nichola Russell
Headteacher, Sandal Castle VA Community Primary School, Wakefield

7.6 Lucy Supperstone
Director of Skills, Standards and Learning at Sports Leaders

7.7 Kate Thornton-Bousfield
Head of Physical Education, Achievement at the Youth Sport Trust

7.8 James Bowen
Director of Policy, National Association of Headteachers (NAHT)

7.9 Dr Shrehan Lynch
Senior Lecturer in Secondary Education, University of East London
8. CONTEXT

8.1 We know that schools across the country are under extreme pressure, and as we write are still in the midst of working to educate our children and young people whilst dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

8.2 Our subject should not only be at the heart of the response to the challenges of this public health emergency, but also at the heart of school life on an ongoing basis. Children and young peoples’ emotional wellbeing has been in decline since the pre-Covid period due to external factors that are well-documented by mental health organisations and others.

8.2.1 This will help to ensure that future generations develop a lifelong love of physical activity through being physically educated. Crucially they will also be conscious of—and recognise the impact of—this effective engagement.

8.3 We are very proud of our profession, and of the huge contribution that PE makes to the lives of young people. However, we are mindful and accepting of the need for change.

8.4 The driving purpose of this taskforce has been to make an honest assessment of current provision and challenges and to make focused recommendations for change.

8.5 Those recommendations are directed at central government, the PE, sport and physical activity sector, and at ourselves as a professional body as we believe we have a key role to play in future.

8.6 The following are the longstanding challenges which impact on the ability of our workforce to deliver to their full potential. We have considered these as a Taskforce, and attempted to develop workable solutions and recommendations to each of them.

8.6.1 An unhelpful tendency towards the conflation of PE with school sport and physical activity.
8.6.1.1 Whilst we do not want to become obsessed by semantics, definitions matter, and properly understanding the respective roles of these different disciplines and their inextricable connective relationship is important.

8.6.2 Budgets remain uncertain, not least around the PE and School Sport Premium funds.

8.6.3 A lack of diversity in the workforce, hampering its ability to fully serve the needs of all children and young people.

8.6.4 Varying perceptions of the importance and status of PE as a teaching option on the curriculum.

8.6.5 The underutilisation and adaptation of school facilities and equipment.

8.6.6 Delivery challenges—not least with relation to the levels of progress in school swimming.

8.7 Conversely there are many important and welcome opportunities in the external environment.

8.7.1 A greater recognition by government of the need to be active.

8.7.2 Promising signs of a core focus on children and young people and social impact in the Sport England strategy Uniting the Movement.

8.7.3 The recognition by headteachers and parents that physical and emotional wellbeing should be a priority—taking this once in a generation opportunity to turn positive intent and messages into real action to better support young people.

8.7.4 A greater willingness than ever across the PE, sport and physical activity sector to work together.
9. HEADLINE RECOMMENDATION

9.1 The Taskforce has identified as its core recommendation an **urgent review by Government of the status of PE as a foundation subject**.

9.2 It further **recommends PE to be classified as a core subject** with clear goals and priorities and assessment, monitoring and reporting around the holistic development of the child.

9.2.1 It is essential to have clarity and transparency around what schools can affect and not through high quality PE, to make them responsible for the whole life experience of young people.

9.3 This ‘unlocks’ many of the other recommendations, and would help ensure school leaders step up and deliver for the benefit of all school age children.

10. FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

10.1 Government and the sector must prioritise high-quality teaching of PE and increase the available time needed for it to become a core subject in a few years from now, with a highly-trained PE teacher in every primary school.

10.1.1 This would underpin the Government’s pandemic recovery plan for child development, and also the longer-term excellence of our school offer to all children—academic, physical, emotional, and social.

10.2 Government and the sector should prioritise establishing better, more coherent linkages between PE and the health and wellbeing of young people, both physical and mental, including through, but not reliant upon, after-school clubs.

10.3 Current teacher training (across all key stages) should be more comprehensive for non-specialist staff; recruitment of specialist PE staff as set out in the 2019 Conservative
Party manifesto should be increased; and a wider and deeper curriculum is needed to allow all staff to develop greater skills and knowledge.

10.3.1 This should be coupled with a campaign to encourage more teachers to choose PE, recognising the significant and influential contribution they make to a child’s overall development.

10.3.2 Including PE in the suite of National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) will provide a route to improve the quality of PE teaching.

10.4 Government should institute a targeted summer swimming catch-up for year 5 and 6 pupils using local facilities—or schools across all sectors opening up theirs to other pupils—to ensure all primary school leavers can swim 25 metres unaided and self-rescue. Swimming is an essential life skill, and social and economic background should be no obstacle to achieving a basic level of competence.

10.5 The profession should consider offering greater breadth in the PE curriculum as recognised by Ofsted.

10.6 Ofsted should carry out a thematic review—drawing on the expertise of afPE and this taskforce—of PE to determine its quality and impact, as well as how best to inspect PE as a core subject to ensure their findings provide the best basis for improving PE in our schools.

10.7 Government must act for the long term, in part by maintaining its commitment to, and strengthening the requirements of, the Primary PE and Sport Premium, through to the next General Election.

10.8 The profession must tackle a number of challenges—including a need for greater diversity; a need for more systematic approaches to CPD; and a need for the workforce to become more skilled and confident in articulating the impact of PE on young people and the life of their school.

10.9 The profession should take advantage of the enthusiasm for increased peer-to-peer learning and practical support, and share developmental case studies within the workforce so as to improve the depth and delivery of PE in our schools. Government could provide further support, and co-ordination of leading advisers and practitioners to support a national improvement on knowledge skills and understanding.
11. ACTION PLAN

11.1 Our top priority is to work with the PE profession, schools and government to secure core subject status.

11.2 We want to work further with our colleagues in schools to understand how this can drive real, lasting transformational change rather than becoming another burdensome requirement.

11.3 It is very important for PE to be part of the tables and metrics that measure and communicate school performance.

11.3.1 This should include a particular focus at every level on the school’s accountability around physical and emotional wellbeing.

11.4 Our ambition is that every young person has access to high quality PE.

11.4.1 Our first priority in achieving this is a PE specialist in every primary school.

11.5 We also wish to see a consistent and appropriate interpretation of delivery of the PE national curriculum to ensure the following aims are achieved:

11.5.1 Develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities

11.5.2 Sustained periods of physical activity at school

11.5.3 Engagement in competitive sports and activities

11.5.4 Pupils leading healthy, active lives
12. HOW WE WILL DO THIS

We know that this is a hugely ambitious set of aspirations. We have identified the following priority actions to make this a reality:

12.1 CO-PRODUCE OUTCOMES WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

12.1.1 A national conversation with our young people—from early years provision, through to primary, secondary, further and higher education, and those entering our profession for the first time to shape and agree future outcomes.

12.2 CHANGES TO THE WORKFORCE: DIVERSITY & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

12.2.1 A joint diversity action plan owned by the PE profession and government to deliver lasting change in building the workforce of the future.

12.2.2 A radical increase in the amount of PE provision delivered to primary teachers through extended and far more comprehensive ITT (Initial Teacher Training) and CPD, giving schools the ability to have more control and choice over provision and for outsourcing to be used to enhance the offer, rather than through necessity.

12.2.3 Ringfenced funding to guarantee a primary specialist in every school.

12.2.3.1 We know that where staff qualified at levels 5 and 6 are in place that PE outcomes significantly improve through enhanced status and leadership.

12.3 CHANGES TO DELIVERY AND MEASUREMENT

12.3.1 A changed approach to curriculum delivery to include all key aims including leading healthy active lifestyles.
12.3.2 Rigorous inspection of PE provision with clear linkages to the wellbeing and emotional health of young people either by Ofsted or a national team of PE specialists who can support, mentor and develop the workforce and celebrate outstanding provision.

12.3.2.1 Schools reporting on children’s physical education to incorporate the physical, emotional social and cognitive journey as part of the performance data drawing on existing resources.

13. WHEN CAN THIS HAPPEN?

13.1.1 Even if new workforce members can start training in September 2021, it would take until 2022, at the very earliest, for them to enter the workforce and to start the journey.

13.1.2 They will need additional support to be internal change agents and advocates.

13.1.3 Including PE in the Early Career Framework alongside other key subject areas and competencies would mark significant progress towards this aim.

14. OUR PART TO PLAY

14.1 As the representative organisation for the PE profession, afPE takes its own responsibility to make change very seriously.

14.2 To that end, we will commit the subject area to the following positive changes.
14.2.1 Work with our partners at Sports Leaders to bring forward plans for new qualifications as well as develop existing subject leader qualifications.

14.2.2 Review and enhance our current CPD offer and ensure it remains fit for purpose and demonstrates impact.

14.2.3 Work to provide a high-quality peer-to-peer learning and knowledge exchange opportunities for members.

14.2.4 Continue to identify resources that would be of most benefit, and to provide and/or signpost to these resources.

14.2.5 Embrace the student voice in developing materials that show what the delivery of high-quality PE looks like, per the Studio You pilot.

14.2.6 Work with sector partners to simplify and support the education offer.

15. FINDINGS IN MORE DETAIL

15.1 CORE SUBJECT STATUS

15.1.1 There is significant (near universal amongst respondents) support for making PE a core subject, not least because this is the best way of achieving high level and enduring commitment to the delivery of excellent PE right across our school system.

15.1.2 The Taskforce has prioritised making the ambition behind this meaningful.

15.1.3 The challenges around this recommendation are significant—differentiating this call from similar calls in the past, and the practical differences a change in status alone would actually bring.
15.1.4 The development of ‘core’ status or similar will require more stringent minimum and/or quality standards than we have now.

15.1.5 Some respondents promoted the idea of a radical change to current Ofsted requirements, meaning that no school without a high-quality PE offer could be judged as ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’.

15.1.6 Core status would allow greater traction with all schools including academies, academy chains and free schools.

15.1.7 One of the successful schools we visited argued for PE to form the ‘spine’ of the curriculum.

15.2.1 Establishing closer links between PE and health and wellbeing outcomes was identified as another key priority.

15.2.2 The evidence tells us that PE has a significant impact on physical and mental health and wellbeing, increased cognitive ability and receptiveness to learn, concentration, confidence and self-esteem.

15.2.3 The evidence strongly supports a broader offer (for example, the use of dance, yoga and mindfulness) to particularly promote cognitive impact—and particularly amongst those with special educational needs.

15.3.1 PE, delivered well, can have positive and lifelong implications. Key skills are developed that will support future generations in employment including decision making, communication, leadership skills, as well as confidence.

15.3.2 We know that school is the one place where we have the opportunity to reach almost every child, and to play a particular role in tackling issues related to socio-economic deprivation and inequality.

15.4.1 Young people deserve to have their voices heard, and there is potential
15.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC BENEFITS (CONT.)

for them to have far more influence and control over the PE that is delivered in schools.

15.4.2 The right to high quality PE—helping young people to understand and have control over their health and wellbeing—should be seen as a core entitlement.

15.5 CURRICULUM REVIEW

15.5.1 There was significant support for a wide-ranging review of the current curriculum implementation and interpretation—particularly in relation to more clearly emphasising the specific role of PE (and its distinctions to sport and physical activity), creating greater links with health and wellbeing and making PE a core subject.

15.5.2 There was a scepticism amongst some, though not all respondents, about an excessive focus on the delivery of competitive sport and activities to the detriment of a broad PE curriculum.

15.5.3 The wider benefits of PE, including the development of leadership skills and attributes, could be realised more effectively through the formalisation of a broader offer.

15.5.4 PE should embrace new and emerging activities (e.g. parkour and yoga) so that it is broad and balanced.

15.6 ACCOUNTABILITY

15.6.1 There was significant appetite for greater accountability.

15.6.2 This related in part to the Primary PE and Sport Premium —there was strong recognition that ongoing funding (and indeed any increases, should those materialise) would require and merit greater accountability.

15.6.3 There was scepticism that current policy decisions—from school level to central government—were always based on firm evidence.
15.7 RESOURCE AVAILABILITY

15.7.1 Schools are under enormous pressure—to secure greater time, resources and attention for PE will be challenging and will require:

15.7.2 More overt, evidence-based linkages to wider considerations, including educational attainment, cognitive development, behaviour and attendance and the health and wellbeing of young people.

15.7.3 Creating links to other curriculum subjects—making them easy to deliver through PE (e.g. maths, English and outdoor learning/environmental and pastoral content).

15.7.4 Finding ways to make workloads more manageable—for example using existing requirements to report against PE premium spending to shape future actions.

15.7.5 Ensuring that the workforce has the right skills and knowledge to select suitable resources, which can be flexibly modelled to work in their own bespoke context.

15.8 WORKFORCE REFORM

15.8.1 The most pressing concern in relation to current initial teacher training was an insufficient lack of time for primary teachers to be adequately trained in PE.

15.8.2 Other issues identified included a lack of understanding of best practice around health and wellbeing, and a lack of confidence around delivering a broader curriculum, beyond the most traditional activities.

15.8.3 Outside provision focuses on occasion too much on sport and not on PE—this needs to be addressed to ensure a sustainable workforce.

15.8.4 Respondents consistently called for more high-quality CPD, especially in the case of primary teachers.
15.8.4.1 This was identified as a core purpose of ‘premium’ funding—particularly during evidence sessions—to ensure a sustainable legacy, rather than simply outsourcing responsibility or pouring ever more money into the system.

15.8.5 It is not possible or desirable to attempt to deliver all the necessary training through the standard one-year ITT course. To this end it is necessary to embrace the new two-year framework approach, and to see this as a key opportunity for early-career CPD.

15.8.6 Additional funding was inevitably cited as a key driver for future activity—particularly in relation to an enhanced extra-curricular offer that is a wider than traditional sport.

15.8.7 There has been an historic problem with the number of initiatives and pilots. These make it challenging for schools to ‘keep up’, and can breed a sense of fatigue and cynicism.

15.8.8 There was a strong appetite among respondents for more support in providing evidence of the full contribution of PE, and a clear sense that many in the profession instinctively know what this contribution is, but struggle to articulate it.

15.9 Diversity is a challenging area in several facets of the subject:

15.9.1 A lack of diversity in the workforce

15.9.2 Practice that has become outdated

15.9.3 Potential to understand and work more effectively with other sectors
16. SWIMMING

16.1 Recent data shows that in 2019 150,000 children left primary school unable to swim 25 metres or self-rescue. Sadly this is not a new problem, with one in three adults in England being unable to swim.

16.2 The Taskforce is aware that Government shares this concern, and its announcement in February 2021 that £10 million would be made available to support school sports and swimming facilities, and ensure access to swimming for school children is levelled up across England, is welcome.

16.3 A targeted summer swimming catch-up for year 5 and 6 pupils using local facilities (or schools across all sectors opening up theirs to other pupils) would also help in starting to address this.

16.4 However, we need to establish a clear strategy for the longer term that will systematically remove all barriers to pupils achieving their PE National Curriculum requirements in relation to swimming. It is too valuable a life skill to be allowed to pass hundreds of thousands of children by.

16.5 This agenda has been championed for some time by Olympic swimmers Steve Parry and Rebecca Adlington, who have been keen to discuss this with the Taskforce and with Government to share their knowledge of what works.
16.5.1 STEVE PARRY - OLYMPIC SWIMMER

“Water safety is the only part of the national curriculum that will save children’s lives. It can’t be treated as an optional extra. Prior to the pandemic, a third of children left primary school unable to swim and this year’s figures can only be worse. We owe it to them to do better.”

16.5.2 REBECCA ADLINGTON - OLYMPIC SWIMMER

“Swimming is such an important activity for young children, and one that should be taken seriously as part of the national curriculum. Swimming encourages children to socialise and support one another, improves wellbeing and fitness, but above all else, it’s a life-saving skill.”
17. HIGH QUALITY PE DIRECTLY CONTRIBUTES TO SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

17.1 CASE STUDY: SANDAL CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL, WAKEFIELD

At Sandal Castle Primary, physical education (PE) continues to be at the heart of our curriculum, more so than ever in these most challenging of times. PE is vital and a critical priority driver for school improvement. High quality CPD ensures that staff recognise and are aware of the impact that high quality PE provision, teaching, learning and leadership have on the positive physical, social, emotional and mental health of all.

As a school we ensure that staff CPD is a priority, and this academic year, our focus has been to further improve and develop the overall delivery of the PE curriculum, with an increased focus on well-being. When budget setting it is important that significant financial allocations are prioritised to ensure that CPD remains a key focus and is accessible to all.

During 2020/21, one member of staff is undertaking the afPE/SLQ Level 5 Certificate in Primary School Physical Education Specialism, which will mean we have two members of staff who have achieved this much valued qualification. This qualification is a vital component in raising standards within primary school physical education teaching and learning.

Another member of staff has begun the afPE/SLQ Level 4 Qualification in Supporting Pupils’ Wellbeing through Physical Education. This qualification is also nationally recognised, and enables staff to become specialists in supporting the emotional and social wellbeing of pupils through physical education; more important than ever in the current climate.
The breadth of curriculum opportunity on offer within the extended school day has ensured that our attainment in core subjects continues to be well above the National average with, in 2019 (last validated data set) 82 per cent of children achieving the National standard in reading, writing and maths, compared with the England average of 65 per cent.

Progress measures in English in particular are well above the National average, with reading at +3.5 and writing at +3.1. This is attributed to our commitment and determination to remain loyal to our vision and values of delivering a broad and balanced PE curriculum, which challenges learners, encourages curiosity and inspires lifelong learning.

We firmly believe that our PE Curriculum promotes aspiration, so that our children can discover what they are good at, and have the opportunity to explore a range of possibilities open to them. This is demonstrated in our commitment to offering a range of free sporting after school clubs and participation in festivals and tournaments, often hosting the competitions for the local area.

We currently have 27 after school clubs on offer, which are always free of charge and offered to the whole school community. This was recognised and celebrated in our Ofsted report in October 2019.

Leaders are committed to creating a school that is rich in the arts and sport. Pupils can attend up to 25 different sports clubs. All pupils learn to play five different musical instruments before the end of Year 6.

Our swimming curriculum is recognised as a strength of the school, with children swimming from year 1 onwards. Swimming develops not only skills and technique (97 per cent met their swimming standard by the end of year 6), but also develops valuable life skills, building strength, stamina, flexibility and confidence, whilst also having fun!
We celebrate every aspect of our children, and allow our PE curriculum to evolve to meet the needs and passions of our current and anticipated school community, aiming to support them in widening their aspirations and broadening their horizons.

The recent visit by Jason Robinson OBE and filming by BBC Breakfast was a fantastic opportunity for our children to demonstrate and showcase the importance of PE within school and the impact it has on the lives of our children, families and community. PE is certainly at the heart of our curriculum and always will be.

“The school, through the leadership and commitment of the headteacher and staff, have prioritised PE and physical activity placing it at the heart of their curriculum. The results speak for themselves. It is a joy to be in this school.”

Sue Wilkinson MBE FRSA, afPE CEO

“It’s an absolute pleasure to be working with you guys. How can you not be inspired when you see kids enjoying PE in a school that really gets it! Keep up the great work everyone!

We all know that PE—if it is prioritised as a central part of a school’s curriculum, taught well and advocated strongly—will make a significant and positive difference to children and young people.”

Jason Robinson OBE