


**GET
ACTIVE!**

**Physical Education,
Physical Activity and Sport
for Children and Young People**

A Guiding Framework



Get Active! Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport
for Children and Young People: A Guiding Framework

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Foreword

This government is committed to the promotion of physical education, physical activity and sport in recognition of the educational, social, health and cultural benefits that can be gained through participation.

A series of measures has already been adopted to promote awareness and action related to the cultivation of a more active, physically educated and healthier society. These measures include the development of a national physical activity plan, the creation of physical activity guidelines and the establishment of the Active School Flag.

This guide is intended as an enabling framework which opens the way to further developments involving a deeper level of cooperation across agencies, in the interest of children and young people. It is a framework which organisations and individuals involved in the promotion of physical education, physical activity or sport can use according to their needs. The guide is not prescriptive or exhaustive in detail as its purpose is more about encouraging dialogue and generating new ideas which act as a catalyst for action.

I hope this guide will inform debate about the links between education and other sectors involved in the provision of sport and physical activity, in the belief that a collaborative approach is the most effective in cultivating an active healthy society, now and into the future.

Enda Kenny TD
An Taoiseach

Acknowledgements

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Get Active I: Children

The desired outcomes in reference to children were developed in consultation with the following: Ms. Caitriona Cosgrave, Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Institute of Education; and Ms. Susan Marron, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra. The outcomes were then reviewed by members of the Irish Primary Physical Education Association (IPPEA) and the Colleges of Education Physical Education Consortium (CEPEC).

Get Active I: Young People

The desired outcomes in reference to young people were developed in consultation with the following: Ms. Margo Jackson, Mercy Secondary School, Waterford; Ms. Marian Carey, Presentation Brothers' College, The Mardyke, Cork; and

Mr. Michael Carey, Glanmire Community College, Glanmire, Co. Cork. This work was carried out under the direction of Dr. Mary O' Flaherty, National Co-ordinator, Junior Cycle Physical Education Support Service.

Consultation Process

The following groups were consulted during the drafting of this guide

- Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools
- CARA Adapted Physical Activity Centre, Institute of Technology, Tralee
- Catholic Primary School Management Association
- Church of Ireland College of Education
- Church of Ireland Managerial Bodies
- Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Institute of Education
- Department of Health & Leisure Studies, Institute of Technology, Tralee
- Educate Together
- Froebel College of Education
- Health Promotion Officers - Physical Activity
- Health Promotion Policy Unit, Department of Health & Children
- Health Service Executive
- Irish Heart Foundation
- Irish Primary Physical Education Association
- Irish Second-Level Students' Union
- Irish Vocational Education Association
- Joint Managerial Body for Voluntary Secondary Schools
- Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
- National Association of Principals & Deputy Principals
- National Council for Curriculum & Assessment
- National Parents Council, Primary
- National Parents Council, Post Primary
- National Youth Council of Ireland
- Network of Local Sports Partnerships
- Outdoor Education Department, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, Castlebar
- Outdoor Education, Ireland
- Physical Education & Sports Science Department, University of Limerick
- Physical Education Association of Ireland
- School of Health & Human Performance, Dublin City University
- Sports Studies & Physical Education Department, University College Cork
- Sports National Governing Bodies
 - Athletics Ireland
 - Badminton Ireland
 - Basketball Ireland
 - Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael
 - Football Association of Ireland
 - Gaelic Athletic Association
 - Irish Gymnastics
 - Irish Rugby Football Union
 - Ladies Gaelic Football
 - Swim Ireland
 - Tennis Ireland
 - Volleyball Association of Ireland
- St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra

Thanks to all of those who provided oral and written submissions. A special thanks to Kathy Campbell, Programme Administrator (JCPESS), for her role in co-ordinating the consultation process and collating feedback.

A special thanks also, to Gráinne McConnell for her contribution to the development of the document.

Introduction to the Get Active Guide

Why was this Guide Developed?

Physical activity plays an important role in the lives of children and young people:

- as a medium for education
- as a basis for healthy living
- as a vehicle for social inclusion¹

In recognition of the potential within this role, this guide sets out to create the framework for a co-ordinated approach to physical education, physical activity and sport in school and community settings for children and young people². It draws on the *National Guidelines on Physical Activity for Ireland (2009)*, which outline the nature, frequency and intensity of physical activity to be engaged in for health benefits. Those guidelines form the foundation for this and related documents which seek to clarify the desired outcomes, in terms of knowledge, competencies and attitudes, of quality physical education, physical activity and sport.

The formulation of this guide reflects the commitment of the Department of Education and Skills; the Department of Health; the Department of Children; and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport to the promotion of children's well-being and interests. More specifically, this guide is an effort to realise the strengths that can be gained in terms of quality provision and experiences if common goals are promoted and pursued across a range of physical activity contexts³.

It is envisaged that experiences across the three settings in this framework would support and reinforce each other. In this way, all children are provided with a clear accessible pathway for progression so that they can achieve their potential and live an active, healthy lifestyle. Reference is made to 'play' in the document, in recognition of the fact that young children often participate in physical activity in this way.

These contexts are:

1. **In Class:** Physical education and related programmes, taught as part of the curriculum;
2. **In Co-curricular Activities:** School-related physical activity and sport outside of curriculum time;
3. **In Community:** Physical activity and sport outside of school hours in the community setting, including walking or cycling for everyday travel needs.

Who should Use this Guide?

The guide is targeted at:

- Young people and those who work directly with children and young people in physical activity settings in schools. This includes teachers and external providers (EPs)⁴ at primary level, and physical education teachers and teachers involved in organising co-curricular activity at post-primary level, and sports leaders⁵.
- Those who influence the nature of physical education, physical activity and sports experiences, such as: school leaders; Boards of Management; and Parent Associations of all schools; after-school childcare providers at primary level; and Student Councils at post-primary level.
- Those involved in co-ordinating and providing physical activity and sport in community contexts, such as the Co-ordinator attached to Local Sports partnerships; Sports National Governing Bodies; and Physical Activity Co-ordinators. Additionally, it is aimed at parents / guardians and Parent Associations at primary level as they play an important role in the provision of co-curricular and community-based physical activity and sport.

What are our Definitions?

In this guide:

- The term physical education refers to activities taught as part of the curriculum within class time where the emphasis is on learning.
- Physical activity is an all-encompassing term which includes physical education, sport, play and activity undertaken for enjoyment or health or performance enhancing purposes.
- Sport refers to those activities that are organised in a structured way and have a focus on competition.

What does this Guide Entail?

The guide entails a suite of three documents - **Get Active 1, Get Active 2 and Get Active 3** which are briefly described below. While they can be read on a stand-alone basis, they are best considered together.

Get Active 1, *Agreeing a vision for all to work towards*, outlines the desired outcomes of children's and young people's participation in physical education and physical activity, and should be considered in line with the school's or club's mission and vision. These desired outcomes are intended to help users review the current position, as a basis for further action.

Get Active 2, *Developing a plan to achieve our vision*, addresses the process of implementation, and guides users in terms of setting down targets, tasks, time frames, roles and responsibilities. This element of the guide is intended to help those involved in planning and delivering programmes to work together more effectively. Ideally, a school should develop its physical education and co-curricular physical activity programmes within the framework of its school plan as guided by its vision and aims.

Get Active 3, *Evaluating our progress*, is intended to guide users in relation to the monitoring and evaluation of those programmes that are in place. Some of its elements may form the basis of an ongoing review process within the school and community, carried out in a systematic way, in order to improve programme effectiveness. Alternatively, it can help schools prepare for accreditation schemes such as the Active School Flag⁶ and Health Promoting Schools⁷.

Time Frame

A time frame of approximately three to five years is envisaged for the completion of the planning cycle (i.e. review, design, implementation and evaluation process) associated with the guide.

Notes:

- I Education:** Commission of the European Communities (2007) *White Paper on Sport*, Brussels. Online at: http://ec.europa.eu/sport/white-paper/index_en.htm

Department of Education and Science and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (1999) *Primary School Curriculum, Physical Education*, Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Science and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2003) *Junior Cycle Physical Education*, Dublin: The Stationery Office.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2009) *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*. Online at: http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Early_Childhood_Education/

Healthy Living: Department of Health and Children, Health Service Executive (2009) *Get Ireland Active: The National Guidelines on Physical Activity for Ireland*. Online at: <http://www.getirelandactive.ie/>

Higgins, C., Lavin, T. and Metcalfe, O. (2008) *Health Impacts of Education: A review*, Dublin: Institute of Public Health in Ireland.

The Report of the National Taskforce on Obesity (2005) *Obesity: The policy challenges*, Department of Health and Children, Ireland.

Social Inclusion: Fahey, T., Delaney, L., and Gannon, B. (2005) *School Children and Sport in Ireland*, Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.

Lunn, P. (2007) *Fair Play? Sport and Social Disadvantage in Ireland*, Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.

- 2 For the purpose of this guide, ‘children’ refers to those in the primary education system, generally aged between 4 and 12 years and ‘young people’ refers to those in post primary education, generally aged between 12 and 18 years.
- 3 These contexts are consistent with the ‘three pillars’ identified in the ESRI (2005) publication *School Children and Sport in Ireland*.
- 4 For the purpose of this guide, ‘external provider (EP), refers to those who support the primary teacher in the implementation of their PE programme during curriculum time’ e.g. a qualified second level PE teacher, national governing body coach or another qualified coach / teacher. Ref: IPPEA (2010.) Online at: www.irishprimarype.com
- 5 See Irish Sports Council and Sports Council Northern Ireland (2003) *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport* p.6.
- 6 Active School Flag. Online at: <http://www.activeschoolflag.ie/>
- 7 World Health Organisation (2008) *School Policy Framework: Implementation of the WHO global strategy on diet, physical activity and health*, Geneva: World Health Organisation. Online at: <http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/schools/en/>





**GET
ACTIVE 1**

**Desired Outcomes of
Physical Education,
Physical Activity and Sport
for Children and Young People:
Agreeing a vision for all
to work towards**



I. Introduction to Get Active I

Agreeing a vision for all to work towards

This first document is intended to clarify what might be expected of children and young people when engaged in physical activity in a range of contexts. It provides direction and a basis for communication for those involved. These expectations are expressed as desired outcomes in the following section. As a participant, teacher, provider or administrator, it is important that you are familiar with these desired outcomes and that you use them as a measure of the current position. It is important also, that you share them with others for whom they are relevant, such as colleagues, other providers, parents and the children or young people themselves.

The outcomes are not intended to be used as a checklist or rigid format of evaluation. Rather, they are intended as indicators of good practice within which the scope of children's and young people's participation can be acknowledged.



1.1 Desired Outcomes of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport for Children

What are the desired outcomes of quality physical education, physical activity and sport?

Children who...

1. are **committed** to regular participation in physical education, physical activity and sport, including walking or cycling for everyday travel needs
2. possess **knowledge and understanding** of the role of physical education, physical activity and sport as part of an active, healthy lifestyle
3. have the **confidence** to get involved in physical education, physical activity and sport
4. have the **physical, social and emotional competencies** to participate in physical education, physical activity and sport
5. are able **to make informed decisions** with the support of their parents or guardians regarding their participation in physical education, physical activity and sport
6. strive to **maximise their personal potential** in physical education, physical activity and sport, and to recognise and respect the potential of others
7. **enjoy and appreciate the benefits** of physical education, physical activity and sport

Outcome 1

Children are committed to regular participation in physical education, physical activity and sport, including walking or cycling for everyday travel needs

In Class

Children:

- display effort in physical education lessons
- wear appropriate clothing for physical education lessons
- move safely to and from the play areas and use equipment safely
- are aware, and their parents or guardians are advised, of co-curricular opportunities to engage in physical activities outside of curriculum time
- engage in incidental physical activity opportunities during the school day

In Co-curricular Activities

Children:

- participate in a range of developmentally appropriate physical activities with an emphasis on play
- experience an appropriate level of competition relevant to their age and stage of development
- are appropriately equipped and dressed for participation in activities
- help organise equipment and co-operate with the teacher or leader
- choose co-curricular activities with the assistance of their parents or guardians to develop their competencies

In Community

Children:

- engage daily in physically active outdoor play
- walk or cycle when and where possible
- participate regularly in local physical activity settings such as the home, playgrounds, after-school care settings and community settings
- co-operate with friends when playing in physical activity settings

Outcome 2

Children possess knowledge and understanding of the role of physical education, physical activity and sport as part of an active, healthy lifestyle

In Class

Children:

- identify benefits resulting from regular participation in different forms of play, movement and physical activity
- experience and recognise the links between physical education, social, personal and health education and other curricular areas
- can suggest ways they can practise what they learn in physical education, and other physical activity settings
- can recognise the benefits of sport and physical activity in promoting health

In Co-curricular Activities

Children:

- apply what they have learned in physical education to a variety of play, physical activity and sport settings
- participate in a broad range of activities incorporating skill and health-related components of fitness
- experience the positive effects that result from participation in co-curricular play, physical activity and sport

In Community

Children:

- are aware of links between knowledge learned in class and activities experienced in community settings
- know how to participate appropriately in play, physical activity and sport with family members and other children

Outcome 3

Children have the confidence to get involved in physical education, physical activity and sport

In Class

Children:

- are willing to try out new activities across the six strands of physical education
- show enthusiasm when learning new skills
- are happy to work individually, in pairs and in small groups
- are willing to take turns and help less able pupils
- have confidence in their abilities and experience personal success

In Co-curricular Activities

Children:

- avail of opportunities to engage in a range of physical activities
- ask questions to help their understanding
- can demonstrate to others without displaying fear of failure
- engage in practice to experience success and increase self-confidence

In Community

Children:

- engage in physical activity outside of organised sport, including walking or cycling for everyday travel needs
- are happy to try out new activities
- get involved in different aspects of sports club life with their parents / guardians or independently
- are aware when others need help and encouragement and provide as appropriate

Outcome 4

Children have the physical, social and emotional competencies to participate in physical education, physical activity and sport

In Class

Children:

- develop their physical skills through appropriate movement experiences
- experience achievement in and build positive attitudes towards activities
- demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the value of physical education and physical activity
- develop their capacity to assess their own and others' performance and apply the correct techniques to improve
- communicate well with other children during the lesson
- appreciate the feelings of winning and losing and understand fair play

In Co-curricular Activities

Children:

- can competently engage in a variety of sports and physical activities including break-time activities
- negotiate rules for activities created by themselves and cope with winning and losing
- are happy to talk to others involved in their physical activity
- can experience a positive emotional connection with their peers
- begin to demonstrate awareness and respect for those less or more skilful than themselves
- develop the qualities necessary to work as part of a team

In Community

Children:

- further develop their physical competencies through participation in activities outside of school
- have the confidence and interpersonal skills to engage in physical activities as an individual or as part of a group
- have the self-confidence to initiate, sustain and manage constructive social relationships in physical activity settings
- develop positive thinking and coping skills which would form a basis for lifelong involvement in sport and physical activity

Outcome 5

Children are able to make informed decisions with the support of their parents or guardians regarding their participation in physical education, physical activity and sport

In Class

Children:

- can work responsibly and independently with or without the support of the teacher
- are able to organise tasks as directed by the teacher
- develop their ability to understand concepts and to problem solve
- consider the abilities of others and adapt what they do accordingly

In Co-curricular Activities

Children:

- can choose the activities in which they wish to be involved with the support of their parents / guardians if necessary
- develop the ability to make decisions with the support of leaders or coaches
- develop their understanding of how to improve at the activity and practise accordingly
- vary and adapt their actions in response to changing circumstances

In Community

Children:

- recognise the personal and familial benefits of participating in sport and physical activities in their personal time
- take responsibility for improving their abilities in their chosen activities as appropriate
- adapt their performance in response to changing situations

Outcome 6

Children strive to maximise their personal potential in physical education, physical activity and sport, and to recognise and respect the potential of others

In Class

Children:

- do their best when participating in physical education lessons
- experience quality opportunities to practise and apply skills
- begin to analyse their own performance
- provide appropriate feedback to others on their performance
- support other children who are trying to improve

In Co-curricular Activities

Children:

- experience enjoyment and success in a variety of activities of their choice
- practice skills and activities during free play at break time
- believe that with practise improvement is possible
- help and play with others who may not be as competent

In Community

Children:

- with the support of parents / guardians, participate in appropriate activities for their stage of development
- participate in physically active family outings and local activities
- talk to their parents / guardians and leaders for advice on further challenging activities
- experience challenging physical activities which allow them to develop their talents
- participate with others to help them improve

Outcome 7

Children enjoy and appreciate the benefits of physical education, physical activity and sport

In Class

Children:

- are happy in physical education lessons and interact with their classmates in a positive way
- share what they experience during physical education lessons with family and friends
- identify what they have learnt in their physical education lessons

In Co-curricular Activities

Children:

- participate in a variety of co-curricular activities of their choice
- show commitment to chosen activities by attending on a regular basis
- accept and respect decisions made by game officials, teachers and parents / guardians
- show an interest in the school's physical activities and clubs by bringing notices home and by viewing the school noticeboard

In Community

Children:

- avail of opportunities to engage in physical activity at home for personal enjoyment
- show commitment to chosen activities with parent / guardian support as appropriate
- are happy to talk about their positive experiences at chosen activities
- enjoy regular participation in their chosen activities



1.2 Desired Outcomes of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport for Young People

What are the desired outcomes of quality physical education, physical activity and sport?

Young people who...

1. are **committed** to regular participation in physical education, physical activity and sport, including walking or cycling for everyday travel needs
2. possess **knowledge and understanding** of the role of physical education, physical activity and sport as part of an active, healthy lifestyle
3. have the **confidence** to get involved in physical education, physical activity and sport
4. have the **physical, social and emotional competencies** to participate in physical education, physical activity and sport
5. are able to **make informed decisions** about their participation in physical education, sport and physical activity
6. strive to **maximise their personal potential** in physical education, physical activity and sport, and to recognise and respect the potential of others
7. **enjoy and appreciate the benefits** of physical education, physical activity and sport

Outcome 1

Young people are committed to regular participation in physical education, physical activity and sport including walking or cycling for everyday travel needs

In Class

Young people:

- participate fully in physical education lessons
- take responsibility for their own kit and equipment
- are prepared for multiple roles within the physical education class
- contribute to the smooth running of the lesson

In Co-curricular Activities

Young people:

- participate in a range of physical activities, including non-competitive and individual pursuits, where possible
- attend training sessions and competitions
- are appropriately equipped and dressed for participation in activities
- help organise activities and support the coach or team leader
- are able to identify ways they can develop their competence in physical activities in and outside school

In Community

Young people:

- assign personal time to physical activity
- take responsibility for themselves and others while engaged in activities
- join a sports club or group and participate on a regular basis
- walk or cycle when and where possible
- are involved in the broader activities of the club or group, such as committee meetings and social and fundraising events
- source information about their chosen physical activities
- take responsibility for leading, organising and encouraging others to engage in physical activity

Outcome 2

Young people possess knowledge and understanding of the role of physical education, physical activity and sport as part of an active healthy lifestyle

In Class

Young people:

- recognise the links between physical education and social, personal and health education
- are willing to learn the basic components of fitness and principles of training
- can suggest ways of applying knowledge learned to out-of-school activities
- can recognise the benefits of sport and physical activity in promoting health
- can identify the negative aspects of sport and physical activity, and how these impact on health

In Co-curricular Activities

Young people:

- apply what they have learned in physical education to a variety of sporting and physical activity situations
- can identify the difference between skill-related and health-related components of fitness
- recognise the positive effects that result from participation in co-curricular sport and physical activities

In Community

Young people:

- are willing to share knowledge learned in class with their club / group outside of school
- know the difference between training to maximum potential and overtraining
- are open to including members of the wider community in sports club or physical activity groups
- develop an informed and positive approach to active living as a basis for lifelong involvement in sport and physical activity

Outcome 3

Young people have the confidence to get involved in physical education, physical activity and sport

In Class

Young people:

- are willing to try out new activities
- show initiative when learning new skills
- are willing to undertake a range of roles (team leader, referee, coach) within the class
- are willing to help less able students
- are happy to work on their own or as a member of a group

In Co-curricular Activities

Young people:

- avail of opportunities to engage in a range of physical activities
- avail of opportunities to adopt different roles related to the activity
- show initiative when participating in an activity
- are not afraid to ask questions
- can demonstrate to others without displaying fear of failure
- are open to constructive criticism

In Community

Young people:

- can independently engage in a physical activity outside organised sport, including walking or cycling for everyday travel needs
- are not afraid to try out new approaches to the activity
- can adopt a variety of different roles if involved in a sports club
- volunteer ideas and thoughts when trying to promote the club
- actively engage with club coaches and leaders
- are aware when others need help and encouragement, and provide as appropriate

Outcome 4

Young people have the physical, social and emotional competencies to participate in physical education, physical activity and sport

In Class

Young people:

- demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the value of lifelong participation in sport and physical activity
- develop their competence in a range of physical activities
- develop their capacity to analyse their own and others' performance, and apply the correct techniques to improve
- communicate well with classmates

In Co-curricular Activities

Young people:

- can competently engage in a variety of sports and physical activities
- develop the social and emotional competencies to cope with both winning and losing when engaging in competition
- are happy to talk and cooperate with others involved in their sport and / or physical activities
- can experience a positive emotional connection with their peers
- demonstrate awareness and respect for those with abilities lesser or greater than theirs
- demonstrate leadership qualities when participating in sport and physical activity, where appropriate

In Community

Young people:

- further develop their physical competencies through participation in activities outside of school
- have the confidence and interpersonal skills to engage in physical activities on an individual basis or as part of a group or team
- possess a wide range of technical skills and can apply these skills using speed and power
- have the self-confidence to initiate, sustain and manage constructive social relationships in a sport and physical activity setting
- can demonstrate positive thinking habits and coping skills which would form a basis for lifelong involvement in sport and physical activity

Outcome 5

Young people are able to make informed decisions about their participation in physical education, physical activity and sport

In Class

Young people:

- can work responsibly and independently, without constantly relying on the teacher
- become organised in an effort to make progress
- develop their ability to understand concepts and to problem solve
- consider the abilities of others, and adapt what they do accordingly
- develop their decision-making ability when in game or performance situations

In Co-curricular Activities

Young people:

- are able to choose the activities and level, both competitive and non-competitive, at which they wish to be involved
- have the ability to make decisions with conviction, without relying constantly on direction from the coach / leader
- identify ways in which they can improve at the activity and practise accordingly
- vary and adapt their actions in response to changing circumstances

In Community

Young people:

- recognise the personal and societal benefits of participating in sport and physical activities in their personal time
- are proactive about developing their ability in their chosen activities
- are able to make decisions with self-assurance, without continuously needing guidance from the group leader or coach
- adapt their performance in response to changing situations

Outcome 6

Young people strive to maximise their personal potential in physical education, physical activity and sport, and to recognise and respect the potential of others

In Class

Young people:

- do their best when participating in physical education lessons
- can compare their performance with that of others
- seek guidance on what they need to do in order to improve
- support others in their class who are trying to improve

In Co-curricular Activities

Young people:

- are interested in reaching their potential in sport and physical activities of their choice, while not limiting the range of activities in which they are engaged
- devote personal time to extra practice, without overtraining
- believe that they have the potential to further improve on their accomplishments
- show interest in the efforts of others who are engaging in sport and physical activity and provide support as appropriate

In Community

Young people:

- are determined to fulfil their potential in sports and physical activities of their choice
- assign personal time to training and preparation
- ask for advice on how to progress
- facilitate others in their efforts to improve by helping to organise activities

Outcome 7

Young people enjoy and appreciate the benefits of physical education, physical activity and sport

In Class

Young people:

- are happy in the physical education lesson and interact with their classmates in a positive way
- come to class on time, with kit and ready to take part in activities
- recognise the importance of what they can learn in physical education
- share what they do in physical education with family and friends

In Co-curricular Activities

Young people:

- show their commitment to their sports club or physical activity group by attending training sessions and competitions / events
- show an interest in the school's clubs and physical activities by viewing noticeboards on a regular basis
- contribute to the running of the sports club or physical activity
- are happy to demonstrate their affiliation to their school's sport or physical activities
- assign personal time to physical activities outside of organised sport

In Community

Young people:

- take part in club activities or activity of their choice, on an independent basis
- are committed to their club or group and are interested in its development
- are happy to commit fully to each session
- talk about what they are doing in their club or group with enthusiasm
- keep up-to-date on developments within their sport or physical activity
- develop and value a lifestyle which accommodates participation in sport and physical activity on a regular basis



**Physical Education,
Physical Activity and Sport
for Children and Young People:
Developing a plan to
achieve our vision**



2. Introduction to Get Active 2

The National Guidelines on Physical Activity for Ireland state that all children and young people should be active, at a moderate-to-vigorous level, for at least 60 minutes every day.

The *Get Active* series provides a planning framework which facilitates the achievement of this goal, along with the development of skilled performance and the knowledge and attitudes which will support and sustain lifelong active lifestyles.

Get Active 1 sets out the desired outcomes of children's and young people's participation in physical education, physical activity and sport. These desired outcomes create a common vision, language and understanding of what children and young people should be working towards, along with their teachers, coaches or sports leaders across school and community contexts. They also serve as criteria for reviewing the current position in order to identify priorities for action.

Get Active 2 aims to guide users in working towards these desired outcomes through the formulation and implementation of a plan. The processes involved are similar to other planning frameworks in place across education and community settings and as such should be familiar to users. The purpose of the guide is to raise awareness of the range of physical activity experiences to which children and young people are exposed and to promote co-operation among providers in forging school-community links. The intention in this is to ensure that practices within schools and in community contexts are symbiotic, mutually supportive and essentially child-centred or young-person-centred.

More specifically, this guide is intended to assist users in:

- setting tangible achievable objectives to chart progress towards realising the desired outcomes set out in Get Active 1
- planning measures or initiatives to improve the level of engagement in physical education, physical activity and sport (to be known hereafter as PEPAS)
- implementing initiatives
- evaluating the effectiveness of initiatives in cultivating a positive culture to support physically active lifestyles (further information on evaluation will be provided in Get Active 3)

Get Active 2 refers to both children (with particular reference to those attending primary school) and young people (with particular reference to those attending post-primary school). The guide is of relevance to all who work with children or young people, whether in school or community contexts.

Section 2 of this document outlines the planning cycle for PEPAS, and it applies the cycle to the three settings that are identified in Get Active 1: in class, in co-curricular activities, and in community. Thus, while it is important that each is aware of the efforts of the other, school and community groups are addressed independently, as follows:

- **Sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 refer to planning and implementation in schools**
- **Section 2.4.3 refers to planning and implementation in community settings.**

Finally, in recognition of the level of multi-stakeholder collaboration required in the design and implementation of an effective PEPAS plan, details of the individual roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders are provided in this section.

Stakeholders include:

- School leaders and teachers
- Children and young people
- Parents and families
- Community based organisations and groups including:-
 - Local Sports Partnership (LSP) Sports Officers
 - Sport's National Governing Bodies (NGBs)
 - Health Service Executive (HSE) Physical Activity Co-ordinators

Government is also a stakeholder, in view of its responsibilities in the area of health and well-being.

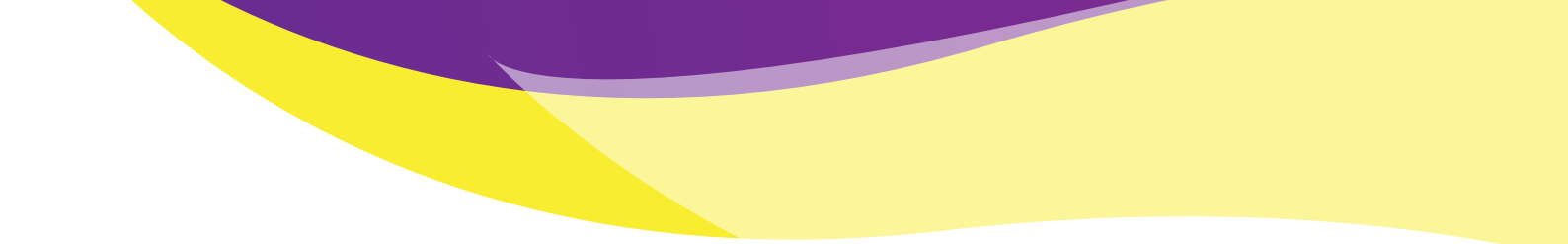
2.1 How does the Get Active Guide Relate to Other School Schemes?

There are a number of other initiatives that are designed to promote healthy active lifestyles through good practice and quality programmes. Among them are the Health Promoting School, the Active School Flag and An Taisce's Green Flag. The *Get Active* guide is not intended to replace or duplicate those initiatives. Rather, it augments or supports what they might provide. All of these schemes can reinforce and complement one another.

The Health Promoting School (HPS) is part of a Europe-wide network – the Schools for Health in Europe (SHE) Network—which aims to support schools in the promotion of health. A large number of Irish schools are currently working through the HPS process supported by local Health Promotion Departments. The PEPAS guidelines are aligned with those of the HPS in recognising the influence of context or setting, the role of stakeholders, and the importance of a systematic approach to the development of policy influenced by the needs of the school and its students and to the evaluation of its implementation. Working towards a HPS involves a structured process entailing a needs audit, as with a PEPAS plan. This audit is used to determine priority areas for action. Physical activity is often identified as a key area for action and in these circumstances, schools that follow the *Get Active* guidelines will be meeting the physical activity requirements of the Health Promoting School.

The Active School Flag (ASF) involves schools in a process of self-evaluation around provision. It focuses on: curriculum planning; co-curricular activities; additional promotion of physical activity and health-related exercise; links with community; and qualifications, training and resources. The Active School Flag provides a mechanism which acts both as an incentive and as a guide for schools interested in promoting quality physical education, physical activity and sport. Steps 4, 5 and 6 of the process outlined in *Get Active 2* (In school) relate directly to the measures required to seek ASF accreditation. Schools following the *Get Active* process can refer to the Active School Flag website for guidance around provision and specific examples of what works.

An Taisce's **Green Flag Award** incorporates a physical activity dimension in its *travel theme* which refers to walking and cycling to schools. As well as benefiting the environment, walking and cycling to school can increase daily physical activity, and thus can serve as a means of addressing some of the desired outcomes set out in *Get Active 1*. While the award scheme is school-focused, these forms of activity occur in the community and therefore represent a school-community link. Walking and cycling are also encouraged through the Active School Flag.



The *Get Active* guide speaks to a public health and physical activity agenda in attending to school and community physical activity and sport. It fills a gap in school policy terms, in addressing co-curricular physical activity and sport, and encourages both school and community-based providers to consider the implications of their combined influences and actions on the child and young person.



Developing a Plan to Achieve Our Vision: The process at a glance

This chapter outlines a six-step process for developing a plan to achieve our vision. Section 2.2 gives an overview of the process. Section 2.3 considers the role and composition of a co-ordinating team. The rest of the section falls into three parts, dealing in turn with the three contexts identified in Get Active I:

- In Class
- In Co-Curricular Activities
- In Community

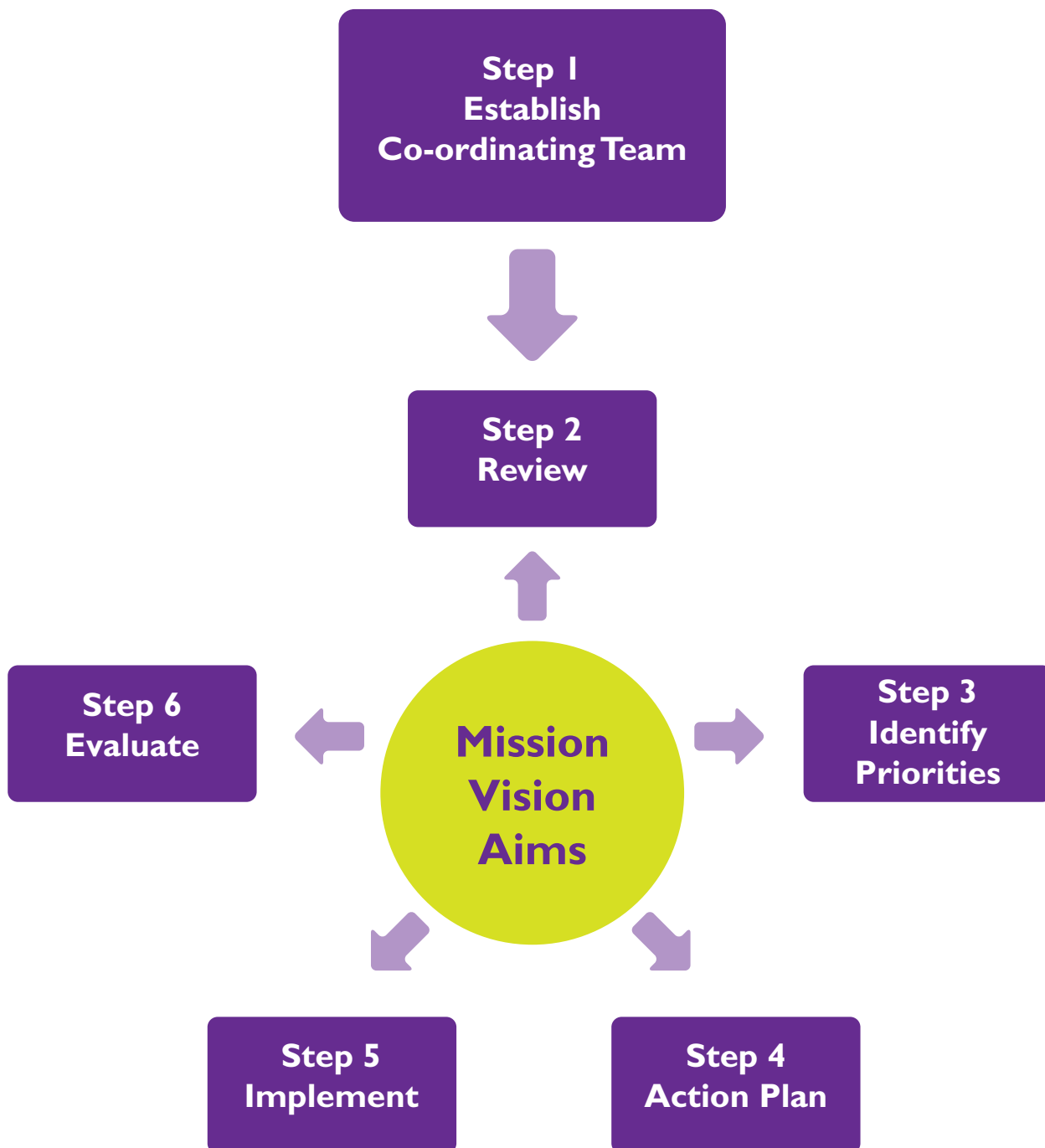
2.2 The Process at a Glance

Figure 1 presents the basic planning framework for PEPAS. It is a six-step process:

- Step 1:** Establish a representative team to organise and co-ordinate the development of the plan
- Step 2:** Review the current situation, to determine where the school or organisation is at in relation to PEPAS and how well it is achieving the desired outcomes set out in Get Active I
- Step 3:** Identify priorities for development or improvement
- Step 4:** Prepare action plans to address the priorities, setting out targets or desired outcomes and specifying who will do what, when and with what resources in order to achieve them
- Step 5:** Implement the action plans, monitoring progress so that the plans can be adjusted in the light of experience if necessary
- Step 6:** Evaluate the success of the action plans in reaching the targets or desired outcomes

As the diagram shows, Steps 2 to 6 form a Planning Cycle that revolves around the core mission, vision and aims of the school or organisation.

Fig. 1 Basic planning framework for PEPAS



2.3 The Co-ordinating Team

Step 1: Establish a Co-ordinating Team

Step 1 in the proposed planning process is to establish a Co-ordinating Team. In general terms, the role of this team is to organise and co-ordinate the planning process. It is recognised, however, that every school and community organisation is a unique blend of context factors, with its own distinct set of strengths and challenges. Accordingly, the specifics of the role of a Co-ordinating Team will be determined by the individual circumstances and particular needs of the school or community. The Co-ordinating Team may:

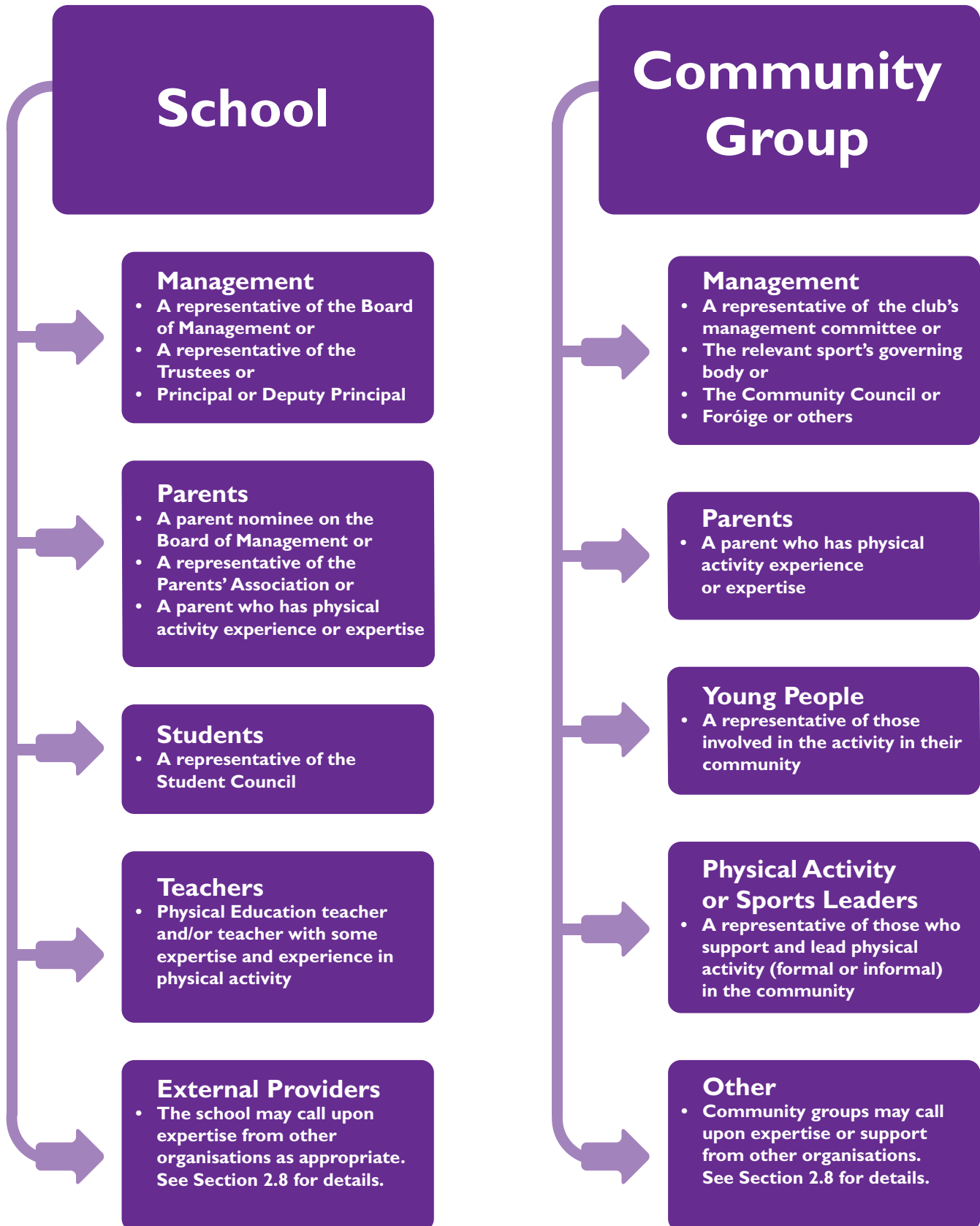
- 1 facilitate the development and implementation of the PEPAS plan and its component action plans, including the organisation and acquisition of resources required to ensure the realisation of the objectives
- 2 liaise with other groups or stakeholders in order to communicate and advocate for the plan and garner support for its implementation
- 3 align the implementation of the plan with the activities of other schools and community-based groups in the area, as appropriate
- 4 ensure that developments at national and local level are reflected in the plan and its implementation, in order to maintain good practice

The Co-ordinating Team should be representative of the various stakeholders in the school or community organisation. Figure 2 identifies the relevant stakeholders and outlines the suggested composition of the team.

The Co-ordinating Team should be transparent and accountable in its work. The team should take care to communicate and consult appropriately with all relevant parties in order to maintain confidence and foster co-operation.

Arrangements for the leadership of the Co-ordinating Team should be agreed to ensure that the team operates effectively. Leadership may be shared or rotated among members if required.

Fig. 2 Suggested composition of Co-ordinating Team



2.4 The Planning Cycle in Context

Get Active I identified three settings for physical education, physical activity and sport in the lives of children and young people: in class, in co-curricular activities, and in community. This section applies the planning cycle to each of these contexts in turn.

The first two contexts – in class and in co-curricular activities – involve planning by the school. While they are addressed separately in this document for the sake of clarity, they should be considered together by the school. It is strongly recommended that there be a clear link between them, with opportunities for practice and progression.



2.4.1 In School: In Class

This PEPAS context refers to what is taught in class time as part of the school curriculum. It refers principally to physical education and social, personal and health education but may also include other subjects that can support or enhance the quality of the PEPAS outcomes. School situations vary widely, and the actual curriculum taught in any school is inevitably shaped by a range of factors. Such factors might include the people involved, the location of the school, the community within which it is set, and the resources and facilities available. The planning challenge for the school is to ensure that the curriculum makes the best possible provision for PEPAS, in the light of school circumstances, so that quality outcomes are achieved for all students.

The sets of questions and pointers that follow are intended to guide the process of planning for in-class PEPAS through the stages of the planning cycle: review, prioritisation, action planning, implementation, and evaluation (steps 2-6 of the

framework presented in Figure 1). These lists of prompts should not be regarded as comprehensive: the school may amend them or add to them to ensure an appropriate focus on its own particular circumstances.

Step 2: Review

The purpose of the review process is to establish 'where the school is at' now, regarding provision for physical education, underpinning values, and performance in relation to the desired outcomes set out in Get Active 1.

The review should consider both the hard data concerning PEPAS in the school (such as the number of timetabled hours of physical education per week for each class group, or the range of activities provided for in physical education classes) and the views of the different parties in the school community.

Provision

- What PEPAS activities are provided for in the school curriculum, and at what level?
- Are these activities meaningful and relevant to the lives of children or young people?
- Are these activities in keeping with good practice recommendations from relevant bodies?
- Are these activities conducted in accordance with health and safety and child protection requirements?
- How much curricular time is allotted to physical education and related subject areas for each class group? Does the time allotted allow the desired learning outcomes to be achieved? Is the time allotted in line with the recommendations of the Department of Education and Skills?
- Are those teaching physical education appropriately qualified to do so?
- Are there adequate resources and appropriate facilities in place to deliver the physical education and social personal and health education programmes?
- Do management and staff support and facilitate quality programmes in physical education and social personal health education?
- How do the PEPAS activities that take place in class time relate to what goes on in co-curricular time and in the community?

Values

- What are the values that underpin the physical education and social, personal and health programmes?
- How do these values relate to the school mission?
- In the context of PEPAS, is there consistency between the values professed by the school in its statement of mission, vision and aims and the values reflected in the reality of school life?

Performance regarding Desired Outcomes

Get Active I set out the desired outcomes of quality physical education, physical activity and sport as follows:

Children and young people who...

- 1 are **committed to regular participation** in physical education, physical activity and sport, including walking or cycling for everyday travel needs
- 2 possess **knowledge and understanding** of the role of physical education, physical activity and sport as part of an active, healthy lifestyle
- 3 have the **confidence** to get involved in physical education, physical activity and sport
- 4 have the **physical, social and emotional competencies** to participate in physical education, physical activity and sport
- 5 are able to **make informed decisions** (with the support of their parents or guardians as appropriate) regarding their participation in physical education, physical activity and sport
- 6 strive to **maximise their personal potential** in physical education, physical activity and sport, and to recognise and respect the potential of others
- 7 **enjoy and appreciate the benefits** of physical education, physical activity and sport

Criteria regarding the in-class context are provided for each desired outcome.

In relation to each of these desired outcomes in turn, and taking account of the criteria for the in-class context in each case:

- Overall, how well is this outcome achieved in the school?
- Are there particular groups within the student body who do not achieve this outcome? Do these groups have particular needs that should be taken into account? How well does the school's curricular provision for PEPAS cater for their needs?
- Which criteria for this outcome is the school most successful in meeting? Which criteria is it least successful in meeting?

Step 3: Identify Priorities

Step 3 involves:

- analysing the data gathered in the review process to establish the school's strengths and weaknesses with regard to in-class PEPAS
- identifying aspects of in-class PEPAS that are working well and that should be continued
- identifying needs that must be addressed and possibilities for development
- identifying factors that must be taken into account in planning for in-class PEPAS in the school
- in the light of the foregoing, selecting the priorities that will form the basis for action planning

The choice of priorities should focus on improving outcomes for students, giving due consideration to good practice recommendations, health and safety and child protection requirements, and recognising the extent and limitations of the school's resources and facilities. The views of the school community should be taken into account. The choice of priorities should balance the continuity of existing good practice, the consolidation of recent innovations, and the introduction of new developments.

Step 4: Action Plan

In Step 4, the priorities are translated into specific objectives or targets, and action plans are devised to achieve those targets.

An action plan usually focuses on a particular priority. In relation to that priority, it specifies:

- **Targets:** what is to be achieved; the improvement objectives
- **Tasks:** what is to be done to attain the targets; the actions or measures that are to be taken to effect improvement
- **Resources:** the human, financial, organisational, and physical resources needed for implementation
- **Remits:** who is to do what
- **Time frames:** when the actual tasks will be done; the deadline by which actions or measures will be accomplished
- **Success criteria:** the outcomes that will indicate that the plan is achieving or has achieved its objectives
- **Monitoring and evaluation procedures**

When setting targets for in-class PEPAS, it is important to start from 'where the school is at'. The targets should be realistic, taking account of the school's baseline or starting position, and achievable with the resources, personnel and

time available. Nevertheless, they should be challenging enough to give impetus to improvement. When deciding on targets, consideration should be given to the desired outcomes and criteria set out in Get Active 1, especially those that the school is currently least successful in meeting.

The choice of actions or measures to achieve the targets may be influenced by:

- existing good practice measures that are working well in the school
- good practice measures that are working well in similar situations in other schools
- advice from support services or educational experts
- external evaluation
- findings of educational research
- feedback from students or parents
- innovative suggestions from teachers
- resource considerations (including staff professional development needs)

The success criteria should be derived from the targets and tasks. They are statements of how things should be if the actions or measures are successfully implemented and the targets or objectives are achieved.

In relation to Step 4, it is important to consider at the outset:

- how the stakeholders in the school community will be involved or consulted in the process of action planning
- how the completed action plans will be shared with the different parties in the school community when they have been approved by the school's Board of Management

Step 5: Implement

Step 5 involves the implementation of the action plans and the monitoring of progress to keep the plans on track. Monitoring should be carried out in accordance with the decisions made at Step 4 regarding who should have overall responsibility for monitoring, who should be involved in the process, what strategies should be used, and how often progress should be checked.

The following questions may prove helpful in the monitoring process:

- How well is focus being maintained on the targets specified in the action plans?
- Are the proposed actions or measures being carried out?
- Are the proposed time frames being adhered to?
- Is there evidence of progress towards the attainment of the targets?
- Are there difficulties that need to be addressed? Are there adjustments that need to be made to the action plans?

- Are the desired learning outcomes and expected standards of performance shared with the children / young people? How?
- What teaching styles are employed? Are they appropriate for promoting the desired learning outcomes?
- Are the children or young people encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning? How?
- Are measures in place to ensure an inclusive approach to teaching and learning in the physical education lesson?

Step 6: Evaluate

Step 6 takes place at the end of an agreed period of implementation. It involves a systematic examination of the outcomes of the actions or measures that have been implemented, in order to ascertain the extent to which the targets specified in the action plans have been achieved. In Step 4, success criteria were developed for each action plan, specifying its desired outcomes. In Step 6, evidence of the actual outcomes is collected, and the actual outcomes are measured against the desired outcomes, thus revealing the level of success that has been achieved. The findings of the evaluation feed into future planning.

The main focus of Step 6 should be on evaluating the outcomes for children or young people, and the impact on their learning.

The following questions may prove helpful in the evaluation process, procedures for which will have been decided at Step 4:

- On the basis of the success criteria, what evidence do we need to collect?
- From whom or from where do we need to get information?
- What methods will we use to collect the information we need?
- What time scale will be involved in collecting the information?
- To what extent will children or young people be involved in the measurement of outcomes?
- When we have completed the evaluation, who will be informed of the findings? How?
- How will progress and attainment be recognised and achievement acknowledged?
- How will the findings inform planning for future learning?



2.4.2 In School: Co-Curricular Activities

Co-curricular activities are school-related activities that complement the curriculum, but that take place outside of timetabled class time. As with the curriculum, the co-curricular programme offered by a school is shaped by its unique combination of context factors. The range of co-curricular activities may be influenced by factors such as the needs and interests of the children and young people; the activity / sporting culture in the locality; the expertise within the school staff and the local community; and the nature of the resources and facilities available. A major planning challenge for the school is to ensure that the range of co-curricular PEPAS activities on offer provides opportunities for widespread participation.

The sets of questions and pointers that follow are intended to guide the process of planning for co-curricular PEPAS through the stages of the planning cycle: review, prioritisation, action planning, implementation, and evaluation (steps 2-6 of the framework presented in Figure 1). These lists of prompts should not be regarded as comprehensive: the school may amend them or add to them to ensure an appropriate focus on its own particular circumstances.

Step 2: Review

The questions below are intended to guide the review process in order to establish 'where the school is at' now in relation to co-curricular physical activity and sport.

Provision

- What range of activities is provided and at what level? Does the range cater for a varied spectrum of interests, skills and capacities? Is the range broad and balanced, offering opportunities for both competitive and non-competitive activity, on both an individual and a group basis?
- What rate of participation by children or young people do the various activities attract? How enduring is the participation of children or young people? What proportion of the children or young people in the school never participate in co-curricular physical activity or sport?

- Are there adequate resources and appropriate facilities in place to sustain the co-curricular programme?
- How do management and staff support and facilitate the co-curricular programme?
- How do the activities relate to curriculum and community-based activities?
- Are those involved in organising and running co-curricular physical activities appropriately experienced and / or qualified? What measures are in place to support them?
- Are co-curricular physical activities conducted in accordance with health and safety and child protection requirements?
- Has the school established a scheme to promote walking and cycling to school?
- Has the school established a healthy eating policy?

Values

- What are the values that underpin the co-curricular programme?
- How do these values relate to the school mission?
- How are these values shared with the school community and others?
- What measures are in place to ensure that external providers respect the school's mission and philosophy, and that what they provide is in response to the needs of the children and young people?

Performance regarding Desired Outcomes

Get Active I set out the desired outcomes of quality physical education, physical activity and sport as follows:

Children and young people who...

- 1 are **committed to regular participation** in physical education, physical activity and sport, including walking or cycling for everyday travel needs
- 2 possess **knowledge and understanding** of the role of physical education, physical activity and sport as part of an active, healthy lifestyle
- 3 have the **confidence** to get involved in physical education, physical activity and sport
- 4 have the **physical, social and emotional competencies** to participate in physical education, physical activity and sport
- 5 are able to **make informed decisions** (with the support of their parents or guardians as appropriate) regarding their participation in physical education, physical activity and sport
- 6 strive to **maximise their personal potential** in physical education, physical activity and sport, and to recognise and respect the potential of others
- 7 **enjoy and appreciate the benefits** of physical education, physical activity and sport

Criteria regarding the co-curricular context are provided for each desired outcome.

In relation to each of these desired outcomes in turn, and taking account of the criteria for the co-curricular context in each case:

- Overall, how well is this outcome achieved in the school? How well does the co-curricular programme of physical activities support the achievement of this outcome?
- Are there particular groups within the student body who do not achieve this outcome? Have these groups particular needs that should be taken into account? How well does the school's co-curricular programme of physical activities cater for their needs?
- Which criteria for this outcome is the school's co-curricular programme most successful in meeting? Which criteria is it least successful in meeting?

Step 3: Identify Priorities

Step 3 involves:

- analysing the data gathered in the review process to establish the strengths and weaknesses of the school's co-curricular programme of physical activity and sport
- identifying aspects of the co-curricular programme that are working well and that should be continued
- identifying needs that must be addressed and possibilities for development
- identifying factors that must be taken into account in planning for co-curricular physical activity and sport in the school
- in the light of the foregoing, selecting the priorities that will form the basis for action planning

The choice of priorities should focus on improving outcomes for students, giving due consideration to good practice recommendations, health and safety and child protection requirements, and recognising the extent and limitations of the resources and facilities that are available to the school. The views of the school community and of external providers should be taken into account. The choice of priorities should balance the continuity of existing good practice, the consolidation of recent innovations, and the introduction of new developments.

Step 4: Action Plan

In Step 4, the priorities are translated into specific objectives or targets, and action plans are devised to achieve those targets.

An action plan usually focuses on a particular priority. In relation to that priority, it specifies:

- **Targets:** what is to be achieved; the improvement objectives
- **Tasks:** what is to be done to attain the targets; the actions or measures that are to be taken to effect improvement
- **Resources:** the human, financial, organisational, and physical resources needed for implementation
- **Remits:** who is to do what
- **Time frames:** when the actual tasks will be done; the deadline by which actions or measures will be accomplished
- **Success criteria:** the outcomes that will indicate that the plan is achieving or has achieved its objectives
- **Monitoring and evaluation procedures**

When setting targets for co-curricular physical activity and sport, it is important to start from 'where the school is at'. The targets should be realistic, taking account of the school's baseline or starting position, and achievable with the resources, personnel and time available. Nevertheless, they should be challenging enough to give impetus to improvement. When deciding on targets, consideration should be given to the desired outcomes and criteria set out in Get Active I, especially those that the school's co-curricular programme is currently least successful in meeting.

The choice of actions or measures to achieve the targets may be influenced by:

- existing good practice measures that are working well in the school
- good practice measures that are working well in similar situations in other schools
- advice from support services or from those with expertise in the area of PEPAS
- external evaluation
- findings of educational research
- feedback from students or parents
- innovative suggestions from teachers
- innovative suggestions from external providers
- resource considerations (including staff professional development needs)

The success criteria should be derived from the targets and tasks. They are statements of how things should be if the actions or measures are successfully implemented and the targets or objectives are achieved.

In relation to Step 4, it is important to consider at the outset:

- How will the stakeholders in the school community be involved or consulted in the process of action planning? How will external providers be involved or consulted?
- How will the completed action plans be shared with the different parties in the school community when they have been approved by the school's Board of Management? How will they be shared with external providers?

Step 5: Implement

Step 5 involves the implementation of the action plans and the monitoring of progress to keep the plans on track. Monitoring should be carried out in accordance with the decisions made at Step 4 regarding who should have overall responsibility for monitoring, who should be involved in the process, what strategies should be used, and how often progress should be checked.

The following questions may prove helpful in the monitoring process:

- How well is focus being maintained on the targets specified in the action plans?
- Are the proposed actions or measures being carried out?
- Are the proposed time frames being adhered to?
- Is there evidence of progress towards the attainment of the targets?
- Are there difficulties that need to be addressed? Are there adjustments that need to be made to the action plans?
- Are the children or young people being enabled to take part in the co-curricular activities? How?
- Are the desired learning outcomes and expected standards of performance shared with the children / young people? Is it clear to them what they are expected to know and to be able to do?
- Are the children or young people supported in adopting a range of roles and responsibilities in the co-curricular programme (activity organiser or leader, assistant coach, referee)?
- Are measures in place to ensure an inclusive approach to co-curricular PEPAS?
- Is there a common approach across activities when involving parents, guardians or carers?
- Are measures in place to ensure that involvement in co-curricular activities does not compromise learning during curricular time?
- Are measures in place to ensure that children or young people understand how their experiences in school and community complement each other?

Step 6: Evaluate

Step 6 takes place at the end of an agreed period of implementation. It involves a systematic examination of the outcomes of the actions or measures that have been implemented, in order to ascertain the extent to which the targets specified in the action plans have been achieved. In Step 4, success criteria were developed for each action plan, specifying its desired outcomes. In Step 6, evidence of the actual outcomes is collected, and the actual outcomes are measured against the desired outcomes, thus revealing the level of success that has been achieved. The findings of the evaluation feed into future planning.

The main focus of Step 6 should be on evaluating the outcomes for children or young people, the impact on their learning.

The following questions may prove helpful in the evaluation process, procedures for which will have been decided at Step 4:

- On the basis of the success criteria, what evidence do we need to collect?
- From whom or from where do we need to get information?
- What methods will we use to collect the information we need?
- What time scale will be involved in collecting the information?
- To what extent will children or young people be involved in the measurement of outcomes?
- To what extent will external providers be involved in the measurement of outcomes?
- When we have completed the evaluation, who will be informed of the findings? How?
- How will progress and attainment be recognised? How will success be acknowledged or celebrated in the school community?
- How will the findings inform planning for the future?



2.4.3 In Community

Community-based activities are those which take place outside of school. They may include organised activities undertaken in a club, informal activities undertaken individually or as part of a group, in addition to walking or cycling as part of everyday travel needs. The focus in the *Get Active* guide is on the promotion and support of these activities by community-based organisations and groups.

The sets of questions that follow are intended to guide the process of planning for community-based PEPAS through the stages of the planning cycle: review, prioritisation, action planning, implementation, and evaluation (steps 2-6 of the framework presented in Figure 1). These lists of prompts should not be regarded as comprehensive. The organisation or group may amend them or add to them to ensure an appropriate focus on its own particular circumstances.

Step 2: Review

The questions below are intended to guide the review process in order to establish 'where the organisation or group is at' now in relation to community-based physical activity and sport.

Provision

- What activities are provided? What is the purpose of the activities?
- How do these activities relate to what goes on in school?
- What level of participation by children or young people in the community do these activities attract?
- Do the children or young people have an opportunity to engage in the activities at a range of levels?
- Are there adequate resources and appropriate facilities for the activities in place?
- Is there co-operation with schools and other relevant organisations in the planning of activities?
- Are those involved in the activities appropriately experienced and / or qualified? What measures are in place to support them?
- Are the activities conducted in accordance with health and safety and child protection requirements?

Values

- What are the values that underpin the organisation / group?
- How are these values shared with the children or young people, parents / guardians, school community and others?

Performance regarding Desired Outcomes

Get Active I set out the desired outcomes of quality physical education, physical activity and sport as follows:

Children and young people who...

- 1 are **committed to regular participation** in physical education, physical activity and sport, including walking or cycling for everyday travel needs
- 2 possess **knowledge and understanding** of the role of physical education, physical activity and sport as part of an active, healthy lifestyle
- 3 have the **confidence** to get involved in physical education, physical activity and sport
- 4 have the **physical, social and emotional competencies** to participate in physical education, physical activity and sport
- 5 are able to **make informed decisions** (with the support of their parents or guardians as appropriate) regarding their participation in physical education, physical activity and sport
- 6 strive to **maximise their personal potential** in physical education, physical activity and sport, and to recognise and respect the potential of others
- 7 **enjoy and appreciate the benefits** of physical education, physical activity and sport

Criteria regarding the community context are provided for each desired outcome.

In relation to each of these desired outcomes in turn, and taking account of the criteria for the community context in each case:

- Overall, how well is this outcome achieved by the organisation?
- Are there particular groups of children or young people who do not achieve this outcome? Have these groups particular needs that should be taken into account? How well does the organisation's provision for physical activity and sport cater for their needs?
- Which criteria for this outcome is the organisation most successful in meeting? Which criteria is it least successful in meeting?

Step 3: Identify Priorities

Step 3 involves:

- analysing the data gathered in the review process to establish the organisation's strengths and weaknesses with regard to community-based physical activity and sport
- identifying aspects of the organisation's programme that are working well and that should be continued
- identifying needs that must be addressed and possibilities for development
- identifying factors that must be taken into account by the organisation in planning for community-based physical activity and sport
- in the light of the foregoing, selecting the priorities that will form the basis for action planning

The choice of priorities should focus on improving outcomes for children and young people, giving due consideration to good practice recommendations, health and safety and child protection requirements, and recognising the extent and limitations of the organisation's resources and facilities. The views of relevant parties in the community should be taken into account, especially those of the children or young people and their parents or guardians. The choice of priorities should balance the continuity of existing good practice, the consolidation of recent innovations, and the introduction of new developments.

Step 4: Action Plan

In Step 4, the priorities for improvement are translated into specific objectives or targets, and action plans are devised to achieve those targets.

An action plan usually focuses on a particular priority. In relation to that priority, it specifies:

- **Targets:** what is to be achieved; the improvement objectives
- **Tasks:** what is to be done to attain the targets; the actions or measures that are to be taken to achieve the desired outcomes
- **Resources:** the human, financial, organisational, and physical resources needed for implementation
- **Remits:** who is to do what
- **Time frames:** when the actual tasks will be done; the deadline by which actions or measures will be accomplished
- **Success criteria:** the outcomes that will indicate that the plan is achieving or has achieved its objectives
- **Monitoring and evaluation procedures**

When setting targets for community-based physical activity and sport, it is important to start from 'where the organisation is at'. The targets should be realistic, taking account of the organisation's baseline or starting position, and achievable with the resources, personnel and time available. Nevertheless, they should be challenging enough to give impetus to improvement. When deciding on targets, consideration should be given to the desired outcomes and criteria set out in Get Active 1, especially those that the organisation's programme is currently least successful in meeting.

The choice of actions or measures to achieve the targets may be influenced by:

- existing good practice measures that are working well in the organisation
- good practice measures that are working well in similar situations in other community organisations
- advice from those with expertise in physical activity or sport, especially in community settings
- findings of relevant research
- feedback from children or young people or parents / guardians
- innovative suggestions from members of the organisation
- resource considerations

The success criteria should be derived from the targets and tasks. They are statements of how things should be if the actions or measures are successfully implemented and the targets or objectives are achieved.

In relation to Step 4, it is important to consider at the outset:

- How will the stakeholders in the community be involved or consulted in the process of action planning?
- How will the completed action plans be shared with members of the organisation and with the community? How will they be shared with other relevant organisations?

Step 5: Implement

Step 5 involves the implementation of the action plans and the monitoring of progress to keep the plans on track. Monitoring should be carried out in accordance with the decisions made at Step 4 regarding who should have overall responsibility for monitoring, who should be involved in the process, what strategies should be used, and how often progress should be checked.

The following questions may prove helpful in the monitoring process:

- How well is focus being maintained on the targets specified in the action plans?
- Are the proposed actions or measures being carried out?

- Are the proposed time frames being adhered to?
- Is there evidence of progress towards the attainment of the targets?
- Are there difficulties that need to be addressed? Are there adjustments that need to be made to the action plans?
- Are expectations and goals agreed with the children / young people taking part in the activities promoted by the organisation? How?
- Are the children or young people supported in adopting a range of roles and responsibilities in the activities (activity organiser or leader, assistant coach, referee)?
- Are structures in place to guide and support young people in their efforts to continue to develop as a player or athlete?
- Are parents or guardians or carers involved in the organisation's activities? If so, on what basis?
- Are measures in place to ensure an inclusive approach to the activities?
- Are measures in place to ensure that the interests of the children or young people are paramount?
- Are measures in place to ensure that children or young people understand how their experiences in school and community complement each other?

Step 6: Evaluate

Step 6 takes place at the end of an agreed period of implementation. It involves a systematic examination of the outcomes of the actions or measures that have been implemented, in order to ascertain the extent to which the targets specified in the action plans have been achieved. In Step 4, success criteria were developed for each action plan, specifying its desired outcomes. In Step 6, evidence of the actual outcomes is collected, and the actual outcomes are measured against the desired outcomes, thus revealing the level of success that has been achieved. The findings of the evaluation feed into future planning.

The main focus of Step 6 should be on evaluating the outcomes for children or young people.

The following questions may prove helpful in the evaluation process, procedures for which will have been decided at Step 4:

- On the basis of the success criteria, what evidence do we need to collect?
- From whom or from where do we need to get information?
- What methods will we use to collect the information we need?
- What time scale will be involved in collecting the information?
- To what extent will children or young people be involved in the measurement of outcomes?
- When we have completed the evaluation, who will be informed of the findings? How?
- How will progress and attainment be recognised? How will success be acknowledged or celebrated within the group / team, in the organisation and in the community?
- How will the findings inform planning for the future?



Stakeholder Involvement

The World Health Organisation defines stakeholders as those ‘who have important information about an issue or policy area, who will be affected by a decision, or who may be able to affect a decision’ (WHO, 2008 p.25). The design and implementation of PEPAS plans may involve a range of stakeholders, including government departments, teachers and other school staff, children and young people, parents and families, and community-based organisations. In this section, the roles and responsibilities of a number of key stakeholders in meeting the child’s or young person’s physical activity interests and needs are outlined.

2.5 School Leaders and Teachers

Boards of Management

The board of management of a school has responsibility for arranging the preparation of the school plan and for ensuring that it is implemented. The board is responsible for ensuring that the school provides for the educational needs of its students. Accordingly, the board should ensure that the school plan includes a PEPAS plan and that school partners (including the trustees / patron, parents and young people) are consulted about its content.

Principal

The principal has a key role in leading and managing the development of the school and in devising school policy. The principal can support the preparation and implementation of an effective PEPAS programme through a range of measures, including:

- allocating adequate time on the timetable to allow a quality experience of physical education (the Department of Education and Skills recommends one hour per week at primary level and two hours per week at post-primary level)
- ensuring adequate resources are in place to support a quality experience of physical education and co-curricular physical activity and sport
- ensuring that co-curricular activities are provided by personnel with appropriate qualifications and experience

- ensuring that arrangements are made for the co-ordination and promotion of co-curricular physical activity and sport
- encouraging teachers, coaches and sports leaders to engage in ongoing professional development
- liaising with outside organisations to gain access to a broader range of activities and facilities
- publicly supporting the promotion of a physical activity culture in the school through initiatives such as the Health Promoting School and the Active School Flag and acknowledging those who contribute to it

Primary School Teacher

Physical education is one of the eleven mandatory curriculum subjects at primary level and is taught by the class teacher. The class teacher has a unique and important relationship with the children and he or she is often best placed to design and implement a programme that is appropriate to their learning needs and context, while adhering to the requirements of the curriculum. In some cases, the class teacher may call upon others (e.g. colleagues, external providers as appropriate) for support in the implementation of the programme, if this is in the best interest of the children. The class teacher may:

- 1 contribute to the PEPAS plan as a member of the co-ordinating committee
- 2 become directly involved in co-curricular physical activity and sport programme in a coaching / organising capacity, if appropriate
- 3 support the school's co-curricular programme by acknowledging participation and celebrating success through their interactions with the children

For further information see

Irish Primary Physical Education Association. Online at: <http://www.irishprimarype.com/>

Post-Primary Physical Education Teacher

The physical education teacher is responsible for the teaching and learning that takes place during class time. In working within the framework of prescribed syllabi and programmes, the physical education teacher aims to promote learning outcomes, support the physical and mental well-being of students, and guide students in the development of pathways for lifelong participation in physical activity.

Physical education teachers have the potential to act as a key reference point in the development and implementation of the PEPAS plan. They may choose to adopt a number of roles within the school, as appropriate to the context.

For example, the physical education teacher may:

- 1 utilise their expertise to guide and support the development and implementation of the school's PEPAS plan, in consultation with other members of the co-ordinating team
- 2 support the planning and organisation of the school's co-curricular activities in an advisory capacity
- 3 be directly involved in some elements of the co-curricular physical activity and sport programme in a coaching / organising capacity

For further information see Physical Education Association of Ireland. Online at:
<http://www.peai.org/home.html>

Teachers and Staff

All teachers and staff have a role in the promotion of a physical activity culture within the school. Some teachers and ancillary staff are directly involved in coaching, leading physical activity or sport and make an enormous contribution to school life and the life experiences of children and young people in so doing. Such stakeholders may be:

- 1 consulted or directly involved in the formulation of the school's PEPAS plan
- 2 encouraged to examine how their contribution relates to the school's mission and plan on PEPAS
- 3 facilitated and supported in their efforts
- 4 encouraged to develop their capacities in their chosen activity

The school may prioritise the area of PEPAS through the allocation of a post of responsibility for the co-ordination and promotion of school physical activity and sport. Other teachers can support the school's co-curricular programme by acknowledging participation and celebrating success through their interactions with children or young people.

2.6 Children and Young People

Children and young people should be encouraged to be active agents in their own learning² when involved in physical education, co-curricular or community-based physical activities or sport. Their duty is to participate in a responsible, respectful, fair and safe manner³ in their own interest and that of others. It is important that children and young people enjoy their experience of physical activity, particularly in the early years⁴. As they get older, young people should take responsibility for the nature and extent of their participation in physical activity and begin to make choices that will enable them to engage in active, healthy lifestyles. These choices may refer to the types of activity in which they engage; the skills, knowledge, and understanding they should have; or qualifications they may need in order to pursue these activities.

There are a number of other ways children and young people can contribute to the development of their own and others' capacities in physical education, physical activity and sport. They can:

- work towards achieving the outcomes set out in Get Active I
- seek the support and assistance of others such as parents, guardians, teachers, coaches and sports leaders in an effort to meet objectives they cannot achieve independently
- become engaged in the development and implementation of the school's PEPAS policy when consulted or through their student council if in post-primary school
- develop their qualifications and experience in their chosen activities so that they can contribute to the promotion of the activity as a leader or coach

2.7 Parents and Families

Parental or guardian support and interest can positively influence the nature and extent of a child's or young person's participation in physical activity and sport. This influence is most effective where parents or guardians pursue an active lifestyle themselves. Valuable information for parents and guardians can be found on:

- Get Ireland Active Children's Fact Sheet (HSE)
- Get Kids on the Go (Irish Heart Foundation)

Online at: <http://www.getirelandactive.ie/index.php?p=publications>

Other ways parents / guardians can promote active lifestyles among children and young people include:

- Getting involved in the school's Parents' Association. The association is the structure through which parents in a school can work with the principal, staff and the board of management to create a physical activity culture in the school.
- Volunteering in a local club or group on a coaching / leading basis. Alternatively, they might assist in other aspects of running the club or group.
- Encouraging their son or daughter to walk or cycle to school, where possible and safe to do so. For an example of good practice see online at: http://www.adamstown.ie/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=360&Itemid=329
- Regularly arranging physical activities in which all members of the family can participate together.

2.8 Community-based Organisations and Groups

Many organisations have a role to play in creating, promoting and sustaining physical activity and sport in schools and communities. These include Local Sports Partnership Officers, Sport's National Governing Bodies and Health Service Executive Physical Activity Co-ordinators.

Local Sports Partnership Sports Officers

Sports Officers working within the framework of the Local Sports Partnerships offer recreational sport to local people. Key tasks in which the partnerships are involved include: the creation and implementation of plans for long-term local sports development; the establishment of a sustainable structure to assist all those involved in local sports development to face the associated challenges; the delivery of projects and programmes particularly for target groups; establishing networks and sports forums at local level.

The role of the Local Sports Partnerships is to work toward developing a sustainable local sporting infrastructure which promotes increased opportunities for children and young people to participate in sport and physical activity. This involves:

- initiating, supporting and delivering participation programmes
- providing quality training for volunteers and officials involved in the organisation of sport for young people
- enhancing local coach deployment
- supporting the adoption of child welfare and protection policies and procedures

For more information on LSPs contact:

Irish Sports Council, Top Floor Block A, West End Business Park, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15

Tel: 01-8608800

Email: info@irishsportsCouncil.ie

Website: www.irishsportsCouncil.ie

Sport's National Governing Bodies

With their member clubs and affiliates, sport's national governing bodies (NGBs) organise and administer most of the organised sport in Ireland; they train and deploy coaches; they organise representative-level sport; and they provide sporting opportunities and pathways leading from local sport to national and international competition.

There are in excess of 60 NGBs of sport in Ireland ranging from large, well-resourced, widely-recognised organisations engaging daily with children and young people, to smaller NGBs that operate on a more limited basis. The role of the NGBs in young people's lives is varied.

In Schools: In co-curricular contexts

Some NGBs provide children and young people with opportunities for active participation both recreationally and competitively. A number also provide opportunities for young people to develop as coaches and officials.

Where schools engage NGB personnel for the purpose of co-curricular sport provision, it is important that they consider whether or how such a contribution is in line with the school's mission and PEPAS plan.

In Community

Many NGBs provide opportunities for children and young people to take part in a wide range of different activities across the sporting spectrum in a safe and secure environment. The range includes opportunities to participate actively at recreational, competitive or high-performance levels, along with opportunities to participate as a coach, administrator or official. NGBs also provide social opportunities through membership of sports clubs and attendance at sporting fixtures and events. All NGBs have adopted and implemented the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport to ensure that young people are safeguarded in their participation in sport.

Health Service Executive (HSE) Physical Activity Co-ordinators

Physical Activity Co-ordinators, within Health Promotion, aim to promote and support participation in physical activity among priority populations across all settings, including education, community and the health services. A key role is to work in partnership with other sectors involved in physical activity, such as local authorities, national organisations, local sports partnerships, and community groups, to promote the national 'Get Ireland Active' guidelines and to address the determinants of physical inactivity. Physical Activity Co-ordinators aim to support schools through the Health Promoting Schools Framework. Other programmes that work well through this integrated process include the Active School Flag, Smarter Travel initiatives, and the Green Flag. The Physical Activity Co-ordinator can support the school by:

- acting as an advisor to the school's Co-ordinating Team
- providing links to physical activity / sports groups in the community
- providing information on what physical activity materials and resources are available
- providing information on the Health Promoting School Framework
- implementing programmes that focus on increasing participation in physical activity

For HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster contact	For HSE Dublin North East contact:
Physical Activity Co-ordinator HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster Block B Civic Centre Main St. Bray Co. Wicklow 01-2744200	Physical Activity Co-ordinator HSE Dublin North East Health Promotion Dept Railway Street Navan 046-9076400
For HSE South contact:	For HSE West contact:
Physical Activity Co-ordinator Health Promotion Department Dean Street Kilkenny Co. Kilkenny 056-7761400	Physical Activity Co-ordinator West City Centre Seamus Quirke Road Galway City 091-548321

2.9 Other Sources of Information

- Education Centre Network. Online at: <http://www.ateci.ie/>
- Irish Heart Foundation. Online at: <http://www.irishheart.ie/iopen24/>
- Outdoor Education Ireland: The National Network of VEC Outdoor Education Centres. Online at: <http://www.oei.ie/index.php>
- Youth Work Ireland. Online at: http://www.youthworkireland.ie/home_lys.asp
- School Completion Programme Ireland. Online at: <http://www.education.ie/home/home.jsp?pcategory=17216&ecategory=34299&language=EN>

Notes:

- 1:** World Health Organisation (2008) *School Policy Framework: Implementation of the WHO global strategy on diet, physical activity and health*, Geneva: World Health Organisation. Online at: <http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/schools/en/>
- 2:** Department of Education and Science & National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (1999) *Primary School Curriculum*, The Stationery Office, Dublin. Online at: http://www.curriculumonline.ie/en/Primary_School_Curriculum/
- 3:** Sports Council Northern Ireland & The Irish Sports Council (2003) *Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport*. Online at: http://www.instituteofsport.ie/Participation/Code_of_Ethics/Code_of_Ethics_Manual/Content_PDF_/
- 4:** The Irish Sports Council & National Coaching and Training Centre, *Lifelong Involvement in Sport and Physical Activity: The LISPA Model: Consultation Document*. Online at: <http://www.coachingireland.com/files/The%20LIPSA%20Model.pdf>



**Physical Education,
Physical Activity and Sport
for Children and Young People:
Evaluating our progress**



3. Introduction to Get Active 3

Get Active 1 set out the vision in terms of the desired outcomes of physical education, physical activity and sport for children and young people. Get Active 2 outlined the process of developing and implementing a plan in order to achieve that vision. This section of the document, Get Active 3, is intended to guide users in relation to the evaluation of those programmes that are in place. It seeks to ensure that evaluation is carried out in a systematic way, in order to improve programme effectiveness. Some of its elements may form the basis of an ongoing review process within the school and community setting. It may also be usefully employed where schools are seeking the Active School Flag (in relation to physical education and co-curriculum physical activity and sport provision), the Health Promoting School Award (in relation to physical activity) or the Green Flag Award (in relation to its travel theme).

3.1 Self-Evaluation: The What and Why

Self-evaluation, in the context of these guidelines, is a process whereby a school or community group or club might reflect in a systematic way on **how things are** in the organisation and measure that against **how they should be**. It is a process of judging actual outcomes of a plan or programme of activity against intended or desired outcomes, actual practice against accepted standards of good practice.

The **success criteria** identified during the action-planning process (Step 4 of the basic planning framework outlined in Get Active 2) serve as indicators of how things should be if plans and programmes are achieving their objectives. The desired outcomes of quality PEPAS that are set out in Get Active 1 can also serve as indicators of how things should be.

How things are is ascertained by the **evidence** gathered to test whether the success criteria have been met, whether the intended or desired outcomes have been achieved, and whether things are how they should be.

Self-evaluation helps an organisation or group consider:

- How are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now?

Self-evaluation can be useful for schools, clubs or other physical activity groups as it provides a means by which they can monitor their actions against their mission or aims or improvement objectives. It can help individuals or organisations consider whether they are effective in meeting the physical activity needs of children and young people, whether the PEPAS activities they provide are of a quality that can create competent participants or performers, and whether these activities are accessible to and inclusive of all those who seek to engage in them.

The findings of the self-evaluation process guide decision-making about future action. Thus, they feed into the next cycle of planning for PEPAS.



3.2 Self-Evaluation: Getting Started

Ideally, the evaluation of PEPAS takes place within the context of a coherent planning process focused on achieving the optimum outcomes for children and young people. Where this is the case, the evaluation will have been prepared for at earlier stages in the planning cycle. Thus, the priorities selected in Step 3 of the framework outlined in Get Active 2 will help to focus the evaluation. The action plans developed in Step 4 will specify:

- the success criteria in relation to which evidence will be collected and against which actual outcomes will be measured, and
- the evaluation procedures that will be followed

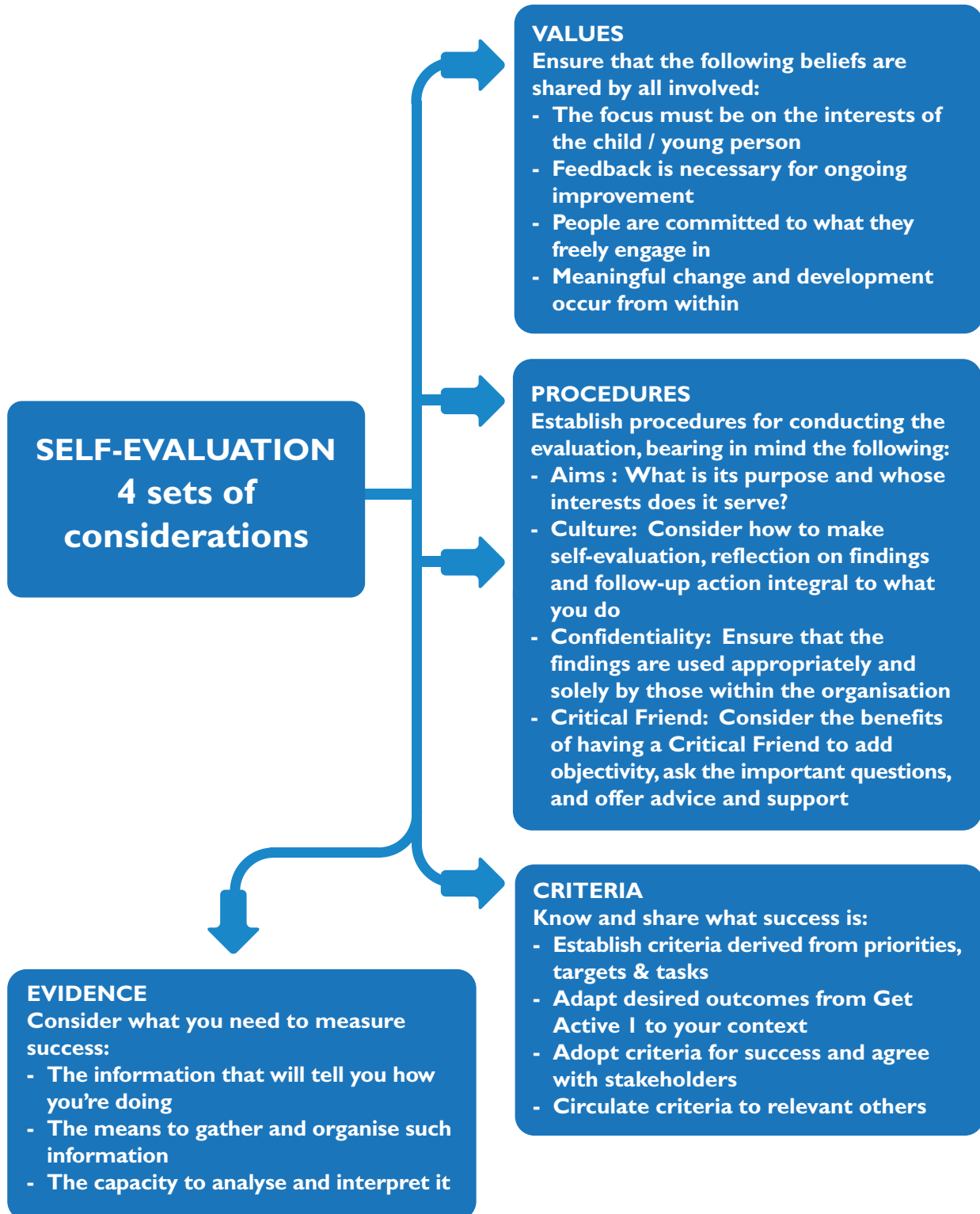
Where these matters have not been determined in advance, it is important that they be addressed at the start of the evaluation process.

So, when preparing for the evaluation, it is helpful to ensure that there is clarity about the following:

- the **values** that underlie the evaluation process
- the **procedures** that will be followed in conducting the evaluation
- the **criteria** that will be used to measure success
- the **evidence** that will be needed, based on the criteria

Figure 3 presents a summary of what should be considered.

Fig. 3 What to consider. (Adapted from School Development Planning: Guidelines and Resources for Post-Primary Schools, Unit 5)





3.3 Self-Evaluation: The Process

There is no single right way of carrying out a self-evaluation; decisions on how to approach it will be influenced by the particular situation of the school, club or group and by what is wanted from the process.

The following key questions may prove helpful in planning an evaluation:

What will be the focus of the evaluation?

Will the focus be on:

- the whole PEPAS programme of the school, club or organisation?
- a particular action plan or set of action plans within the PEPAS programme?
- an area or areas of practice within PEPAS in the school, club or organisation?
- the performance of the school, club, or organisation in relation to one or more of the desired outcomes of PEPAS, as outlined in Get Active 1? (See Appendix 1)
- levels of competence or skill achieved by the children / young people in particular physical activities or sports?
- other?

At what point will the evaluation be conducted?

The timing of an evaluation will depend on its focus and scope. Monitoring of progress should be ongoing while plans and programmes are being implemented (see Get Active 2, Step 5). The evaluation of individual elements within the overall PEPAS programme may take place at different times, as appropriate to their respective time frames. A large-scale evaluation of the success of the overall PEPAS programme might take place only towards the end of the period of a planning cycle (3-5 years) in order to inform the next cycle of planning.

Who will conduct the evaluation?

This will be determined to some extent by the focus and scope of the evaluation and by the nature and size of the organisation concerned. While the Co-ordinating Team (see Get Active 2, Step 1) are probably best placed to undertake a larger-scale self-evaluation process, those in the organisation who have research skills or experience might be encouraged to contribute. Post-primary school students might be involved in conducting the evaluation as part of a Transition Year project or a Leaving Certificate Applied task. It might prove helpful to appoint a Critical Friend with relevant expertise to assist in the process.

What success criteria will be used?

Again, the choice of success criteria will be related to the focus of the evaluation.

- As stated previously, where the focus is on the PEPAS programme action plans, the success criteria should already have been established at an earlier stage in the planning process (see Get Active 2, Step 4). They derive from the targets and tasks set out in the action plans.
- Where the focus of the evaluation is on an area of practice, the task for the evaluators is to determine what good practice is in that area. This may involve consulting with experienced practitioners and exploring the relevant research literature in order to arrive at an agreed set of indicators of good practice against which actual practice can be measured.
- Where the focus of the evaluation is on performance in relation to the desired outcomes specified in Get Active 1, the criteria for each outcome set out in that document serve as a basis for developing more detailed success criteria for use in the evaluation process. The task for the evaluators is to identify the criteria from Get Active 1 that are relevant to the focus of the evaluation and to adapt them to the particular context, making them specific enough to focus the gathering of evidence. This may involve discussions with colleagues.
- Where the focus of the evaluation is on the levels of competence or skill achieved by children / young people in a particular physical activity or sport, the success criteria will relate to the standards of performance that can reasonably be expected of the children / young people, given their age, physical development, and prior level of skill. As indicated in Get Active 2, Step 5, these standards should have been shared with them in the course of the activity to give them performance targets to aim for. It may be helpful to express the standards not only through verbal description but also through demonstration or through use of visual imagery (for example, pictures or video clips from YouTube or NGB educational material).

What evidence will need to be gathered?

Evidence is the information that reveals the reality on the ground in relation to the area being evaluated: the actual outcomes of a course of action as opposed to the intended outcomes; the standard of actual practice as opposed to recommended standards of good practice; the actual levels of skill being achieved as opposed to the levels aspired to. Thus, the evidence required will be determined by the success criteria. In general, it will be of two kinds, quantitative and qualitative. Some of the success criteria may be readily measured by means of quantitative data, such as levels of attendance and participation, performance records, and so on. Other criteria may necessitate the gathering of qualitative data – the views and perspectives of the children or young people and their parents, for example. Video evidence may be appropriate where the focus is on levels of skill.

From whom or from where will the information that is needed be obtained?

Some of the information needed will already be available in the school or organisation and can be abstracted from records such as attendance or membership lists, timetables, training schedules, scores in performance tests, results in competitive events, and so on. Other information will need to be specially collected for the purposes of the evaluation. A task for the evaluators is to identify the relevant sources of qualitative information – whose views, perceptions and perspectives should be sought, and in relation to what issues? Particular care should be taken to ensure that the children and young people themselves have the opportunity to contribute their views.

What methods will be used to collect the information that is needed?

Information can be gathered by means of evaluation tools (or instruments). The choice of tools is guided by the nature of the information needed, which is guided by the success criteria that are being tested.

There is a wide variety of tools that can be considered (see Section 3.5 for exemplars). Means of gathering quantitative information include desk research (analysing existing records and documents), checklists, standard forms, logs, evaluation grids, and performance tests. Means of gathering qualitative information include SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis, questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, and self-assessment profiles.

Much information can be gathered by simply observing and taking notes. Observation records can then be triangulated with information from other sources to ensure that a balanced, accurate picture is arrived at.

Care should be taken to ensure that, whatever methods are used, only information that is relevant to the focus of the evaluation is collected. Collecting surplus information can slow down the evaluation process and distract from the core issues.

What time scale will be involved in collecting the information?

The time scale will depend to an extent on the focus and scope of the evaluation and on the amount of information that has to be specially collected in order to test the success criteria. The nature and size of the organisation will also be a factor. It is advisable that a realistic timetable for the collection of information be established, taking into account the availability of those who will be involved in it.

How will the information be analysed and interpreted?

Analysis and interpretation are crucial aspects of the evaluation process. The task for the evaluators is to examine the evidence that has been collected to see what it reveals about how things are and to ascertain whether or to what extent the success criteria have been met. So, the analysis is focused by the criteria.

The choice of methods for conducting the analysis will be influenced by the nature of the information in question and the nature of the tools used to gather it. The following approaches may prove helpful, depending on the context:

- scan the information to look for meaningful patterns, groupings, and items of particular significance
- set up categories for analysing qualitative information such as responses to interview questions and questionnaires
- use charts, graphs or tables to deal with numerical data
- prepare summary sheets on which to record the key points that emerge from each strand of the information in relation to each success criterion
- develop a summative tool to draw together the main points uncovered by each individual tool
- triangulate information from different sources to ensure that a balanced, accurate picture can be arrived at

In a large-scale evaluation, computer software can be an invaluable aid in managing and analysing data.

In interpreting the evidence, the core questions to consider are:

- What does the evidence reveal about the actual situation, actual outcomes, actual practice, actual competencies and skills?
- How does this compare with the desired or intended outcomes, the standards of good practice, the target levels of competence and skill?

The challenge for the evaluators is to reach valid conclusions that are fully supported by the evidence. The following simple framework may prove helpful in focusing deliberations:

What does the evidence indicate?	
In relation to Implementation	Did we do what we set out to do?
In relation to Outcome	Did we achieve what we set out to achieve?
In relation to Impact	Is there evidence of a positive impact on the development of the children or young people in terms of their attitudes and values, competencies and skills, or knowledge and understanding in the area of PEPAS?
In relation to Surprises	Were there unexpected occurrences or outcomes?
Reflect on the 'Whys'	

It is important to allow sufficient time for analysis and interpretation in the evaluation process. It is advisable to decide at the outset who will be responsible for the various tasks involved and who will have overall responsibility.

What use will be made of the findings?

The findings of the self-evaluation process are intended to guide decision-making about future action. Accordingly, steps should be taken to enable this to happen. The choice of approach will depend on the focus and scope of the evaluation, the nature and size of the organisation, and the range of stakeholders to whom the findings are relevant.

It is often the case that those who conduct an evaluation are asked to make recommendations on the basis of their findings. Where warranted by the scale of the evaluation, a formal report may be prepared, outlining the focus of the evaluation, the methods and tools used, the analysis of evidence, the conclusions, and the recommendations. In other contexts, an oral report to the relevant audience, followed by discussion, may be more appropriate. Sometimes, in a small-scale evaluation exercise, there are no formal recommendations; suggestions as what should happen as a result of the findings emerge from dialogue among those concerned.

Whatever the context, the relevant members and stakeholders of the group or organisation need to reflect on the findings and consider their implications. The following prompts may prove helpful:

What are the implications of the findings for future action?
• What should we continue...?
• What should we adjust or modify...?
• What should we radically revise...?
• What should we stop...?
• What should we start...?

The challenge then will be for those concerned to decide on the follow-up, and plan for it.

Who will be informed of the findings? By what means?

The answers to these questions will be determined by the context. In general terms, those to whom the conclusions are relevant should be informed of them, by whatever means are appropriate.

With a larger-scale evaluation in particular, it may be appropriate and worthwhile to present the findings to the type of audience that has the capacity to effect change. In a school setting, this may involve reporting on the findings to school leaders and staff, the board of management, the parents association, and the student council. For a community group or club, the findings might be relevant to the Local Sport Partnership committee, the club management committee, the community council or others.

When presenting the findings to an audience, it is worthwhile to:

- acknowledge what is working well, the outcomes that are being achieved, and the positive impact on the children or young people
- identify the limitations of provision and the challenges that the organisation faces
- state what challenges can be addressed and propose priorities

Adequate time should then be allowed for reflection, discussion, and debate around issues that emerge. Opinions expressed about future options should be taken into account when decisions are being made about follow-up action.

What resources will be needed for the evaluation process?

The main resource needed is likely to be the time, effort and expertise of those involved in conducting the evaluation.

The services of a Critical Friend may need to be sought. Advice and support from a relevant external agency may also prove helpful.

Depending on the methods chosen, resources may be required for the collection and analysis of information and for the presentation and dissemination of findings.

When the evaluation is completed, how will progress and achievement be acknowledged?

Consideration should be given as to how positive findings from the evaluation process will be recognised. The school magazine or website, the club handbook or newsletter could be used to acknowledge progress and achievement.

How will follow-through be ensured?

The major challenge for any group or organisation that has undertaken an evaluation is to ensure that the findings are reflected on, the implications are considered, appropriate decisions are made, and those decisions are acted on. Consideration should be given as to what steps can be taken to keep the findings 'live' until the follow-up process has been completed.

3.4 Light-Touch Evaluation

In the previous section, an outline was given of a very formal, systematic approach to self-evaluation. In some contexts, however, a more informal, light-touch approach may be appropriate. For example, immediately after an event or activity or small-scale intervention, such as a sports day or training camp or adventure activity, it may be helpful for those involved to reflect together on the experience to see what lessons should be learnt for the next time.

The following prompts are a guide to a collaborative reflection of this kind:

- 1 Did it happen according to plan?
- 2 What worked well? What is the evidence?
- 3 What did not work well? What is the evidence?
- 4 Did it achieve the desired outcomes? What is the evidence?
- 5 Were there any unintended outcomes?
- 6 Should we a) Continue? b) Change? c) Stop?
- 7 What changes should we make for the next time?



3.5 Other Sources of Information

Information for Schools

Department of Education and Skills. Online at <http://www.education.ie/>

- Department of Education and Skills (2010) Circular 0022/2010: *Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE): Best Practice Guidelines for Primary Schools*. See online at: <http://www.education.ie/en/Advanced-Search/?q=22/2010>
- Department of Education and Skills (2010) Circular 0023/2010: *Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE): Best Practice Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools*. See online at: <http://www.education.ie/en/Advanced-Search/?q=23/2010>
- Department of Education and Skills (2011) Circular 0065/2011: *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*. See online at: <http://www.education.ie/en/Advanced-Search/?q=65/2011>
- Department of Education and Skills (2012) *School Self-Evaluation Guidelines for Primary Schools: Inspectorate Guidelines for Schools*. Online at: http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Inspection-Reports-Publications/Evaluation-Reports-Guidelines/sse_guidelines_primary.pdf
- Department of Education and Skills (2012) *School Self-Evaluation Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Inspectorate Guidelines for Schools*. Online at http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Inspection-Reports-Publications/Evaluation-Reports-Guidelines/sse_guidelines_post_primary.pdf
- Department of Education and Skills, Health Service Executive; Department of Health (2013) *Well-Being in Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention*. Online at: http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/Well_Being_PP_Schools_Guidelines.pdf

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. Online at: <http://www.ncca.ie/en/>

Professional Development Service for Teachers. Online at: <http://www.pdst.ie/>

Accreditation Scheme Information

Active School Flag. Online at: <http://www.activeschoolflag.ie/index.html>

Green Schools. Online at:
http://www.greenschoolsireland.org/Index.aspx?Site_ID=1&Item_ID=28

Health Promoting School, *Health Services Executive (2011) Health Promoting Schools Co-ordinator's Handbook*. For details contact: Health Promoting Schools Team, Health Promotion Department, Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital, Western Road, Cork. Email: hpdsouth@hse.ie; Telephone: 021-4921641.

Other Planning and Evaluation Resources

Barnekow, V., Buijs, G., Clift, S., Jensen, B.B., Paulus, P., Rivett, D and Young, I. (2006) *Health Promoting Schools: A resource for developing indicators*. International Planning Committee (IPC), of the European Network of Health Promoting Schools: European Commission. Online at: <http://www.nepes.eu/?q=node/418>

Department for Education and Skills (2005) *Do you have high quality PE and sport in your school? A guide to self-evaluating and improving the quality of PE and school sport* DfES Publications: Nottinghamshire. Online at: http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/_doc/8126/Self%20Evaluation%20Guide%20Jan2005.pdf

Directorate – General for Education and Culture (2011) *European Guide of Healthy Physical Activity Programs: Methodology and compilation of best practices*: European Commission. Online at: http://www.eurosporthealth.eu/en/guiabonespratiques_en.asp

Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, *The School Health Index (SHI): Self-Assessment & Planning Guide*. Online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/shi/index.htm>

World Health Organisation (2008) *School Policy Framework: Implementation of the WHO global strategy on diet, physical activity and health*, Geneva: World Health Organisation. Online at: <http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/schools/en/>

3.6 Appendix I

The desired outcomes set out in Get Active I remain at the heart of the planning, implementation and evaluation process for physical education, physical activity and sport. They ensure a child-centred approach and a common focus, language and understanding which can be shared by different organisations or groups involved in PEPAS provision. As was indicated in Section 3.2, these desired outcomes can serve as the focus of an evaluation process and as the basis for the development of success criteria. For evaluation purposes, these outcomes can be examined:

Individually:- A single desired outcome from Get Active I may be examined within an organisation. Or it may be examined across the three contexts (class, co-curricular and community) by a partnership of schools and community-based agencies (NGBs, LSP, PACs) or groups. For example, participation rates might be monitored across physical education, co-curricular and community settings in order to evaluate Outcome I (Young people who are committed to regular participation in physical education, physical activity and sport, including walking or cycling for everyday travel needs).

In groups:- The outcomes identified in Get Active I can be grouped according to attitudes and values, competencies and abilities, knowledge and understanding, if this aids the identification of success criteria. For example,

- attitudes and values might focus on commitment, confidence and enjoyment (Outcomes 1, 3, 6 and 7)
- competencies might focus on personal, physical, social and emotional competencies and decision-making ability (Outcomes 4, 5 and 6)
- knowledge and understanding might also incorporate the ability to make informed decisions (Outcomes 2 and 5)

Collectively:- All of the desired outcomes identified in Get Active I might be examined together, using criteria that might apply across all seven.



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