

Physical Education: Intent, Implementation, and Impact

Middle Schools within the Initio Learning Trust (KS2-KS3)

Intent - Creating Motivated Movers - To build confidence and enjoyment in movement by trying new activities

To create meaningful and positive experiences in PE, Sport and/or physical activity that promotes healthy active lifestyles and a joy of movement now and beyond. The aim of our programme is to engage all pupils, to inspire them to enjoy physical activity and create a pathway to excel. This approach illustrates the all-encompassing nature of meaningful experiences connected by the three domains of learning: Cognitive/Knowing (Head), Affective/Feeling (Heart) and Psychomotor/Doing (Hands). Students will receive mastery oriented feedback for each of their activities and placed on an assessment continuum and pathway. We prioritise physical literacy and movement as the drivers for learning, focusing on developing motor competence, understanding rules, strategies, and tactics, and promoting healthy participation (Ofsted, 2023). Through the Head, Heart, Hands model (Frapwell, 2014) and Models Based Practice (Casey and Kirk, 2021) , we strive to improve pupils' physical performance in a range of sports and physical activities while fostering their social and emotional well-being.

Implementation

Our PE curriculum is designed with the following key components, aligned with the three pillars of PE education and supported by the Head, Heart, Hands model:

1. Motor Competency/Physical Literacy

- **Hands (Move):** Develop basic and advanced motor skills through a diverse range of sports and physical activities, ensuring students gain confidence and competence in their physical abilities. This includes:
 - **Core Performance:** Focus on gym, dance, swimming and other interpersonal challenges to build a strong foundation of physical literacy.
 - **Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS):** Enhance locomotor skills (running, jumping), stability skills (twisting, balancing), and manipulation skills (throwing, catching). These skills are crucial for participating in everyday activities and establishing long-term physically active lives (source).
 - **Sport-Specific Skills:** Develop skills in various sports such as cricket, rounders, volleyball, and table tennis, emphasizing technique, accuracy, and coordination.

- **Adapted Activities:** Tailor activities to meet the needs of all students, providing differentiated instruction to support varying skill levels and abilities.

2. Rules, Strategies, and Tactics

- **Head (Think):** Educate students on the rules, techniques, and strategies of different sports and physical activities, fostering a deeper understanding of game mechanics and tactical thinking. This includes:
 - **Teaching Games for Understanding (TGFU):** Implement TGFU to help students develop a comprehensive understanding of invasion games, enhancing their decision-making and strategic thinking.
 - **Game Sense:** Use Game Sense approaches to teach advanced principles of invasion games, encouraging students to think critically and adapt their play based on game situations.
 - **Health and Fitness Knowledge (Health Based PE):** Integrate lessons on health and fitness, emphasising the importance of physical activity, nutrition, and overall well-being.
 - **Assessment Clarity:** Provide clear and concise teacher and student assessment criteria using the Head, Heart, Hands framework, ensuring students understand what is expected of them in terms of cognitive, emotional, and physical development. [HHH Assessment Student View Updated.docx](#)

3. Healthy Participation

- **Heart (Connect/Feel):** Promote emotional and social skills through activities that require teamwork, cooperation, and resilience. This includes:
 - **Teamwork and Cooperation (OAA, Cooperative learning and Sport Education):** Design activities that encourage students to work together, solve problems, and share responsibilities, fostering a sense of community and collaboration.
 - **Emotional Resilience:** Create a supportive environment where students can face challenges, learn from failures, and celebrate successes, building emotional resilience and self-confidence.
 - **Respect and Responsibility (Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility):** Emphasize the importance of respecting equipment, facilities, teachers, and peers, promoting a positive and respectful learning environment.

- **Conflict Resolution:** Teach students how to resolve conflicts and disagreements constructively, developing their interpersonal skills and ability to work effectively in groups.

4. Vocabulary in PE

- Enhance students' vocabulary in PE, including specific terminology and informal terms used in sports/activities to effectively convey instructions and feedback. This supports students in understanding and executing complex movements and strategies.

Each year group follows a **conceptual theme** (e.g. Motivated Movers, Mindful Communicators, Resilient Participants), shaping all learning within that year. These themes support identity, belonging, and purposeful movement journeys.

Influenced by curriculum theorists Oates and Wiliam, our curriculum is sequenced to promote the revisiting of key ideas and skills over time using threshold concepts in units of work. As Sherrington (2021) describes in his work on curriculum design, learning should form a “narrative thread,” with concepts being revisited, rehearsed, and embedded through structured repetition and layered depth.

Impact

The impact of our PE curriculum is measured through:

- **Increased Participation:** A noticeable rise in student engagement and participation in PE classes, extra-curricular clubs, and school sports events, including the highest level of participation at our sports day.
- **Improved Skills and Knowledge:** Students demonstrating a deeper understanding of sports rules, strategies, and health principles, alongside improved physical abilities.
- **Enhanced Emotional and Social Skills:** Students showing greater teamwork, resilience, respect, and responsibility both in and out of PE classes.
- **Student voice:** Allowing students to be co-creators in their learning experiences.
- **Positive Feedback:** Positive responses from student surveys and parent feedback, indicating that the curriculum meets the needs and interests of our pupils.
- **Ongoing Self and Peer Reflection and Adjustment:** Regular assessments and reflections on the curriculum to ensure it remains relevant, challenging, and supportive of all students' growth.
- **Assessment-Driven Development:** Use of continued formal and summative assessments to create positive and meaningful targets for student development, ensuring a tailored approach to each student's progress.

By using the Head, Heart, Hands model and integrating vocabulary-rich instruction, we ensure a well-rounded PE program that not only focuses on physical performance but also nurtures the cognitive and emotional development of our students, preparing them for a healthy and active future.

Glossary

- **TGFU:** Teaching Games for Understanding, developing understanding of invasion games.
- **Game Sense:** Advanced principles of invasion games.
- **Core Performance:** Gym, dance, swimming and other interpersonal challenges through sports and fitness.

References

- Research Review Series: PE: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-pe/research-review-series-pe>
- Head, Heart, Hands: Frapwell, A. (2014). A practical guide to assessment without levels. 1st ed.
- Models-Based Practice: Casey, A., & Kirk, D. (2020). Models-based Practice in Physical Education (1st ed.). Routledge.
- [HHH Assessment Student View Updated.docx](#)
- Casey, A., & Kirk, D. (2020). *Models-Based Practice in Physical Education*. Routledge.
- Frapwell, A. (2014). *Head, Heart, Hands: A practical guide to assessment without levels*.
- Department for Education (2013). *The National Curriculum for Physical Education* (England).
- Sherrington, T. (2021). *Curriculum and the Narrative Thread* [blog].
- Oak National Academy (2022). *Curriculum Design Framework*.
- Sullivan, L. (2021). *Concept Curriculum in PE* [PE Scholar].