**PE, sport, and physical activity multi-programme evaluation**

**Supplier pre-market engagement discussion**

***Summary***

DfE is interested in evaluating three core programmes in the PE, sport, and physical activity space: the PE and sport premium, the Primary PE Package, and Opening School Facilities. We are exploring the possibility of procuring a large-scale combined evaluation programme to cover the three programmes.

We want to consult with the market on questions around the most appropriate, feasible and robust way to go about this ambitious project in order to help us shape the research to be commissioned to ensure high quality bids. This is also an opportunity for the market to suggest information that would be useful to include in the specification to enable them to develop proposals.

If undertaken, this evaluation would include:

Year 1

1. Process evaluation for each programme
2. Feasibility study for full impact evaluation for each programme
3. Rapid Evidence Assessment
4. Further development and testing of draft Theory of Change for each programme and across programmes

Years 2 and 3

Dependent on and informed by the findings of Year 1, Years 2 and 3 may involve:

1. Continued monitoring of the implementation of the programmes
2. Impact evaluation for each programme

We would like to invite potential suppliers to a virtual meeting at **11:00-12:00 on** **27 July 2022** to gauge the level of interest in these projects, to hear their views on what is needed to make it a success, to answer questions and to support potential suppliers to link up.

***What is the PE and sport premium?***

The PE and sport premium is a £320 million ringfenced grant to all primary schools to make additional and sustainable improvements to the quality of the Physical Education, sport and physical activity that they provide. It is allocated to primary schools (and other schools with primary aged children; e.g. special schools, hospital schools, pupil referral units etc) based upon pupil numbers, with an average one form entry primary school receiving approximately £18,000 per year. This funding has now been confirmed for the academic year 2022/23.

For more information, see:

* [Sport and music education championed with new investment - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/sport-and-music-education-championed-with-new-investment)
* [PE and sport premium: conditions of grant 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pe-and-sport-premium-conditions-of-grant-2021-to-2022)

***What is the Primary PE Package?***

The Primary PE Package represents a [manifesto commitment](https://www.conservatives.com/our-plan/conservative-party-manifesto-2019) to improve PE teaching in primary schools. There will be £10.1m spent per year on a package to schools to deliver this improvement over the next three years. All primary schools will be offered to take part in the programme, the exact delivery (e.g. how many schools per year) is not yet clear.

The Primary PE Package will provide a four-part support package to equip schools to better understand what ‘good’ PE looks like, tools to assess the quality of their own provision, and bespoke support and advice to assist schools in making this change and foundation PE CPD for teachers who may benefit from it. The Package will:

* Develop PE non-statutory guidance to bring together evidence on what constitutes good PE and how this can be practically delivered in a school, including the provision of curriculum swimming and water safety at primary.
* Develop tools to enable primary schools to monitor the progress of their pupils in PE;
* Provide bespoke support to every primary school that wishes to participate to evaluate and improve their PE curriculum and delivery;
* Deliver a foundation PE CPD programme to primary teachers who may benefit from this.

***What is the Opening School Facilities programme?***

Opening School Facilities represents a [manifesto commitment](https://www.conservatives.com/our-plan/conservative-party-manifesto-2019) to increase the opening of school facilities outside the school day to increase physical activity levels in children and young people and the wider community more broadly. There will be £19m per year spent on a package to schools to deliver this over the next three years, with at least 1350 schools taking part over the three years of the programme. At least 90% of the funding will be provided directly to schools to allow them to invest in the things that would allow their school to open sports facilities outside of the school day. Up to 10% will be used to manage that funding and provide support to schools to identify how best to target this investment.

The objective of this work is to provide funding to support schools to open their facilities outside of the normal school day (evenings, weekends, and holidays) to allow young people and their families more opportunities to be physically active. Schools will be provided with support and guidance on how to apply for and how to spend the funds.

The aim of OSF is to increase the amount of physical activity CYP are doing, enabling more to meet the guidelines of 60 mins of physical activity a day as set by the Chief Medical Officer.

This programme has already undergone [two phases](https://www.activepartnerships.org/news/active-partnerships-support-schools-open-their-facilities-and-support-return-sport-and-activity) with an emphasis on covid recovery, this third phase places more focus on making the opening of school facilities sustainable in the longer term.

***Multi-programme PE & Sport research and evaluation***

***Background***

The three core programmes – the PE and sport premium, the Primary PE Package, and Opening School Facilities – and various smaller activities, are all seeking to achieve a common set of wide-ranging outcomes related to sport, physical activity, and physical literacy[[1]](#footnote-2) in children and young people, for example:

* raise the profile of physical activity in schools and create physically active school culture/environments;
* increase physical literacy in children and young people;
* increase the amount of physical activity done by children and young people generally so more CYP meet guidelines set by the Chief Medical Officer;
* improve PE provision in primary schools;
* make better use of school sports facilities outside the school day (for use by school pupils, families and the wider community);
* improve mental health and wellbeing outcomes in CYP;
* reduce inequalities in access to/use of green space; in access/use/engagement in PE, physical activity and sport; in swimming ability

The interventions in this space to some extent overlap in the methods used to achieve these outcomes; and the schools involved in the programmes can also overlap, i.e., a primary school could be engaged in all three principal programmes and other small activities.

While there has been some previous delivery of similar interventions there has been no meaningful evaluation to date[[2]](#footnote-3) [[3]](#footnote-4) [[4]](#footnote-5). There is also scarce detailed data about the system, how the various interventions and wider actors fit together, and the need for ongoing intervention beyond these programmes.

We are exploring options for an overarching evaluation and research programme to meet the specific evaluation evidence needs for each of the three programmes while creating efficiencies, enabling the pooling of knowledge between programme evaluations, streamlining the involvement of schools, and allowing us the scope to collect data to better understand the wider system.

***What are your aims and objectives?***

The key research aims are:

* to establish the current state of affairs in provision of PE and school sports and the extent to which this aligns with the recent Ofsted PE research review, focussing on what works, for whom and in what contexts[[5]](#footnote-6);
* to evaluate the efficacy of these 3 specific policies in improving the quality of PE, improving levels of physical activity, engaging pupils in sport and engendering a physically active school culture;
* to understand to what extent further intervention is needed in the school system to further improve school provision of PE, sport and physical activity to meet our aims for the system, and thus to inform decisions about these policies, and future policy development and funding needs.

Our research objectives relate to:

* understanding the wider problem of low activity levels in children and young people;
* school role in improving physical activity levels via curriculum PE and extra curricular sport and physical activity;
* the impact of these 3 specific policies themselves and any possible interactions between policies;
* understanding how schools engage with the interventions and what is most effective;
* understanding the extent of remaining problems in the system that government intervention could help.

***What are you seeking to procure?***

The exact details of what we want to include in the evaluation are still being worked through, but we expect it to include 4 main strands of work in Year 1: process evaluation of all three programmes; rapid evidence assessment; feasibility study; development and testing of theory of change. Followed by 2 main strands of work in Years 2 and 3: impact evaluation for each programme (dependent on findings of the feasibility study); and continued monitoring of the programmes. We anticipate the following will be included across the different work strands: primary data collection (quantitative and qualitative), secondary data analysis (relevant and available management and administrative data), use of quasi-experimental and/or theory based methods of impact evaluation.

**Anticipated costs**: £1m-£2m

Year 1

1. Process evaluation for each programme involving, for example:
	* qualitative work (e.g. interviews/focus groups) with Headteachers, PE leads, PE teachers, pupils
	* quantitative methods (e.g. surveys) with Headteachers, PE leads, PE teachers, pupils
	* analysis of management and other data from delivery providers
	* document review of documents provided by schools and delivery providers
2. Rapid Evidence Assessment of the PE, Sport and physical activity literature (academic and grey)
3. Feasibility study for full impact evaluation for each programme to explore how best to approach robustly assessing impact (e.g.: identifying appropriate and robust outcome measures, data sources, methods)
4. All elements above contribute to development and testing of Theory of Change for each programme and across programmes

Years 2 and 3

1. Continued monitoring of the implementation of each programme
2. Impact evaluation for each programme (dependent on the findings of the feasibility study), possibly involving one or more of the following:

*Approaches*:

* theory-based evaluation (e.g. realist, contribution analysis)
* quasi-experimental approaches

*Quantitative methods:*

* surveys with Headteachers, PE leads, PE teachers, pupils
* analysis of management and other data from delivery providers
* cost-benefit analysis

*Qualitative methods:*

* depth interviews with Headteachers, PE leads, PE teachers, pupils
* observational methods
* creative methods with pupils
* Qualitative Comparative Analysis
1. Pooling knowledge and findings across the programmes in final reporting

It is important that this evaluation is robust and stands up to scrutiny. To support this, the project will be supported by an Advisory Group, which will include sector stakeholders and academics.

In addition, part of achieving this is ensuring that all activity is co-ordinated and run in as standardised way as possible. As such, we also want to procure:

* Programme management to oversee the delivery of each part of the evaluation, to co-ordinate each part of the project and across the project as a whole, to include monitoring and reporting on progress to DfE on a regular basis
* Quality assurance, to include: a) working with researchers in DfE to design, review and refine research tools and data analysis approaches, to ensure they are of a consistently high quality; b) working with advisory groups to review design of research and analysis; c) undertaking quality assurance on all research tools, data collection methods, data analysis, interpretation and reporting, to ensure that all conclusions drawn are robust
* Fieldwork management, to include: a) developing sampling approaches; b) ensuring surveys, interviews et al are accessible; c) engaging with schools and providers to secure willingness to participate in the evaluation and avoid overburdening schools; d) ensure robust response rates are achieved; e) adhering to all data protection regulations and principles
* Quality assured interim and final reports for each part of the evaluation (e.g. process evaluation for each programme, feasibility study, REA, and so on), timing to vary depending on the length of the work strand
* A high-quality, accessible written report, in the DfE house-style, answering the evaluation and research questions in a clear way identifying which of the tested approaches were the most and least effective and the implications of this for policy makers, sector stakeholders, practitioners, providers and commissioners

***What kind of organisation are you looking for?***

We would like our supplier or consortium of suppliers to have extensive experience and expertise in running mixed method primary research projects, impact evaluation (using quasi-experimental and theory-based methods), a track record of managing large and complex research projects, good knowledge of primary and secondary education and excellent written and verbal communication skills.

Our initial assessment of the market is that few organisations will have all of this at the level of expertise we require. We are keen to encourage suppliers to form consortiums to deliver this project, in order to make the procurement process as competitive as possible.

***What would we like to hear from you?***

We are interested in getting your thoughts on the following:

* How this ambitious research can be achieved, including how impact evaluation via quasi experimental and/or theory-based approaches could be conducted
* Risks and issues to be considered in its commissioning
* What is the key information that bidders will need in order to prepare a proposal
* What sort of budget would be appropriate for an evaluation of this size and scope?
* If the project were to go ahead, how much time do you think you would need to prepare a bid?

If you would like to ask any specific questions to be covered in the event, please send your questions to the email provided in the notification.

***What is the timeline for delivery?***

Our indicative timeline is:

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| ***Task*** | ***Date*** |
| Invitation to Tender issued | September 2022 |
| Supplier in place | January 2023 |
| Process evaluation | January 2023 – end date TBC |
| Rapid evidence assessment  | January 2023 – July 2023 |
| Feasibility study | January 2023 – July 2023 |
| Planning impact evaluation (dependent on feasibility study) | September 2023  |
| Conducting impact evaluation including reporting (dependent on feasibility study), continued monitoring of the implementation of the programmes | October 2023 – December 2025 |

1. There is no universally accepted definition of physical literacy. We are currently working with the definition provided by International Physical Literacy Association – see: [Definitions, Foundations and Associations of Physical Literacy: A Systematic Review - IPLA (physical-literacy.org.uk)](https://www.physical-literacy.org.uk/research/definitions-foundations-and-associations-of-physical-literacy-a-systematic-review/?v=79cba1185463), and anticipate shifting to the definition that will be provided by Sport England’s work on physical literacy once that concludes (expected in around a year’s time). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Youth Sport Trust’s Secondary Teacher Training programme is similar to the Primary PE Package: [Secondary teacher training programme | Sport England](https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/secondary-teacher-training-programme?msclkid=c5af6d54c55711ec9842046241baa9bd) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. DfE run survey from 2019 details how the PE and sport premium had been used and perceived impact: [Primary PE and Sport Premium Survey research report (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816676/Primary_PE_and_Sport_Premium_Survey_research_report.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Active Partnerships carried out evaluations of phases 1 and 2 of Opening School Facilities, as an example: [Opening School Facilities | Active Lancashire](https://www.activelancashire.org.uk/projects/opening-school-facilities#:~:text=Opening%20School%20Facilities%20Sport%20England%20have%20announced%20that,and%20re-open%20their%20facilities%20to%20the%20local%20community.) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. We understand that Ofsted will produce a subject report on PE, as this develops - particularly the scope, approach and any emerging gaps in the evidence base - it will inform this overall research aim. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)