

# Amanda Spielman at the Youth Sport Trust 2019 Conference

Ofsted's Chief Inspector discussed the new education inspection framework and what it means for physical education and sport.

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Good morning. I'm delighted to be joining you today. Thank you for inviting me.

This morning I'm going to talk about the new Ofsted inspection framework that we're consulting on, and what that might mean for PE and sport. As well as some of the research that lies underneath that framework, and how it links with the Youth Sports Trust's own research on what's happening to PE in schools.

Exercise and sports are hugely important for children. That should go without saying. Schools and colleges have a vital role to play in inspiring the next generation to lead healthy, active lives and to build resilience. But it's more than that. The pursuit of sporting excellence is a fine thing in itself. While there isn't a single definition of excelling, a good PE education can take each child down different pathways to find what they're really good at. And on a bigger scale, it can take the whole of humanity forward.

But of course, schools are not a silver bullet. The responsibility for making sure children have ample opportunities to exercise and to live healthy lives cannot rest just with schools: a point I made when I published obesity research and reiterated in my annual report. By the way, when I say schools, I do use that as shorthand for all the

different providers we inspect – from nurseries to schools to colleges – but I'll say schools for the sake of brevity.

## Inspection of PE and sports

Given that importance, how do our inspectors currently look at PE and sport? I know that some of you may have concerns that they haven't always had the focus they deserve, especially the shorter Section 8 inspections. Ultimately this goes back to a government decision back in 2004 to simplify inspection, to take it away from being a subject-by-subject review and to focus inspection on the core subjects. Short inspections by their nature can't provide a full review of all aspects of school life, and have to be driven by lines of enquiry.

That being said, many of you will know that under our current common inspection framework, before making a final judgement on overall effectiveness, one of the things we look at is the cultural development of pupils and, within this, their willingness to take part in and respond positively to musical, cultural and of course sporting opportunities.

And within our leadership and management judgement, we also look at a school's extra-curricular opportunities.

And we look at the use of the primary PE and sport premium and consider its impact on pupil outcomes, and we look at how well primary school governors hold schools to account for this.

These areas give us some insight into the quality of physical education and school sport, but it is fair to say that, as with quite a few other aspects of the curriculum, PE and sport has tended to play second fiddle to the areas with more readily available performance data. Six weeks ago we published a consultation on our new draft framework, which I hope you've seen. We're now halfway through the consultation, which runs until 5 April. This really is a proper listening exercise, so I would encourage you all to respond. We want your collective wisdom and expertise to help us make what I think are already a strong set of proposals even better. And we want to start working with this in September.

## Rebalancing inspection to focus on substance

Our new framework, which I've described as an evolution rather than a revolution, aims to tilt the focus of our inspections slightly away from performance data and more towards the real substance of education, seen through the lens of the curriculum. In this way, we hope to get back to discussing not just the results a school or college has achieved but how they have achieved them. We want to make sure inspections are professional dialogues between school leaders and inspectors about what matters to children. What are they being taught and how? How are they being set up to succeed in the next stage of their lives?

Now don't get me wrong - when data is used well it's a very good thing. And test and exam results matter enormously. You can't tell teenagers that their GCSEs don't matter, and I wouldn't want to tell parents that we're not interested in how well their 11-year-olds do in reading tests. But when the balance tips too far toward data, problems emerge.

Over the past 2 years, we've been researching the curriculum and our findings have highlighted some of these problems. When data is allowed to overtake substance, it's the curriculum that suffers. It gets squeezed and narrowed. Teachers are incentivised to teach to the test. And it's children from disadvantaged backgrounds, who have fewer opportunities generally for learning outside school, who most lose out.

So a key principle of the new framework is to shift inspection back to where it belongs – complementing published performance data, rather than putting pressure on providers to deliver ever higher numbers. Because it matters how results are achieved. Achieved in the right way, they reflect a great education. Achieved in the wrong way, they can give a false sense of assurance that children have achieved and can move on. Leaving them ill-prepared for the next stage of their lives – any employer or university will tell you that.

So the new framework is about the substance of education – making sure that children get to grips with mathematical concepts, master the art of passing on the football pitch, learn why the world is as it is, harness the beauty and power of the English language, develop their

front crawl and learn to dance. If you take care of teaching a broad and balanced curriculum and teaching it well, the test results and performance table outcomes should take care of themselves.

## New quality of education judgement

So, let's unpack that a little. The new framework, with its focus on a rich and balanced curriculum should give a greater platform to individual subjects, such as PE and sport, and allow more time for conversations about subjects during inspections. But how will this work in practice?

There isn't and there won't be an Ofsted curriculum. The research that we published last year demonstrates that we can recognise and evaluate a range of different curriculum approaches in a way that's fair.

And of course a high-quality education is made up of many parts, not just a good curriculum. We distinguish the curriculum – what is taught – and pedagogy, which is how the curriculum is taught. It is also distinct from assessment, which is about whether learners are learning or have learned the intended curriculum.

So we will approach the curriculum in 3 ways. First, we'll consider the framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and skills to be gained at each stage: the curriculum intent.

Secondly, we'll consider the translation of that framework in practice and the contribution that teaching makes to the intended curriculum: the implementation.

And thirdly, we'll look at the evaluation of the knowledge and skills that students have gained across the curriculum and the destinations that they go on to next: the impact.

We propose a new quality of education judgement to capture the most important aspects of curriculum intent, implementation and impact. The judgement still recognises the importance of outcomes, but in the context of how they are achieved.

Inspectors will take a rounded view of the quality of education that all children get across the whole range, including every kind of advantage and disadvantage.

We'll continue to look at teaching, assessment, attainment and progress, much as we do now, but through the lens of the curriculum implementation and impact.

We won't grade intent, implementation and impact separately, individually. Instead, inspectors will reach a single graded judgement for the quality of education, drawing on the totality of the evidence they have gathered, using their professional judgement.

And it will be important to consider intent, implementation and impact in the context of physical education. As for, all other subjects, PE subject leads will need to think about their curriculum. The most fundamental question of all is:

What do you want pupils to know and to be able to do?

And then, are there any physical competencies that pupils need to get better at, such as balance, agility and co-ordination? If so, how will we help them to improve?

How do you make sure that pupils are physically active for sustained periods of time? Are activities chosen inclusive and enjoyable?

How do you make sure that pupils can compete in an enjoyable and inclusive way? And how do you make sure that PE is helping all children to be fit and active?

The national curriculum sets out the content that must be covered in maintained schools and is a benchmark for the breadth and ambition of the curricula that academies devise. The new handbook makes clear that inspectors will have this in mind.

There are of course other questions to ask and you are the experts in this area and know how to design a curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils in your community. I know that Matt Meckin HMI, our national lead for PE and sport, has been working closely with the Youth Sports Trust to make sure that we increase our inspectors' familiarity with these questions.

## Personal development judgement

And for another of our judgements, personal development, we want to look at how the curriculum helps pupils to develop in different ways, moving beyond the core timetable. We'll look at schools' intent, and the way this translates into practice. What we won't do here is to second guess the impact of the parts of the curriculum angled towards personal development. A lot of the likely value that schools add here will only be realised in pupils' lives many years down the road. No school and certainly no inspector can definitively say from an inspection what has been achieved in this area.

I am sure, for example, that all of you put on a range of extra-curricular sporting activities and enrichment. These are vital for pupils. But we can't measure on inspection whether these opportunities have encouraged pupils to lead healthy and active adult lives.

While a school has its children for 6 or 7 hours a day, 5 days a week, these same young people are influenced by their home environment and their community. Schools can teach in ways that build children's confidence and resilience, but they can't determine how well they draw on this. Schools can teach young people sports but as I say, the impact may not be seen for years. Which is why I think calls to use average pupil Body Mass Index, or even 'performance on the bleep test' in coming to our judgement probably don't make sense.

We are instead being careful to ask the inspection question in the right way. A key criterion in the proposed personal development judgement is that:

The curriculum and the school's wider work support pupils to develop resilience, confidence and independence and lead a healthy and active lifestyle.

So, on inspection, inspectors will look to see what the school does to help pupils keep physically and mentally healthy and maintain an active lifestyle. Are pupils getting ample opportunities to be active during the school day and through extra-curricular activities? These are the kinds of conversations we'll be having, and for evidence, we'll look, for example, at the range, quality and take-up of extra-curricular activities offered.

## Narrowing of curriculum

I've talked a little about the narrowing of the curriculum. This links with research you published a year ago.

Your research in secondary schools found that:

- Timetabled PE time is decreasing and the cuts get bigger as students get older. You found that at KS4, 38% of schools had reduced timetabled PE in the past 5 years and nearly a quarter had done so in the past year. By the time young people are sixth form, they're doing barely half an hour a week.
- You also found that nearly 40% of teachers said their PE provision had declined because core or eBacc subjects have been given additional time, with students taken out of timetabled PE for extra tuition in those subjects.
- And PE teachers feel sport needs to be more valued by school leaders, parents and young people for what it offers.

This chimes with our own two-year research programme on the curriculum, which was divided into 3 phases.

In phase 1, we wanted to understand how schools were thinking about the curriculum. We did find many of them teaching to the test and teaching a narrowed curriculum in pursuit of league table outcomes, rather than thinking about the careful sequencing of a broad range of knowledge and skills. PE is likely to be a subject that's been affected by that curriculum narrowing.

## Curricular thinking

In phase 2 of our research, we chose schools that were invested in curriculum design and aimed to raise standards through the curriculum. We went to schools that had very different approaches, but we found some common factors relating to curriculum quality, including the importance of subjects as individual disciplines, and using assessment intelligently to shape curriculum design.

In phase 3, we wanted to find out how we might inspect aspects of curriculum quality, including whether the factors we'd identified can apply across a much broader range of schools. We found that inspectors can indeed have professional, in-depth conversations

about curriculum intent and implementation with school leaders and teachers across a broad range of schools. And crucially, we found that inspectors were able to make valid assessments of the quality of curriculum that a school is providing.

We visited 33 primary schools, 29 secondaries and 2 special schools. Within each school, inspectors looked at 4 different subjects: one core (English, science or maths) and 3 foundation – arts, humanities, technology, PE or modern foreign languages.

This allowed us to find out more broadly which subjects, if any, had more advanced curriculum thinking behind them. Inspectors also gave each school a banding. Only around a quarter of primary schools scored highly overall, as against over half of secondaries.

For PE, of the 33 primary schools we visited, 7 out of 10 scored well on our scale. Of the 29 secondaries, two-thirds scored well. This means PE actually came out better than some other subjects, especially at primary: for example, we've recently published our findings on science curriculum, which in primary didn't come out nearly as well. There is some good practice out there in PE and some work still to do.

We also unpacked intent and implementation. Most of the schools that scored well for intent but not so well for implementation were primaries. It is not hard to see primaries, particularly small ones, being less able to put their plans into action. It is difficult in many areas to recruit the right teachers. In small primaries, it is asking a lot of teachers to teach across the range of subjects and even across year groups. Of course we'll consider these challenges when making judgements on inspections.

In contrast, those schools that scored much better for implementation than for intent were all secondaries. Again, it is not hard to see why that might be. Weaker central leadership and lack of whole-school curriculum vision are more easily made up for in some of the secondary schools, especially large ones, by strong heads of departments and strong specialist teaching.

So in our new framework, we hope that judgements of quality of education and personal development will allow us to look more on broader and deeper subject content, at how well the curriculum is

being thought through and sequenced, and what knowledge and skills children are acquiring.

The curriculum research that we've been doing has had a PE strand. Last autumn we carried out 12 research visits looking specifically at PE and sport. This will feed into the development of some subject-specific training for inspectors.

And with a proposed extra day for our shorter section 8 inspections, we should have more time to have those conversations that will really help us get underneath what's happening.

## Primary PE and sport premium

What we don't expect to be doing from September is checking a PE and sport premium plan and looking at its impact. I know this is a disappointment for some of you, but we simply don't believe that the current approach is leading to improved PE and sporting outcomes. Inspection doesn't have the greatest positive impact in schools when it's about checklists or processes. Inspection drives real improvement where the inspection conversation really helps leaders think about the education they provide. As we have seen more widely with the use of data, checking only specific pieces of data or information encourages strange behaviour that is directed more towards compliance and hoop jumping, which can be at the expense of providing really good education.

We would like to bring about a shift in thinking, moving to: "How effective is the intent, implementation and, where appropriate, impact of the PE curriculum?" rather than "how is the money being spent?"

## Attitudes to PE in secondary schools

Another piece of research I'd like to draw attention to is the 2015 Sport England survey. It's sobering stuff. Their survey of older teenagers showed that a fifth of them hated or disliked PE at school. And that a bad experience at school can put children off physical activity for life – with girls more likely to dislike or hate PE.

So it was heartening to hear Sport England announcing from than £13 million from the National Lottery to train secondary school teachers to teach PE and sport. That is a significant amount of investment in secondary school PE and I hope it will support children develop and maintain that love of sport that will carry them into healthy and active adult lives. Your own 2018 impact report showed that more than 80% of young people were not meeting the Chief Medical Officer's guidelines of more than 60 minutes of activity every day.

This secondary teacher training will, I hope, do a great deal to raise the profile of PE and sport in school and to make it more appealing and inclusive. I applaud the work that you are doing here to help make this a reality.

## Obesity research

Our own research on obesity was published last July. I'm sure you're familiar with the figures - according to the National Child Measurement Programme, almost a quarter of children in England are overweight or obese at the start of primary schools and it rises to over a third by the time children leave primary school. Obesity happens for complex reasons. Children are influenced by many factors and we don't fully understand how these factors interact when it comes to individual children.

What we did not find was that schools could have a direct and measurable impact on a child's weight. There are too many factors beyond the school gate that make this impossible for them to control. Obesity is too complex and schools cannot do it alone. Schools cannot become a catch-all for everything that's going wrong in society. That distracts them from their core purpose: educating children and getting the curriculum right.

Our research also looked at what parents wanted – and as well as wanting more information on what their children were learning about at school, and what they were eating, parents wanted to see more time in the curriculum for PE. Obviously some of this can happen in after-school clubs, but a quarter of parents said their child couldn't access all the clubs and activities they wanted, often because not enough spaces were available. Then there were some issues with

cost or the school had not taken into account parents' work and childcare patterns.

Obviously some activities are more expensive. Not many primary schools have swimming pools, for example. But we found one activity pupils wanted to do more of was dodgeball, where all you need is some space. Many schools were really making the most of the school day for PE and offering the daily mile or purposeful play. But I think it's fair to say many schools could do more to listen to parents about what they need to know about and what parents want for their children.

## Teacher confidence at teaching PE

And we also picked up that some schools, especially primaries, need to do more to help their teachers get more confident and skilled at teaching PE. Coaches are great – but we worry that some schools have become over-reliant on them and I'm sure you're concerned about this too.

Coaches can add value when used in the right way, but we must not forget the importance of teacher training in primary schools. This is something that we at Ofsted will look into further when we reconsider our approach to inspecting initial teacher training. Is there enough time devoted to PE training?

So to finish, I'd like to reiterate the importance of PE and sports in schools for helping children lead healthy lives, building their resilience, making them strong, and giving them a lifelong love of being active and simply the pleasure of excelling. I hope that our new framework will allow us to look more at the brilliant work that PE teachers and sports coaches do across the country, and that our focus on the curriculum will bring PE and sport the greater focus that it deserves. Please do join in with our consultation.

Thank you.

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