

# Partnership Plan, Structure and Governance

2025-2026



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## 1. Introduction

Physical Education (PE), Physical Literacy (PL), school sport and Physical Activity (PA) play an important role in the lives of young people. They can have a positive impact on their holistic development, supporting their physical and mental health and wellbeing, fostering self-confidence in movement, learning and attainment, behaviour, communication, leadership skills, resilience and community cohesion.

The Merton School Sport Partnership is funded and supported by its key stakeholders, to ensure that PE, school sport and PA are well coordinated, delivered in abundance and to a high standard to the students within the Borough of Merton.

Our annual Partnership Plan considers both local needs and national recommendations. Our key targets, focus for delivery and outcomes are reviewed and published annually for our stakeholders.



## 2. Background and Context

Merton School Sport Partnership is located in the London Borough of Merton and was established in September 2003 through the government funded national PE School Sport & Club Links programme. The Partnership is currently formed of 39 (out of 43) state primary schools, 11 secondary schools and 3 special schools.

In September 2011, due to a reduction in government funding, MSSP reduced in size and became a self-funded entity via a range of avenues but predominantly through its key stakeholders - Merton state schools and academies. Since then, the Partnership has expanded and now also provides a specialist sports provision service, professional development programme and has developed its own Schemes of Work for Primary PE. The majority of the Partnership's programmes and work remit target children at Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 with more bespoke programmes targeting Key Stages 3, 4 and 5.

In the pupil census report of Autumn 2024, Merton state schools and academies had around 26,487 students on roll from Reception to Key Stage 5. Of these 540 attended a special school, 1,562 had an EHCP and 3,953 had received support.

14,381 mainstream students were studying at Reception, KS 1 and 2; 9,651 students were studying at KS 3 and 4; and 2,542 studying in Merton schools / academies in KS 5.

Based in South-West London, Merton has a geographical split in terms of social economic factors with the east of the borough encountering more inequality than the west.

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### Additional Merton Context

#### Extracted from The Merton Story 2021

On average, the population of Merton is healthy compared to London and England. However, there are significant health inequalities across the Borough. These inequalities in population health correlate with differences in the demographic structure of the population, for example ethnicity and age structure, as well as differences in the wider determinants of health, such as socioeconomic circumstances. For example, compared to West Merton, East Merton has a high proportion of people from minority ethnic groups, a higher amount of socioeconomic deprivation and a lower average life expectancy. Significant inequalities in socioeconomic status exist across Merton. East Merton has more socioeconomically deprived areas than West Merton, an inequality which has persisted over time. In Merton, areas in East Merton have a higher level of health and disability related deprivation compared to those in West Merton.

Children and young people in Merton experience good health outcomes compared to regional and national benchmarks but there is inequality within Merton.

In Merton, over 1 in 12 (8.7%) of Reception-aged children and 1 in five (20.1%) of Year 6 children were estimated by the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) to be obese in 2019/20. Although these proportions are lower than or similar to England and London levels, there are significant inequalities in Merton with greater levels of childhood overweight and obesity in East Merton compared to West Merton. Significant inequalities in childhood obesity and overweight exist in the UK by gender, ethnicity,

socio economic status, geography, and disability. For example, children living in the most deprived areas are twice as likely to be classified obese as children in the least.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on obesity levels in Merton remains to be seen, however there is emerging evidence that stay-at-home guidance, the move to online education and closures of leisure facilities has disrupted children's routines leading to negative impacts on sleep, nutrition and physical activity levels. Engagement work in London indicates that some young people were leaving the house less than once a week at the start of the pandemic, with negative impacts on physical activity as well as young people's mental health.

Good mental wellbeing is characterised by happiness, high self-esteem, life satisfaction and social inclusion. Poor mental wellbeing can have negative impacts on every aspect of life, from social inclusion, employment and education, to economic hardship and physical ill-health, and can lead to a significant risk of earlier death. Mental wellbeing is inter-related to our physical health and to our lifestyles (diet, exercise and smoking). Poor physical health or health conditions can adversely affect our mental wellbeing, and vice versa.

At least one in eight children and young people in the UK have a diagnosable mental health condition or emotional disorder; and anxiety and depression are on the rise. Merton has high admission rates for self-harm in 15–19-year-olds compared to London, while the mental health of young Londoners has declined in general during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A large number of Merton residents have behavioural risk factors that contribute to ill health and premature death in Merton; 1 in 4 residents are physically inactive. The 'Active Lives' survey by Sport England received 520 responses from Merton residents and illustrates that Merton is lower than the London average for physical activity levels, with almost one in four (24.7%) Merton residents reporting being inactive during November 2019 to November 2020. Physical activity is not only lower than London but also lower than previous years by 3.8%.

Overall, children and young people in Merton obtain good levels of development and attainment, however lower proportions reach expected levels in East Merton and the move to online teaching may have widened the educational gap for disadvantaged students.

In Merton, 12.6% of school pupils received Special Educational Needs support in 2020/21 and there has been an increase in the number of children with an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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The Partnership will use local and national data and insight to focus our resources and remit effectively, providing opportunities and support where they are needed most, and working to reduce the impact of inequality on PE, physical activity and sporting opportunities for our students.

Since 2018-19 MSSP has been awarded funding from Public Health Merton to operate the Healthy Schools London awards programme for schools within the borough.

The Partnership supports the council's plan '[Building a Better Merton Together](#)' (2023 – 2026), and its intention to create a 'Borough of Sport'. We hope this will further enhance the sport and physical activity outcomes for Merton's school communities.



### 3. Our Vision

‘To inspire all of our young people to achieve their best and to be confident, competent and motivated within Physical Education, sport and physical activity. Through high-quality, inclusive and formative experiences, which begin in their early years of education, we aim to nurture physical literacy and develop a lifelong, positive relationship with movement. We want our students to have meaningful and enjoyable experiences across a wide range of physical activities, enabling them to lead healthy, active lifestyles throughout their time at school and into adulthood.

Our co-ordinated, partnership approach will provide effective channels of communication and delivery, ensuring all schools work collaboratively while sharing resources, knowledge and facilities. Our teachers and coaches will be confident in delivering high-quality, inclusive, fun and engaging PE lessons that meet the needs of all learners, supporting physical literacy development and embedding sport and physical activity into the ethos of our schools.’

“**Physical Literacy** is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life”

IPLA, 2017

## 4. Aims and Objectives

In order to achieve our long-term vision for Merton's students we have eight key PE, School Sport and Physical Activity (PESSPA) objectives which are based on the needs of our Merton schools and the national landscape for PESSPA.

Inclusion is embedded throughout all aspects of our work. We are committed to ensuring that every PESSPA objective actively promotes and upholds our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles, celebrating diversity in culture and experience, making opportunities accessible to all our students. Each objective will incorporate targeted approaches to support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and those experiencing disadvantaged or from underrepresented backgrounds. Our network is here to serve our whole community creating a sense of belonging and connection.

### PE, School Sport and Physical Activity (PESSPA) Objectives

(see in brackets for link to the AfPE Key Indicators for the Primary PE and Sports Premium funding)

#### 1. PE Curriculum (PPESP Key Indicator: 1)

Ensure every child receives at least two hours of PE (Physical Development for EYFS) each week, develops the competence and Physical Literacy to excel across a broad range of physical activities, and remains physically active for sustained periods. The curriculum should show progression in the holistic elements of Physical Literacy (physical, cognitive, social, and emotional learning) through lessons that are engaging, inclusive, active, joyful, and build confidence and positive attitudes toward movement.



#### 2. Developing Teaching and the PE Workforce (PPESP Key Indicator: 1)

Develop staff confidence, knowledge, and skills to deliver high-quality PE and physical activity from EYFS to KS2. Supporting the PE Coordinator to lead the subject, effectively shaping curriculum intent, driving implementation, and monitoring impact.

Building a skilled workforce to ensure PE is taught consistently and inclusively, including the use of moderation processes to ensure assessment of physical literacy is fair, reliable, and consistent across staff and year groups. Developing strong leadership and targeted professional development embed PE and school sport as a valued part of whole-school priorities. Championing the role of PESSPA in supporting the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of pupils, while also promoting staff wellbeing through active role modelling and supportive practice.

### **3. Physical Activity** (PPESP Key Indicator: 2)

Promote daily physical activity for all pupils, ensuring national guidelines are met and children develop autonomy, agency and motivation to choose active, healthy habits for life. Developing a whole-school approach, active classroom strategies, monitoring systems, and initiatives to positively engage all children.

### **4. School Ethos and Environment** (PPESP Key Indicator: 3)

Creating a whole-school ethos, environment and leadership culture that values, celebrates and actively supports PE, sport and physical activity. This includes ensuring that facilities and all school spaces (such as break and lunch areas, multi-purpose rooms and outdoor areas) are intentionally designed to encourage movement, meaningful physical experiences and strong community engagement. Developing policies that reinforce the school's ethos and provide a clear foundation for building high-quality PESSPA provision.

Ensuring that all adults adopt a positive ethos to the delivery of sessions and the management of competitive activities. Encouraging children and enabling them to explore, discover, and 'play their way' to develop a positive and lifelong love of being active.

Highlighting the importance of REFSPECT, positive attitudes, teamwork, fair play, determination and developing a growth mindset and empathy for others. Utilising physical activity and health interventions to contribute to the positive mental health, resilience and well-being of children.

### **5. Enrichment and Community Links** (PPESP Key Indicator: 4)

Children have access to and can enjoy a breadth and inclusivity of enrichment opportunities beyond the PE curriculum, including extra-curricular clubs, inspirational events, sport development pathways and links with community sports providers.

### **6. Competition and Performance** (PPESP Key Indicator: 5)

Children are able to take part in and enjoy competitive sport, both within school (intra) and at external (inter) competitions and festivals, at a level that best suits their experience, knowledge and ability. They do this within a safe, welcoming and positive environment that encourages a growth mindset and opportunities to learn and grow.

### **7. Sports Leaders and Pupil Voice** (PPESP Key Indicator: N/A)

Students are empowered through leadership opportunities and can access Sports Leaders training and opportunities to volunteer. Pupil Voice programmes enable students to have their say and influence decisions around PE, sport, and physical activity, ensuring provision is relevant, engaging, and reflective of all student interests and experiences.

## **8. Swimming and Water Safety** (PPESP Key Indicator: N/A)

All students are able to be safe in the water and develop as competent swimmers. Swimming is delivered as part of the National Curriculum, supports pupils' progress and confidence, and ensures equity in attainment for all groups. It takes into account the range of experience and confidence that students bring to their school swimming lessons, and incorporates preparation and 'dry-side' strategies. The provision also considers the timetabling and quality of swimming lessons at the local pool, the collection and analysis of attainment data, and the development of plans for improvement.

## **Strategic and Organisational Aims**

Our Strategic and Organisational Aims outline the principles and priorities that guide our work. They reflect our commitment to delivering high-quality, inclusive, and sustainable provision that meets the needs of every child and supports schools in achieving excellence. Through strong governance, safeguarding, equality, sustainability, and collaboration, we aim to create an environment where pupils thrive physically, mentally, and socially, and where schools and communities are empowered to promote lifelong participation in physical activity.

### **1. Governance and Compliance**

We will uphold all legal obligations and best practice within our industry. Maintaining robust risk management, data protection, and transparent decision-making across the Partnership. Keeping policies current and aligned with school and local authority requirements.

### **2. Safeguarding and Child Protection**

MSSP acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard, protect and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and Merton Schools' requirements. MSSP are employed by Harris Academy Morden (HAMD) and as such, follow and adhere to the annual HAMD Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, aligning with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) guidance.

We will place the safeguarding and welfare of children and vulnerable young people at the core of everything that we do. We are committed to ensuring children's safety, wellbeing and enjoyment, both directly; during our events and coaching sessions and indirectly; through teacher and sports coach training days. We will complete a biannual safeguarding review to support our policy and protocols across all areas of the Partnership, embedding safeguarding through all our provision (including our events and coaching delivery).

### 3. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

We are committed to embedding inclusion throughout all aspects of our work. Every PESSPA objective will actively promote and uphold our EDI principles, ensuring that opportunities are accessible to every child. This includes targeted approaches for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those who are less engaged, and pupils from disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

To achieve this, we will collect and analyse participation data annually to identify gaps and inequalities, using these insights to focus resources where they are needed most. Our policies, plans, resources, and communications will reflect the diversity of our community and foster a sense of belonging for all stakeholders. Programmes will be designed to meet the needs of SEND and underrepresented groups, while enhancing local provision and staff capability. We will set clear, measurable EDI targets within our action planning process and report progress transparently to stakeholders.

We will embed EDI within all workforce recruitment and training, and in response to feedback from our network, we will provide targeted CPD on gender equality and SEND PE and sport delivery, and review this provision annually. We remain committed members of the Council's Black Lives Matter and Equalities forum, and the Physical Activity for SEND Network.



## EDI Insight Snapshot from 2024-2025

During 2024-2025, MSSP collated data on children attending our events, representing their schools, and participating in extra-curricular clubs; as well as gaining perspectives through our Pupil Voice project and other surveys. Unfortunately, the participation data is not robust as we would like it to be; not all schools provided EDI data, it could also be the same children attending more than one competition – data around individual attendances is not recorded. It does however give us some idea about which children are accessing these opportunities. Gathering more accurate and useable data and comparing this year-on-year will be a focus for our team as our Partnership seeks to better understand and address any inequalities.

### Extra-Curricular Activities

- Data collated from the schools' MSSM submission suggests an average of **43% of KS2 pupils took part in an extra-curricular activity** in a selected week (this could be the same children attending more than one club – data around individual children's attendances across the week is not recorded).
- Attendances at extra-curricular clubs were **lower in SEND** (34% of pupils on roll attended), **Girls** (40% of pupils on roll attended - compared to 47% of Boys) and **Global Majority** (41% of pupils on roll attended). Students receiving **Pupil Premium were well represented at the clubs**, with an average 53% attendance rate.
- Feedback from the **SEND Pupil Voice** Survey suggests us that some children with SEND may be too tired to take part in additional activities at the end of the school day in our special schools.

### Competitive Events and Festivals

- Schools also reported (MSSM Survey) that approximately **62% of eligible pupils** (Years 3-6) attended at an **inter school event** or competition (this could be same children attending more than one event). With Girls (59%) slightly less represented than boys (63%) at competitions between schools.
- Schools reported that as a sub group, **Global Majority were the least fairly represented at events** (46%), followed by **SEND** (52%) and **Pupil Premium** (55%).
- At MSSP competitions and festivals, registration data suggests that children from **Asian or mixed Asian heritage were the most underrepresented group**. At our events, boys and girls were evenly represented, with around 3,375 boys taking part and 3,429 girls participating. This correlates with our calendar which ensures girls have equal access to all of our events through team selection regulations and additional girls only events.

### Swimming

- Swimming attainments data suggests that 53% of children could swim 25m in Year 6. Schools in the East of the Borough appeared to have lower 25m swimming attainment (45%) than those in the West (58%).

### Pupil Voice

- Pupil Voice feedback from 250 of our less active students, selected by the PE Co from underrepresented groups (including girls, Pupil Premium, Global Majority and SEND), across 42 Primary Schools, informed us that Girls often feel less confident and engaged in PE due to the **behaviour of some Boys**. Students also want to have more say in their curriculum activities and competitive events need to be **fun and safe**.
- SEND student voice from 28 pupils within our Special Schools reveals that most enjoy being active, enjoy inclusive competition, **need rest after school**, and value access to fresh air.

### Staff Voice

- Feedback from school staff tells us that they are less confident in adapting PE for SEND students, would like support with the topic around Gender Equality in PE and that our Dance Scheme of Work needs reviewing and redeveloping through an EDI Lens.

### Active Lives Survey

- The borough wide Merton School Active Lives Survey in 2023-24 tells us that around **49% of pupils take part in 30 mins + of moderate to vigorous activity across the week** (national data 45%). **Boys (51%) are more active than girls (47%)**. When comparing the east (43%) to the west (52%) of Merton, there is a 9% difference in activity levels - suggesting that **deprivation levels in the east appear to be affecting a young person's ability to access sport and physical activity opportunities**.

Further details can be found in the [MSSP Annual Summary Report 2024-2025](#)

#### **4. Sustainability and Resources**

We aim to ensure the long-term sustainability of our Partnership and the programmes we deliver. This includes securing adequate funding to maintain and grow initiatives that support PE, sport, and physical activity across our schools. We will actively assist schools in accessing external grants and funding opportunities to enhance their provision. We will optimise shared resources (such as equipment, venues, and staff expertise) across our network to maximise impact and value for all stakeholders.

#### **5. Innovation and Improvement**

We are committed to fostering innovation and driving continuous improvement across all aspects of PE, sport, and physical activity. This includes introducing creative approaches, new activities, and digital tools to keep pupils engaged and active, and to enhance our outputs and data collection/analysis methods.

A key priority is strengthening the performance and capability of our core team. We will implement robust performance management processes that support professional growth, accountability, excellence and staff health and wellbeing. This includes providing tailored training and development opportunities for staff to enhance leadership, operational efficiency, and specialist skills required to deliver high-quality PESSPA provision. We will create a culture of learning and collaboration, ensuring team members have access to resources, mentoring, and opportunities to share best practice.

To ensure sustained progress, we will embed continuous improvement cycles (plan, do, review) into programme design and delivery, and facilitate communities of practice within the team to share knowledge and drive innovation. By adapting to emerging trends and evidence-based approaches, we will ensure our provision remains relevant, inclusive, and impactful.

#### **6. Communication, Advocacy & Celebration**

We are dedicated to ensuring clear, inclusive, and impactful communication across all aspects of our work. We will provide schools with a strong PESSPA network, accessible guidance, resources, signposting to national and local programmes, competitions, and opportunities.

Our communications will reflect diversity and inclusion, using plain language, representative imagery, and alternative formats where needed. We will actively publicise and celebrate achievements in PESSPA through events, our website, social media, and local authority channels, showcasing the success of schools and pupils.

In addition, we will report outcomes and impact transparently to schools, partners, and stakeholders, reinforcing accountability and promoting the value of our work.

#### **7. Network, Partnerships & Community**

We will strive to build and sustain strong partnerships that enhance opportunities for PE, sport, and physical activity. This includes working collaboratively with local sports clubs, National Governing Bodies, leisure providers, health services, and community organisations to strengthen school sport provision.

We will ensure MSSP aligns with and contributes to Merton’s Borough of Sport strategic aims, supporting wider objectives for physical activity, health, and wellbeing.

Our approach will also engage the broader community to expand inclusive participation and volunteering opportunities. In addition, we will promote pathways between school sport and community programmes, including talent development where appropriate, to ensure pupils have opportunities to continue their sporting journey beyond school.

## 8. Impact and Quality Assurance

We are committed to delivering high-quality PESSPA provision that meets the needs of our schools and stakeholders. To achieve this, we will monitor and assure the quality of all programmes and services, ensuring alignment with recognised best practice in school sport and physical education.

We will measure impact on pupil engagement, wellbeing, and attainment, using data to drive continuous improvement. Feedback loops with pupils, staff, and partners will be established to refine programmes and enhance effectiveness. In addition, we will ensure that all stakeholders receive value for money and the level of service they expect, reinforcing trust and accountability across the Partnership.



## 5. Stakeholders

Through all of our work, our ultimate beneficiary is always the student. In everything that we plan and do, we place the utmost consideration on the impact we have upon the children involved.

### Primary / Special State Schools and Academies

Our focus as a Partnership is at Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stages 1 and Key Stage 2.

39 primaries and 3 special schools have bought into our generic affiliation package for 2025-2026. The provision and support they receive from MSSP is outlined throughout this document.



### Secondary Schools and Academies

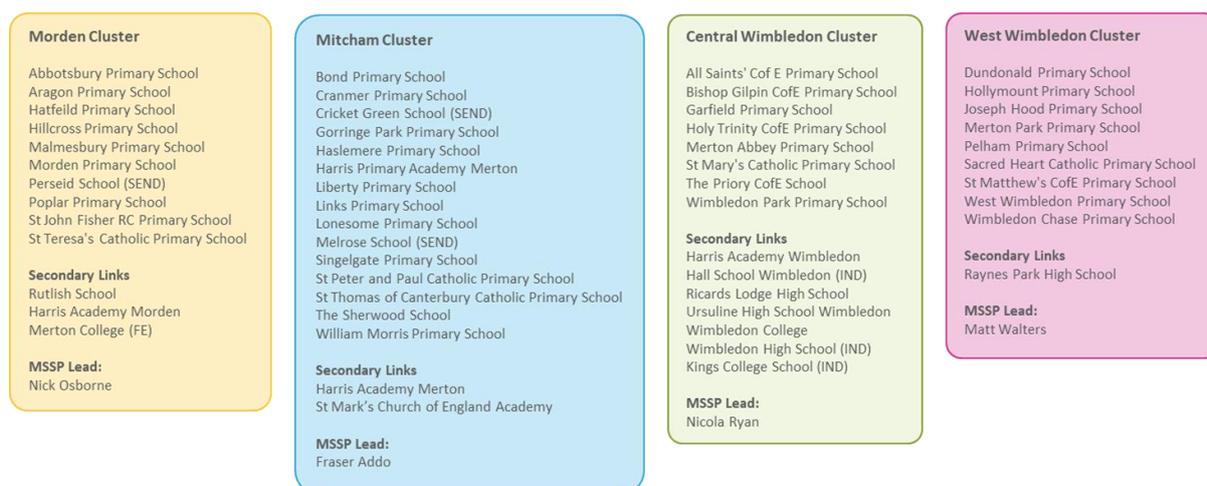
Although there is no affiliation charge in place for secondary schools, we do still support PE and sport provision at Key Stage 3 – 5 through our core team's work and via the School Games Organiser post. For secondary schools, the level of support depends upon the needs of the individual school and bespoke packages have been tailored to best meet each school's requirements. Our general support for Key Stage 3 – 5 includes:

- Representing the Primary Schools / Partnership at Merton Secondary Schools Sports Association meetings and acting as Treasurer for the Association.
- Hosting the School Games Organiser post – this includes programming the calendar of competitions for the academic year, communicating relevant information to schools around pathways to Level 3 events and other local or national programmes (Independent Schools are included in this provision).
- Providing Leadership Academies to some schools (this is charged for).
- Providing officiating training to sports leaders and opportunities to officiate at primary competitions.

- Coordinating and supporting the Merton events/trials and representative teams for the Surrey Schools Athletics and Cross Country (Independent Schools are included in this provision).
- Brokering the relationship and transitional experience between Key Stage 2 to 3, in terms of sports provision and on-site experiences. Secondary school sports leaders gain valuable experiences of working with younger children and the school gets to promote its facilities, staff and pupils to potential applicants from feeder schools. In return, primary schools have the opportunity to participate or compete in full size sports facilities with young leaders officiating for them, acting as positive role models.

## Clusters of Schools

The Partnership is formed of four geographic clusters of schools with each led and supported by a member of the core MSSP team. The cluster groups enable valuable communication channels; support for teachers; a local group within walking distance for inter school competitions and festivals; strong links to local feeder schools and leadership opportunities. The clusters changed in Sept 2025 to better fit with the reduction of affiliated schools in the east of the borough and with Head Teacher Cluster Meetings (former extended schools clusters).



## Non-Partnership Schools

The Partnership's stakeholders are our Merton state schools and academies. We do however have cause to work with and provide services for non-Partnership Schools. These may include independent schools, non-affiliated Merton state schools or out of borough schools. In order to protect the stakeholders' investment into the Partnership it has been agreed by the Steering Committee that non-Partnership schools will be required to pay an enhanced fee to access any services which are provided or coordinated by the Partnership. In all cases, services should not be supplied at a detriment to the MSSP Stakeholders.

## 6. Governance, Funding and Partners

The Partnership works on behalf of and seeks to support all Merton affiliated schools. It is hosted by **Harris Academy Morden**, which is part of the Harris Federation. The Partnership is managed as an independent structure within the Academy / Federation, serving the affiliated Merton Schools with its objectives and finances separated from the Academy itself. Partnership staff are employed by Harris Academy Morden and managed via the Academy's performance management structure. The Partnership is led and managed by the School Sport Director (SSD). The SSD is line managed by the Principal of Harris Academy Morden.

MSSP finances are held and audited by Harris Federation's finance department and legal structures. The Partnership is partly governed by its self-appointed **Steering Committee**, which has an agreed **Constitution** and **Scheme of Delegation**. The Committee serves to protect the affiliated schools' financial investment and ensure that the Partnership is effectively managed, advised and supported.

### Funding

The Partnership core staffing and operations are funded predominantly by the affiliated schools and our Inspire and Educate programme. Funding may change year on year, but the list below provides a general breakdown of our **income streams**.

	Approximate Income P/A	% Income
<b>Affiliation Fees - Primary and Special Schools</b>	£140,000	<b>38%</b>
<b>Inspire &amp; Educate Programme Surplus</b> Specialist sport provision in schools, professional development and sales of the Scheme of Work.	£105,000	<b>29%</b>
<b>Government Funded School Games Organiser 3 day role</b>	£24,000	<b>7%</b>
<b>LB Merton Healthy Schools and Borough of Sport</b>	£25,000	<b>7%</b>
<b>The Wimbledon Foundation</b>	£60,000	<b>16%</b>
<b>Other income</b>	£10,000	<b>3%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£364,000</b>	

The Partnership's finances are reported to the Steering Committee bi-annually. Copies of the report will be provided to affiliated schools upon request.

## Partners

The Partnership is also fortunate to receive support and resources from other partners including but not limited to:

### Harris Academy Morden and the Harris Federation

Hosting office space, line management process, financial structure and audit, Data Controller, ICT provision, Human Resources, payroll and Safeguarding and Welfare procedures.

### Merton Schools

- Schools make use of Primary PE and Sport Premium Funding to affiliate to MSSP and release time for PE Cos
- Schools provide facilities for each other to use at no cost
- Head Teachers and senior staff support the Steering Committee

### Local Authority

Provide support and guidance through Merton council's Leisure Team, School Improvement Team, Public Health and Youth Service. Working in close partnership within the Borough of Sport ambition.

### The All-England Lawn Tennis Association and the Wimbledon Foundation

Financial contribution from the Foundation to support MSSP staffing and delivery costs. Delivery of the WJTI programme for all Merton Schools plus additional coaching support and teacher training throughout the year. Projects funded by the Foundation and frequent, free use of facilities including the Raynes Park Community Tennis Centre.

### Merton Youth Partnership

Sharing opportunities, guidance and support through this group.

### London Sport, the Association for PE and the Youth Sport Trust

Regional/national support and guidance.

### Tooting and Mitcham United Football Club

Use of facilities at a reduced rate for sports events. Working together to develop a local workforce with our PE Coach Academy.

### The Wimbledon Club

Use of facilities for agreed sports events, access to coaching for our schools.

### AFC Wimbledon Foundation

Working together to improve opportunities address inequalities across PE and School Sport in Merton.

### Old Rutlishians

Use of facilities for agreed sports events at no cost, access to coaches and event support staff through their coaching programme.

### Greenwich Leisure Ltd (Better for Everyone)

Contract holder for LA pools and schools' swimming programme. Engagement with the Merton School Swimming Development Group.



### **Stormbreak**

Working in partnership to provide opportunities and support for Merton's students to improve mental health and wellbeing through movement.

### **PE Scholar**

Supporting MSSP with the PE Leadership Programme and developing our online MSSM tool.

### **Wimbledon and Merton Hockey Clubs**

Use of facilities for agreed sports events, access to coaches and event support staff through their coaching programme.

### **London Broncos, Harlequins FC, Spencer Lacrosse Club, DJ Junior Golf Foundation, South West Runs Basketball**

Supporting our school events, providing coaching within our schools and inspiring students through access to their matches as spectators and mascots.



## 7. Workforce

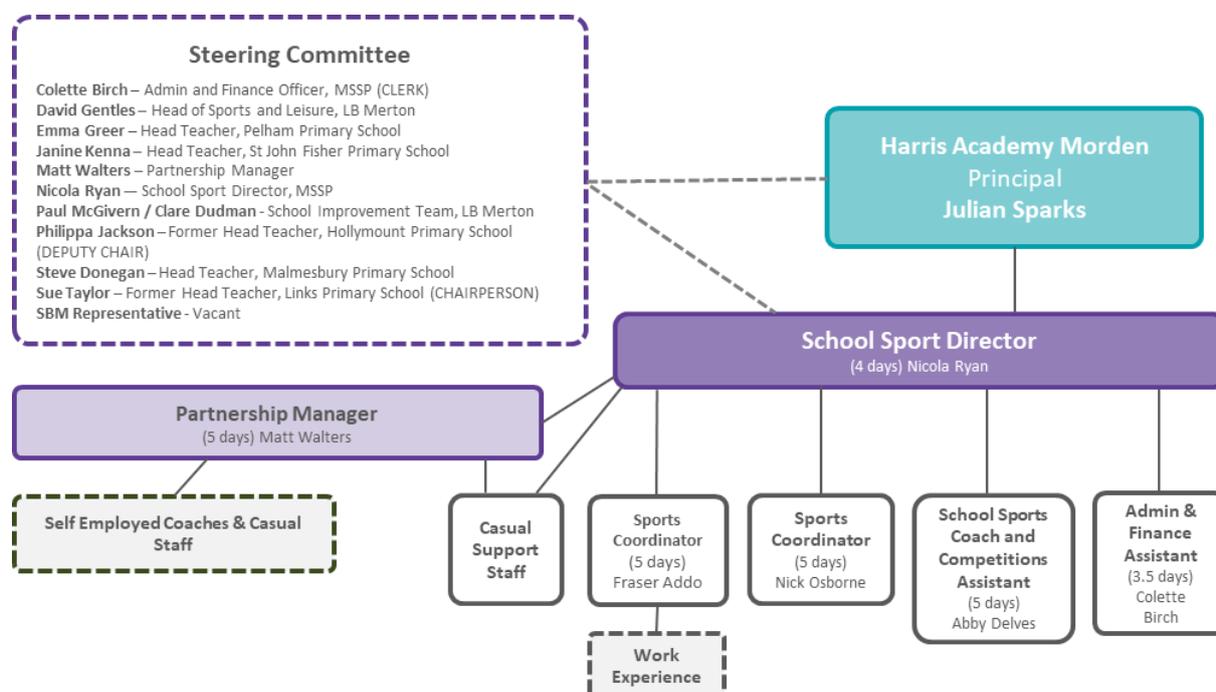
In order to achieve our Borough wide aims, our workforce involves a range of personnel. These include the core MSSP staff team as well as school staff, volunteers, sports leaders, sport specialists, consultants and the members of our Steering Committee.

Safeguarding the children we work with is paramount and the HAMD Safeguarding and Welfare protocols are thoroughly considered and implemented at all times within the recruitment, deployment and development of the workforce.

### MSSP Core Staff Team

The core staff team are all based at, and employed by, Harris Academy Morden. Within the team is the School Sport Director (SSD) who oversees all strategic planning and management. The SSD is supported by the Partnership Manager (PM) who is in charge of the operational management of the Inspire and Educate Programme and the self-employed sport specialists. The Sport Coordinators (SC) each lead a cluster of schools to help them meet their PE, PA and sport aims which will in turn feed into the Partnership's overall vision. The team are supported by the Admin and Finance Assistant.

The team provide PE and sport training for primary teachers, support and guidance to each school, plan and deliver competitions, leadership training and coaching opportunities. Each SC also leads the whole partnership in a specific area. These include the School Games and Competition, Leadership, Healthy Schools, Specialist Sport Provision, Professional Development, REFSPECT and Inclusion.



## **Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee provide a vital role in challenging, supporting and guiding the Partnership. The group meets at least four times per year with specific sub-meetings organised when required.

- Autumn Term**, November – End of year accounts and general updates/guidance focus
- Spring Term**, March – General updates/guidance and safeguarding focus
- Summer Term**, May – Budget review and projections focus
- Summer Holidays**, August – Review of performance and plans for following year

The Head Teacher (HT) that leads on PE and Sport for the Merton Primary HT's group will feedback to the Borough HTs on any prevalent issues. The SSD or PM regularly attend cluster Head Teacher meetings to consult and engage with the Head Teachers.

## **Workforce Support and Development**

The development of our workforce is key in order for us to achieve our aims and provide high quality and enjoyable opportunities for our young people.

### **MSSP Core Team**

The MSSP core team's professional development programme forms an integral part of the performance management process. Staff development questionnaires are completed at the start of the year and review meetings undertaken termly to provide valuable feedback and to plan the training required in order to develop the staff.

### **MSSP Wider Team**

MSSP also facilitate a range of mentoring, training and development opportunities for the PE Cos, School staff, volunteers and self-employed sport specialists to ensure the whole workforce are enabled and enthused to achieve their goals.

MSSP work closely with local and national education providers to keep up to date with the training and development landscape. The Partnership advocates that Primary schools make good use of the Primary PE and Sport Premium funding to upskill the workforce and embed good practice within the school.

**Sports Leaders**

Sports leaders play a key role in our wider workforce. Due to their support at as young officials, we are able to run many more events and activities for the younger children.



## 8. Communication

In order to achieve our objectives, it is vital that we communicate effectively as a Partnership. Key methods of communication are detailed below.

**MSSP Core Team Weekly Update Meetings** – MSSP team meet weekly to discuss and plan upcoming events/competitions as well as to review our programmes and agree improvements.

**MSSP/HAMD Performance Management structure** – Enables regular line management meetings and target setting as well as feedback, training and appraisal opportunities.

**Head Teachers and School Business Managers** – MSSP attend HT and SBM meetings to gather feedback and update on the Partnership's performance and new initiatives or plans. MSSP will also email correspondence as required to keep Head Teachers up to date.



**Merton Borough of Sport Advisory Group** – An MSSP representative attends the Borough of Sport Advisory Group meeting to help develop, shape and implement the Borough of Sport plans across Merton. MSSP also have regular meetings with Public Health and the School Improvement Team.

**Safeguarding and Welfare** – All MSSP staff, volunteers and self-employed coaches undertake annual training with HAMD Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The Director and Partnership Manager have regular contact with the DSL to ensure MSSP are up to date with protocols and to discuss any concerning matters. They also alternate attendance at the LB Merton DSL update training and networking sessions.

## **PE Coordinators:**

- **Conferences** – MSSP organise two conferences per year to ensure that all PE Coordinators feel equipped to lead PE, PA and Sport within in their schools. They are able to network, gain new ideas and skills and find out about up-to-date initiatives and information at these events.
- **Subject Leadership Programme with PE Scholar** - Bespoke programme for MSSP PE Coordinators covering curriculum and assessment, mentoring, leadership and PE policy. 3 half day workshops across the year.
- **SEND Workshop** – Adapting PE (annually).
- **PE Coordinator / Sports Coordinator 1-2-1 meetings** – 2hrs contact time per PE Coordinator as well as communication via email and phone at any time.
- **New PE Coordinator Inductions** – MSSP run one of every September to ensure our PE Coordinators feel supported by MSSP and understand the breadth of the role.
- **ECT Training** – MSSP provide around 4 sessions per year to upskill new teachers around the PE Curriculum.
- **Survey** – an annual survey is sent to all PE Coordinators (and HTS) to gather feedback around the services we provide and any changes that could be made to improve our programmes.

**Newsletters** - MSSP send out newsletters throughout the year to highlight achievements, changes to the landscape and key information.

**Emails and Telephone** – Our team have direct email contact with all PE Coordinators and School Staff. Our office mobile is manned 09:00-15:00 daily (term time) and taken to events with us if the office is vacated.

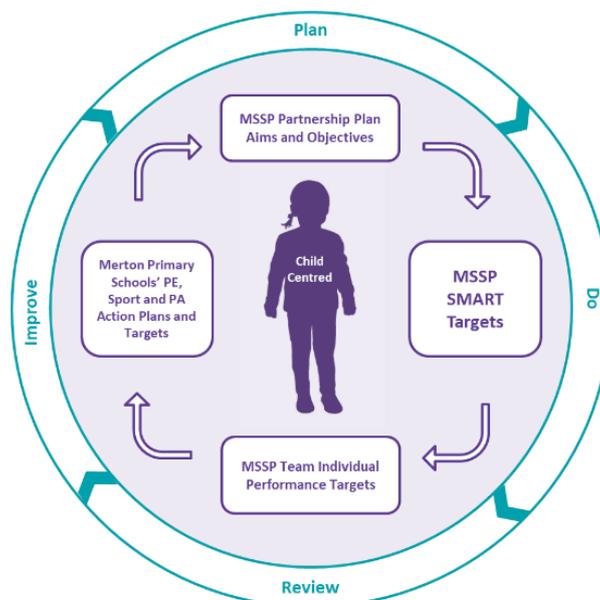
**Website and social media** – the website provides a key source of information for PE Coordinators, school staff, students and parents. It contains details of all upcoming events and staff training as well as information about the Partnership and its programmes. PE Coordinators have their own log in and dashboards to enable them to book onto events and records their bookings. News reports are also posted within 24 hours of any competitions. During the events we seek to report via social media platforms with updates.

**Young People** – We communicate with the beneficiaries themselves via iPad surveys and discussions at our events, PE delivery and other programmes. Pupil voice is a key part of our work remit as we seek to understand what our students enjoy and how they could overcome any barriers to access participation.

## 9. Plan, Action and Review

The flow chart demonstrates how the Partnership plans and sets its targets in order to achieve the Merton wide Key Aims and Objectives for our young people.

### School PE, PA and Sport Action Plans



Each primary and special school is encouraged to develop their own annual PE Action Plan which can link to their School's Development Plan and to the Primary PE and Sport Premium Reporting Template. This plan will in turn support the Borough as a whole to achieve the Partnership's aims and objectives.

### The Partnership Plan

The Partnership's Performance Targets will be agreed by the Steering Committee and documented annually in October. Outcomes from the Partnership's Performance Targets will be reviewed and reported back to the Steering Committee by the School Sport Director during August, at the end of the academic year.

### Merton School Sports Mark Award

The Partnership created its own Award scheme for PE and School Sport in 2011 when the national PE and School Sport Survey ended. The award is reviewed and developed annually to ensure it is up to date with national direction and local need. The criteria link closely to our key aims and grade the school's responses as Gold, Silver or Bronze. A school that achieves Gold 5 years consecutively will receive a Platinum award that year.

Each school is actively encouraged to complete the Merton School Sports Mark Award annually. The Award provides a good insight into how our schools are working towards the Partnership’s and their own school’s aims and objectives. It also serves as a self-improvement tool which enables the school to reflect on provision, identify targets and benchmark itself against other local schools.

It also allows us to recognise and reward good practice happening within the Merton schools. The MSSM Award Tool is currently being reviewed and redeveloped as an online tool, due to be launched in Summer 2026. This should make the questionnaire more user friendly for our PE Coordinators to complete and will also enable MSSP to gather and analyse the data from across our borough more efficiently.



**Impact**

Performance Targets are set each year and help us to measure the impact of our work across the whole Partnership. Evidence taken from the results of the Merton Sports Mark Award questionnaire and survey responses from the PE Coordinators also support this review.

The outcomes from our work are documented annually in the **MSSP Performance Targets Review** document and the **Annual Report Summary**, which is reported to the Steering committee and available to all affiliated schools upon request.



## 10. Programmes

With our partners, we deliver and facilitate a range of both national and our own Partnership's PE, PA and school sport programmes in order to meet our objectives and fulfil our coordinating role for our stakeholders. A detailed but non-exhaustive list of these programmes can be found below.

### Merton Inspire & Educate PE

Merton Inspire & Educate PE is our sub brand for the specialist sports provision and professional development elements coordinated by the Partnership. Merton Inspire & Educate PE programmes seek to establish links with schools both inside and outside of the Merton borough. Engaging with other schools and offering our services to a wider audience will help share good practice locally and nationally and bring in additional income to reinvest into the Partnership's work.



The provision offered to schools is divided into two strands:

#### 1. Sport Specialist Provision

This includes PPA cover and extra-curricular activities. Every member of the delivery team possesses the following attributes as a minimum requirement: enhanced DBS, Level 2 in at least one sport (and/or QTS), SLQ Level 3 Certificate in Supporting the Delivery of Primary Physical Education or equivalent, experience of working in primary schools, first aid, safeguarding, public liability insurance certificates. They also undergo observations and further training throughout the year.

## 2. Professional Development

This training for staff and volunteers includes workshops; bespoke whole school training and INSETs; PE mentor support and lunchtime supervisors training. The professional development opportunities on offer are an excellent way for schools to use their sports premium in order to sustain high quality PE provision within their schools. We also develop resources for all schools to support their staff development and delivery to students. We will also help source external training providers where necessary to find the right training for our schools.

### Merton PE Coach Academy Programme

In order to meet the needs of our schools to provide more PE, Sport and PA opportunities for their students and to enhance the local sporting workforce, MSSP has become an accredited centre of excellence for the SLQ Level 2 and 3 Certificates in Supporting the Delivery of Physical Education, School Sport & Physical Activity



September 2023 saw the first year of our new initiative, funded by Merton's Civic Pride Award, working with BTEC provider and local community club, Tooting and Mitcham United FC, to train and develop their students. In Sept 2024 our Academy has progressed to include both Level 2 and 3 courses especially targeting girls and under-represented groups, developing their skill set to deliver engaging PE, physical activity and sport to children within a school setting and in turn enhance their employability and career prospects. The courses are predominantly in-person and include practical and theory lessons, mentoring, work placements within schools and the community and lesson observations.



**Sports Leaders**

MSSP provides specific training programmes for primary and secondary school sports leaders and officials. This includes the provision of sport leaders training to every year 5 student across all of our affiliated schools. Where funding is available, MSSP also seek to enhance this programme, providing Sports Leaders Inspiration Days to targeted schools in the east of the borough.



## MSSP PE, Sport and PA Resources

### Merton Primary PE Schemes of Work

The Partnership have developed their Primary PE Schemes of Work (SOW) which provide a comprehensive framework for Primary School PE. These Schemes were developed predominantly to help the less confident classroom teachers to deliver PE to support their delivery of high quality, progressive, engaging and active PE. The Schemes include Early Years Foundation Stage, Athletics, Games (1&2), Gymnastics (Edition 2) and Dance folders. Merton Primary and Special schools received the folders and videos as part of their membership package to the Partnership from 2017-2021.

As part of their 2021- 2025 affiliation, all schools received the new Edition 2 Gymnastics Folder and access to all SOW (including videos) online, on our new website in September 2022. The Dance Scheme of Work is currently being reviewed through an EDI lens as part of our commitment to improving EDI across all of our programmes and resources.

### Other Resources

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, MSSP devoted much time and effort to develop online video resources to support students at home and teachers in school during the lockdowns. These videos remain available to all schools on our **Merton School Sport Partnership YouTube Channel**. We also host a plethora of supporting videos for teachers to deliver areas such as warm up games, virtual school games competitions, guides to the rules for sports and general coaching ideas.



## REFSPECT

All children have the right to be able to take part in PE and sport without abuse, in a nurturing, growth mindset environment where they feel confident to make their own decisions and learn from their own 'marvellous mistakes'. The REFSPECT campaign promotes a positive and encouraging approach to competitive school sport where the participants can perform and learn in a fun, safe and supportive environment. The campaign aims to remove any negative, abusive or unsupportive behaviours from all those involved.

By improving the environment for those performing, coaching and officiating we hope this will further develop their ability, commitment and interest in sport.

# REFSPECT

We actively encourage all schools to offer continuous support of the campaign and its importance as a safeguarding tool, both within their own school and at all sporting events. We also promote the initiative 'Play Their Way' which seeks to ensure children can shape their sporting experience and enjoy taking part at any level within PE, sport and physical activity.

We celebrate the schools that have actively embraced the ethos of the programme and present them with the REFSPECT trophy. This is given at the end of each academic year, to one school from each cluster, with the most nominations from other schools at our Partnership events.



## Other Local and National Programmes

- Active 30/30
- Active Classrooms
- Active Lives Survey for Children and Young People
- AfPE Membership
- Borough of Sport (Merton)
- Community Club Links
- DONS Local Action Group
- Eat Well, Be Active – Merton
- Healthy Schools London
- Inclusive Competition
- London Youth Games (LYG)
- Merton PE Coach Academy
- Merton School Sport Mark (MSSM)
- Merton School Swimming Development Group
- Merton Sports Leaders
- Merton Schools Football Association and U11 Borough Football Teams
- Mini Marathon
- NGB's – range of sports
- Panathlon
- Park Run
- Play Their Way
- REFSPECT
- School Games Intra and Inter School Competition and Regional/National Pathways and Award Programme
- Set for Success
- Sport Bank
- Stormbreak
- Surrey Schools Associations (various sports) and Competitions
- Surrey Special Schools Sports Association
- The Daily Mile
- Wimbledon Junior Tennis Initiative (WJTI)



## 11. Risks

Potential risks to the financial sustainability of MSSP and our capacity to meet our objectives are highlighted in the table below.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation / Prevention Strategy</b>
<b>Decline in PPA / PE Mentoring uptake</b>	Reduced income and potential drop in PE lesson quality	Promote importance of two high-quality PE lessons weekly. Support schools via MSSM to maintain standards. Explore alternative income streams if demand decreases.
<b>Workforce qualification changes</b>	Risk of non-compliance with future AfPE guidance	Monitor updates and respond promptly. Provide training and qualification pathways for coaches and staff.
<b>Schools using alternative providers</b>	Loss of revenue and reduced partnership sustainability	Maintain competitive, high-quality PPA packages. Emphasise benefits of MSSP services. Ensure robust contracts with schools and coaches. Careful consideration if promoting conflicting services.
<b>Reduction in government PE funding</b>	Financial instability post-August 2026	Diversify income through Inspire & Educate programme and resource sales. Stay informed on policy changes and adapt accordingly.
<b>Loss or unaffordable cost of host site</b>	Operational disruption and increased costs	Strengthen agreements with current host. Formalise hosting arrangements. Explore alternative sites if necessary.
<b>Schools opting out of partnership</b>	Review (possibly reduce) buy-in for borough-wide approach	Engage regularly with Headteachers and PE Coordinators. Promote MSSP's value. Secure longer-term membership agreements. Monitor national funding changes.
<b>Impact of national academisation</b>	Difficulty maintaining borough-wide model	Work with Steering Committee and School Improvement Team to anticipate changes and develop solutions.
<b>Discontinuation of SGO funding</b>	Reduced staffing and competition provision	Review structure and provision if funding ceases. Explore alternative funding sources.
<b>School budget constraints</b>	Reduced investment in PE and enrichment	Seek additional funding opportunities. Adjust service models to remain viable while supporting schools effectively.

## 12. Focus for 2025-2026

The priorities and key actions for MSSP in 2025–2026 (and beyond) have been agreed by our Executive Steering Committee and will be detailed in the **MSSP Annual Performance Targets and Action Plan** document, which will be available to affiliated schools upon request.

### Strategic and Organisational

- ✓ Prepare for and react quickly to any changes in our **national landscape**, with new School Sport Networks planned alongside the National Curriculum Review and Recommendations, and the potential changes to the Primary PE Funding in its current format. Ensure the Partnership evolves to meet the needs of our affiliated schools in line with national and local objectives.
- ✓ Secure adequate funding to enable our work remit for the next affiliation period – including provision this year for Sports Leaders, Work Experience, and the new MSSM Online Tool.
- ✓ Develop a new online MSSM Tool that is easier and quicker for PE Coordinators to use, and that provides more accurate data for the Partnership to analyse and report on (less subject to human error and time-consuming processes).
- ✓ Review our current MSSM grading criteria and ensure they are better aligned with key student outcomes, including daily physical activity levels and swimming attainment.
- ✓ Improve data collection and analysis techniques within the Core Team. Make better use of technology and AI to organise the breadth of work and reporting mechanisms.
- ✓ Further build relationships with secondary school PE departments to consider the PE pathway for students from EYFS to KS4 and improve links between local primary and secondary schools.
- ✓ Continue to offer enhanced CPD to our workforce, especially around target areas including girls' participation, promoting healthy masculinity in school sport, EYFS physical development, adapting PE for SEND, and supporting the PE Lead to enhance their curriculum.
- ✓ With new structural changes and fewer opportunities for 1-to-1 mentoring, enhance the networking and CPD offer to ensure less experienced PE Leads continue to feel supported and connected within our Partnership.
- ✓ Utilise Active and Healthy Futures CIC to increase income generation to enable more young people, particularly those from underserved groups have the chance to be active and to build the foundations for a career in this industry.
- ✓ Investigate potential to launch a new Alternative Provision centre with the NCFE Course for PE and Sports Coaching.
- ✓ Launch the new Healthy Schools London Award for Merton Schools. Improve opportunities for students and school communities to adopt active and healthy lifestyles, working with PH to target the schools that need the most support in this field.
- ✓ Increase Active Lives Survey completion rates by secondary schools.
- ✓ Review current MSSP hosting and compliance arrangements with Steering Committee and Harris Federation.

## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**

- ✓ Continue our journey to review and improve our approach to EDI across school sport and within our organisation. Use local insight and data to target our work remit effectively to identified target groups.
- ✓ Provide ongoing training for staff and coaches around EDI and adapting PE for SEND; make use of SEND student voice feedback to enhance our provision.
- ✓ Respond to the feedback gathered from our Pupil Voice report:
  - Provide training around the impact boys can have on girls in PE and find a way to develop a better model and environment for girls in sport and PE – working with Play Their Way and our school network.
  - Develop resources to support both curricular and extra-curricular delivery of a wider range of sports and training for staff.
  - Add a broader range of sports to our events calendar where needed.
  - Review our Competition and Festival calendar for 2025–26 and ensure safety, fun, and supportive school adults are prioritised at every event.
- ✓ Gather further feedback from underrepresented groups to understand how they would like their PE (including swimming), sport, and physical activity to be. In particular, investigate the underrepresentation of students from Asian and Mixed Asian backgrounds at inter school competitions.
- ✓ Create better imagery and language to ensure all students and staff feel a sense of belonging in PE, sport, at our events and within our resources. Continue to review and rewrite the Dance Scheme of Work.
- ✓ Further develop schools' physical activity, health, and wellbeing dashboards alongside LB Merton Public Health, Sport and Leisure and School Improvement Teams to utilise the new extensive data sets we now have across Merton. Aim to have a better impact on those who need it most, ensuring all children can enjoy being active and reducing the barriers they face to participation.

## **PE, School Sport and Physical Activity**

- ✓ 100% of Primary schools delivering 2 hours of PE every week for every pupil – preferably on separate days, for all schools.
- ✓ Provide support and training for PE Leads to enhance their school PE curriculum through new termly workshops.
- ✓ Support schools to develop their PE Progression of Skills map in line with their school's own curriculum intent.
- ✓ 95% of Primary Schools achieving Merton Sports Mark Silver Standard or higher for Question 2.
- ✓ Increase the number of schools planning for regular bouts of physical activity in every child's day and promote the Daily Mile.
- ✓ Develop resources and training to support active classrooms/schools by April 2027
- ✓ Support the Surrey FA Women and Girls Working Group to improve the landscape for girls Football within Merton.
- ✓ Enhance Sports Leaders resources, keep up to date with good practise and meet the actions from our pupil voice project.

- ✓ Further refine MSSP's events calendar to ensure there is something for every child to enjoy and that schools can access the events as easily as possible (times/locations).
- ✓ Make sure the events are a safe and fun space for all children to learn, practise and perform and that all adults are supportive.
- ✓ Encourage GLL to provide all attainment data in a digital format for school and to include EDI data to show trends and highlight groups that may need more support or an alternative approach.
- ✓ Encourage GLL to adapt timetable and approach to meet the needs of the schools with the lowest attainment data and for those with SEND that require a different approach.
- ✓ Work with the swimming development group and the Local Authority to find solutions to increase 25m attainment and ensure water safety is a priority.





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