

# NURTURING EXCELLENCE THROUGH ACCREDITATION



As the educational landscape continues to evolve, so do the expectations placed upon physical education (PE), sport and physical activity in schools across England. With the goal of fostering holistic development and well-rounded students, the role of PE has shifted beyond merely promoting sport. Educators now face the challenge of providing high-quality PE that instils confidence, inclusivity and educational effectiveness. In this pursuit of excellence, educators often find themselves grappling with questions about what a quality assured resource is and how to implement sustainable teaching practices. In particular, PE leads and head teachers require quality assured resources that will satisfy both Ofsted and the needs of their colleagues.

Engaging with thousands of schools annually has provided imoves with valuable insights into these concerns. Among the chief priorities for primary schools is the allocation of the Primary PE and Sport Premium funding. In accordance with guidance, the emphasis has shifted from promoting physical activity for the children to equipping all staff members with the confidence, knowledge and skills to teach PE, sport and physical activity effectively. This signifies a move away from over-reliance on external coaches and a renewed focus on nurturing teachers' abilities to deliver engaging, inclusive lessons and incorporate physical activity into daily routines.

The rewards of teaching PE lie in educators' satisfaction when they craft inclusive, engaging and educationally enriching lessons. However, achieving this level of proficiency is often easier said than done. The complexities arise from ongoing debates about the purpose of PE, differing priorities, policy considerations and varying levels of teacher confidence and training experiences. Thus, the provision of teacher education and continuing professional development (CPD) emerges as a pivotal pillar in empowering educators to deliver sound and fulfilling PE lessons.

Sarah Williams, Primary PE Specialist Course Leader at Sheffield Hallam University, shares her insights from trainee and early career teachers. She reveals that, "The lack of experience or comprehensive understanding of PE progression often leaves educators seeking guidance on identifying quality teaching resources." Sarah emphasises the "significance of impartial quality marks and accreditations, which offer a framework for assessing resources, ensuring educators make informed choices amidst the variety of commercial offers."

Established in 2000, in England, the Professional Development Board (PDB) for PE is the independent authority assessing the quality of CPD – be it physical or digital – for practitioners in PE, school sport and physical activity. It works closely with Ofsted and the Department for Education. The PDB's rigorous assessment process guarantees that CPD consistently meets high standards. Sue Wilkinson, CEO of the Association for Physical Education (afPE), highlights that "accreditation brings a

level of quality assurance from experienced school improvement specialists. The process involves a thorough evaluation of provision, impact and developmental aspects before approval." Eileen Marchant, Chair of the PDB, underscores this: "The PDB's rigour in assessing providers assures schools that the resources they use have undergone independent scrutiny, aligning with their quest for confident, knowledgeable teachers who deliver transformative PE experiences."

Eager to address schools' queries on quality, we at imoves resolved to meet the highest standards for our primary school offer. This demanded an arduous effort, culminating in a comprehensive application process which included outlining resource aims, impact on teachers and students, team structure, design details and references from collaborating schools. Additionally, the PDB was granted access to the imoves platform to conduct a thorough evaluation of the resources.

The PDB's assessment yielded positive outcomes, acknowledging our role in delivering transformative PE experiences that extend throughout the school environment. Notably, our impact on broader skills, like confidence, teamwork, emotional wellbeing and physical activity beyond PE lessons, drew recognition. The journey to accreditation wasn't without challenges. Initial feedback highlighted the need to streamline our assessment tools to better align with Ofsted's requirements, saving significant teacher effort. This process, though demanding, proved invaluable in refining our offer. Subsequent re-application with revised assessment tools led to PDB approval. The board lauded imoves' professional support for our far-reaching impact on educators, from novices to veterans.

For schools navigating the terrain of quality assured resources, the imoves experience underscores the value of PDB accreditation. The assurance of independent evaluation and alignment with stringent standards offers educators confidence in selecting resources that uphold excellence. The application process itself not only reaffirms resource quality but also illuminates areas for enhancement.

In conclusion, the journey towards providing high-quality PE, sport and physical activity is complex and the importance of independently accredited resources becomes clear. The imoves story showcases the transformative potential of meeting the PDB's rigorous criteria, ensuring teachers are armed with resources that embody educational excellence. PDB-accredited resources stand as beacons of quality, contributing to the holistic development of students and the enrichment of the educational experience. ■

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