An analysis of the policy process for selected elements of the physical education, school sport and club links strategy in England

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An analysis of the policy process for selected elements of the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links strategy in England

By

Lesley Ann Phillpots

A Doctoral Thesis

Submitted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of

Doctor of Philosophy

Loughborough University

June 2007
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Abstract

This study analyses the policy process for selected elements of the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy in England. The background to the policy context provides a chronological account of the changing political ideologies and policy priorities of UK governments since the 1970s. Theoretical frameworks for policy analysis are examined and the selection of the multiple streams and advocacy coalition frameworks as two meso-level theoretical tools for the analysis of the policy process is presented. The epistemological assumptions are underpinned by a 'critical realist' perspective. The empirical section of the study describes the use of case studies, semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis as the approaches selected for data collection. It is argued that by repositioning itself to deliver government policy objectives, physical education and school sport has a stronger and more visible role to play in government policy-making. It is acknowledged that divisions centred upon traditional education and sport discourses remain within the policy subsystem. Organisations such as AfPE and LEAs are increasingly positioned at the margins of the PESSCL strategy and policy-making for physical education and school sport. It is suggested that as the PESSCL strategy has embedded there is evidence of an emerging advocacy coalition for physical education and school sport led by the YST.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank everyone who has helped and supported me in completing this PhD thesis. Firstly I am grateful to all the interviewees who gave up their time to contribute to this study. In particular I would also like to thank Professor Barrie Houlihan for all of his support, patience and critical comments over the years. Thanks also to all of my colleagues at the School of Education at The University of Birmingham for their support and understanding throughout.

Finally I would like to thank my husband for his unstinting support and encouragement over the years. I dedicate this thesis to him and to my daughters Katie and Lucy who have been so patient and understanding.
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Glossary

ACF Advocacy Coalition Framework
AfPE Association for Physical Education
BAALPE British Association of Advisors and Lecturers
CCC Community Cricket Coach
CCPR Central Council for Physical Recreation
CCT Compulsory Competitive Tendering
CSP County Sports Partnership
CTC City Technology College
DCMS Department for Culture Media and Sport
DES Department of Education and Science
DfEE Department for Education and Employment
DfES Department for Education and Skills
DNH Department of National Heritage
DTI Department of Trade and Industry
ECB England [and Wales] Cricket Board
EGP England Golf Partnership
ERA Education Reform Act
HEI Higher Education Institution
ILAM Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management
ISPAL Institute for Sport Parks and Leisure
IYS Institute of Youth Sport
KKP Knight Kavanagh Page
KPI Key Performance Indicator
LA Local Authority
LDA Local Delivery Agency
LEA Local Education Authority
LMS Local Management of Schools
LTAD Long Term Athlete Development
MS Multiple Streams Framework
NAHT National Association of Head Teachers
NASD National Association of Sports Development
NAS/UWT National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers
NCfCPD National College for Continuing Professional Development
NCPE National Curriculum for Physical Education
<table>
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<tr>
<td>NCSS</td>
<td>National Council for School Sport</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGB</td>
<td>National Governing Body [of Sport]</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOF</td>
<td>New Opportunities Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODPM</td>
<td>Office of the Deputy Prime Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>OFSTED</td>
<td>Office for Standards in Education</td>
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<td>OOSHL</td>
<td>Out of School Hours Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>PADO</td>
<td>Partnership Athletics Development Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDM</td>
<td>Partnership Development Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDU</td>
<td>Prime Minister's Delivery Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
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<td>PEAUK</td>
<td>Physical Education Association of the United Kingdom</td>
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<td>PESS</td>
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<td>PGA</td>
<td>Professional Golfers' Association</td>
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<td>PLT</td>
<td>Primary Link Teacher</td>
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<td>PPA</td>
<td>Planning Preparation and Assessment</td>
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<td>PSA</td>
<td>Public Service Agreement</td>
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<td>QCA</td>
<td>Qualifications and Curriculum Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>QUANGO</td>
<td>Quasi Autonomous Non Government Agency</td>
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<td>SCL</td>
<td>School Club Links</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEF</td>
<td>Self Evaluation Form</td>
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<td>SSCO</td>
<td>School Sports Co-ordinator</td>
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<td>SSP</td>
<td>School Sports Partnership</td>
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<td>TTA</td>
<td>Teacher Training Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>UKCC</td>
<td>United Kingdom Coaching Certificate</td>
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<td>WSP</td>
<td>Whole Sport Plan</td>
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<td>YST</td>
<td>Youth Sport Trust</td>
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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background and introduction to the study
This study examines the dramatic changes and increasing political salience of physical education and school sport through three selected elements of the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PEESCL) strategy. In seeking to analyse these policy changes, it is acknowledged that the policy context for physical education and school sport (PESS) is located in an area which includes a number of overlapping interests and agendas. Since its emergence from the Public Schools of England in the 19th Century, physical education has been inextricably linked with a number of competing government, sport and education agendas. The rationale for the inclusion of physical education within the school curriculum has been justified on the basis of its character building qualities, its traditions of fair play and its potential to deliver a range of health, social and education agendas (Kirk, 1992). It is argued that philosophical debates surrounding the nature and purpose of physical education have punctuated this policy context throughout its history (MacIntosh, 1986).

In seeking to analyse policy-making processes for physical education and school sport, it is acknowledged that it is a complex and fragmented policy context bounded by political, sport and education interests and agendas. The introduction of a National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE) in 1989, the formation of a new Department of National Heritage (DNH) in 1992 and the publication of Sport: Raising the Game (1995) represented a number of significant events for PESS. Significantly for physical education and school sport in England, a new national framework the ‘Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links strategy’ (PESSCL) was launched in 2003. This study seeks to analyse the policy process for PESS by focussing upon selected elements of the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links strategy in England. It is acknowledged that whilst there is an extensive body of literature
that analyses policy-making processes in areas such as health, education and the environment, there is a paucity of research that focuses upon policy for sport, school sport and physical education. This thesis acknowledges the contribution already made by authors such as Evans et al. 1998; 1999; Green 2004, 2005; Houlihan, 1997; Houlihan & Green 2006 and Penney and Evans 1995, 1997, 1999 to the analysis of policy for sport and physical education.

1.1.1 The aims and objectives of the study
It is the broad intention of this study to contribute to this growing body of knowledge and understanding of the physical education and school sport policy area. More specifically, the research aims to analyse the policy process for selected elements of the PESSCL strategy in England. In addition the study seeks to:

- Examine the changing salience of physical education and school sport through an exploration of broader government policy priorities from the 1970s onwards.
- Examine both the continuities and changes in government policy for physical education and school sport since the Callaghan Government of 1976.
- Investigate and select appropriate meso-level theoretical frameworks for the analysis of policy change within PESS.
- Locate the analysis of the policy process for PE and school sport within the context of power relations.
- Examine the structural conditions and the role of agents in shaping policy for PE and school sport.

1.2 Theoretical orientation
The last 30 years has seen a rapid rise of academic interest in the public policy process which has led to extensive model building and conceptual innovation (Houlihan, 2005, Houlihan and Green, 2006, Evans and Penney, 1994, 1995, 1998). As this study seeks to analyse public policy, attention is directed to policies that originate, or are dependent, upon the resources of the
state. This thesis focuses upon policy analysis at the 'meso-level' and explores the role and involvement of interest groups, government departments, national sports governing bodies and government quangos in explaining policy change.

Any study that examines the public policy process should acknowledge the nature, exercise and distribution of power and its impact. Conceptualisation of the term power is a source of ongoing academic debate and the term has proved notoriously difficult to operationalise and to measure (March, 1966). The concept of power is highly complex and has been interpreted through a range of perspectives (Hay, 2002). A discussion of the theoretical models of power is provided in Chapter Three and includes Pluralism (see for example Dahl, 1961; Lindblom, 1953 & Galbraith (1992); Marxism (see Marx, 1970; Miliband, 1968 & Poulantzas, 1969; Corporatism (see Schmitter, 1974; Middlemas, 1979 & Dunleavy & O'Leary (1987) and the work of Michel Foucault (1981) and Steven Lukes (1974, 2002). Each of these perspectives offers the researcher a different viewpoint on the way that power is conceived in the policy process. Given the complexity of the policy area for PESS, no single macro-level theory is ideally placed to reflect the complex nuances of this policy area. Corporatism’s focus upon the role of corporate bodies in influencing government decision-making has some resonance with the policy area of PESS, whilst neo-Marxist accounts underline the domination of organised groups and policy elites in which political power and the role of state are closely linked. Neo-pluralist accounts focus upon the dispersal of power amongst a range of interest groups which compete to promote their particular causes and viewpoints. A range of macro-level theoretical approaches are considered in order to support the analysis of the complex arrangements and interplay between the state and the policy actors and organisations involved in policy for PESS.

Whilst macro-level approaches focus upon broader political events and the exercise of power, middle-level or meso-level theorising focuses upon the behaviour of interest groups and the structures and patterns of interaction between them (Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998:54). The most frequently adopted
approaches to policy analysis are represented by 'stages heuristic models' (see Hogwood & Gunn, 1984; Smith, 1993) which focus upon distinct elements of the policy process such as agenda setting, issue definition, policy implementation, policy review and policy termination. They are most commonly used to investigate discrete stages of the policy process. Sub-system approaches are sometimes referred to as 'network' approaches and include models such as the Multiple Streams Framework (Kingdon, 1984) and Advocacy Coalition Framework (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993). The particular focus of these models is an analysis of policy-making in terms of metaphors such as 'communities' and 'sub-systems'. These approaches are particularly relevant to pluralistic societies and focus upon communities of actors and their role in shaping policy agendas and decision-making processes. Institutionalism (see Hall 1986; Weaver & Rockman 1993) provides an analytical framework that privileges the concept of structure and places institutions at the centre of policy analysis. Most importantly, institutionalism explains the temporal dimensions of policy-making by placing institutions in an historical context, whilst also recognising how the behaviour of actors is defined by these structures.

The selection of the two meso-level frameworks chosen for this study is based upon a set of criteria formulated to judge the efficacy of these models and their capacity to deliver a robust account of policy change. The criteria offered by John (1998) and Sabatier (1999) emphasise the capacity of theoretical models to explain policy stability and change by focussing upon the role of agency (e.g. policy actors) and structures (e.g. value systems, policy subsystems, government administrative arrangements and resource dependencies) whilst also acknowledging the centrality of ideas in the policy process. These criteria are used to select the frameworks that are best suited to this study and its analysis of the school sport and physical education policy context.

1.3 Methodological considerations
The study adopts a critical realist approach and its ontological and epistemological assumptions underpin the research. Case studies, semi-
structured interviews and documentary analysis are the principal methods selected for this study. School Sport Partnerships, School Club Links and High Quality PESS are the three cases that have been selected to illustrate the policy process for PESS. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with a range of elite policy actors from a selection of government, sport and education agencies who have been involved in the policy area for at least five years. The study also draws on an extensive range of documentary evidence and reports in order to triangulate the data gathered through semi-structured in-depth interviews. The data collected will be analysed using both inductive and deductive techniques and the results presented in Chapter Nine of the thesis.

1.4 The emergence of the PESSCL Strategy
Chapter Five provides an account of the dramatic rise in the salience of PESS and the emergence of the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy. The chapter traces the development of policy from the period of John Major, to the formal launch of the strategy in 2003. The chapter acts as a precursor to the more detailed empirical case study chapters that focus upon specific elements of the PESSCL strategy, namely High Quality PE and the School Sport Partnerships and School to Club Links work strands. The three case study chapters explore the changing beliefs and values of policy actors; the influence of interest groups; the effects of changes in organisational infrastructures and resources and the influence of significant policy actors in shaping policy for PESS.

1.5 School Sports Partnerships
School sport partnerships (SSPs) present a rich context in which to investigate the complexity of the policy process for PESS. This work strand is characterised by a range of actors and agencies involved in the development, management and implementation of PESS. The case study explores four themes: the agenda setting process; arrangements for management and implementation; key policy developments within the case since the inception of SSPs: and finally, a summary of the role of the clusters of actors involved in
this particular case study. The agenda setting section provides the background to SSPs and outlines the role and involvement of key organisations and actors in shaping policy. The management and implementation of SSPs is the second theme and involves an analysis of the administrative and funding arrangements for SSPs and an examination of the patterns of accountability and resource dependences of the various stakeholders involved. The negotiations, tensions, resistance and policy shifts within this complex policy area and the interests and agendas of sport and education agencies are also explored.

1.6 School Club Links

The School Club Links programme was an attempt to address the inadequacy in the provision made for school sport outside curriculum time and links between schools and adult sports clubs. The Wolfenden Report (1960) highlighted 'the gap', which was a term used to emphasise the marked decline in sports participation once pupils left school. The School/Club Links initiative is one of the nine PESSCL work strands whose specific purpose is to strengthen the links between schools and local sports clubs in order to increase the number of children and young people who become members of accredited sports clubs (DCMS/DfES, 2002). Twenty two national governing bodies (NGBs) receive funding from Sport England to support their accredited clubs to develop sustainable and effective links with schools. Cricket, athletics and golf are the three sports that have been selected for in-depth analysis within this case study chapter.

The School Club Links programme provides a fertile context in which to explore policy change for PESS because of the involvement of a range of policy actors and agencies such as teachers, schools, Local Education Authorities (LEAs), coaches, Partnership Development Managers (PDMs), National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Sport England and County Sport Partnerships (CSPs). Once again this case study explores the agenda setting process and the background to and emergence of the School/Club Links strand of the PESSCL strategy. The role and involvement of the key
organisations and actors in shaping policy is discussed and the structural and funding arrangements and significant policy developments and contribution of key policy actors in the case are analysed.

1.7 High Quality Physical Education and School Sport

High quality PESS was the third case chosen for this study. Its selection was based on its capacity to illustrate the dynamics of the discourses, interests and contexts that have framed the policy process. Discussion of agenda setting for high quality PE and sport is followed by an analysis of the significance of management and implementation processes on the way in which the discourse around high quality PE and school sport has been constructed. The third section of the chapter examines the role of interest groups and stakeholders in shaping and determining policy change and provides a commentary on the role of each of the key stakeholders and the tensions between the delivery of the NCPE and the PESSCL strategy. The chapter is concerned to investigate how the constitution of 'high quality' PESS was determined and how the delivery of the related PSA target has been addressed. The achievement of high quality PESS is embedded within a DfES/DCMS PSA target which focuses upon increasing the percentage of school children in England participating in two hours a week of high quality PESS. The case study explores the role of agencies such as Ofsted, LEAs QCA and AfPE in debates surrounding high quality PESS. The emergence of the PESSCL strategy and the delivery of high quality PESS through a PSA target initially monitored by the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit represents a significant element of the PESSCL policy and provides a focus and 'glue' for all the policy actors involved in the strategy.

1.8 The structure of the thesis

In seeking to examine the policy process for PESS, this study focuses upon selected elements of the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy in England. Chapter Two provides an historical account of the political changes that have framed the policy context for PESS and led to the design of the PESSCL strategy. A chronological review is provided of the
ideology and values of British governments since 1976 and their public policy priorities for education, physical education and sport. The chapter also explains the background to the political continuities, changes and public sector policy priorities for education, sport and physical education over the last thirty years. The intention is to locate the analysis of policy change for PESS within a broader political and historical context and to trace the emergence of school sport and physical education as an increasingly salient policy concern.

A number of theoretical models have been devised as frameworks for policy analysis. Chapter Three provides an account of two meso-level frameworks that have been selected for the analysis of policy for PESS. Whilst the study focuses upon meso-level accounts of the policy process, this chapter also considers macro-level theoretical perspectives which offer an insight into the conceptualisation of the nature, exercise and distribution of power. The philosophical underpinnings, research methodology and methods that have been adopted for this study is provided in Chapter Four, which is then followed by an outline of the emergence of the national PESSCL strategy in Chapter Five. Chapters Six, Seven and Eight form the empirical basis of this study. School sport partnerships, school club links and high quality PESS are the cases that have been selected for an analysis of policy processes. The final chapter explores and examines policy change for PESS and critically reflects on the efficacy of the advocacy coalition framework (ACF) and the multiple streams framework (MS) as theoretical tools for the analysis of the policy process for physical education and school sport (PESS).
Chapter 2

The Changing Political and Policy Context of School Sport and PE

Introduction

In explaining the emergence of school sport and physical education as a key public policy arena in England, it is important to acknowledge that the policy-making process is influenced by what has happened in past decades (Chitty, 2004). This chapter conceptualises the current school sport and physical education policy milieu by providing an historical account of the political changes that have shaped the school sport policy context that exists today. This is achieved through a chronological account of the ideology and values of British governments and their public policy priorities for education, physical education and sport, from the Labour Government of James Callaghan (1976-1979) to the Labour Government of Tony Blair (covering the period 1997 to 2006). The continuities, changes and public policy legacies of each period of government over the last thirty years is provided; however it is important to acknowledge the passage of the 1944 Education Act as it sets the context for the modern state education system that is the focus of this study.

This Act owed much to a growing awareness amongst policy-makers, administrators and teachers, of the importance of the state education system to economic advancement and social welfare, through partnership arrangements between central government, local government and schools (McNaughton, 2003). The 1944 Education Act was established as the cornerstone of the post-war Welfare State and marked the beginning of a gradual shift towards more centralised state control and intervention in the state education system (Chitty, 2004; Finch, 1984; Kerr, 2001). It also established the state education system as a key arena for policy-makers who recognised its wider potential social and economic benefits. The Act made fundamental changes to the structure of the state education system and
established a national secondary education system for all children. The years from 1944 to 1976 were marked by the passage of three Education Acts; however the period since 1976 has witnessed over thirty Education Acts, numerous education circulars, regulations and statutory instruments. The time framed by the Labour Government of James Callaghan (1976-1979) marked the beginning of intense government involvement in education policy-making that has continued into the first decade of the 21st century. The manifest growth in government interest in the education policy arena was precipitated by the economic conditions of the time and a breakdown in trust between central government, local government and teachers (Chitty, 2004).

2.1 The Labour Government (1976 – 1979)

James Callaghan was elected in 1976 at a time of growing inflation, unemployment, increasing wage demands and a series of paralysing strikes culminating in the so-called ‘Winter of Discontent’ 1978/9 (Ingle, 2000). The social contract policies adopted by the Labour Governments of both Callaghan and Wilson before him, represented an attempt to institutionalise the support of the representatives of capital and labour as partners in the economic planning and running of the state (Middlemas, 1979). The period of social contract from 1974 to 1977 was characterised by a pact between the trade unions and the Labour Government. In return for a series of non-statutory agreements in wage increases, the Labour Government promoted both the role of trade unions and the representatives of business, in determining the country’s macro-economic policy (McAuley, 2003). From his election to office in 1976, James Callaghan faced a growing economic crisis and, influenced by the views of leading employers and industrialists, his Government sought to blame schools for their failure to produce workers who were equipped to meet the economic demands of society (Chitty, 2004). With public confidence in state schooling at a low point, James Callaghan was advised by the Downing Street Policy Unit on the political expediency of using education as a tool of social and economic policy (McNaughton, 2003). At the earliest opportunity after his election, Callaghan launched the ‘Great Debate’ (1976) on education, which signalled a new era of public and political
deliberation about issues of the curriculum and of school and teacher accountability.

2.1.1 Labour Government policy priorities for education (1976 - 1979)

The fiscal crisis faced by Callaghan’s Government was partly blamed upon the ignorance of young people about the basic workings of the British capitalist system. Employers and key industrialists sought to make the state education system culpable for Britain's economic decline, arguing that it produced workers who showed no respect for their employers. They particularly singled out teachers who they believed had little experience of industry and scant regard for the capitalist ethic. Primary schools were held responsible for the decline in educational standards because of their focus upon child-centred learning and a progressive school curriculum that ignored standards in English and Mathematics (Chitty, 2004).

During his visit to Ruskin College, Oxford in 1976, Callaghan made a speech that instigated what became known as the ‘Great Debate’ in education. His discourse reflected the views of many industrialists who linked the parlous state of the British economy, with perceived public and parental concerns about low standards of academic achievement in state schools. At the heart of Callaghan’s speech were policies for education that outlined the Labour Government’s political will to establish prescribed national standards, a common core curriculum and the development of closer working partnerships between schools and industry. The Ruskin speech undoubtedly signalled a marked political change in which the Labour Government expressed its intentions to regain control over the state education system. The speech was significant because it highlighted that teachers and their unions were no longer the only legitimate group to have an interest in schools and the school curriculum, nor did they have the sole power to control its delivery (Riley, 1998). The teaching unions were infuriated by Callaghan’s speech, which they believed reflected the Government’s intention to use education as a tool for shaping the economy, rather than for its intrinsic educational values (Cawson, 1986). The Ruskin speech marked a critical turning point in education policy-
making and was of major discursive significance as the speaker, the setting and the nature of the text legitimated the need for government and society to address the problems surrounding education. Ball (1990) maintains that the speech provided a political context which empowered certain groups and constituencies to speak authoritatively about education, whilst marginalising others.

The views expounded in Callaghan's address gave impetus and legitimacy to the Labour Government's new priorities for education that centred upon the themes of accountability and control. The speech also highlighted the increased rate of government spending on education and the need to make effective use of the £6 billion a year investment in order to raise educational standards. The Ruskin Speech highlighted six areas of concern that should be tackled as a matter of urgency:

1. The case for a core curriculum of basic knowledge.
2. A means by which resources might be monitored to maintain a proper national standard of performance.
3. The role of the Inspectorate in monitoring national standards.
4. The relationship between industry and education.
5. The methods and aims of informal instruction.
6. The future of public examinations.

(Adapted from Chitty, 2004: 44)

These areas of concern provided an opportune moment to exact some fundamental changes within schools. The speech was set against a background of critical comments in the press about declining educational standards in schools which harmonized with public opinion which was largely supportive of moves to address these concerns (Pring, 1992). The speech signalled a marked change in the Labour Government's relationship with schools as it wished to exercise a far greater degree of control over the education system. It fashioned a new political consensus for a more direct subordination of educational practices in order to meet the demands of the British economy (Chitty 2004). One of the main concerns for the Callaghan
administration in its three years in office was to address the teaching of the three ‘Rs’ in primary schools and to establish the principles of a core curriculum for all pupils in secondary schools. This was set within a milieu in which the Labour Government’s major focus was an improvement of educational standards across all state schools.

2.1.2 Labour Government policy priorities for School Sport and Physical Education (1976 - 1979)

In the hundred years of physical education prior to 1979, changes to the subject had largely been internally imposed as a result of conflict and compromise within the profession (MacIntosh, 1986; Mangan, 1981). The years after the Second World War were marked by the gradual, although contested development of a new form of physical education that sought to put the child at the centre of physical education pedagogical practices. Kirk (1992) has suggested that the period from the 1970s onwards was a time when there was growing concern from within the PE profession about the subject’s educational value. He further argued that whilst the role of competitive team sport was the mainstay of physical education programmes during the 1970s, many remained privately sceptical of its educational value. Kirk (1992) has highlighted how the pyramidal structure of competitive British sport, was reflected in the curricula for many schools whose pedagogical practices focussed upon servicing the needs of elite sport. Juxtaposed with the elite sport discourses framing the practices of many physical education departments in state schools, was the Sport for All (1966) campaign. Sport policy at this time reflected the social democratic principles of the Labour Government and the role it could play in targeting disadvantaged young children (Houlihan, 1991). Whilst the Sport for All (1966) campaign was reflective of the Labour Government’s policies for sport at that time, the period of the Callaghan Government was marked by a lack of any government involvement within the policy arenas of school sport and physical education.

The period defined by the Callaghan Labour Government (1976-1979) was a politically turbulent one, in which industrial action over stringent pay policy
restraints severely damaged the Government's power and authority. The loss of a confidence motion in Parliament on 28th March 1979, which the Labour Government lost by one vote, meant that Prime Minister Callaghan was forced to hold a general election and was replaced by Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government. With the election of a new Conservative government and the ascendancy of a New Right hegemony, changes to the methods of policy implementation for the public sector proved to be radical (Dunleavy, 1990; Hall, 1985; Durham, 1991).

On their election to power in 1979, the Conservative Government inherited a country that was dogged by rising inflation and, according to Margaret Thatcher, unions who exerted disproportionate power and influence. Callaghan had left an educational legacy that marked the beginning of a new era for education, in which there was a redefinition of educational objectives in an economic context of limited financial resources. The significance of the Callaghan Government (1976-1979) was its establishment of the roots and foundations for the debates and themes surrounding education that are still at the forefront on policy-making in the 21st Century. The need to improve educational standards, greater teacher accountability and government control of the state education system were the new policy priorities for education. A core curriculum of basic knowledge; the re-establishment of the 3Rs in primary schools; the raising of educational standards monitored by a proper national standard of performance and increased powers of an inspectorate to scrutinise national standards were the policy themes framed by the Callaghan administration.

2.2 The Conservative Government (1979 – 1990)

When the Conservative Government of Margaret Thatcher came to power in 1979, there was a political conviction that social democracy had failed and that both the Conservative Government of Edward Heath (1970 -1974) and the Labour Government of James Callaghan (1976-1979) had been defeated by the forces of militant trade unionism and 'a growing army of public sector professionals whose influence had spread into nearly every corner of public
service’ (Ingle, 2000:45). Thatcher made no secret of her ambition to break with the corporatist world of the 1960s and 1970s and to build a government that was strong and which could nurture and stimulate business practices in order to re-launch Britain as a successful capitalist economy. The new Conservative Government set itself five major tasks in order to respond to this crisis of the welfare state:

1. To control inflation by emphasising the rights and duties of groups such as trade unions.
2. To restore incentives and reward success.
3. To uphold Parliament and the rule of law.
4. To support family life through a focus upon education and the welfare of those most in need.
5. To strengthen the nation’s defences.

(Adapted from Le Grand, 1998)

Whilst the Conservative Government did not enter office with a fully articulated ideology, its first priority was to establish fiscal control and to establish economic liberalism in order to free the country of the grip of collectivism (Gamble, 1988; Ingle 2004). Such changes to the institutional arrangements between the state, business and unions marked a dramatic shift in the distribution of power relations and led to long periods of conflict between these institutions and the Thatcher Government. Conservative ideology emerged gradually during Thatcher’s three terms in office and was underpinned by a commitment to increase the prosperity of both the individual and the nation and to widen the distribution of wealth (Atkinson & Sage, 1994). Central to achieving its broader political objectives was a desire to move away from the concept of ‘big government’, towards a belief in the concept of the market as a superior political framework. Market fundamentalism (reduction in taxation and public expenditure, deregulation and privatisation) and traditional nationalism became dominant features of Conservative Government policy between 1979 and 1990 (Giddens, 1998). Prime Minister Thatcher provided strong leadership in driving through these policies and made no apologies for her onslaughts on every vestige of
collectivism within the arenas of education, defence, law and order and industrial relations (Ingle, 2000). She sought to maximise the conditions that were favourable to the values of a market economy and to create market conditions in all public policy contexts.

The Thatcher Government initiated a series of legislative and economic measures in order to control and limit financial expenditure generally and in the public services specifically. The introduction and development of initiatives such as the Local Management of Schools (LMS) ensured that at local government level monetary expenditure was strictly controlled. In order to ensure that these rigid economic policies were delivered and implemented, the Conservative Government created a number of agencies and quangos (e.g. The Audit Commission). Their role was to measure the performance of central and local government in achieving Government targets for improved efficiency and customer care, whilst also lowering costs. Gamble (1988) suggests that the Thatcher Government was prepared to force people to be free, in order to release Britain from the grip of old style social democracy and collectivism. He suggests that the policy was shaped by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher herself as she had little time for institutions that perpetuated the social democratic consensus.

2.2.1 Conservative Government policy priorities for education (1979 - 1990)

Wilding (1992) suggests that education was not a major policy priority for the Conservative Government during its first term of office; indeed its Manifesto of 1979 dedicated relatively little space to its policies for education. Its major policy concerns were to tackle rising inflation and to reduce the power and influence of institutions such as the trade unions and LEAs. Having tackled its fiscal priorities, the Conservative Government shifted its attention to other areas of public policy concern, such as education. Chitty (2004) suggests that when Sir Keith Joseph took over the role of Education Secretary in 1981, Conservative policies for education took on a more radical edge. Right-wing attacks on the failings of social democracy and the welfare state focussed
upon declining standards in state schools that were presented as a causal factor in the country's economic decline (Simon, 1991). The debate surrounding the nature and purpose of education provision that was instigated by James Callaghan's Ruskin speech served as a platform for right-wing attacks upon poor educational standards. The right-wing assault on education focussed upon ideologically motivated left wing LEAs and teachers' unions who were regarded as culpable for the crisis within schools (Gamble, 1990; Knight, 1990). The political solution was increased responsibility and accountability for schools, with power removed from politicised local education authorities and unions, through a system of decentralisation and devolution of power to schools (Simon, 1991).

During the Conservative Government's second term of office, Education Secretary Kenneth Baker began a raft of education reforms that Chitty (2004) described as ten years of frenzied legislation during which new Education Acts arrived on the statute books almost every year. A series of Education Acts in 1980, 1981, 1984, 1986, 1987, DES White Papers in 1983 and 1985 and Education Circulars from the DES represented some of the major education legislative reforms and education policy-making during the Thatcher era (Tomlinson, 1993). This raft of reforms included priority areas for teaching (Vocational Studies, Mathematics and Science), education support grants directed at priority areas, parental choice, open enrolment, per capita funding, the publication of examination results and changes to the governance of schools and the inspection process. These policy changes were designed to meet the needs of industry and to raise standards of education in line with those countries that the Government regarded as its economic competitors. The 1980s were also characterised by political critiques of teachers and educational under-performance fuelled intensive public discussions about teaching and learning, school effectiveness and educational cost-benefit analysis (Batteson, 1999). The Conservative Government was prepared to break the power and control that teachers and local authorities had over curriculum matters in schools and to place control into the hands of parents and pupils as the new consumers in the education market place (Ball, 1990). Quality, diversity, parental choice, autonomy for schools and accountability
became the five major educational policy themes that emerged as defining characteristics framing educational policy-making during the Thatcher era (Docking, 2000). They bore a striking similarity to the education policy themes that had been highlighted by the previous Labour Government.

At the Conservative Party Conference in 1986 the Government set out its intention to create a market within education through new types of secondary schools called City Technology Colleges (CTCs). A number of information technology education centres, created a few years earlier by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), acted as the blueprint for their creation. Jointly funded by government and local business partnerships, these new schools were established towards the end of the Thatcher Government's second term of office and were located outside the power and control of LEAs. They were monitored and controlled through a CTC Unit that was formed within the Department for Education and Science. City Technology Colleges were placed at the forefront of Conservative education policies and acted as standard bearers for the Government's new reform agendas for the state secondary school system. Private sponsorship arrangements between CTCs and local business partners provided a source of external funding for schools at a time of tight government spending controls. CTCs were accountable directly, and solely, to the Secretary of State for Education and were informed by the disciplines of the private sector and the need to embrace entrepreneurship, income generation, customer care, quality audits and performance related pay.

During the Thatcher Government's third term of office, the Education Reform Act of 1988 (ERA) proved to be a major policy watershed for education in England and Wales. It represented a triumph for Conservative politicians who had campaigned and argued for greater government control over schools. The landmark Education Reform Act (1988) established fundamental changes to the arrangements and funding of schools and introduced a mandatory National Curriculum that defined and standardised the content of school curricula. The Education Reform Act (1988) also introduced benchmark
national testing, the Local Management of Schools, Grant Maintained Status, City Technology Colleges and school league tables.

The introduction of new types of secondary schools, as alternatives to state secondary schools, reflected the Conservative Government's intention to create a system of open enrolment and market forces in state schools. In theory, parents could exercise 'choice' in deciding which school would be best for their child, although in reality parental choice proved to be limited (Hammersley, 1994). The marketisation of schools was extended and expedited in 1988 through the addition of 'opted out' grant maintained schools in order to create a more diverse portfolio of secondary schools (Docking, 2000). This policy shift towards a diverse state secondary school system also ensured a shift in financial control away from LEAs, to individual Grant Maintained Schools and City Technology Colleges. Schools were directly funded by Government and took control over their own finances, running them like businesses on a profit and loss basis (Ball, 1990). These policies also satisfied the Government’s wider financial targets which aimed to achieve value for money in public sector spending. It also signalled a shift of power away from local education authority control to individual schools that were afforded greater autonomy to organise and govern their own affairs (Riley, 1998; Tooley, 1996). The themes of value for money, effectiveness and accountability imported into education policies during the late 1970s and 1980s, provided the Conservative Government with a way of asserting its power and authority in order to bring about changes in organisational emphasis (Ball, 1990). Government drives to deliver education at a lower cost and to make schools more accountable and efficient, provided ideological and financial control over the discursive shifts in the meaning and governance of education (Demaine, 1993).

The introduction of a National Curriculum in 1989 ensured that schools were held accountable for improving standards and that Government had more direct control over schools and curricula. The National Curriculum formed a central part of the Education Reform Act (1988) and for the first time, schools were provided with a prescribed compulsory curriculum. The imposition of a
standardised National Curriculum for all state schools was however highly controversial in terms of its inconsistencies with free market educational principles (Apple, 1993). The content and implementation of this new curriculum for all state schools was equally contentious, as Conservative Ministers sponsored their personal views about subject content and the body of knowledge that should constitute the national curriculum (Basini, 1996). The National Curriculum established a clear hierarchy of subjects with Maths, English and Science at the centre of the new compulsory curriculum. Echoing the education themes of the Callaghan Government, improvement in the standards of the '3 Rs' was a top priority in supporting the economic recovery of the state. The core subjects were a government priority and their delivery commenced in September 1989. The foundation subjects were phased in later, with Design and Technology offered in 1990, Geography and History in 1991 and Modern Languages, Music, Art and Physical Education introduced in 1992 (DES, 1989). Penney and Evans (1999) have suggested that prioritising the core subjects within the National Curriculum effectively legitimated and reinforced the low status historically accorded to foundation subjects.

Policy initiatives for education followed a step-by-step process of implementation as each new initiative built upon the possibilities created by previous initiatives (Ball, 1990). Ball describes how the challenge was to soften up, undermine and suppress the opposition in order to replace social democratic values and mechanisms, with those of social market principles. Demaine (1993) suggests that from 1979 onwards, the Conservative Government sought to restructure educational partnerships and reduce the autonomy of LEAs and teaching unions.

2.2.2 Conservative Government policy priorities for physical education (1979 - 1990)

Right-wing ideological demands for the reform of state education were also reflected in arguments surrounding the nature and purpose of physical education. Pollard, (1988) describes how the decision of a Bristol primary
school to hold a non-competitive sports day attracted public attention which culminated in New-Right claims that such decisions were motivated by teachers' ideological, rather than educational concerns. The Right actively sought to influence public opinion by linking such practices within physical education with the nation's moral and economic decline (Pollard, 1988).

Surrounding these debates was a definition of physical education which privileged competitive sport and games and which emphasised the promotion of excellence, discipline and moral fortitude (Penney & Evans, 1995).

The years between 1986 and 1988 marked a particularly difficult period for physical education. It was held responsible by right-wing politicians, the government, and the media for problems such as the poor performances of national sports teams and a general decline in the country's moral standards (Evans, 1988; 1990). The attacks also had deeper political and hegemonic significance, as the Conservative Government's rhetoric about the need for sport and games within schools sought to perpetuate and legitimate a narrow right-wing view of physical education as sport (Kirk, 1992). The introduction of Local Management of Schools (LMS), a system whereby schools had control of their own money and a greater degree of autonomy from local education authorities (Evans & Penney, 1995; Penney, 1994; Penney & Evans 1991, 1994) had also led to a contraction of the LEA PE advisory system and the provision of in-service professional development courses for PE teachers.

The restriction of funding as a consequence of LMS was compounded further by physical education's late arrival on the National Curriculum. Because of the staggered implementation of national curriculum subjects, by the time PE was introduced in 1992, the curriculum was already overcrowded and time for PE was limited (Penney & Evans, 1999). The challenge of designing a new curriculum for physical education presented an opportunity for the PE National Curriculum Working Group to form a new consensus and direction for physical education. The PE Working Group was established in the final months of the third Thatcher administration and in an educational environment in which schools were already struggling with the demands of teaching the core subjects. In July 1990, four months before Margaret Thatcher left office,
Education Secretary John MacGregor announced the membership of the Working Group for PE. Membership was comprised of professional sportsmen and representatives of the business world, lecturers from higher education and head teachers. Penney and Evans (1998) suggest that the PE Working Party was a symbolic representation of government's own agendas for PE, which were predominantly concerned with the needs of elite sport. They describe how the Working Group's task was framed politically, institutionally, economically and ideologically and its deliberations were constrained not only by a lack of time but by political pressure from politicians who wished to see their notion of traditional games prevail. The tensions between those who argued for the educational potential of physical education for all pupils and the advocates of traditional competitive team sport agendas were highlighted in the formulation of the National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE). The eventual empowerment of the discourses of 'sport' and 'elite performance' reflected the Conservative Government's determination that their definition of physical education should prevail (Penney & Evans, 1994, 1995, 1999, 2001). Furthermore, Penney and Evans argue that the Conservative Government promoted a curriculum in which sport was empowered whilst other interests in physical education such as health education, were essentially excluded.

2.2.3 Conservative Government policy priorities for sport (1979 – 1990)

Reflective of Thatcher's general apathy towards sport, it was an arena of relative policy neglect during her period in office. Henry (1993) has identified distinct periods of policy development and structural shifts which reflect the changing nature of the state's involvement in sport. He suggests that Margaret Thatcher's first term of office was defined as a period of government disinvestment in sport. The New Right ideologies of public choice, accountability and efficiency espoused by the Thatcher Conservative Government demanded that sport provision, like all other public policy arenas, should be opened up to market forces. This enabled people to be free to satisfy their sporting needs through a choice between commercial and voluntary sector providers. The introduction of market forces also meant that sport agencies and the governing bodies for sport were required to secure
commercial investment from the business sector rather than be dependent upon financial provision from the state.

Towards the end of Thatcher’s eleven years in office, her intransigence and inability to respond to growing unrest over the Poll Tax ultimately led to her resignation from office and replacement by John Major in 1990. During her eleven years in office, Thatcher’s Conservative Government made a distinct break with the existing institutional arrangements and bargaining structures between the state, business and unions. The period was also marked by an increase in the influence of New Right study groups and Think Tanks, which were prepared to advocate innovative solutions to existing policy problems (Chitty, 2004). In its later years, New Right Thatcherite policies represented a paradoxical fusion of a strong nation-state and a strongly deregulated market (Gamble, 1988; Giddens, 1998). The Conservative Government was successful in its imposition of the concept of free-markets and competition within public services and was also able to bring public spending under control. The Government had successfully eroded the power of teachers and local education authorities through the Education Reform Act (1988) and through the establishment of a diverse and more accountable state education system. Over eleven years, Margaret Thatcher’s Government had achieved many of the objectives for education policy change that James Callaghan had highlighted in his Ruskin Speech in 1976. The Conservative Government’s political commitment to the establishment of a prescribed curriculum, national academic standards and the development of closer relationships between schools and industry were redolent of the previous themes highlighted by James Callaghan. The education legacy of the Thatcher period was characterised by the creation of Grant Maintained Schools and City Technology Colleges that were funded directly by the state in partnership with industry and by the design of a new National Curriculum for all state schools. The National Curriculum provided a platform for the establishment of an agreed curriculum for physical education; however it was left to the incoming Conservative Government of John Major to agree the details of this new curriculum for physical education and school sport.
2.3 The Conservative Government (1990 – 1997)

The period of economic boom that characterised the 1980s was replaced by a fiscal climate of world economic recession by the 1990s. John Major succeeded Margaret Thatcher in November 1990 as the leader of the Conservative Party and his period in office was marked by an adherence to much of the political themes of the previous Thatcher administration. His own political beliefs centred upon a concern to promote the privatising measures of the previous government (Chitty, 2004) and were marked by a Back to Basics campaign (1993) which focussed upon issues of law and order, education and public security. More significantly the introduction of the Citizens Charter was a code of practice designed to demand accountability and improved standards of service from public services. The adoption of the themes of individual opportunity, ownership and choice, privatisation and civil service reform, represented a continuation of the values and ideology of the previous Thatcher Government. John Major was determined that his Government would help the country get back to basics, self-discipline and respect for the law.

2.3.1 Conservative Government policy priorities for education (1990 - 1997)

The education system in England and Wales had undergone a dramatic transformation during the latter years of Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government and the pace of educational change continued from 1990-1997. McVicar and Robins (1994) have proposed that educational policy-making during both the Thatcher and subsequent Major-led Governments, unfolded against a background of centralised education policy decision-making, intensifying resource problems and continuing public unease about poor educational standards. In educational terms, John Major's policies for education were based upon a continued concern to endorse the privatising measures of the previous government, combined with the values of a meritocratic society (Chitty, 2004). In essence, this meant that schools were in a competitive environment in which they were required to compete for pupils
on the basis of subject specialisation and through the introduction of league tables.

The Conservative Government's Election Manifesto *The Best Future for Britain* (1992) highlighted its intention to continue with the education policies of the previous Thatcher Government. Diversity, equality, parental choice, accountability and autonomy all remained part of the Government's mantra for education and were highlighted in the White Paper, *Choice and Diversity: A New Framework for Schools* (1992). Legislation within the 1993 Education Act set out the Government's intention to increase the number of Grant Maintained schools, thereby expanding the choice of schools available for parents and pupils within the education market. In 1994, the Specialist Schools Programme was launched which allowed a small number of pilot secondary schools to deliver innovative and effective teaching and learning in one particular area of subject expertise. Applicant schools were expected to engage in a thorough audit and to set out plans and targets for whole school improvement within their chosen subject. These schools were required to work with named partner schools and local community groups, in order to benefit young people within and beyond their school boundaries. Specialist status was intended to act as a catalyst for educational innovation and to help schools sustain and accelerate the pace of whole-school improvement (Morris, 2002). Specialist schools became an integral part of the Major Government's plans to raise educational standards in secondary education during the mid 1990s. The programme was partly financed through private sector sponsors, with matched government funding per pupil, each year, for a period of four years. In addition to this capital grant, the school was required to target one third of its funding on sharing its resources and expertise in its specialist subject area with partner schools and the wider community. In acquiring the status of a specialist school they were now directly accountable to Government and their political demands (Penney, 1994).

The Conservative Government from 1990-1997 oversaw an array of educational reforms and initiatives. These constituted a major restructuring of the public examination system, revision of teacher education provision,
privatisation of the schools inspectorate, the appraisal of teacher performance and the publication of school league tables. This constituted an impressive series of educational reforms.

2.3.2 Conservative Government policy priorities for physical education (1990 - 1997)

The implementation and revisions of the National Curriculum and the introduction of the National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE) in 1992 highlighted the discourses and the socio-political and cultural context in which these educational initiatives arose (Evans & Penney, 1995). Furthermore they argue that in order to restore and reassert a traditional social and moral order within the UK, the Conservative Government used the forum of the National Curriculum generally, and physical education specifically, to promote its political ideologies and a return to core values and traditional ways of teaching. It is a point also reinforced by Fisher (1996: 140):

The pressure for a greater emphasis on traditional competitive team games in the school curriculum ... can be seen as a feature of a political context in which tradition, order, stability and accountability are important.

The Government selection of a Physical Education Working Party that consisted of professional sportsmen but no practising PE teachers was responsible for what Evans and Penney (1999) suggest was a blurring of the boundaries between physical education and sport and an erosion of the interests of those who argued for physical education's broader educational values. The curriculum for physical education that subsequently emerged privileged the interests of sport and focussed upon the discourses of performance, competition and traditional Anglo-centric male team games (Kirk, 1992).

The publication of Sport: Raising the Game (DNH, 1995) was the first major sport policy document for twenty years and focussed in particular upon sporting excellence and youth sport. The policy statement identified physical education as having an integral role in improving standards of sports
performance and of developing sporting talent. *Sport: Raising the Game* proved to be a catalyst for the development of a number of sport partnership initiatives with schools, such as Sport England’s Active Schools programme (which provided Award Schemes for sport and physical education in schools), Coaching for Teachers, the Specialist Sports College initiative, the Lottery funded School Sport Co-ordinator and Primary Link Teacher schemes (supported by Sport England) and the Youth Sport Trust’s TOPS Programmes. The Youth Sport Trust was registered as a charity in 1994 and developed a direct link with schools initially through its TOPS programmes in primary schools. Its vision was to create opportunities for all young people to receive a quality introduction to physical education and sport through a number of activity based programmes. The Trust through its substantial financial backing from Sir John Beckwith and the dynamic leadership of Sue Campbell was in a unique financial position to contribute to school sport at a time when resources and finances in schools were limited. A key feature of the TOPS programme was its free in-service training for primary school teachers, its resource cards and sports equipment. The success of the TOPS initiatives in primary schools marked the beginning of the Youth Sport Trust’s commitment to, and influence upon, physical education and school sport. With its secure financial backing, the Youth Sport Trust was ideally positioned to contribute to and champion the Conservative Government’s agenda for both sport and school sport. The context of financial constraint within public services at this time provided the ideal environment for a financially robust sport body such as the Youth Sport Trust, to have a considerable impact upon this policy arena.

A number of other youth sport initiatives developed during this period. *Sportsmark* and *Sportsmark Gold* were established in 1996 as a direct response to the Government’s policy document *Sport: Raising the Game*. Sport England, together with a range of national sports organisations developed this award system for schools which was intended to play an important role in the development of school sport and physical education. This sports quality accreditation scheme for secondary schools acted as a developmental, auditing and marketing tool that rewarded and recognised out
of hours sports provision and the breadth and balance of a school’s PE curriculum. A panel of key English Sports Council partners that included the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE), the British Association of Advisors and Lecturers (BAALPE), the Physical Education Association of the United Kingdom (PEAUK), the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) adjudicated on the awards. This award system reflected a growing number of partnership arrangements between schools and external sports bodies which emanated from the Conservative Government’s sport policy statement, *Sport: Raising the Game* (DNH, 1995). Green and Houlihan (2005) suggest that this policy document demonstrated the Government’s intention to move its interests from the provision of opportunities for mass participation, to a policy focussed upon elite sport. Most crucially, funding allocations to governing bodies were conditional upon their support of the Government’s policy objectives for sport.

### 2.3.3 Conservative Government policy priorities for sport (1990 - 1997)

Henry (1993) and Houlihan (1997) argue that there was a marked change in the British Government’s approach to sport post 1991. An important factor was John Major’s personal interest in sport and the belief that sport and school sport could make a contribution to the achievement of the Conservative Government’s broader political agenda. In 1992, the Government’s commitment to sport was demonstrated in the formation of a new Department of National Heritage (DNH), which had combined responsibilities for the Arts, sport and tourism. John Major’s administration was keen to create a more coherent and dynamic approach to policy for sport and the arts. The establishment of a National Lottery through the National Lottery Act (1993) enabled the Government to provide additional funding for sport. This heralded a clear shift in government policy and marked a critical turning point for elite sport which strengthened its voice and influence over government sports policy (Houlihan, 2000).

Conservative Government and media concern about the parlous state of sporting opportunities and the increasing loss of school playing fields during
the mid 1990s, gave rise to public concerns about an apparent crisis in youth sport (Roberts, 1995). The publication of Sport: Raising the Game in 1995 established youth sport and sporting excellence as two government priorities for sport. In the preface to the document, John Major described sport as a binding force between generations and a defining characteristic of nationhood and local pride. He acknowledged that the publication of this sports policy statement represented the most significant set of government proposals ever produced for sport (DNH, 1995). Significantly, it placed a ‘twin emphasis on school sport and excellence’, with teachers ‘identified as key agents for realising successful policy implementation’ (Houlihan, 2000: 174). As a sport policy document, it laid the foundations for many new sporting developments and partnerships, in which schools played a crucial role in achieving the Conservative Government’s agenda for sport. The establishment of a National Lottery in 1994 and the publication of Sport: Raising the Game provided an organisational, financial and administrative framework that would shape the future direction of sport policy in the twenty-first century (Green, 2004). John Major’s personal advocacy and interest in sport which was underpinned by Sport: Raising the Game, secured its higher political and policy profile.

The Conservative Government (1990-1997) did not engage in any substantial break from the Thatcherite political agendas and policies for the public services. The popular themes of social disintegration, crime, law and order continued to be high on the Government’s agenda, and demands for accountability and improvement to standards of service within public service provision remained a top priority. Whilst there was continuity in the broader ideological agendas of the Thatcher and Major Conservative Governments, there was a significant change in the attitude of John Major’s Government to the school sport and sport policy arenas. His appointment as Prime Minister undoubtedly signalled a renewed political interest in sport. However, his vision reflected a particular interest in elite sport and success on the international stage, alongside a return to the values of traditional team games within schools. Whilst financial resources for sport had previously been limited, the establishment of sport as a National Lottery ‘good cause’ in 1994 ensured that the Government was able to release more funding for its sport policies. The
increased investment in both school sport and external sports bodies was controlled through more rigorous accounting procedures. John Major was instrumental in placing school sport and sport closer to the centre of government policies. Previous to his election, sport and school sport had been policy areas characterised by political neglect. It was within this context of renewed interest and an exponential growth in sporting initiatives that New Labour came into power in 1997.


McKibbin (1997) has suggested that Labour were elected in May 1997 because, on the one hand, it was not the Conservative Party and, on the other, it was not very different from the Conservative Party. Tony Blair’s succession to the Labour Party leadership on the death of John Smith accelerated the modernisation of the Labour Party. The term ‘New Labour’ was selected in order to reflect the Labour Party’s new political vision that rejected traditional Labour distinctions between the state and market and between the public and private sectors. New Labour was prepared to adopt a sympathetic attitude towards privatisation, a willingness to experiment with markets in the provision of public services and to reject its traditional close ties with the trade unions. Devolved government, inclusive politics and sympathetic attitudes to individual and consumer-orientated values were central features of Labour Government policy. Social inclusion and stakeholding, employment and enterprise, and moral and urban regeneration represented the key features, values and concerns of New Labour policies (Leach et al, 2006).

On its election in 1997, the Labour Party distanced itself from its social reformist and trade union roots and ‘modernised’ itself into a government that adopted the ‘Third Way’. This rejected Labour Party old, left roots and the New Right politics of the Conservative Governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major, in favour of a middle way that was a blend of the strengths of both. It was based upon the work of influential political sociologist Anthony Giddens and involved a process of deepening and widening democracy, so
that government could act in partnership with agencies in civil society in order to foster community renewal and development. According to Giddens (1998) the Third Way was based upon a radical centre, a new democratic state, an active civil society, a new mixed economy and positive welfare. These politics were about pragmatism and, for the public service sector, was embodied in the new political adage 'what matters is what works'. Powell (1999) argued that the Third Way was initially an approach that sought to combine the ethics of community with the dynamics of a market economy achieved by redistributing opportunities rather than redistributing income. It was also about investment in human capital wherever possible, rather than the direct provision of economic maintenance:

the overall aim of third way politics should be to help citizens pilot their way through the major revolutions of our time: globalisation, transformations in personal life and our relationship to nature (Giddens, 1998:117).

This dogma was however criticised for having no theoretical, ideological or empirical grounding and it was suggested that New Labour policies emerged before the establishment of any clear ideology, theory and philosophy (Moran, 2005). Cynically, some commentators have suggested that Third Way politics were more about gaining success at the elections, than any strongly underlying beliefs or philosophies (Stevens & Green, 2002). They also describe how in a Conference Speech to the Civil Service in 1997 Prime Minister Tony Blair spelt out the aims of New Labour to cut crime and unemployment and to improve health and education. However, he also highlighted the need for joined-up government and joined-up policy-making for joined-up services. The sentiments reflected in this speech set the parameters for the Labour Government's first term of office in which a renewed focus was placed upon modernising government through improvements to the quality and efficiency of public services. The new challenge for the Blair Labour Government was to ensure that different parts of government worked together to deliver its strategic objectives.
The Labour Government had ambitious plans for the public sector and committed itself to a 10-year programme aimed at delivering world-class public services. It pledged to invest more money in public services in order to drive up service quality, to make services more responsive to the needs of its users and to establish consistently high standards across the UK. Prime Minister Blair argued that old structures and attitudes needed to replace the old public sector monolith that had been characterised by inflexibility and intransigent, public sector unions (Kendall & Holloway, 2001). The public sector was required to work alongside private firms and charities in a context in which the state would act as an enabler, rather than a provider, of services. The Labour Government regarded their public service sector plans as ambitious, because of what they perceived as years of Conservative under-investment. The Labour Manifesto New Labour Because Britain Deserves Better (1997) also stated the Government's commitment to building strong communities: decentralising political power; being tough on crime, and achieving its agenda for social reform. Improvement to the fabric of inner cities through tackling poverty, social divisions, unemployment, bad housing, crime and poor health were Labour's main priorities during their first term of office. However, at the top of the Government's agenda was the improvement of academic standards in Britain's schools.

2.4.1 Labour Government policy priorities for education (1997-2004)

When the Labour Party was elected in 1997, it was clear that education would remain a key policy priority. The Labour Government believed that education was key to the country's economic performance and its wider social agendas. Whilst the Labour Party Manifesto of 1979 had allocated only three pages to education, in 1997 the phrase 'Education, Education, Education' signalled the Blair Government's commitment to make education a key policy priority. The Labour Government agenda for education was to enforce a step-change in the structure and organisation of schools supported by substantial government investment (Giddens, 1998).
As a consequence of eighteen years of Conservative rule, New Labour inherited a divided education system in England with opted-out schools accounting for approximately 20% of secondary and 3% of primary school pupils; there were fifteen CTCs, thirty Language Colleges and one hundred and fifty-one Technology Colleges (Chitty, 2004). Whilst the system established by the previous Conservative administrations could have been radically overhauled, the Labour Government chose to accept and pursue rigorously Conservative policies of choice and diversity within the state education system. The Blair Government articulated its dissatisfaction with the comprehensive system of schooling and set out its intention to tackle failing schools and to raise academic standards. In 1997 the Labour Government affirmed its support for the specialist schools initiative that had been established by the Thatcher Government in 1988. In the White Paper *Excellence in Schools* (1997), the Labour Government reiterated the key role that specialist schools would play in modernising the comprehensive principle. The policy document set out the Government’s commitment to expanding and recasting the specialist school programme in order to drive up standards in schools in major cities. This type of school was free to adopt admission policies that allowed them to have a limited degree in latitude (10% selective admission per year group) in the selection of pupils with aptitudes associated with the school’s chosen subject specialism. The expansion of the specialist school initiative was a staging post in a longer-term education strategy that allowed all schools to develop distinctive strengths and work in partnership with private sector sponsors and other local schools (Chitty, 2004).

The White Paper *Schools Achieving Success* (2001) paved the way for a new Education Act in 2002. Choice, diversity and devolution were again the buzzwords that set the tone for the Labour Government’s next onslaught on the sphere of education. In the 2002 Spending Review the newly renamed Department for Education and Skills (DfES) announced a record increase in its funding. It was made clear that investment must be allied with workplace reform, the restructuring of the teaching profession and a renewed commitment to raising standards. The transformation of secondary education was to be achieved through increased specialisation and all schools capable
of meeting the challenges of specialisation would be supported to do so. The role of the DfES focussed upon the development of effective working partnerships with a wide range of statutory and non-statutory contractual partners in order to meet government targets and deliver its policies for schools.

2.4.2 Labour Government policy priorities for physical education (1997 - 2004)

The Labour Government was elected at a time when there were ongoing debates surrounding the implementation of the National Curriculum and the subsequent reduction in physical education in primary schools. Despite John Major’s renewed focus upon school sport, the realities of implementing the National Curriculum and its emphasis upon the core subjects led to concerns about the diminishing presence of physical education within the curricula of many primary schools (which had been brought about as a direct result of the suspension of the orders for PE and the literacy and numeracy initiatives). Speednet, a lobby group and consortium of physical education and school sport interest groups within the UK, conducted a national survey on physical education in primary schools in 1999. This report (funded by Sport England and Leeds Metropolitan University) suggested that one third of primary schools in the UK had reduced the amount of curriculum time devoted to physical education as a result of the impact of literacy and numeracy initiatives.

The challenges facing physical education and primary physical education during the late 1990s was extensively documented in reports and conferences (World Summit on PE in Berlin November 1999, Ofsted 1998, NAHT 1999 and the TTA/PE National Conference 1999). The National Association of Head Teachers Survey established that in 41% of primary schools and 21% of secondary schools, the provision of physical education had decreased significantly in the two years after the Labour Government was elected (NAHT, 1999). The Sport England Young People and Sport Survey, also conducted in 1999, revealed declining levels of physical education in schools
and evidence that suggested that whilst 46% of school children had spent two hours or more on physical education in 1994, by 1999 this figure had slipped to just 33% of school children.

The decision in May 1997 to reorganise the Department of National Heritage (DNH) and rename it the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) reflected the Government's intention to encourage joined-up strategic thinking amongst government departments. The new department (DCMS) recognised that in many schools physical education and sport had declined. Unease about the Labour Government's lack of commitment and concern for school sport gained momentum as a result of growing media and pressure group attention. The declining status of physical education within the curricula of schools at the turn of the Millennium was not confined to the UK. At the World Summit on PE in Berlin, November 1999, the Berlin Agenda for Action called for governments to implement policies for physical education as a human right for all children. As a matter of urgency, governments were urged to address the decline in time spent on curricular physical education, to improve the standards of school sport facilities and to increase the time allocated to initial teacher training.

On the 25th July 2000, Culture Secretary Chris Smith announced what he described as the 'best ever' funding settlement for sport. The DCMS investment in sports policy initiatives was justified as good for standards of behaviour, reducing youth crime and tackling social exclusion. In an attempt to manage the large amounts of money that were also released for school sport from Lottery funding, Kate Hoey (Minister for Sport) announced in the House of Commons on the 10th November 2000, the creation of a Schools Sport Alliance that would establish a strategic framework for the funding of sport in schools. This Alliance was made up of representatives of the DCMS, the Department for Education and Employment, the New Opportunities Fund, the Youth Sport Trust and Sport England. Its main role was to ensure that the £750 million Lottery funding for schools and the share of the £100 million in government funding to 2003 was spent in a planned and efficient way. Kate Hoey described schools as a fundamental part of the Government's vision for
sport. Extra financial support for sport and physical education was also provided through the Out of School Hours Learning initiative which was allocated a budget of £205 million. The programme created regular out of school hours learning activities for the most disadvantaged pupils across a quarter of all primary schools in the UK. By embracing activities, such as sports and outdoor activities, creative arts and homework clubs the Government sought to improve the motivation and self-esteem of young people and help them to become more effective learners.

The Government's strategy for sport A Sporting Future for All (April 2000) proved to be the catalyst for a number of national initiatives that were intended to change the way in which physical education and school sport were resourced. In a joint press release by the DfES and the DCMS on the 11th January 2001, the Government outlined its commitment to 'giving children a sporting chance' by offering them access both during and after school, to high quality coaching and the opportunity to take part in competitive sports within and between schools. In addressing these policy objectives the Government set out its plan to raise standards of physical education and school sport. This was to be instigated through a five point plan that focussed upon rebuilding new school sport facilitates, the creation of 110 Specialist Sports Colleges, extension of sporting opportunities beyond the school day (through an allocation of £240 million), the establishment of 600 school sport co-ordinators linked wherever possible to a Specialist Sports College and access for talented 14-18 year olds to coaching and support. The Labour Government also increased the availability of funding for school sport and physical education through extending the New Deal initiative (a key part of the Government's Welfare to Work Strategy) into schools. A commitment was also made to the creation of two thousand opportunities for suitable people from New Deal to work in schools alongside School Sports Co-ordinators by the year 2004. In addition, the New Deal for Schools initiative also provided £1.1 billion for capital works projects that targeted improvements to school sports facilities. These plans signified a renewed investment in, and change to, the resourcing of physical education and heralded fundamental changes in the way school sport would be staffed, delivered and resourced in the future.
The Labour Government advanced the Specialist Sports Colleges programme as a leading policy initiative and its rapid expansion reflected its policy status. Government investment in Specialist Sports Colleges and their associated networks of schools reflected the changing context of resourcing and training within education. A fundamental objective for Specialist Sports Colleges was to raise standards of teaching and learning in school sport and physical education. The specialist schools concept was built upon a model of partnership and a family of schools working together in order to secure whole school improvement. Sports Colleges were required to help and provide benefits to other schools in their local area, to provide sports resources for the wider community, to strengthen their links between private and/or charitable sponsors and to extend the range of opportunities available to children.

Houlihan (2000) has highlighted the inherent difficulties and challenges faced by Specialist Sports Colleges in their position at the intersection of multiple policy agendas and interests. Their responsibilities included raising standards in schools, educationalists' concerns with the learning needs and achievements of all children, the concerns of NGBs for sport development and the identification and development of sporting talent. The requirement for specialist schools to contribute actively to the raising of standards across their family school networks signalled a formal reconfiguration of education policy networks and relations and, in the case of sports colleges, within education networks that were inextricably linked to sports discourses (Penney & Houlihan, 2001). Agencies and organisations, such as the Youth Sport Trust, the DCMS, the DfES, the New Opportunities Fund and Sport England were just some of the bodies that were actively involved in ensuring the delivery of the Government's objectives in association with Specialist Sports Colleges.

The School Sport Co-ordinator programme was established as an initiative that reflected the Government's desire to achieve joined-up policy making between government departments. In June 1999, the Government announced a multi-agency initiative in which six hundred new Schools Sport Co-ordinators would be appointed to help arrange competitive fixtures between schools and to help boost after-school sports. Speaking at the Institute for
Public Policy Research Conference on its Vision for Sport in the UK, Schools Minister Charles Clarke said that it would be the job of the School Sports Co­ordinator to lift the pressure on teachers by arranging better links between schools and sports clubs to increase after school sport. He went on to suggest that this initiative would play an important role in raising school standards and for competitive sport to be a key part of the PE curriculum in every school.

The programme was established as a joint collaboration between Sport England, DCMS, DfEE (now DfES), the New Opportunities Fund and the Youth Sport Trust. The plan was for at least one thousand school sport co­ordinators to be appointed by 2004 (covering roughly one in three secondary schools). These school sport co­ordinators were new appointments located within specialist sports colleges.

The School Sport Co­ordinator programme’s key objectives involved strategic planning, primary liaison, school and community, coaching and leadership and raising standards. The preferred model of delivery for the programme was through a family of schools built around a cluster of secondary, primary and special schools. In this model, a typical partnership might consist of one Partnership Development Manager (PDM), four School Sport Co­ordinators and twenty Primary Link Tutors. A PDM (initially an experienced PE teacher) was identified within the Sports College or LEA to support and manage the development of local partnership arrangements. Primary Link Teachers within the primary partnership schools were released from their timetable for one or two days per month to ensure that programmes were planned and delivered and that links would be made with other schools and organisations in the partnership area. The Youth Sport Trust was assigned the role of supporting, monitoring and evaluating the delivery of this initiative. The scale of financial investment in the School Sport Co­ordinator programme signalled the Government’s intention that it would play a key role in developing the Government’s strategy for physical education and sport for young people. The introduction of the School Sport Co­ordinator programme, with its close links to the Specialist Sports College initiative and the Youth Sport Trust, consolidated the linkages between a variety of sporting agencies, sports bodies and schools. The question remained however as to how the alliances
between the groups and individuals from educational and sport backgrounds would shape the outcomes of the initiative (MacDonald, 2002).

The Labour Government viewed schools as central hubs for their policy objectives for sport because of their potential to pull together the threads of its broader policies for youth sport, sport in education, sport in the community and the development of talent. Schools provided access to all young people and this placed them at the centre of pathways for junior sport and in a unique position to help deliver a number of government policy outcomes. The growing involvement of sports coaches, governing bodies and sports development officers in the provision of sporting activities in and around the school context, arguably, resulted in a blurring of the policy boundaries surrounding sport and physical education (Flintoff, 2003).

The launch of the national Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy in 2002 through a joint DfES and DCMS Public Service Agreement (PSA) target represented a major commitment by the Labour Government to school sport. Delivery of the strategy was administered through a board of representatives from the PE professional associations, head teachers, OFSTED, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) Sport England, government departments and NGBs. Ofsted was responsible for monitoring and evaluating the impact of each of the programmes to ensure that the strategy made a difference. The over-arching strategy statement declared that ‘all children, whatever their circumstances or abilities, should be able to participate in and enjoy physical education (PE) and sport’ (DfES, DCMS, 2002:1). The policy document also suggested that sporting initiatives would improve fitness levels because:

- active children are less likely to be obese and more likely to pursue sporting activities as adults, thereby reducing the likelihood of coronary heart disease, diabetes and some forms of cancer (DfES, DCMS, 2002: 1).

The Government articulated the strategic benefits to be gained as a result of its substantial investment in PE and school sport. These include the raising of
educational standards, improvement to the health of the nation, the nurturing of lifelong participation and international sporting success.

Three sub-targets were also agreed with the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit (PMDU) and HM Treasury in order to help achieve the PSA target. These included a national infrastructure for PE and school sport through the creation of 400 Specialist Sports Colleges by 2005 (subject to high quality application), 400 School Sport Co-ordinator partnerships, 3,200 School Sport Co-ordinators in secondary schools and 18,000 Primary or Special School Link Teachers by 2006. The second sub-target was improvement to the quality of teaching, coaching and learning in physical education and school sport and an increase in the proportion of children guided into sports clubs from School Sport partnerships. The strategy was an over-arching initiative that initially included eight work strands made up of: Specialist Sports Colleges, School Sport Co-ordinator Partnerships, a Gifted and Talented Programme, the QCA PE and School Sport Investigation, Step into Sport, School / Club Links and Swimming.

The Labour Government used the PESSCL strategy as a tool to drive reform within the specialist school system, to modernise the school workforce through the development of partnerships beyond the classroom and as a strategy for sporting excellence. The initiative was jointly managed by the DfES and DCMS and was delivered locally through partnership arrangements. The initial financial commitment to the PESSCL initiative amounted to over £1 billion and a DfES statement outlined how the initiative:

comes at a time when the Labour Government is seeking to transform education. It helps to drive a number of key areas of the Government’s investment and reform strategy which includes: increased collaboration among secondary, primary and special schools; modernising the school workforce through innovative use of teachers and adults other than teachers; and behaviour management strategies (DfES, 2002:1).

2.4.3 Labour Government policy priorities for sport (1997 - 2004)
The Manifesto of 1997 outlined the Government’s belief that sport and the arts could enhance the nation’s sense of community, identity and civic pride, and
focussed upon the contribution that school sport could make to build the foundations of sporting opportunities for young people. *England the Sporting Nation* (1997) was the starting point for New Labour's vision for supporting sport into the new Millennium. It demonstrated a commitment to the development and continuation of many of the sport policy initiatives of John Major's Conservative Government. It also included many of the values that had been a feature of *Sport: Raising the Game* (1995) but differed in placing a broader emphasis on the value of active lifestyles and recreation for all. It was clear that teachers and schools were central to the realisation of New Labour's policies for sport and the achievement of the Government's wider political agendas. Sport England took the lead in directing and co-ordinating responses to the policy document by launching the initiative *More People, More Places, More Medals*, which was followed in June 1998 by the *Active Schools, Active Sports and Active Communities* programmes. These programmes all became integrated within the 'Active' programme initiatives that had been established as a consequence of previous Conservative Government sport policies.

In 1997, the Government announced its *Best Value* initiative, which was modelled upon the Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) model of the previous Conservative administration. This policy ensured that market forces, efficiency and accountability remained dominant features of leisure and sports provision within the UK. The Government also announced its support for the development of elite sporting talent through the establishment of a new UK Sports Institute. Reflective of the growing status of the sport policy arena, the Labour Government created a sports cabinet with representatives from the DCMS and all four home countries. This move created a new structure that signalled a more hands-on approach to the governance and control of sport (Taylor, 1997). It was suggested that Labour Government rhetoric surrounding social exclusion and joined-up government led to the re-establishment of sport's value in broader social and welfare terms (Oakley & Green, 2001). The establishment of the Government's modernising agenda inevitably impacted upon policy arrangements for sport. Sport England, DfES and DCMS were charged with promoting sport as a key tool in tackling social exclusion and
creating active citizens. However, in line with Third Way ideology, the DCMS strategy document, *A Sporting Future for All* (2000) emphasised the Labour Government's belief that social cohesion was not obtainable through the action of the state or by appealing to tradition but through individuals accepting responsibility for their behaviours and lifestyles.

Taylor (1997) suggests that sport was now framed by systematic scrutiny, policy guidance and review and tight financial control so that the Labour Government maintained its authority and control over sport policy. However, the Labour Government was somewhat reluctant to exert absolute control over policy formulation and delivery, preferring to place this in the hands of sporting quangos, such as Sport England and UK Sport (Coalter, 1990). Coalter wryly observed that the benefit of these organisations was that they provided governments with a scapegoat if things went wrong. The use of quangos such as UK Sport to administer sport policy solutions has long been a preferred option of British governments (Houlihan, 1991).

Continued government drives for efficiency and accountability in the delivery of public services meant a new strategic role for Sport England as a watchdog of public funds. This was also combined with the Government’s drive to promote more joined-up thinking between government departments and was evident in the appointment of Sue Campbell (who was seconded from the Youth Sport Trust in January 2000) as non-political adviser to both the DfES and DCMS on physical education and school sport policy. A Strategy Unit (formerly known as the Performance and Innovation Unit) was commissioned to advise the Prime Minister and other government departments on an essential route map that would address the gaps and coherency in the Government's existing sports policy (DCMS / Strategy Unit, 2002:206). The Strategy Unit was formed as part of the Government’s drive for joined-up government that had been proposed in the White Paper *Modernising Government* (1999). The objective of the Unit in relation to sport was to develop an overall strategic framework for the Government’s sport policy priorities. The efforts of the Strategy Unit culminated in the publication of a new sport strategy document *Game Plan: A Strategy for Delivering the*
Government's Sport and Physical Activity Objectives (2002). The report set out recommendations that focussed upon the development of grassroots participation (with a particular focus upon the economically disadvantaged, young people, women and older people), high performance sport, mega sporting events and the delivery of organisational reform within sport. A central focus of the report was to increase grassroots participation in sport because of growing Government concerns about the high levels of obesity and physical inactivity which the report suggested were costing the nation approximately £2 billion a year. Closer partnerships between the providers of sport and physical activity, such as schools, local authorities and voluntary and private sectors, was seen as essential if there was to be a 'step change' in participation rates.

The complex nature of the arrangements between the sectors delivering sport and physical activity within the UK was identified as potentially problematic and clearly identified in the sport policy document Game Plan (2002). It highlighted the structural complexity of the policy context in which 'government's interaction with these sectors is through a complex set of organisations with overlapping responsibilities and unclear accountability' (DCMS / Strategy Unit, 2002:14). The sport policy statement established young people as one of the Labour Government's main policy priorities for sport through a twin track approach aimed at increasing participation in sport and physical activity and nurturing sporting talent.

This renewed commitment to sport did not bring with it any marked changes in the Government's attitudes towards public spending and, indeed, it quickly became clear that any Treasury spending on public services, such as sport would be kept in check. Labour's commitment to flexible labour markets and the prudent financial management of public spending owed much to previous Conservative government policies. However, there were some fundamental differences in the Labour Government's approach to public policy, which involved a drive to develop more community focussed ventures that demarcated it from previous Conservative policy values and priorities (Giddens, 1994). New Labour philosophy suggests that it attempted to adapt
its traditional values of ethical socialism surrounding social justice, equal opportunity and a sense of community to the current social and economic context (Hay, 1999). A degree of continuity in the ideological orientations and values of both Conservative and Labour Governments over the past two decades has remained.

2.5 Conclusion
The chapter has documented the political ideologies and values of governments since 1976 and the implications for public policy priorities in education, physical education and sport. What emerges is a political landscape that has been characterised by continuity in the service specific priorities for education. Since the election of Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan in 1976 the political landscape of the UK has witnessed the deconstruction of social democracy and a shift in the ideological parameters of politics towards a New Right agenda. These values and beliefs dominated politics during the 1980s and the ideological legacy of neo-liberalism is still a reference point for the new Millennium (Le Grand, 1998). The election of Tony Blair heralded a new ideology. However, for many this approach represented continuity with post-Thatcherite political ideology and the main tenets of neo-liberalism (e.g. Perryman, 1996). In more forceful terms Gamble (1994) suggests that Third Way politics reflects a deeply ingrained Thatcherite ideology.

The political legacy of Thatcherism arguably remains deeply embedded in the social and political fabric of the UK (Green, 1993). Thatcherism succeeded in shifting the political terrain dramatically to the Right and sought to organise several diverse interests and groupings around the themes of anti-statism, anti-collectivism and anti-socialism. This manifested itself in an ideological, political and legislative assault on the values of collectivism, redistribution and corporatism (Hall, 1986). Even after her personal removal from office, Thatcherism remained an integral part of the political and policy programme of John Major and her policies continued to define social and political debate. Heath et al (2001) argue that the political agenda set by Margaret Thatcher continued to define the parameters of much of the wider social, political and
public service debates into the 21st Century. Novak (1998) has even gone as far as claiming that the success of New Labour can be accredited to Margaret Thatcher's ideas and suggests that Third Way politics can only be understood against the backdrop of the New Right. Gamble (1994) and Novak (1998) suggest that all contemporary politics, including that of New Labour, reflects deeply ingrained Thatcherite values. It is argued that the Labour Party under Tony Blair and Gordon Brown reflected continuity with the Conservative Government's commitments to flexible labour markets, free trade and individual self help (Savage & Atkinson, 2001) and to the ongoing relationship of government to the public sector. Giddens (1999) attempts to demarcate the differences between ideologies of the Thatcher and Major Governments and New Labour by arguing that Labour politics advocates more limited state intervention and a more re-distributive role for the state, whilst governing with a social conscience. However, in broad economic and fiscal matters, he recognises that New Labour policies are very similar to those of the Thatcher era.

New Labour's education policies demonstrated a commitment to the policies of the previous Conservative Governments which had created a market for education based upon a diverse range of secondary schools. On its election, the Blair Government made clear its intention to continue with the specialist schools initiative and some of the more divisive Conservative education policies of a market-led system, such as parental choice, teacher accountability and the publication of league tables. Education was the Blair Government's stated, number one priority; and unlike the previous Conservative Governments of Thatcher and Major, there was a significant increase in the share of national income spent on education (McAuley, 2003). Selection and specialisation, devolution and diversity were the hallmarks of education policies for education from the 1970s onwards. Political involvement and government investment in physical education and school sport also rose exponentially from John Major onwards as he placed sport onto the public policy map during the 1990s. New Labour adopted and developed many of the policy themes for PESS founded in the 1990s and its significant
investment in the PESSCL initiative demonstrated the Labour Government's commitment to sport and physical education.

In assessing the impact of these broader political ideologies and values on policy-making within the public service sectors of education and sport during this period, it can be seen that there were marked continuities between Labour and Conservative Government policy priorities for education from 1976 to the present day. The changes are illustrated in Table 2.1 below.

**Table 2.1 Political ideologies and government service priorities for education, physical education and sport (1976 - present)**

|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
Each of these periods left a legacy that shaped the public policy decisions of each subsequent government in the public policy arena of physical education and school sport. Conservative Government engagement with sport and physical education between 1990 and 1997 served as a catalyst for subsequent Labour Government endorsement and substantial financial commitment to a public policy arena previously characterised by neglect. What defined policy for physical education and school sport was a renewed interest in its potential to help government deliver its own policy priorities. Following a period of limited political interest in school sport during the Governments' of James Callaghan and Margaret Thatcher, John Major's personal interest in sport acted as a catalyst for a growth of political interest and investment culminating in the Labour Government's significant commitment to a national strategy for school sport. This study examines the dramatic rise in the salience of PESS through an analysis of the policy process for selected elements of the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links strategy in England.
Chapter 3
Theorising the Policy Process

Introduction
The chronological account of the changing political ideologies and policy priorities of UK governments since the 1970s provided in Chapter 2 identified the gradual emergence of school sport and physical education as a salient policy context. In order to analyse policy change within the context of school sport and physical education, a range of theoretical frameworks are evaluated for their capacity to deliver insights into a policy arena that involves the complex interplay of policy actors and agencies. This chapter establishes and justifies the selection of the theoretical frameworks that are best placed to provide an analytical framework for a study which seeks to analyse the complexities of policy-making in physical education and school sport.

As policy networks are crucial features in any account of the policy process and of policy change (see Heclo, 1974; Kingdon, 1984, Marsh and Rhodes, 1992) it is essential that the broader political, ideological, social and economic context is considered in order to gain an understanding of what constrains and enables their actions. This macro-level analysis (it is acknowledged that there are various definitions of what constitutes macro-level), focuses upon and explores the nature of power relationships and the distribution of power that exists within and between state and civil society. Macro-level theoretical perspectives offer a variety of interpretations of the use of power, its distribution at a societal level and the location of decision-making centres (see Dahl, 1957; 1961; 1963; Boulding, 1989). In order to understand decision-making processes and the role of interest groups within public policy contexts, a number of meso-level models have been devised which provide frameworks for analysing how power and power relations impact upon and shape policy and policy change. The purpose of adopting and focussing upon meso-level models of policy analysis is their potential for offering the researcher insights into the role of interest groups and their relationships with government, the
state and organisations within these networks. A number of prominent theoretical approaches to policy analysis are discussed and two in particular are chosen for their potential to contribute to an analysis of policy change in the arena of school sport and physical education.

The intention is that by integrating macro and meso levels of analysis, the study will account for the broader social, economic, ideological and political context that constrains and enables the network of groups involved in the PESS policy area and also provide a more informed analysis of policy change. A set of criteria for assessing the adequacy and capacity of macro and meso-level analytical frameworks for elucidating matters concerning policy stability and policy change is presented (Sabatier, 1999; John 1998). Sabatier's Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) (1988) and Kingdon's Multiple Streams Model (1984) are employed as the two theoretical frameworks for analysing policy change. They have been selected for this study because they have been extensively applied as theoretical tools for the analysis of policy change in a diverse range of contexts. They also provide what Houlihan and Green (2006) suggest are two of the more fully articulated and internally coherent frameworks that complement and extend the existing policy analysis literature.

In sum, this chapter presents the theoretical basis upon which this study is founded and begins with a brief overview of the nature and purpose of policy analysis. This is followed by a conceptualisation of the nature of power as it is conceived in this study and a detailed examination of macro and meso-level frameworks.

3.1 An overview of policy analysis

What constitutes policy analysis has generated substantial academic debate and whilst Dye (1976) argues that its essential purpose is to discover what organisations do and why they do it, there are a range of definitions available which all focus upon describing and explaining the causes and consequences of an organisation's actions. Dye (1976) highlights the potential prescriptive purpose of policy analysis, an argument that is developed by Hogwood and
Gunn (1984). They suggest a distinction should be made between the analysis of how policies are made (description) and how policies should be made (prescription). They categorise the various types of policy analysis as characterised by analysis for and analysis of policy. It includes a range of approaches to the analysis of public policy focussing upon policy content, the policy process and its outputs, policy evaluation and policy advocacy. What emerges from the literature surrounding policy analysis is that the researcher must have an acute awareness, understanding and sympathy for the essentially political nature of the policy process and the complexities and constraints inherent within the political system (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984).

3.1.1 Conceptualising power in policy research

Central to political analysis and any study which seeks to examine the public policy process is the nature, exercise and distribution of power (Dahl, 1963; Lasswell, 1950; Weber, 1946; Lukes, 1974; Foucault, 1981). It is evident that within political analysis the concept of power is interpreted from a number of more or less inclusive perspectives (Hay, 2002) and that the concept is a highly complex and contentious one. It is important for the purpose of this study that a definition of the concept of power is established, as this will inform and support the process of analysing public policy.

The conceptualisation of the term power is a source of ongoing academic debate and the term has proved notoriously difficult to operationalise and to measure (March, 1966). The period after the Second World War was marked by a particular focus within political science upon debates surrounding the nature and definition of power. These deliberations focussed largely upon whether the concept of power could be defined in a way that rendered it easily measurable. Academics such as Ball (1992) suggest that 'power is arguably the single most important organising concept in social and political theory' (p.14), whilst Lukes (2002) proposes that 'power is inextricably linked with many aspects of the policy process. What emerges is a range of different theoretical approaches to political analysis, which focus to a greater or lesser extent on the concept of power. Numerous protagonists have adopted a range
of positions and perspectives on the nature of political power with the dominant debate known as the 'faces of power' controversy, which is synthesised in Table 3.1

Table 3.1 The faces of power controversy: political power in three dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>One-dimensional view</th>
<th>Two-dimensional view</th>
<th>Three-dimensional view</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conception of power</strong></td>
<td>Power as decision-making.</td>
<td>Power as decision-making and agenda setting</td>
<td>Power as thought control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus of analysis</strong></td>
<td>The formal political arena.</td>
<td>The formal political arena and the informal processes surrounding it (the corridors of power).</td>
<td>Civil society more generally, especially the public sphere (in which preferences are shaped).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodological approach</strong></td>
<td>Counting of votes and decisions in decision-making forums.</td>
<td>Ethnography of the corridors of power to elucidate the informal processes through which the agenda is set.</td>
<td>Ideology critique - to demonstrate how actors come to misperceive their own material interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nature of Power</strong></td>
<td>Visible, transparent and easily measured.</td>
<td>Both visible and invisible (visible only to agenda setters), but can be rendered visible through gaining inside information.</td>
<td>Largely invisible - power distorts perceptions and shapes preference; it must be demystified.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hay (2002: 180)

In the period after the Second World War Anglo-US debates centred upon methodological concerns as to whether power could be simply, precisely and quantifiably defined, or whether because of its sheer complexity it was measurable (Hay, 2002). The first face of power was represented by the classic pluralist notion of power which focussed upon power as decision-making, as actor centred and inter-personal. The state was conceived as an instrument rather than a set of structures and centred upon the role of individuals who inhabit positions of influence within the state apparatus, rather than the state itself (Boulding, 1989; Dahl, 1957; 1961; Polsby, 1961). This first face of power constituted the conscious actions that influenced the
decision-making process and was based upon judgements about who possessed power through an analysis of decisions based on the known preferences of the actors involved. Hay (2002) suggests that the key assumptions of such classical pluralist conceptions of power were unidimensional and operationalised through a focus upon decision-making with powerful individuals influencing the process. Within such pluralist conceptualisations, power is understood in terms of its effects, its focus upon the role of the individual and their behaviours, power as domination and as a zero-sum game (Hyland, 1995). Such a narrow, one-dimensional conception of power in which the state is an instrument and attention afforded to those who hold positions of power, rather than the nature and function of the state itself, was regarded as a major weakness in classical pluralist notions of power as decision-making (Dunleavy & O'Leary, 1987; Hay, 1999).

The second face of power debate challenges such one-dimensional pluralist notions, arguing that a narrow concentration upon decision-making processes ignores issues of 'non-decision-making' (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962; 1963; 1970). Neo-elitists such as Bachrach and Baratz focus upon agenda setting as the second face of power and suggest that conceptualisations of power should include both decision-making, non decision-making and agenda setting. Their focus upon power outside the formal boundaries of parliament and on agenda setting behind the scenes, served to distinguish neo-elitist from pluralist theories of power (Hay, 2002). Power as non-decision-making involves the ability to set or gain control over the political agenda by preventing issues from being aired in the first place (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970). The art of politics in this context was the ability to shape agendas so that formal decision-making on issues where success could not be guaranteed was avoided (Hay, 2002). Methodologically this required a focus upon both the informal and formal process of agenda setting and the assessment of the importance of issues in the decision-making process in determining the location of power (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970). However, the failure to differentiate between perceived interests and preferences, and a concentration upon the behavioural process of agenda-setting to the detriment
of how preferences are shaped, received much criticism. Lukes (1974) entered the debate by proffering a three-dimensional model of power. A third dimension or face of power is identified which seeks to address the shortcomings of the previous two conceptualisations of power. This third dimension or 'preference shaping' is the ability to influence another individual by shaping what he or she thinks, wants or needs. Drawing on the work of Gramsci (1971), Lukes argued that power can be expressed as ideological indoctrination, or psychological control that in political life is often exercised through the use of propaganda and the impact of ideology. This approach proposes the use of a framework that recognises the struggles and strategies inherent in the decision-making process, the actions and inactions in shaping agendas and the actions and inactions involved in shaping perceived interests and political preferences. It is a conceptualisation of power that has resonance for Marxists, neo-Marxists and radical elitists/pluralists as it focuses upon decision-making, agenda setting and preference shaping and an analysis of power that focuses upon the public sphere where preferences are shaped. Power is viewed as largely invisible; however, it is capable of distorting the perceptions of actors who may be capable of misperceiving their own interests.

As a critical theorist, Lukes advances a radical conception of power that identifies power and power relationships in normative terms and openly acknowledges the value-laden nature of his reformulation of the notion of power. This approach suggests that the exercise of power is not necessarily observable behaviour and that power can be both a realised or unrealised capacity. It draws upon Marxist perspectives which suggest that inequalities in society are largely invisible and a consequence of effective mechanisms of institutionalised persuasion. However, it is Lukes' failure to distinguish between questions surrounding the identification of power within political and social contexts and the distribution and exercise of power that has led to criticism of his approach (Hay 2002). In particular, Hay is disapproving of the assumption that all actors who wield power should be made responsible for the consequences of their actions and, in his view; it is the identification and
exercise of power that provides the central focus of the faces of power controversy.

Lukes argues that a pluralist model of power lacks the subtlety to interpret and recognise less transparent uses of power. Bachrach and Baratz (1970) also suggest that there is often an inherent bias in the policy-making context, which acts to privilege some groups and their values above those of others. At the centre of these arguments about the nature and exercise of power is the capacity of individuals and powerful interest groups to ignore and exclude the ideas of others whose views do not match or resonate with their own. Lukes also suggests that power can be exercised more subtly by the process of socialisation in which people accept their position, despite the fact that they have limited access to available resources and opportunities. This third dimension of power suggests that there is a need to acknowledge and investigate the operation of myths, symbols and language in the policy process. However, what is central to an understanding of the role of power in the policy process is the involvement of the state, which is often compliant in bringing attention to public issues which it feels should be defined as a matter of public concern, whilst suppressing others which it does not seek to address. This model of power views the state as accountable for developing and maintaining deeply embedded values and attitudes in society.

The perception that schools need to raise academic standards has been a recurring theme of governments since the 1960s and still remains as a core policy theme of the current Labour Government. Similarly, successive governments and the media have been compliant in repeatedly raising concerns about anti-competitive practices within physical education teaching, whilst having little evidence to support this argument. The media and politicians are located in a privileged position because of their capacity to manipulate and perpetuate these arguments. It is therefore important to acknowledge within a study of public policy, the motivations that drive a government’s involvement in school sport and to be cognisant of the multi-dimensional nature of power and the role of the state as a key policy actor (see Lukes 1974; 1978). The central premise of critical theorists, such as
Lukes and Habermas (1990) that power can be possessed, obtained and given is fundamentally challenged by other academics and the notion that there is any potential liberation from power relations within society is rejected by Foucault (1988) who argues that power is ubiquitous. Foucault's conception of power and his desire to understand more fully the power relations within society, has generated a number of perspectives that are worthy of examination.

Whilst the faces of power controversy dominated Anglo-American academic debate, the work of Michel Foucault argued that power was ubiquitous. He was particularly critical of theories which suggested that power was a sovereign, unitary and centralised construct that was primarily repressive in character (Fox, 1998). Foucault proposed that:

in human relations ... power is always present ... these relationships of power are changeable relations, i.e. they can modify themselves, they are not given once and for all .... The thought that there could be a state of communication which would be such that the games of truth could circulate freely, without obstacles, without constraint and without coercive effects seems to me to be utopian. It is being blind to the fact that relations of power are not something bad in themselves, from which one must free one's self. I don't believe there can be a society without relations of power (Foucault, 1988:45).

Michel Foucault has been instrumental in engaging academic debate on the interaction of power and society and in particular in attempting to deconstruct existing power structures. His approach rebuffs arguments that suggest that power is a single entity, in favour of a definition of power as productive and power as knowledge, therefore suggesting that the two concepts are inseparable. Power does not reside with individual groups or, indeed, with individuals but lies in a range of discursive struggles. This model of power directly opposes those of Marxism and feminism, whose arguments focus upon more unitary societal perspectives. Foucault contends that power operates from the bottom up and therefore, individuals are not simply affected by the ideologies of power retained by a dominant group but by the presence of widespread oppression in society that emerges from more localised power relationships that are manifest in the dynamics of class and gender.
Foucauldian theorists associate power and knowledge and propose that:

power assumes a relationship based on some knowledge which creates and sustains it; conversely, power establishes a particular regime of truth in which certain knowledge becomes admissible or possible (Armstrong, 1983:10).

Fox (1998) posits that researchers within the field of sociology have adopted these models in an attempt to record these 'knowledges' within spheres, such as education, religion, beauty, fitness and public health, where people become the subjects of these professions in everyday encounters between professionals (or privileged others) and their subject matter (patients, children, family, workers). In this respect this breaks with structuralism and traditional Marxist perspectives in denying that power is coercive and also rejects humanist perspectives that suggest the individual is at the centre of the social world. Butler (1990) suggests that, from this perspective, power is a productive process which creates human subjects and determines their capacity to act.

Central to this work is the concept of discourse and its links with knowledge and power. The term discourse relates to the historical practices of such disciplines as medicine, which limits human actions and thoughts, such that people think and act on the basis of these acknowledged truths (Nettleton, 1992). Modern society, therefore, is characterised by the existence of experts who retain power through their possession of technical and scientific knowledge that is used to convince and persuade other non-experts to accept the claims they make. This acknowledges discursive practices as human activity which is:

embodied in technical processes, in institutions, in patterns for general behaviour, in forms for transmission and diffusion and in pedagogical forms which at once impose and maintain them (Bouchard, 1977:200).

However, the concept of discourse (which becomes power/ knowledge in Foucault's later work) is seen as the surface manifestation of the will to power,
which cannot be reduced to human intentionality. Power/knowledge was regarded as unknowable in a traditional sense and crucially no one or no group, such as the sovereign or the state could (intentionally) possess it absolutely. Power was not a commodity to be held, possessed or embodied in a person, institution, or structure, or to be used for organisational or individual purposes. For Foucault power is relational and is associated with practices, techniques and procedures; it becomes apparent when operationalised and can be employed at all levels and through many dimensions. Of central importance was an understanding of how power is exercised as a consequence of what is known. Importantly, governments are not regarded as political institutions but in terms of their conduct which shapes, guides and affects the conduct of individuals (Gordon, 1991 cited in Burchell et al, 1991). The exercise of power creates and causes new bodies of information and knowledge to emerge so that it is impossible for power to be exercised without knowledge. From a Foucauldian perspective, human subjects are produced historically and their identities exist and are shaped through the relationships they maintain with others. According to Ransom (1997), Simons (1995) and Webb (2000) Foucault’s notion of power rejects neo-Marxist arguments about the existence of powerful elites who serve to oppress other groups and also challenges the notion that power is retained by certain individuals and not by others. Essentially it postulates that power is integral to decision-making processes that exist within and between organisations, is often unobservable and is not retained by an individual. Power is exercised through the interactions that exist between organisations and this power may play an important role in activities such as the policy-making process.

A major limitation of the work of Michel Foucault in terms of this study is its relative neglect of the role of the state and its assumptions that the state is a decentralised entity. It favours an approach to power that is omnipresent, rather than a possession that rests with any group or class. Whether the structure/agency debate is sufficiently resolved by Foucault is questionable; indeed Fox (1998) suggests that it is not capable of resolution and therefore ceases to be a problem. This supposition is challenged by Silverman (1985) and Goldstein (1984) who claim that Foucauldian approaches have
successfully attempted to bridge the agency/structure dichotomy. However, these perspectives on the nature of power are regarded as constituting a meta-narrative which, according to Mouzelis (1995), is typified by vagueness, grandiosity and over-generalisation. Whilst Foucault unquestioningly has much to offer in terms of the philosophical debates surrounding the location of power, his theorising is of questionable value for the empirical demands of this study. As Hay (2002) succinctly argues, this narrative is self-consciously ambiguous and his strategy is to problematise, disarm and deconstruct. His work challenges the notion that a progressive path can be attributed to explanations of political tendencies, thus rendering the theoretical perspective on the nature of power and knowledge problematical in terms of this piece of research (see Foucault 1979, 1980).

This relatively brief overview of the debates within political science concerning the conceptualisation of power and its usefulness to political analysis has highlighted how the concept can be understood in a variety of more or less inclusive ways. These debates surrounding power are indicative of the different theoretical traditions and approaches that can be taken to political analysis. Crucially, the debate focuses upon whether power can be defined in a way that allows it to be measured and quantified, or is a concept that is so complex it renders analysis inoperable. As this study focuses upon the political arena of policy-making and analysis of policy change, it is to broader, more inclusive macro-level theoretical perspectives that recognise both the involvement of the state and the location of power that the next section of the chapter turns.

In seeking to explore the policy-making process, it is important to recognise the active role of the state and the location and distribution of power within society. Daugbjerg and Marsh (1998) argue that macro-level investigation affords the analyst the opportunity to deal 'with the relationships between the state and civil society that is state theory and more specifically, the broader political structures and processes' (1998:54). Macro-level theories of the state provide a number of different perspectives from which to view the role of the state and the location of power within political systems. The various 'state'
theories that have emerged from political science literature present different hypotheses on the policy process and the role and location of power. They offer different perspectives from which to view the political world and address the role of power, the nature of the policy process and the role of actors in contributing to policy direction and outcomes.

3.2 Macro level analysis

Any study which seeks to investigate and analyse public policy, should consider the broader debates that exist surrounding the role of the state and the distribution of power within society as a whole (Hill, 1997; Marsh & Stoker, 1995). It is essential to begin with macro-level theorising as it provides a context for meso-level theory and establishes fundamental assumptions about the nature of power, its distribution and the role of the state. The macro-level addresses the relationships between state and civil society (State theory) and in particular, broader political structures and processes. State theory seeks to explain patterns of inclusion and exclusion within the membership of networks and the constraining factors that exist within the political, social and economic context. In recent years there have been calls for public policy analysis to integrate different theoretical perspectives and levels of analysis (Marsh & Rhodes, 1992; Marsh & Stoker, 1995; Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998). Macro-level analysis has the potential to explain policy networks and policy outcomes whilst allowing the researcher to gain insights into the formulation of coalitions, how they relate to the broader political system and how policy outcomes are facilitated and constrained. Macro-level analysis takes two forms in this study: an exploration of State theory and an investigation of two macro-level features, namely the parliamentary support enjoyed by sporting interest groups and the organisational structure of the state.
Daugbjerg and Marsh (1998) suggest that State theory seeks to address four questions:

1. Who rules?
2. Why do they rule?
3. How do they rule?
4. In whose interest do they rule?

Macro-level or societal-level approaches offer a range of perspectives from which to analyse the policy-making process and policy change. They focus upon the relationships between the state and power structures and allow the researcher to gain an understanding of the role of power and the state in determining the interplay of relationships and decision-making processes amongst national (meso-level) organisations, such as interest groups, national sporting bodies and physical education organisations and government departments. It is recognised that there is an inherent problem in defining the macro-level and distinguishing it from the meso-level; however, for a study of the policy process it is important to acknowledge that policy is a product of the exercise of political authority that determines what the state can and cannot do (Hill, 1975).

Public policy is inexorably linked with issues surrounding the role of the state because policy is often viewed as being generated from within institutions which draw upon the resources of the state. Whilst there is much debate regarding the boundaries of state, civil society and voluntary organisations, the former is considered to be a relatively permanent entity (although not necessarily a unified one), which exercises authority through a set of permanent institutions (Heywood, 2002). Discussions surrounding the role of the state in the public policy arena are complex and involve an examination of the role of individual actors, such as politicians or civil servants and various sections of the state, such as government departments, the civil service, the courts, hospitals and public bodies in determining policy and resource allocation. McAuley (2003) suggests that the state is composed of many
individuals, organisations and groups and that any analysis of the public policy process should consider

how and why they combine to pursue collective goals. How authority is legitimized and maintained by a dominant group and what political forces exist to block them in their goals, or to challenge their position? (27).

In order to develop an informed position on these key issues, it is imperative to begin by contextualising the study at a macro level.

Reviews of the literature on the distribution of power consistently identify Marxism, pluralism, corporatism and elitist approaches as key macro-level perspectives as the most frequently employed theories of power. McAuley (2003:27) argues that they ‘provide the tools to understand central notions of power, politics and the state in democratic capitalist societies.’ A synopsis of these four macro-level approaches is provided below.

3.2.1 Elitism

Elite theory offers one of the oldest set of explanations of politics and the distribution of power, and is derived from the classical work of Pareto and Mosca (1939). Elite theory suggests that power is vested in the hands of a select group and that this single group or ‘ruling elite’ make all the major decisions in determining the organisation and direction of states. They recognise only one aspect or ‘face’ of power, which is the ability to influence the decision-making process. Rather than see power as distributed widely and evenly, Elite theorists (like Marxists) focus upon the notion of a ‘ruling class’ or ‘power elite’ whose major focus is to pursue their own interests. The power of this ruling class is not derived in a direct sense from economic sources but emerges as a consequence of the leadership qualities or entrepreneurial characteristics of groups or individuals. Elitists argue that the state is permeated at all decision-making levels with dominant social groups and that the state functions in a way that serves the interests of these powerful minority groups. Elitists suggest that whilst the membership of these groups may vary between policy arenas over time, the existence of a dominant class is...
constant (Michels, 1993). Pareto and Mosca (1939) argue that elites exert more power than the masses in society and claims that, once leaders are given authority, they have a tendency to turn it into domination. Modern elitists have been more critical and discriminating about the causes of elite rule. However, as a theory it is weak in its explanation of elite rule and in explaining the source of power and how it is retained by a dominant group (Heywood, 2002). Elite theory has also been criticised for its failure to reflect the reality of political processes and in explaining how access to political power is the preserve of a number of elite and homogenous groups who work together to preserve their privileged positions (Coxall & Robins, 1998).

3.2.2. Marxism and neo-Marxism

Marxist conceptions of the capitalist state focus upon an analysis and understanding of the state and its relationship with the economic structure of society. For the Marxist, the state is perceived as an instrument of class oppression that emerges from the class system. Held (1996) suggests that political science has become preoccupied with Marxist interpretations of state organisation, class and power. Marxist theories focus upon the role of the state and its relationship with the unequal distribution of class power, in which the capitalist state acts either as an instrument of oppression or as a means of perpetuating class antagonisms. Marxist ideology purports that within capitalist societies power is vested in the capitalist class and the role of the state is to protect the dominance of this class who appropriate a range of social networks in order to ensure that they have access to the decision-making roles that exist within society (Dunleavy & O’Leary, 1987).

Consequently, within any capitalist society, those individuals who hold positions of power are selected from the ranks of the dominant class and gender group (Ham & Hill, 1993). However, the emergence in recent years of politicians such as Margaret Thatcher, who was neither from the dominant class or gender group but, arguably, retained the norms and values of the dominant class and gender group of that period, somewhat contradicts this argument. Miliband (1969) suggested that the central tenet of Marxism was that a powerful state (which can never be regarded as neutral) helps to
preserve the status quo, because the bourgeoisie use the state as a method of retaining domination over the working class. Dunleavy and O'Leary (1987) also substantiate the claim that Marxist approaches to power are centred upon ownership and control of economic capital, seeing power as retained by those with wealth and class privilege who hold dominant positions within society.

Neo-Marxist accounts have drawn upon these traditions but now focus more closely upon relationships between the dominant classes, the configuration of the state and economic conditions. Poulantzas (1968) and Miliband (1969) offer two significant but differing neo-Marxist accounts of the role of the state and the distribution of power. The Miliband and Poulantzas debate, which dominated Marxist theorising in the 1960s and 1970s, centred upon Miliband's 'instrumentalist' claim that the state had been captured by the capitalist class as a consequence of its political organisation, set against Poulantzas's argument that the state is capitalist as a consequence of its functions which serves to disorganise the working class. Miliband (1969) argues from an instrumentalist perspective that suggests that the state is used as an instrument in the hands of the ruling class, which is comprised of individuals, groups and institutions. These state elites are drawn from the privileged and propertied and Miliband's contention is that power is retained by these elite individuals and groups. For Miliband, power and domination are central to the authority of these power elites. He offers arguments to substantiate his claims that political power is in the hands of a dominant ruling class by suggesting that their domination is predicated upon the contention that officers of government share similar backgrounds to the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie influence government by their contact with them and through their positions of responsibility, whilst the need of public officials to retain their employment perpetuates the status quo. This instrumentalist position is, however, challenged by Dunleavy and O'Leary (1987) who dispute Miliband's contention that the ruling classes act purely out of self interest, using the example of the emergence of the post-war welfare state in the UK to challenge this notion. Poulantzas (1968) also challenges this interpretation of the role of the state and suggests that it is a major 'factor of unity' in any social
context. Poulantzas postulates that the functions of the state are primarily determined by the structure of society, rather than the individual actors who retain positions of state authority. He provides an account which focuses upon structural concerns where the state operates in a way that maintains social cohesion grounded in class domination. For Poulantzas, the state retains a degree of autonomy from those in possession of economic power. However, the state bureaucracy does not retain power itself as power is exercised in the decision-making process.

The two schools of thought provided by Poulantzas and Miliband have provoked much philosophical debate. Held (1996) highlights how neo-Marxist philosophies have been forced to acknowledge that the state can no longer be regarded as based upon a simple two-class model. He contends that Marxist philosophies have been forced to recognise that a number of different interests, groups and classes are active in challenging the ruling class. McAuley (2003) supports this view and suggests that neo-Marxist theorising has been forced to acknowledge the role of corporate power and to abandon the notion that the state is simply a reflection of the class system. There is now an acknowledgement that electoral democracy has given power to interest groups outside the ruling classes and that the state has become the terrain over which struggles between groups, classes and interests is conducted.

3.2.3 Corporatism

Like many other macro-level theories, there is a range of views and positions, which are represented under the umbrella term of corporatism. Central to corporatist theorising is the notion that interests become arranged within the strict parameters that are demanded by the state. As a consequence, membership of representative groups such as trade unions becomes obligatory and these organisations possess the power to negotiate and reach agreements which are recognised by the state (Schmitter, 1979; Middlemas, 1979). In this scenario, the state orchestrates partnerships between privately owned organisations and hierarchically ordered interest groups where power is vested amongst bureaucrats and professional decision-makers. Such social
contract policies predominated during the governments of Harold Wilson and James Callaghan in the 1970s. Pahl and Winkler (1974) have highlighted how corporate politics are predicated upon power structures that are opposed to economic change. Such practices place the nation's interest above that of the individual and help to control economic objectives and exert discipline over those who propose different policy objectives. In general terms Cawson (1986) suggests that actors or representatives from government, national companies, unions and organisations play key roles in determining political and economic affairs. The focus within corporatist accounts upon the role of delegates, groups or institutions in making key decisions within public policy arenas offers some useful insights into the power of groups and their influence over the policy process.

Central to corporatist theorising are assertions that it is in the interest of groups and government to work in close co-operation. Winkler (1977) argues that for corporatists 'peak organisations' such as major industries play a significant role in political decision-making processes. Drawing upon the work of Schmitter and Lembruch (1979), corporatists highlight the role of a variety of interest groups but contend that it is the economic interests of large industries that play the main role in policy-making. More recently, neo-corporatist accounts concede that many groups engage in policy-making processes, whose role is sanctioned, but not controlled, by the state. In sum, corporatism characterises the decision-making process as comprised of a number of interest groups who seek to obtain agreement and act in a collective manner. However, John (1998) is critical of corporatist arguments, which, he suggests, fail to account for, and address, the complex nature of policy-making processes.

3.2.4 Pluralism

In its narrowest sense, pluralism is a theory of the distribution of political power which claims that power is wider than in the accounts offered by Marxism and elitism. Power is perceived as widely and evenly dispersed in society, rather than concentrated in the hands of a ruling class (Dahl, 1961).
In this form, pluralism is usually seen as a theory of ‘group politics’ in which individuals are represented largely through their membership of organised groups who have access to decision-making. Pluralist theory suggests that the state acts as an umpire or referee within society, or as an abstract concept in which state institutions, such as the courts or the police behave as independent actors, rather than as part of the state machine (Dunleavy & O'Leary 1987; Marsh & Rhodes 1992; Heywood 2002). Pluralist theorising suggests that the state is neutral and not biased in favour of any particular interest or group and, as such, may be regarded as the servant of society and not its master (Schwarzmantel, 1994). The assumption is that the state is subordinate to government and that state institutions conform to the principles of public service and political accountability. Party competition and interest group activity ensures that government is sensitive and responsive to public opinion and, whilst the political arena may be competitive, it is fundamentally equitable and balanced (Dahl, 1961).

As pluralists contend that power is not concentrated within any set grouping, pluralist methodology has a tendency to focus upon visible decision-making processes and overt statements of interests (McAuley, 2003). Pluralists argue that the role of state is to represent and arbitrate between all significant groups. They suggest that the state is organised into a number of discrete units (e.g. government agencies, the police force and the health service), rather than a coherent whole (Dunleavy & O'Leary, 1987). As a consequence, the state is not structured by a dominant ideology but organised by a rich range of ideas. The role of the public is to raise issues and suggest ideas for political deliberation, whilst the electoral process provides a series of checks and balances upon government policies. As a consequence, the political process is regarded as one of choice and competition, with elections acting to keep government in check (Held, 1996). Pluralist theories of state have been conceptualised by Dunleavy and O'Leary (1987) through the use of ‘weathervane’, ‘neutral’ and ‘broker state’ analogies. The ‘weathervane’ model suggests that the state is passive and parliament is a rubber-stamping mechanism for decisions that are made within the public arena. Policy coordination, when it occurs, is undirected and unintentional. In sum, the state is
viewed as a weathervane of public opinion. The 'neutral state' model argues a more interventionist role for the state, as a cabinet system of government which is 'actively neutral' and acts as a referee (McAuley, 2003). The major role of the state is to referee between competing pressure groups and to act in the 'public interest'. The third approach is the 'broker state' model, which argues that public policy decisions emanate from the state apparatus, in which a number of state brokers act as intermediaries who often perform in a self-interested, self-promoting manner. The 'broker state' is not a distinct entity; rather it consists of a number of pressure groups that form as a result of common interests between formal and informal groupings. Those pluralists that adopt this model believe that government departments provide the context for elite group configuration in which bureaucrats behave in a way that is determined by their social background (Dunleavy & O'Leary, 1987).

Neo-pluralists theorists, such as Dahl not always and Lindblom (1953) and Galbraith (1992) highlight the complexity of modern-day states, which, they suggest, are often less than responsive to popular public pressures. They acknowledge that business interests hold a privileged position in their access to government, but argue that the state is also active in forging its own sectional interests. Whilst neo-pluralism is a style of theorising that retains pluralist values, it has been reworked in light of neo-Marxist and New Right theory. The central theme of neo-pluralism is the disproportional influence of major corporations in post-industrial society. Although there are different interpretations of pluralism, there is general acknowledgement of diversity in social, institutional and ideological practices in which modern interpretations suggest that there is no dominance by any single group, organisation or class (Held, 1996). These pluralist models of the state provide different accounts of the amount of power that is vested in the state and its role in political processes. Pluralists argue that there is no centralised source of power and that the involvement of groups and institutions in the policy-making process is in a constant state of flux due to the complex nature of arrangements between policy groups and networks (Held, 1989; Dunleavy & O'Leary, 1987).
In selecting an appropriate macro-level perspective, it is essential that it provides the researcher with a clear set of assumptions about the role of the state and the nature and distribution of power in society. Acknowledgement of these two concepts is an essential prerequisite of any study that seeks to analyse policy processes, as policy is inextricably linked with the nature of politics, political influence and the role that the state plays in mediating these interests. The selection of a macro-level theory that has the capacity to account for the school sport and policy context is important as it sensitises the researcher to the key questions and issues that are raised by this study. A range of macro-level perspectives has been presented and it is necessary to select a theory which is most persuasive for this study. The macro-level theories that have been considered have offered different, though sometimes overlapping explanations, of the involvement of the state and the location of power within the political system. It is acknowledged that it is difficult to present macro-level theories as distinctly separate entities, as there has been a marked converging of theoretical perspectives at this level (Held, 1996; Marsh, 1995). In order to assess the utility of these macro-level approaches for this study, it is important to assess which of these theories is best placed to account for the particularly complex features of the school sport and policy area, the characteristics of which have been outlined in some detail in Chapter Two of this study.

Corporatism certainly has a degree of resonance with the PESS policy context which has become the site of interest and growing involvement for a range of policy actors from within and outside this particular policy arena. Its overt focus upon the economy, trade unions and multi-national companies is a limiting factor of this approach and, as such, it would require a degree of modification if it were to be of use in an analysis of the policy context for PESS. Whilst corporate business interests are vested in the work of some agencies like the YST, their investment in PESS remains marginal. Whilst neo-Marxist and neo-pluralist perspectives have been presented as distinctly separate theories of the state, it has been noted that the boundaries between these two approaches have become increasingly blurred. Indeed Dunleavy and O'Leary (1987) and Held (1996) suggest that there has been a distinct
convergence of neo-Marxist and neo-pluralist theories of the state. Both of these perspectives retain a degree of internal logic and coherency for a study such as this, which analyses the complex nature of policy-making. Neo-pluralist and neo-Marxist macro-level theories both recognise the existence of pressure groups, the contestation of power and the role of the state within policy arenas (Dunleavy & O'Leary, 1987; Held, 1996). Neo-pluralism acknowledges the dispersal of power amongst groups and regards the state as having an independent role to play in political processes. This is counterbalanced by neo-Marxist accounts which suggest that the state is dominated and organised by groups of people, or policy elites in a context in which political power and the state are closely interlinked. However, there are limitations of neo-Marxist approaches for this study, as there is an overt focus on the role of class and class struggles in political processes and a relative neglect of the significance of the role of individuals and interests groups in determining policy.

A summary of these macro-level theories is provided in Table 3.2. Macro-level theories of the state can generate insights into the policy process and establish fundamental assumptions about the nature of power and its distribution and the role of the state. Each macro-level perspective offers the researcher a different 'lens' through which to analyse the policy process. It is acknowledged that there is not one macro-level theory that is ideally placed to reflect the complex nuances of the policy process and it is recognised that all approaches offer a different perspective from which to analyse policy change. It is argued that neo-pluralist theories of the state are particularly suited to a study set within a complex public policy area such as physical education and school sport, which is characterised by the involvement of a diverse range of interests, interest groups and organisations. The selection of this macro-level approach sensitises the researcher to the complex arrangements and interdependencies between the state and the political actors and organisations involved in school sport and physical education within England.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elitism</th>
<th>Pluralism and neo-pluralism</th>
<th>Marxism And neo-Marxism</th>
<th>Corporatism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power concentrated in a select group</td>
<td>Political power is fragmented and widely dispersed</td>
<td>The interests of the ruling/capitalist classes dominate the organisation and function of the state.</td>
<td>Power lies mainly in the hands of bureaucrats and professional decision-makers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A ruling elite take all the major decisions re direction and organisation of liberal democracies</td>
<td>Groups of people act together to press particular causes and viewpoints. Competition for influence between groups</td>
<td>Political power and the 'state' itself are closely linked.</td>
<td>The state directs the activities of mainly privately owned industry in partnership with representatives of a small range of interest groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant group does not derive its power directly from the economy</td>
<td>Many pluralists regard the state as neutral and others do not talk of the 'state' at all</td>
<td>The economics of a society and resultant class structure determine nature of the state and patterns of social life</td>
<td>Interests become systematised along guidelines set by the state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlaps with Marxism</td>
<td>The 'state' is often referred to as 'government'</td>
<td>The state is extension of civil society; reflects class relations</td>
<td>The 'state' often reflects a clear 'corporate bias'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief that state is permeated at key decision-making levels by dominant social groups</td>
<td>Pluralist views expressed in terms of 'political actors' and 'political demands'</td>
<td>The functions of the state determined by the structure of society rather than by those who occupy positions of power (Poulantzas).</td>
<td>Such practices are redolent of the Labour administrations of Wilson and Callaghan particularly in 1970s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The state functions to serve the interests of a powerful minority</td>
<td>Power is disaggregated and no group has the ability to dominate over a wide range of different interest areas</td>
<td>The power elite are winners and under classes are losers of class struggles. Modern state preserves the interests of small, wealthy dominant class (Miliband).</td>
<td>Corporatism is concerned with effectiveness and the state provides a framework for the allocation of resources.</td>
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Adapted from McAuley (2003)

The position accounts for the involvement of a multiplicity of groups and the role of political actors in political processes whilst acknowledging the role of
the state (although it is recognised that there is contention within neo-pluralist debates surrounding the role of the state). Neo-pluralist accounts of power are informative as they acknowledge the variety of influences that have a bearing on policy formation and specifically their accounts of policy spillover. Neo-pluralism also recognises the dispersal of power, the role of a range of interest groups and the competition and tensions that exist within policy-making generally and different sectors of government in particular. A neo-pluralist approach is adopted as the most persuasive macro-level perspective for this study, which will be integrated with meso-level theorising in order to explore how power is exercised within policy-making processes. Adopting neo-pluralist assumptions about the role of the state and the distribution of power, affects the way in which meso-level approaches will be used for this study. Atkinson and Coleman (1992) have highlighted the tendency for studies of the policy process to ignore broader state institutions and economic, political and ideological contexts. The previous section of this chapter has therefore attempted to address this recognised shortcoming and to ensure that this study offers an analysis of policy processes that acknowledges the role of state institutions (Atkinson & Coleman, 1992).

Whilst Daugbjerg and Marsh (1998) define the macro-level of analysis as focussing upon the relationship between the state and civil society, they define meso-level analysis as focussing primarily on the interaction of interest groups within policy processes. While it is acknowledged that there are different definitions of what constitutes macro, meso and micro-level analysis exist, adoption of Daugbjerg and Marsh's interpretation helps to clarify how the two are defined for the purpose of this study. The next section of this chapter reviews a number of the prominent meso-level approaches to policy analysis and the potential contribution they can make to this study.

3.3 Meso-level policy analysis
Whilst insights generated from macro-level or 'state' theorising undoubtedly inform and contextualise policy analysis, this study focuses upon the application of meso or middle-level approaches to the study of the policy
process. Middle-level theorising is an approach that ‘deals with the pattern of interest group intermediation ... it concentrates upon questions concerning the structures and patterns of interaction within them’ (Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998: 54). Meso-level theories have the capacity to direct the focus and sensitise the researcher to the particular characteristics of a policy context. They also give consideration to issues such as policy stability and policy change and the role of structure and agency, ideas and interests. A rich array of meso-level theories and models has emerged recently which emphasise different elements of the political processes involved in policy-making (Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998; Houlihan, 2005; Kingdon, 1984; Sabatier, 1999; Marsh, 1995).

Before embarking upon a discussion of a range of meso-level frameworks from which to investigate public policy issues, a set of criteria is presented which will inform the selection of meso-level models for this study. These criteria provide a framework for judging the capacity of meso-level frameworks to examine the policy context of school sport and physical education.

3.3.1 Criteria for evaluating meso-level frameworks for policy analysis
In order to choose an appropriate framework for analysing public policy, a number of criteria have been suggested as a basis upon which meso-level models or frameworks for policy analysis can be evaluated. John (1998) and Sabatier (1999) have provided criteria against which meso-level frameworks can be assessed in terms of their capacity to explain both policy change and stability. The ability to explain the process of policy change and to investigate the nature of that change by focussing, in particular, upon the role of agency (i.e. actors and policy entrepreneurs), structure (e.g. policy subsystems, government and economic forces) and ideas is an important criterion. A framework should be capable of investigating a number of the separate elements of the policy process whilst being flexible enough to address policy processes in a holistic way. Sabatier (1999) suggests that this criterion allows the researcher to gain an understanding of the dynamic interplay between agents and stages, such as agenda setting, the role of the state and ideas and the location of power. The framework should also be applicable across a range of public policy contexts, rather than limited to one policy arena.
The final criterion is that a framework should be capable of accounting for policy change over a time period of at least five to ten years. This is regarded as an essential dimension that allows significant phenomena and sustained change factors to emerge. In the next section of the chapter a range of meso-level approaches to policy analysis are presented and evaluated on the basis of these criteria in order to identify the framework or frameworks which are best suited to an analysis of the policy context for school sport and physical education.

3.3.2 Meso-level theories of policy analysis

Parsons (1995) has identified three broad meso-level approaches which explain the political context of policy-making (see Table 3.3). This is by no means an exhaustive list of such approaches. However, it illustrates a range of the most frequently adopted approaches to policy analysis. Stagist models dominated policy analysis during the 1970s and 1980s and focussed upon dividing policy processes into distinct and discrete stages. However, the view that it consisted of tidy and neat steps, phases or cycles has since been challenged as offering a false picture of the real nature of policy-making. Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993) criticise stages approaches for their failure to explain how policy moves from one stage to another, their inability to be tested empirically and failure to address the role of actors at the micro level. The model was further questioned regarding its neglect of policy-making at different levels of government and its failure to view the process in a holistic way. Stages models of policy change and stability were also challenged as weak due to the lack of focus on the whole of the policy process.

In sum, stages models do not allow the researcher to analyse the complexities that are inherent in policy processes as a whole. More robust frameworks, such as those provided by new institutional models of policy analysis have emerged to challenge Stagist models, replacing the old institutional frameworks which dominated political science until the 1950s. Goodin and Klingemann (1996) argue the strength of 'new Institutionalism' which offers a more expansive view of its subject matter that focuses upon the informal
conventions of political life as well as constitutional and organisational structures. At the core of Institutionalism is interaction between institutions, such as government, agencies, departments and organisations and the role of these

Table 3.3 Meso-level theories of policy analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘Stages heuristic model’</th>
<th>Sub-system approaches (networks, communities and subsystem approaches e.g. Multiple Streams and Advocacy Coalition Approaches)</th>
<th>Institutionalism</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Considers the policy-making process as a number of stages</td>
<td>Analyse policy-making in terms of new metaphors such as ‘networks’ ‘communities’ and subsystems</td>
<td>Directs attention to the behaviour of actors and the structures within which they exist, but privileges structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elements include agenda setting, issue definition, policy implementation, policy review and policy termination</td>
<td>Are overarching ‘comprehensive’ models and theories of the policy process</td>
<td>Explains temporal continuities within policy contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most commonly applied to analyse distinct phases of the policy process</td>
<td>Concerned with informal and relational aspects of policy-making</td>
<td>Institutions defined as organisational structures or cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong in assessing how issues become part of a policy agenda but weak in explaining policy impact</td>
<td>Policy communities and networks focus upon contacts and relationships which shape policy agendas and decision-making</td>
<td>Not a fully articulated framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive rather than causal explanations</td>
<td>Particularly relevant to pluralistic societies</td>
<td>Weak in exploration of policy dynamics and assumption that institutions influence interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fails to capture messiness of policy process</td>
<td>Policy is framed in a context of relationships and dependencies</td>
<td>Places institutions in an historical context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focuses upon the role of actors and the levels of structure within a social system.</td>
<td>Criticised for failure to explain how issues are processed in the political system</td>
<td>Limited in its treatment of policy stability and policy change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Adapted from Parsons (1995)
infrastructures and individuals in the development of policy. One of the major strengths of this approach is its recognition of the role of both actors and structures within the policy process, although the approach undoubtedly privileges the latter. A major limitation of Institutionalism is its treatment of policy stability and change and its failure to account for the disorderliness of the policy-making process. Gamble (1990) is critical of this approach, which he suggests is still under-theorised and offers an ‘organising perspective’ rather than a causal theory. Whilst institutions have an important role to play in policy processes, their privileged position is regarded as under-theorised. As the school sport policy arena has been characterised by period of stability and rapid change and is a highly complex arena, new Institutionalism perhaps has too many limitations to be the primary analytical framework for this study.

The third set of meso-level theories to be discussed is the sub-system or network approaches which focus upon contacts and relationships that shape policy agendas and decision-making processes. The strength of sub-system approaches is their capacity to explain policy formation and policy processes as a whole, whilst recognising the role of actors and structures within the system. Kingdon’s Multiple Streams Framework (1984) and Sabatier’s Advocacy Coalition Framework (1988) have proved to be increasingly popular models for analysing policy change. The multiple streams (MS) framework (Kingdon, 1984, 1995) and the advocacy coalition framework (ACF) (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993, 1999) are discussed and evaluated in terms of the criteria for adequacy established earlier in this chapter.

Whilst public policy arenas, such as defence, environment and health have been subjected to extensive academic meso-level theorising amongst political scientists, there is a growing body of research that focuses upon the sport policy arena within the UK which uses theoretical models that have emerged from other policy domains (see Coalter, 1990; Green, 2002, 2003; Henry, 1993, 2001; Houlihan, 1997, 2000, 2002; Houlihan & Green 2005, 2006; Houlihan & White, 2002). The growth of policy initiatives within the context of school sport and physical education provides an opportunity to apply these
models in order to analyse policy change within the school sport and physical education context.

3.3.3 Kingdon's Multiple Streams Framework

Kingdon's policy streams or multiple streams framework (1984) is an attempt to examine the agenda setting process and to scrutinise public policy by considering the political system as a whole, whilst recognising the role of individual agency, ideas, institutions and external processes. Kingdon's model focuses upon explanations of the agenda-setting element of the policy process, through the use of metaphors such as 'garbage cans' in order to explain the anarchical nature of institutions, which are often cemented by 'loose collections' of ideas, rather than logical rational structures. Cohen et al (1972:2) suggest that, for many organisations, policy choice is a 'garbage can' in which:

various kinds of problems and solutions are dumped by participants as they are generated and that the outcomes are the consequence of a mixture of problems, the individuals and the resources involved.

Kingdon's use of the 'garbage can' analogy of organisational choice suggests that policy choice is a 'dumping ground' in which problems and solutions are dumped by decision-makers. The model places particular emphasis upon the anarchical nature of organisations within the policy process. The ongoing process of making decisions and finding solutions to problems that other people have left behind, results in a chaotic system of policy-making. Continual change and inconsistent patterns of involvement from politicians, bureaucrats and a variety of actors is indicative of a policy process which is poorly ordered (Cohen, March & Olsen, 1972). Thus, if measured against a conventional, normative rational choice model of decision-making, the garbage can model highlights a non-sequential decision-making process that reflects the complex interplay of problems, deployment of personnel, production of solutions and choice within organisations. Cohen et al's (1972) garbage can model highlights the existence of three particular streams and their impact upon the policy process. Kingdon (1984) suggests that the process of policy-formation is a consequence of the confluence of these three
distinct processes or streams. These streams include a problem stream (which is comprised of the problems that are selected by government policy-makers), a policy stream (that shapes alternatives) and a political stream (which sets the government agenda). Whilst these streams are not viewed as entirely independent, each is regarded as relatively autonomous and exogenous to the system.

3.3.3.1 The problem stream

Kingdon (1998) views the problem stream as consisting of issues that have a public profile which require attention but which may or may not be defined as important. Problems are brought to the attention of policy-makers as a result of government data, public pressure or reports, which assess the nature of a problem. As a consequence, these problems fix the attention of individuals within government and shape their attitudes and responses to the problems. Kingdon refers to these as indicators which, when combined with an events mechanism (such as disaster, crises or personal experience), act to focus public and government attention on significant societal problems, such as increasing levels of obesity, academic underperformance within schools and economic recession. Sometimes the recognition of a problem is sufficient for a problem to get onto an agenda but most of the time government is surrounded by so many problems that only a fraction of them can be dealt with.

There are many reasons why governments attempt to find solutions to their problems; one reason is that politicians like to make their mark and bureaucrats to develop initiatives which may help them retain their jobs or expand their area of responsibility (John, 1998). Focussing attention on one problem rather than another is often due to the involvement of activists, who invest much of their time and energy in bringing problems to the attention of the government and the public in general. The policy process and the problem stream is characterised by the involvement of 'policy entrepreneurs' who have an impact upon the amount of attention that is paid to selected problems (Kingdon, 1984).
Policy entrepreneurs invest their time, energies and resources in order to ensure that the policies they favour retain a high profile. Their efforts are vital to the survival of their ideas and policy entrepreneurs work hard to ensure that other communities within the policy arena are won over and accept their ideas. Policy entrepreneurs may be drawn from the ranks of the media, academia, politics, or any organisation. They seek to marshal opinion and mobilise institutions in attempts to ensure that their solutions to policy problems remain high on the policy agenda. At a general level, policy entrepreneurs are defined as people who seek to promote policy innovations and are prepared to promote their ideas for policy innovation to individuals in and around government. Mintrom and Vergari (1998) suggest that with all else being equal, the policy entrepreneurs who will be most successful at selling their ideas, are those who are well placed to convince politicians that, if implemented, these policy innovations will produce better outcomes than current policy initiatives. Further to this, they contend that policy entrepreneurs can manipulate the resources held within policy networks and are best placed to make convincing arguments on behalf of the policy innovations they are promoting. Drawing on definitions of business entrepreneurship from different cultures, entrepreneurship is not seen as the achievement of isolated mavericks but of culturally embedded participants who pick up the gist of the conversation (Mintrom & Vergari, 1998). Lavoire (1991) suggests that:

a critical characteristic of the policy entrepreneur is their ability to read new things into changing situations and their possession of a higher degree of sensitivity to what others are looking for (1991:49).

He agrees that the role of the policy entrepreneur is to sell their ideas to others and convince individuals (especially politicians) of the worth of their innovations as a potential solution to a specific political problem. Also of importance is their ability to listen to policy conversation and contribute to it strategically. However, the dilemma for policy entrepreneurs who want to sell their ideas is to find ways to navigate through the political screening process, to establish their standing and gain a level of trust which will be fundamental if they want their ideas to receive attention. By ensuring that their policy ideas are technically feasible, policy entrepreneurs demonstrate their credibility and
trustworthiness as their sellers. Mintrom (1997:740) argues that crafting arguments in support of their proposed policy innovations is critical for policy entrepreneurs if they are to successfully sell or broker their ideas to potential supporters. He also suggests that a policy entrepreneur should be able:

- to spot problems, be prepared to take risks to promote innovative approaches to problem solving and ... organise others to help policy ideas into government policies.

Kingdon’s research suggests that no single individual is solely responsible for the high status of a subject within a policy arena. However, he suggests that policy entrepreneurs are central figures in most policy-making contexts (1995). His findings indicate that successful entrepreneurs possess expertise (an ability to speak for others) and often hold positions of leadership within powerful interest groups or retain an authoritative decision-making position. The profile of an entrepreneur supplied by Kingdon is of an individual who possesses political connections and negotiating skills, as well as the ability to combine technical expertise with ‘political savvy’ (Kingdon, 1984). A vital characteristic of successful entrepreneurs is identified as their persistence, tenacity and willingness to invest large and quite remarkable quantities of their personal resources.

Typically, entrepreneurs wait for a window of opportunity but, because of the unpredictability of such openings, must develop their ideas, expertise and proposals in advance of the time when the window opens (Eyeston, 1978). Entrepreneurs must ‘hook solutions to problems; proposals to political momentum and political events to policy problems’ (Kingdon, 1995:182). Advocacy and brokerage are tools of the policy entrepreneur who often act as brokers in order to negotiate amongst individuals and make important couplings. As policy processes are messy, entrepreneurs have to bend the problems to the solutions they are pushing and it may be down to pure luck that they arrive at a time when a policy window opens.
3.3.3.2 The policy stream

Kingdon (1984) conceptualises the policy stream as a 'primeval soup' and draws upon evolutionary theory (Dawkins, 1976) in order to explain how ideas float around, confront each other and combine. The constituency of the 'soup' undergoes change as a consequence of natural selection, survival, death and recombination. The analogy of molecules floating around in a primeval soup is used in order to explain how ideas float around in communities (Dawkins, 1976). Ideas within a particular policy community may become prominent and subsequently fade; whilst some ideas are adopted by policy entrepreneurs, other ideas collide, combine and rise to the top of the agenda. As a consequence, the constitution of the soup changes through the appearance and amalgamation of new elements.

This description offers an explanation of the evolutionary development of ideas and policy processes which are akin to biological selection. Within this 'policy soup' some ideas float to the top whilst others fall to the bottom, and within this milieu exist specialist policy communities. Whether ideas are adopted depends upon whether the ideas reflect the dominant values within that policy community and whether the ideas are practicable and well matched with the dominant values and ideals of that specific society. Some policy communities are closed and tightly knit, whilst others are more dispersed and fragmented. Policy entrepreneurs operate within the policy soup and they are often prepared to invest resources in championing the policies they favour in the hope that they will be adopted (Kingdon, 1984). These entrepreneurs are vital in determining whether an idea survives as they are involved in 'softening up' policy communities in order to gain acceptance of particular ideas.

3.3.3.3 The political stream

Parsons (1995) suggests that although the political stream operates as a separate entity from the problem and policy streams, it is a major determinant of how agendas are set and whether or not an idea is adopted and becomes part of policy process. The political stream includes elements, such as the public mood, pressure group campaigns, election results, ideology and
changes of administration. Developments in the political stream have a powerful effect upon agendas, new agenda items will rise to the fore, whilst others will be shelved until a more favourable time. Kingdon (1995) includes swings of national mood, election results, changes of administration, changes of ideology within government and interest group pressure campaigns in his definition of the political stream. He also asserts that the public mood is sensed by politicians from the media, as well as their mail, visits, trips and constituents and, consequently, they promote issues that fit the mood whilst paying little attention to items that do not meet the contemporary disposition of society.

The political stream can inhibit or promote the status of particular agendas; thus all actors in the political system attempt to judge whether the balance of forces in the stream are favourable to action. Attempts are made to assess whether the general public are receptive to the policy directions being followed by government. Kingdon further suggests that a combination of mood and elections has a powerful impact upon agendas. However, once an item is on the agenda, organised forces attempt to bend outcomes to their advantage, or to defeat proposals altogether. Whether or not issues become part of a policy agenda is determined as a consequence of the convergence of the three streams, which provides a 'launch or policy window'.

3.3.3.4 The policy window

For Kingdon (1984) the essence of policy-making and the adoption of ideas are not a reflection of the power and intention of the participants in the policy process but the result of the confluence of these three streams. He describes how the streams act as a 'launch window' which allows for the identification of a problem. This enables policy solutions to be generated within the policy context given a receptive political framework and a favourable environment. A particular feature of this policy window is that, as quickly as it opens, it may close if an issue runs its course due to political boredom or because political action has been instigated. The 'policy window' is an opportunity for advocates of proposals to promote their particular solutions or raise the profile
of particular problems. Kingdon (1984) suggests that at times the window opens predictably, such as when a project or initiative is at the end of its time phase and actors can push forward their new schemes and ideas. At other times, a window opens unpredictably and policy entrepreneurs need to be ready and their solutions well developed so that they grasp the opportunity when it arises. The convergence of the separate problem, policy and political streams occurs at critical times during which solutions bond to problems and both are coupled to favourable political forces.

An issue is more likely to become part of a policy agenda if proposals, problems and political receptivity are combined in one package. Successful ideas in one policy arena subsequently increase the likelihood of successful policy ideas spilling over into adjacent areas (especially if politicians believe that success in one policy context can be transferred to new arenas). Lieberman (2002) postulates that

the separate streams of problems, policies and politics each have lives of their own ... but there are times when the three streams are joined ... Advocates of a new policy initiative not only take advantage of politically propitious moments, but also claim that their proposal is a solution to a pressing problem (201-202).

3.3.3.5 Strengths and weaknesses of Kingdon's multiple streams approach

John (1998) suggests that the policy streams approach is a major step forward in explaining and understanding how policy is formed and how policy changes. He suggests that its strength lies within its capacity to explain change and integrate concepts, such as the role of policy entrepreneurs and policy communities. The framework is partially successful in meeting the criteria for investigating the nature of policy change, offering a conceptualisation of policy that focuses upon agency and the interface and relations between different actors over policy definition and implementation. The framework acknowledges that all actors, regardless of whether they are involved in policy formulation or implementation, have the power to shape and propose policy solutions. Through their judgements and interaction with the
policy process and decision-makers people at all levels are regarded as having an important role to play in solving policy problems and proposing resolutions.

Dery (1999) suggests that the multiple streams framework is particularly valuable in offering explanations of how policy can spill-over from one policy arena (for example health) to another policy context (such as education). The role of the policy entrepreneur is another facet of the multiple streams approach, which is particularly useful in developing insights into the role of agency within policy-making and into areas in which the institutionalisation of influence is weak (Houlihan, 2000). Zahariadias (1999) suggests that a major benefit of the framework is its linkage of macro-level issues or broader political events and the bearing they have upon policy communities. The multiple streams framework has also been tested and applied across a range of public policy contexts and the work of Chalip (1996), Houlihan (2000), Houlihan and White (2002) and Green and Houlihan (2004) represents a growing body of research, which uses the framework as a basis for investigating the sport policy arena. There are, however, distinct limitations in Kingdon's multiple streams framework and these weaknesses are exposed when mapped against the criteria for evaluating frameworks for policy analysis established earlier in this chapter. For those adopting this framework as a basis for the academic analysis of policy change, a serious limitation is the model's primary focus upon the creation of agendas to the detriment of the function and role of ideas within the broader policy process. One of the recognised weaknesses of the model is its concentration almost exclusively upon the agenda setting element of the policy process, as opposed to policy implementation and evaluation. Whilst the model does address the dynamic interplay between agents and certain stages, such as agenda setting and the role of ideas, the role of the state and the location of power are under-theorised and fail to provide or consider the role of institutional power. Although ideas are regarded by many academics (see Gamble, 1990; Hall, 1989) as a key component of the policy process, John (1998) suggests that the ways in which ideas are related to issues of power and interests is insufficiently explored in Kingdon's model. Furthermore he suggests that the capacity of Kingdon's
model to deliver an account of policy change is somewhat compromised not only by its overt focus upon the role of chance, agency and leadership, but also its failure to tackle fully the role of policy entrepreneurs and to account for the structural features of the policy arena and institutionalised power. John (1998) further suggests that whilst the concept of the 'policy entrepreneur' remains central to the multiple stream approach, it remains relatively ill-defined.

Dudley et al (2000) argue that the multiple streams framework has a strong element of serendipity in its explanations of policy change and a lack of causal explanations as to the ways in which the three separate streams of problems, policies and politics are joined. Sabatier (1999) is also critical of the multiple streams approach and argues that the framework is not amenable to theory-building and fails to produce clear causal drivers. Whilst there has been some testing of the hypothesis of the existence of streams (Mucciaroni, 1992; Radaelli, 1995; Zahariadis & Allen, 1995), Sabatier argues that testing has been relatively limited. Thus, he regards Kingdon's multiple streams approach as weak by positivist standards. Travis and Zahariadis (2002) argue that the framework could be strengthened, if the process of the coupling of streams and decision-making were more closely aligned with the chances of a policy being adopted (rather than a policy merely rising to the top of a government's agenda). Zahariadis (1995, 1996) maintains that this would strengthen the model, without leading to a loss of analytical utility. Exworthy and Powell (2004) propose that theorisation of the policy streams framework needs further work, especially in terms of clarity concerning detailed consideration of the separate streams. They claim that 'if the streams are muddy, then the policy circle cannot be squared, which results in a blurred vision and partial or failed implementation' (p. 269).

Other reviews of the multiple streams approach have focussed upon the positive contributions of the model to policy analysis and suggest that it possesses the capacity to reflect the 'fits and starts' of policy-making in the real political world (John, 2003). In terms of this study, the application of the multiple streams framework to the school sport and physical education policy
context has been limited to the work of Houlihan and Green (2006) which has largely, but not exclusively, focussed upon the application of the model to the sport policy arena. The model's application across a range of policy contexts, suggests that it offers sufficient potential to examine the complexity of the school sport and physical education policy network.

3.3.4 The Advocacy Coalition Framework

Since its emergence in 1986, the advocacy coalition framework (ACF) has subsequently been applied, assessed and revised on several occasions (Sabatier, 1993, 1998; Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993, 1999; Parsons, 1995; Eberg, 1997; Schlager & Blomquist, 1996; Grin & Hoppe, 1997) and has proved to be one of the most promising theoretical approaches to the analysis of policy processes. Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith's advocacy coalition framework (1991, 1993, 1999) is predominantly a socio-economic model of policy analysis which suggests that power is invested within elite individuals and/or elite organisations. It is a robust, ideas based model, in which beliefs, values and knowledge are central and interests provide the cement of policy coalition groups. The framework is underpinned by five underlying assumptions:

1. A timescale of ten years is needed in order to investigate policy change.

2. Policy analysis should focus upon policy sub-systems and communities which are dynamically involved with policy problems.

3. The actors involved in the policy process should be drawn from different levels of government and/or international organisations.

4. Technical information is regarded as a constituent and important part of policy communities and policy sub-systems.

5. The values and assumptions that exist within public policy coalitions include assumptions about how policy priorities and objectives should be realised.

(Sabatier, 1991)
The advocacy coalition framework suggests that policy change needs to be studied over a period of a decade or more and is a function of the interaction of competing advocacy coalitions within policy subsystems, changes which are exogenous to the system, such as socioeconomic conditions and the impact of stable, systemic parameters i.e. social structure and constitutional rules. Policy change is regarded as a dynamic and continuous process in which policy is formulated, implemented, contested and reformulated (Sabatier, 1988). Sabatier further proposes that policy analysis should focus upon the role of ideas and information as major determinants of policy change.

A key element and strength of this research perspective is its focus on the policy process as a whole and in particular 'policy networks' and 'policy communities' (Heclo, 1974; Kingdon, 1984). The advocacy coalition framework proposes that beliefs, ideas and values should be brought to the forefront of policy-making and that socio-economic factors also have a major role to play in it and policy outcomes (Heclo, 1974; Hofferbert, 1974; Majone, 1980; Wildavsky, 1987). The model has much in common with 'policy network approaches', the framework stressing the ongoing and cyclical pattern of policy-making that has no clear beginning or end. However, the advocacy coalition framework includes a more extensive range of processes than those of 'network approaches' and focuses upon the role of 'coalitions' or unions of groups with similar ideas and interests (John, 1998). The advocacy coalition framework describes a competitive policy context in which rival coalitions of policy actors possess shared values and views about policy problems and their solutions (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993; Sabatier, 1998). Jenkins-Smith (1991) suggests that Sabatier's theory of the policy process is one that focuses upon the role of 'coalitions', rather than individual decision-makers as its primary unit of analysis.

3.3.4.1 Policy subsystems and policy coalitions

policy processes operate within partially segmented 'policy subsystems' which comprise institutions and actors. A policy subsystem is made up of actors from public and private organisations who are actively concerned with a policy problem...who share a particular belief system - i.e. a set of basic values, causal assumptions and problem perceptions - and who show a non-trivial degree of co-coordinated activity over time (Sabatier, 1988:139).

Schlager and Blomquist (1996) describe the policy arena in terms of a number of subsystems. These are comprised of all the groups and individuals who are involved in the creation of 'policy ideas', such as interest groups, academics, researchers, journalists and government actors at all levels. Members of these subsystems regularly track and seek to influence the course of public policy within a particular issue arena and tend to cluster into competing coalitions that advocate distinct policy viewpoints (Wildavsky, 1962). Whether the beliefs and policy positions of these elites change in any significant way will depend partly upon the degree of conflict within the subsystem. Sabatier (1987) suggests that when there is a serious threat to the fundamental beliefs of a policy subsystem, or conflict between bottom-line positions, conflict will be intense and organisational elites become less willing to change their policy positions and beliefs. In periods of extreme conflict, stable coalitions are sustained over extended periods of time and any change to the membership of coalitions arises as a direct consequence of political events exogenous to the subsystem (such as personnel changes in elections), or large-scale changes exogenous to the policy process (inflation or energy crises).

Members of advocacy coalitions retain hierarchically structured belief systems in which basic beliefs (ontological and normative axioms) constrain operational beliefs and policy positions (Sabatier, 1987; Heintz, 1988). Advocacy coalitions consist of actors who specialise in particular policy issue arenas and who follow and seek to influence the course of policy development in that area (Heclo, 1978).

Sabatier (1998) suggests that decisions about the structure of a public policy problem and how it should be dealt with is guided by a set of belief systems.
Three structural categories exist within these belief systems which are constituted by: deep, core, fundamental norms and values; a policy core, which reflects a coalition's strategies and policy positions for achieving their deep core beliefs; and secondary aspects that reflect more instrumental views on how the policy core should be implemented. The core aspects (norms and values) of the belief system are most resistant to change and, when challenged will be vigorously defended, whilst secondary beliefs are less resistant to change and may be modified in response to challenges to core beliefs (Sabatier, 1987). In fully developed subsystems competing advocacy coalitions fight to translate their belief systems into public policy by mobilising political resources through the assembly and analysis of information in order to support their own belief systems and attack those of the opposing coalitions (Jenkins-Smith, 1990). The interaction of information and beliefs is central to the advocacy coalition framework and actors within a coalition will resist or reject any information that challenges their core beliefs. Consequently coalitions focus their resources on developing and using policy information that substantiates their views:

In political systems with dispersed power, political actors can seldom develop a majority position through the exercise of raw power. Instead, they must seek to convince other actors of the soundness of their position concerning the problem and the consequences of one or more policy alternatives (Jenkins-Smith & Sabatier, 1993:45).

Exponents of the advocacy coalition framework focus much of their attention upon the inner world of individuals and the structure and content of their belief systems (Sabatier 1988; Jenkins-Smith 1988; Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993). As this research framework is largely based upon empirical methods, rather than assuming individuals' preferences, analysts adopting this model develop hypotheses regarding actors' belief systems. These belief systems include coalition understanding of the connections between institutional structures and policies and their potential effectiveness for realising goals. Members of coalitions act collectively on the basis of these belief systems in order to 'manipulate the rules of various government institutions to achieve shared goals' (Sabatier, 1991:153). In order to operate effectively advocacy
coalitions use information to persuade decision-makers to adopt the policy alternatives espoused by their coalition group. They attempt to manipulate the choices of decision-makers by active support of those public officials who hold positions of public authority and who share similar values. Whilst a number of coalitions often compete for control over public authority there is often one that is dominant over others. Sabatier (1998) suggests that whilst power sharing can exist amongst coalitions, it is more likely when coalition parties recognise that continuation of the status quo is unacceptable, or sharing is mediated through a 'policy broker' who is respected by all parties.

3.3.4.2 Policy oriented learning

The advocacy coalition framework focuses in particular upon policy change explained through dramatic changes to the belief systems that exist within policy subsystems. Change may be a consequence of policy oriented learning, or non-cognitive events that originate outside the policy subsystem. Policy oriented learning is a term used to describe longer-term changes to a coalition’s belief system that occur as a consequence of new information or experience (Sabatier, 1998). Since deep core and policy core beliefs are assumed to have a high level of resistance to change, the advocacy coalition framework argues that ‘policy oriented learning’ is most likely to affect only the secondary aspects of a belief system, leaving the policy core intact (Kubler, 2001:625).

Policy orientated learning is a process of:

relatively enduring alterations of thought or behavioural intentions that result from experience and which are concerned with the attainment and revision of the precepts of the belief system of individuals or collectives such as advocacy coalitions (Sabatier, 1993:42).

Moreover, Sabatier (1998) suggests that policy change also occurs as a consequence of rapid changes in the external world that shock the actors involved in the policy-making process. These exogenous factors impact upon the stability of the patterns of interests and exchanges within these networks.
The occurrence of a crisis, such as economic recession may act as a catalyst for networks to seek new solutions to policy problems. This may subsequently alter the fabric of the relationships and interests amongst policy actors, leading to the creation of new sets of coalitions.

Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993) have attempted to gain insights into the configuration of coalitions through investigating the relationship between these external changes and ideas in order to deliver accounts of policy-making and the process of policy change. However, the inclusion of institutional perspectives and a model of human agency would strengthen the advocacy coalition framework and make it a more complete account of policy change and stability (John, 1998). In later modifications to the advocacy coalition framework, Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1996, 1999) suggest that further work is required in order to explain the conditions under which policy change occurs and they acknowledge that external perturbations are insufficient in explaining changes to policy core attributes. Their revised hypothesis suggests that external perturbations are a necessary but insufficient cause of change in the policy core attributes of a governmental programme. They argue that a vital factor in policy change is the role of the policy broker, who plays an important entrepreneurial role in the process of policy change.

3.3.4.3 The policy broker

The policy broker may be part of, or outside government, retain an elected or appointed position and be part of an interest group or a research organisation. What defines a policy broker is their willingness to invest their time, energy, reputation and on occasions their money in the hope of future returns. Policy brokers play an important role and at times of conflict they act as mediators 'whose principal concern is to find some compromise that will reduce intense conflict' (Sabatier, 1999: 122). The role of the policy broker is a crucial one, prompting important people to pay attention to specific policy solutions, whilst managing coalition conflict within acceptable boundaries. The advocacy coalition framework provides a useful structure for explaining policy change (Mawhinney, 1993; Brown & Stewart, 1993: Munro, 1993; Barke, 1993).
However, whilst the model claims transferability in explaining change across modern industrial societies, it has mainly been tested in a North American context. Arguments have been presented (Greenaway et al, 1992) which suggest that, within political systems in which there is a lack of openness and interaction between actors from separate institutions, the relevance of an advocacy coalition model in policy analysis is subject to question. The framework is best suited, therefore, to policy-making contexts in which decision-making is pluralistic and in which a government's involvement is consultative and involves interest groups and associated institutions (Richardson, 1982). Whilst the framework has undoubted strengths, the model has drawn heavily on quantitative methodologies in the US and, although there is growing evidence of its applicability outside the US context, it may be a more difficult model to apply in countries where government intervention is extensive or within more liberal states.

Parsons (2000) argues that Sabatier’s highly deductivist and deeply positivistic approach does little to improve our understanding of highly complex policy processes. He contends that social and cultural theoretical approaches have much more to offer. John (1998) challenges the advocacy coalition framework for insufficiently explaining the process of policy change and for assuming that certain policy-making relationships remain stable over time. He is also critical of the advocacy coalition’s concentration upon ‘ideas’, ‘networks’ and ‘socio-economic conditions’ and the lack of attention to the role of institutions and individual choices. John (1998) also criticises the framework for its over-emphasis upon external factors or shocks, to the detriment of the role of strategy and interests within coalition formation. He also queries the extent to which external factors have an impact upon coalition development and suggests that other explanations might be more plausible. Whilst the framework suggests that it is a testable empirical model of the policy-making process, it is argued that the framework contains inferences about what the policy-making system could or ought to be (Parsons, 1995). Despite adjustments to the model in order to incorporate public opinion as part of the policy learning context (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993), the framework still perceives non-elites as having little time, knowledge or inclination to
contribute to policy subsystems. The model's failure to address adequately the role of power within the policy process and to encompass the role of non-decision-making is also regarded as an important theoretical omission. Sabatier (1993) believes that it is not raw political power that changes the agendas and decisions of government but policy oriented learning. However, the advocacy coalition framework does acknowledge that policy learning tends to be more prevalent within contexts in which quantitative data is readily available, such as global warming, sustainable energy systems and obesity levels.

One of the weaknesses of adopting the advocacy coalition as a framework for analysing policy change is its failure to account for the role of expert knowledge and the involvement of professional bodies in policy oriented learning which Parsons (1995: 203) argues 'flies in the face of the real world experience in which there has been a decline in professional power and the growth of de-professionalisation.' Despite these limitations, Parsons argues that the advocacy coalition framework successfully synthesises a range of approaches and specifically addresses the early stages of the policy cycle, such as problem definition and agenda setting. It allows the researcher to map the policy process in a way that reflects its interaction and fluidity, as opposed to the more rigid demarcation of Stagist models. There is a growing body of research, which suggests that the advocacy coalition framework can make a contribution to the analysis of policy for sport (Houlihan & White, 2002; Green, 2003). The growing policy links between the government departments responsible for sport and education within England suggests that the advocacy coalition framework should prove to be an appropriate structure for the analysis of policy change in this arena. The concept of a policy broker, the involvement of competing coalitions and the effects of administrative dispersal suggest that this framework has something to offer an analysis of policy change within the complex policy arena of school sport and physical education.

The use of the multiple streams framework (Kingdon, 1995) and the advocacy coalition framework (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1999) allows the researcher to
investigate the policy process through a particular focus upon a number of key variables, such as the role of belief systems, the involvement of key individuals, policy brokers or entrepreneurs, the involvement of lobby/interest groups and the introduction of structural changes and resource dependencies amongst agencies as a result of the PESSCL strategy.

Conclusion

Any study which seeks to analyse the policy decisions and outputs of governments must seek to understand how the state and political actors (in the broadest sense) interact in order to make the decisions that create the public policies of a particular government (John, 1998). This chapter has provided an overview of macro-level or state theory traditions that inform policy analysis at the meso-level or national level organisations, such as government departments, national professional bodies and interest groups. This was essential in order to establish the fundamental assumptions about the nature of power and its distribution and the role of the state. Whilst a range of macro-level theories were considered, the adoption of a neo-pluralist perspective is chosen for this study.

At the meso-level of analysis, the advocacy coalition and multiple streams frameworks are selected on the basis that they sensitise the researcher to the broader political issues surrounding the location of power and the role of the state. The advocacy coalition and multiple streams meso-level approaches are judged as having the potential to offer the most perceptive and rich insights into the policy process and changing government interests and concerns for physical education and school sport. The intention is to adopt both frameworks for this study in order to deliver an account of more long-term policy changes combined with a more in-depth account of the sudden change in the salience of PESS which was marked by the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links Strategy (PESSCL). Both frameworks are adopted as tools of analysis, and their usefulness analysed and evaluated in the conclusion to this study.
The main task of public policy research and of this study in particular, is to analyse policy change by gaining an insight into policy-making mechanisms and the complexity of the decision-making processes in the context of physical education and school sport. This study seeks to shed light on how political systems function and how the policy sector of physical education and school sport has garnered increased political attention, particularly in terms of a burgeoning number of policy initiatives. The school sport and physical education area includes all the common components of public policy sectors, which include political structures, the involvement of the general public, politicians, interest groups and civil servants who operate through complex institutional contexts such as government departments, schools, sporting structures and organisations and quangos. John (1998) suggests that policy oriented research should adopt 'methods that are attuned to the highly variable relationships that occur within the decision-making process' (p. 2). It is acknowledged that the meso-level frameworks selected for this study are not without their weaknesses, however they offer the researcher a theoretical framework from which to analysis the policy process for selected elements of the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links strategy in England.
CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH STRATEGY AND METHODS

Introduction
Chapter Three established the theoretical framework for the study and provided a detailed account and justification of the adoption of Sabatier’s Advocacy Coalition Framework and Kingdon’s Multiple Streams Framework as meso-level analytical frameworks for the analysis of policy change. This chapter details the philosophical underpinnings, research methodology and methods that have been adopted for this study in order to analyse and examine the manifest change in the political salience of physical education and school sport in England. The chapter begins with a discussion of the ontological assumptions that underpin the study because, as Grix (2004: 59) states ‘ontology is the starting point of all research, after which one’s epistemological and methodological positions will logically follow’ (see also Robson 1993; Bryman, 2001). Marsh et al (1999) highlight the need for research to be underpinned by a stated and developed epistemological position, to be theoretically informed and empirically grounded. All of these issues are dealt with successively and the chapter concludes with an outline of the intended data collection strategy that has been adopted and the sources that are used.

4.1 Philosophical assumptions
Blaikie (2000), Bryman (2001) and Hay (2002) have written extensively on the interrelationship between the building blocks of the research process. However it is Grix (2002) who offers a functional diagrammatic representation of these relationships which is presented below. This reflects a particular (but arguably a contentious) interpretation of the directional relationship between the key components of the research process. Nevertheless these building blocks form the basis for the structure and organisation of this chapter.
Figure 4.1 demonstrates how ontological and epistemological assumptions shape the questions that are asked, how they are asked and how they are answered. Whilst the directional relationships between the key building blocks of research are open to challenge, a researcher's methodological approach should be underpinned by and reflect their particular ontological and epistemological assumptions (see Blaikie, 2000; Bryman, 2001 and Hay, 2002). Furthermore, Grix (2002) suggests that the methods and procedures adopted for any research project should be inextricably linked to the research questions posed and to the sources of data that can be collected. The table also illustrates Grix’s argument for question-led, rather than method-led research in order to provide a more seamless match between the question or questions posed and the methods employed. This particular interpretation of the research process creates the basis for the structure of the debates within this chapter.

Source: Grix (2002:180)
4.1.1 Ontology

One of the first questions that needs to be considered by any researcher is the nature of the ‘reality’ that is to be investigated, or what is out there to know. The assumptions and choices that are made in response to this question raise ontological questions which have significant consequences for the conduct of social enquiry and for its outcomes (Blaikie, 2003). Whilst Jenkins (2002) argues that researchers often conflate ontology and epistemology by suggesting that there is no ‘sense in which one is, logically or otherwise, prior to the other’ (Jenkins, 2002: 6), Grix rejects this position by suggesting that whilst they ‘are closely related, they need to be kept separate, for all research necessarily starts from a person’s view of the world, their ontological position, which itself is shaped by the experience one brings to the research process’ (2002: 179). This argument is developed by Lewis (2002) who suggests that researchers should clarify their ontological position from the outset of a study, as:

> it is impossible to engage in any sort of ordered thinking about the political (or social) world without making a commitment (if only implicitly) to some sort of social ontology, because any attempt to conceptualise political phenomena inevitably involves the adoption of some picture of the nature of social being (Lewis, 2002: 17).

In his summary of research within the area of political science, Blythe (2002) commented on the range of ontological positions adopted by political scientists which had led to a rich range of interpretations that pushed forward the boundaries of knowledge within the field. For the purpose of this study, the concepts of ontology and epistemology will be considered separately in order to provide a clearer picture of the nature of social reality as it pertains to the conduct of this study and the policy context for PE and school sport.

Three distinctive examples of ontological positions are those offered by positivist, realist and interpretivist approaches. For the positivist researcher, building up facts which can be known and observed represents a foundationalist ontology which focuses upon establishing causal relationships between social phenomena in order to produce explanatory and predictive models (Marsh and Furlong, 2002). The positivist’s view of social reality is
composed of complex causal relationships between events, which occur in a world that exists independently of our knowledge of it (Blaikie, 2003). The interpretivist approach, however, adopts a contrasting ontological position to the positivist and perceives social reality not as an ‘entity’ or a ‘thing’, but as a process of interpretation involving actors and the socially constructed meanings they attribute to actions and situations. The third and final position to be discussed is the realist approach, which as the positivist position, is foundationalist in ontological terms. However, for the realist, the authenticity of observable phenomena is best explained with reference to the underlying structures and mechanisms that cannot be directly observed (Marsh and Furlong, 2003). It is clear from these three examples that the researcher’s ontological position (their image of social reality) will have a bearing upon epistemological issues associated with the acquisition of knowledge and the selection of methods and validation.

4.1.2 Epistemology
Epistemology focuses upon the knowledge gathering process and the development of new models or theories that are better than those already in existence (Grix, 2004). For Blaikie (1993: 6-7) epistemology is concerned with ‘the claims or assumptions about the ways in which it is possible to gain knowledge about reality’ and with the degree of certainty that any researcher might legitimately claim for the conclusions that they draw from their research. Epistemology also focuses upon the extent to which specific knowledge claims might be generalised beyond the immediate context in which a researcher makes their observations and how they might adjudicate and defend a preference for one particular political explanation. In short, epistemology involves claims about how what is assumed to exist can be known, it focuses upon the knowledge gathering process and the generation of new theories or models that improve those in existence at any particular time (Blaikie, 2000). As Marsh and Furlong (2002) suggest, one’s epistemological position is reflective of one’s view of what a person can know about the world and how one can know it. It is a theory of knowledge that poses questions as to whether one can identify real or objective relations between social phenomena and if so, how.
4.1.2.1 Epistemological assumptions of the major research paradigms

It is important within any piece of academic work that the researcher establishes a clear rationale for the adoption of their particular ontological and epistemological position. Marsh and Furlong (2002) suggest that there are different ways of categorising epistemological positions but little agreement as to the best way. The most common method of classifying epistemological assumptions distinguishes between scientific (or positivist) positions and interpretivist assumptions (although one must bear in mind that such broad classifications often lead to over-generalisations regarding epistemological positions). The epistemological positions of these two major paradigms are sometimes presented as extremes in which knowledge is regarded as something that can be acquired (positivism), or something that has to be personally experienced (interpretivism). The epistemological assumptions associated with the realist paradigm and in particular the 'critical realist' position is presented as a third and alternative epistemological approach to social enquiry. Realists contend that social structures have causal properties and causal statements can be made; however, they also assert that certain social phenomena and the relationships between them are not directly observable. A fuller discussion of the epistemological assumptions of these three paradigms is now presented in order to justify and clarify the particular epistemological assumptions that have been made for the purpose of this study. The table below provides an overview of the epistemological assumptions of three of the major research paradigms which provide distinctive lenses through which the researcher can view the world and ultimately make sense of their observations (Sparkes, 1992).
Table 4.2 The epistemological assumptions of three major approaches to social enquiry

| POSITIVISM                                                                 | REALISM                                                                 | INTERPRETIVISM                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------
| Knowledge is derived from sensory experience by experimental or comparative analysis | Epistemology is based upon the building of models that if they were to exist and act in the suggested way would account and explain the phenomenon being examined | Knowledge is derived from everyday concepts and meanings |
| Concepts and generalisations are summaries of observations                 | Models are hypothetical descriptions which may reveal the underlying mechanisms of reality | The researcher enters the social world to understand the socially constructed meanings |
| Association is made between sensory experiences and the objects of those experiences and between observations and theoretical statements | Models can only be known by constructing ideas about them               | Meanings are reconstructed in social scientific language |
| Scientific laws are identical to empirical regularities                   | Science is an empirically based, rational and objective enterprise to provide true explanatory and predictive knowledge | At one level these accounts are re-descriptions of everyday accounts, at another level they are developed into theories |
| Science is an attempt to gain both predictive and explanatory knowledge of the external world | Explanation is the primary objective of science by discovering the connections between phenomena and knowledge of the underlying structures and mechanisms at work | The researcher seeks to analyse people's social conduct in order to describe it |
| Knowledge is gained through construction of theories which are general and express regular relationships that exist in that world | For the realist a scientific theory is a description of structures and mechanisms which causally generate the observable phenomena | |

Source: Adapted from Blaikie (2003)

4.1.3 Positivism

Positivism is an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality. Hughes and Sharrock (1997) suggest that the term 'positivism' includes and overlaps with
positions and terms such as 'empiricism', 'behaviourism' and 'naturalism', whilst Hollis (1999) also endorses the breadth of the term 'positivism' by suggesting 'at the broad end, it embraces any approach which applies scientific method to human affairs conceived as belonging to a natural order open to objective enquiry' (Hollis, 1999: 41). However, Marsh & Furlong (2002) posit that, whilst there are significant differences between the various positions subsumed under the umbrella term of 'positivism', they are all predicated upon a set of fundamental assumptions. Positivist researchers are largely concerned with establishing causal relationships between social phenomena that offer explanatory and predictive models and with employing scientific methods to analyse the social world (Denscombe, 2002). This focus upon explanation and prediction and the establishment of objectivity in research are particular characteristics of the positivist tradition (Marsh and Furlong, 2002). In essence, positivists tend to assume that there is no dichotomy between appearance and reality; the world is viewed as real and is not mediated by our senses or socially constructed (Marsh et al. 1999). Positivism favours an approach to social science which is value-free and seeks to establish rules and laws to explain the social world. Burrell and Morgan (1979) argue the positivist view that knowledge is hard, objective and tangible and requires the researcher to adopt a detached observer role together with an allegiance to the methods of natural science.

4.1.4 Interpretivism
Interpretivism is an umbrella term and an epistemological position which is often regarded as diametrically opposed to positivism. It encompasses a range of positions which include relativism, phenomenology, hermeneutics, idealism, symbolic interactionism and constructionism (Blaikie, 2000). In epistemological terms, interpretivists regard knowledge as discursively laden and because of this findings emerge at one level as re-descriptions of everyday stories and at another level are developed into theories. In considering the interpretive approach, Marsh and Furlong (2002) suggest that it should be acknowledged that researchers hold subjective opinions, attitudes and values which makes objective analysis within this paradigm impossible (Marsh and Furlong, 2002). They suggest that for interpretivists there is no
real world beyond discourse and, therefore, explanations are open-ended and often at odds with the positivist's search for universal laws, patterns and regularities, causes and circumstances. Both the interpretivist and positivist paradigms represent two ends of a research continuum which is intersected by the research paradigm of realism.

4.1.5 Realism
There are a range of traditions that reflect the realist paradigm, classical Marxism often being regarded as an archetypal realist position. Its philosophical assumptions are based upon the belief that social structures have causal properties and, therefore, causal statements are possible. However, realists also contend that some social phenomena and the relationships between them are not directly observable and may offer a false picture of the phenomena being studied. Realists argue that what actors and agents may say about the world and their particular interests may not reflect their real interests or views, as these interests are often manipulated and so are not truly real. Epistemologically, the focus for the realist researcher is the deep structural relationships between social phenomena which cannot be directly observed but which are, however, crucial to any explanation of behaviour (Ekstrom, 1992). Classical realism has been criticised by positivists who refute the existence of unobservable structures and contend that, by arguing for their existence, realist knowledge claims are untestable and unfalsifiable (Marsh & Furlong, 2002). More recently, however, critical realism has emerged as an alternative position to the traditional realist approach.

4.1.5.1 Critical realism
Critical realism is an epistemological approach that draws upon the central tenets of realism but is arguably the most influential strand of realism in the human sciences (Grix, 2004). Critical realism is a movement in philosophy, which represents a broad research paradigm that emanates largely, but not solely, from the work of philosopher Roy Bhaskar (1994). It is allied to a variety of approaches that are subsumed under the heading of critical social science (Robson, 2002) and uses the term 'critical' to refer to a form of realism that rejects universal claims to truth. In explaining critical realism,
Bhaskar (1994) focuses upon the notion of depth ontology which differentiates between three overlapping domains of reality which he refers to as the empirical realm, the actual realm and the real realm. What distinguishes critical realism from other philosophies of social science is its contention that a domain of the 'real' exists in which structures (generative mechanisms) possess causal powers that produce events (McAnulla, 2005). Interpretivist philosophy is at variance with the critical realist position as it suggests that there are no 'extra-discursive forms of knowledge, thus casting doubt on the idea that there is a real world out there for us to apprehend' (McAnulla, 2005: 32). Both interpretivist and positivist philosophies allow for the existence of the domain of the actual (events, not all of which are experienced and experiences) and the empirical (experienced events) however they both deny the existence of a domain of the real (mechanisms that may be unobservable). Despite this fundamental difference between positivists and interpretivists over the existence of a real domain, the critical realist is insistent that causal mechanisms can exist independently of our knowledge of them. Hence, 'a critical realist might argue that patriarchal structures may cause a female applicant to be unsuccessful in a job application without the candidate having any conscious awareness of the existence of such structures' (McAnulla, 2005: 32). So for the critical realist, the fact that people may be unaware of these structures does not mean that these structures are not real or do not have causal powers.

Positivist and interpretivist paradigms fail to provide an adequate account of the concept of reality and because of this weakness this study adopts the ontological and epistemological assumptions provided by critical realism. In adopting this philosophical position it is accepted that it is not possible to deliver any definitive account of policy change for PESS. However, the intention of this study is to provide a rich account of the complexity of policy processes for PESS based on empirical data and theoretical inference which is supported by two robust, meso-level, theoretical frameworks. Roy Bhaskar (1994) suggests that critical realist assumptions are predicated upon a requirement to offer cogent explanations of empirical events and phenomena through the use of a framework that helps to inform the research and research
questions. The details of Bhaskar’s approach and its implications for research that adopts this methodological approach are illustrated below.

Table 4.3 Bhaskar’s approach to Critical Realism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BHASKAR’S ASSUMPTIONS (1994)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reality is stratified into 3 domains: the empirical (events that can be observed), actual (events if they can be observed or not) and real (structures and processes that constitute reality and which produce events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Transitive objects are the concepts, theories and models which are developed in order to understand and explain aspects of reality; intransitive objects are real entities and their relations that make up the natural and social worlds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Causal relations are regarded as powers or tendencies of things which interact with other tendencies so that an observable event may or may not be observed. Whereas positivists view causal laws as universal constant links between events, Bhaskar suggests that social laws need not be universal and may only represent tendencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. In the domain of the real, definitions of concepts are seen as real definitions about the basic nature of some entity or structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The task of research is to attempt to demonstrate explanatory mechanisms in the domain of the real</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Bhaskar (1997)

Ontologically, Bhaskar (1997) regards social reality as consisting of three layers that include the empirical domain (that which we can observe but not including everything that exists), the actual domain which refers to what actually happens (actuality) and the real domain which refers to the nature of reality by virtue of which things can happen. In order to discover and conceptualise causes, Bhaskar argues that there is a need to uncover the nature of reality and to discover tendencies, rather than attempt to deduce causal relationships between empirical events. Bhaskar further defines causes as factors which in the circumstances have ‘tipped the balance of events so as to produce the known outcome’ (Bhaskar, 1979:106). For the critical realist, the world is regarded as more than a course of events, experiences and discourses; it is comprised of complex objects that, because
of their structure, possess powers and capacities to act in certain ways. In order to understand these powers and capacities, Bhaskar (1979) argues that it is important that researchers who adopt a critical realist approach to their work are cognisant of the nature and structure of the objects of which they are also a property. Social structures are defined by and exist through material and formal contexts which are transmitted through agency but not by agency alone.

Agents are regarded as objects in the social world that have the capacity to act and their actions are fashioned and shaped by the social structures in which they exist. These structures are dependent upon human agency and human action for their activation so that agents are regarded as the extrinsic causes of social structures which have the ability 'to reflect upon their social context, to search for alternatives and to co-operate with other agents in order to change them' (Archer, 1995: 326). Agents possess what Archer (1995) refers to as the 'agency of human beings' that share the same life chances; and in acting collectively are able to develop 'corporate agency' and transform themselves into 'social actors'. Lewis (2000: 250) argues that this is a form of 'emergence' during which 'people confront social structures which are preformed in the sense that they are the product not of people's actions in the present, but of actions undertaken in the past'. Lewis (ibid: 259) also highlights the importance of these:

antecedent social structures which impact upon current activity because, at any particular moment in time, the material and cultural resources required to prosecute (carry out) particular courses of action (wealth, power, status, access to credit and so on) are distributed unevenly between the various positions in the social structure as the result of actions taken in the past.

For the critical realist, actors are perceived as powerful particulars that initiate events in the social world (efficient causation) and determine structural or material causality solely through their decisions (material causation).

Agents are, in a sense, "bearers" of structural positions, but they interpret those structures. At the same time structures are not unchanging; they change in part because of the strategic decisions of actors operating within the structure' (Marsh et al. 1999:15).
The focus upon the role of agency is informative and provides a strong link between the critical realist perspective and the theoretical models discussed in Chapter Three which highlight the central role of the policy entrepreneur and policy broker. Critical realists also engage in research within a social world which they perceive as consisting of open systems rather than the closed (artificially produced) systems of the natural scientist. Once again this feature of the critical realist approach is particularly pertinent considering the nature of this study which focuses upon the policy context of PESS which has been the characterised by policy spillover from health and education areas (Houlihan & Green, 2006).

The use of theory and concepts (such as the ACF and MS framework) and a critical realist approach supports researchers in contextualising observable behaviour in order to infer the underlying structures of particular social or political situations over time. Danermark et al (2002) provide a summary of what they regard as the fundamental features upon which a critical realist approach is based. These consist of a stratified ontology, the need for contextualisation, transitive and intransitive dimensions of reality, causation in terms of generative mechanisms and empirical reality. A stratified ontology is described by Danermark et al through the relationships that exist between the more important social and cultural, psychological and biological levels of reality. The implication is that 'the crucial task for research is to discover the underlying structures that generate empirically observable outcomes rather than describing empirical patterns' (Danermark et al, 2002: 57). Transitive and intransitive dimensions focus upon whether reality exists as an independent phenomenon, as opposed to one which is socially constructed. There is an assumption that an external reality exists which is independent of us (an intransitive dimension) and that we can have imperfect knowledge (the transitive dimension) about this external reality which contains mechanisms that create the complex phenomena that the researcher is seeking to analyse. These mechanisms can be found in the domain of the real, existing beneath the empirically observable surface. Such mechanisms can be experienced indirectly as a consequence of their ability to make things happen. However,
this is always dependent on the context in which a mechanism is active because processes are contextually determined. Mechanisms can act as either generative or counteracting forces in which the context determines whether a mechanism is empirically manifested. The final ontological assumption of the critical realist approach is that empirical outcomes are often best expressed in terms of tendencies, not as regularities. It is important to acknowledge, therefore, that in adopting a critical realist approach it is important to combine the observations of policy actors with theoretical models in order to explain the complex nature of reality.

Because this study’s substantive interest is an analysis of the policy process, the research is predicated upon ontological and epistemological assumptions which assert that not all social phenomena are directly observable. In adopting a critical realist approach it is accepted that structures exist that cannot be observed empirically and those that can be observed may not necessarily reflect the world as it actually is. A number of authors have already successfully explored the former through the adoption of the key ontological and epistemological assumptions associated with the critical realist paradigm (see for example Hay, 1995, 2002; Marsh et al, 1999, 2000, 2001 and McAnulla, 2005). Critical realist assumptions provide a clear theoretical framework upon which an analysis of policy for school sport and physical education can be constructed. The adoption of such theoretical frameworks facilitates an understanding of the underlying structures of this particular policy context and helps identify and explain the relationships between interest groups or what Sabatier (1998) describes as advocacy coalitions. The critical realist perspective also acknowledges the role of social structures and agency in contributing to policy processes. Lewis, (2002) suggests that, in adopting a critical realist position, actors interact with social structures and, as a consequence of these actions, can transform and reproduce structures.

This study is premised upon a critical realist epistemology which argues that not all social phenomena are directly observable and structures exist which cannot be observed empirically. Those that can be observed may not reflect or represent the world as it actually is. Forte (2002) suggests that critical
realism offers the researcher an approach which preserves the essence of science, whilst also providing a transparent approach to data gathering and analysis within research projects. As Bhaskar (1989: 3) argues, critical realism helps to guide empirically controlled investigations and to focus upon the structures that generate social phenomena. The ontological and epistemological assumptions of the critical realist paradigm underpin the study's methodological approach and the choices that have been made in the data collection techniques and the interpretation and analysis of the findings.

4.2 Methodology
A consideration of methodological issues is the next step in the research process which involves a reflection upon how knowledge can be acquired within the specific research context under investigation (Grix, 2002). The preceding discussion of ontological and epistemological assumptions and the adoption of a critical realist position raises questions about the unobservable relationships and phenomena that can only be inferred indirectly (Marsh & Smith, 2002). Bhaskar (1979) proposes that, in order to address these issues, critical realists should adopt a research strategy that involves the key processes of description, explanation and re-description during which layers of reality are continuously exposed (cited in Blaikie, 1993: 169). He suggests that this process is analogous to peeling the layers of an onion, with the outer layers representing a set of structures and mechanisms which are hypothesized, tested and revealed, with the lower layers being subjected to an identical process. Bhaskar (1979: 15) argues that as 'deeper levels or strata of reality are successively unfolded, science must construct and test its explanations with the cognitive resources and physical tools at its disposal'. The process of description and explanation is central to a critical realist approach, as theories are accepted or rejected according to their 'explanatory powers' (Bhaskar, 1989). However, the concept of explanatory power is not without its critics and the lack of clarity surrounding its definition is problematic (Peacock, 2000). Bhaskar (1979) suggests that this problem can be overcome if researchers adopt the process of retroducation, which involves the construction of hypothetical models in order to uncover the structures and mechanisms which are believed to create empirical phenomena. The model is
then tested hypothetically as a description of existing entities and their relations and the model is then presented in a way that can be open to empirical testing. If tests are successful, there is good reason to believe these structures and mechanisms exist. The process of model building can then be repeated again to explain the structures and mechanisms already discovered. In analysing the policy process for PESS this involves the use of theoretical models in order to reveal the involvement and interplay of actors, structures and mechanisms in explaining policy change. Marsh and Smith (2001) contend that it is not possible to make any sense of the world without some theoretical framework. As described in Chapter Three of this study, Sabatier's Advocacy Coalition Framework and Kingdon's Multiple Streams Framework have been selected as the two theoretical foundations for this study.

4.2.1 Structure and agency

Two of the main exponents of the critical realist approach Roy Bhaskar and Margaret Archer, adopt a similar position towards structure and agency as Giddens in his theory of structuration. Both of these phenomena are seen as the ‘flip sides of the same coin’ (Hay, 2002: 20). However Archer (1995) suggests that researchers cannot hope to capture the real duality of these two dimensions because the world is structured in a way that separates appearance from reality. She argues that ‘there is no direct access to the “hard facts” of social life, at least for the vast majority of us who cannot subscribe to the discredited doctrine of immaculate perception’ (Archer, 1995: 17). Moreover she suggests that structure and agency are ontologically different and therefore capable of exerting influence independently, although she states that they should not be treated as analytically separate. Bhaskar argues that the existence of structures is purely a consequence of human action. Ultimately the structure-agency debate centres upon the fundamental issue of determinism versus free-will and the extent to which we are products of our environment, or are capable of determining our own future (McAnulla, 2002).

In seeking to analyse policy processes and policy change, this study adopts a dialectical relationship to both structure (the context in which actors operate)
and the agents who interpret the structural context which shapes the strategic decisions of others. Consequently policy outcomes cannot be explained solely through reference to structures; they should be regarded as the result of actors, such as policy entrepreneurs who are themselves located within broader political, policy and social contexts. This dialectical approach to structure and agency is useful in exploring the values and beliefs of interest groups (or what Sabatier describes as advocacy coalitions) and agents (for example Kingdon’s policy entrepreneurs) who operate within structural contexts. Sabatier’s Advocacy Coalition Framework is capable of delivering insights into these structural factors, such as policy subsystems and the role of actors and organisations in determining policy change. Kingdon’s Multiple Streams Framework provides a more agent-centred approach but also acknowledges that structural issues impact upon agenda setting processes.

Methodological questions should also address the nature of social reality which Marsh et al (1999) suggest hinges on both material and ideational dimensions of social life. Critical realist assumptions suggest that researchers should view the relationship between these two elements as dialectical and in delivering an account of policy change, the relationship between material and ideational factors should be explored. Employment of the ACF focuses in particular upon the role of ideas and their impact on policy oriented learning, whilst Kingdon’s MS framework explores the role of ideas and their adoption and abandonment from the ‘garbage can’ of policy choice. Both theoretical frameworks demand that researchers focus their empirical questions on material conditions and the role of ideas.

4.2.2 Qualitative and quantitative approaches
Researchers face a variety of decisions in constructing a methodologically sound research design which requires them to consider, justify and evaluate the methods to be appropriated in the empirical component of their research project. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies represent two distinct approaches to the investigation and conceptualisation of social reality and data collection. In the selection of either a qualitative or quantitative approach Cohen and Manion (1994) emphasise the profound implications this entails for
the researcher in the formulation of questions, the kinds of data required and how they will be analysed. The distinction between qualitative and quantitative research typically refers to the characteristics of the data collected. Quantitative paradigms are based on the principles of the natural sciences which include the ontological assumption that reality is external to the individual. The epistemological assumptions of quantitative researchers are positivist, arguing that knowledge is objective in nature, can be attained from observation and entail a theory of cause and effect (Bryman, 1988).

Given the study’s ontological and epistemological assumptions and its focus on the policy context of PESS, the selection of qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis offers a richer and more in-depth data can be gathered (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The less structured and more open approach of qualitative research makes it possible to gather additional data and follow new leads (Bryman, 1988). Furthermore, qualitative approaches allow for the interweaving of theory and empirical investigation. As Glaser and Strauss suggest:

No one kind of data, neither category nor technique for data collection is necessarily appropriate. Different kinds of data give the analyst different views or vantage points from which to understand a category and to develop its properties (1968: 65).

Bryman (1988) argues that the question of whether to adopt qualitative or quantitative research methods entails a false dichotomy which overstates their differences, whilst Nau suggests that researchers might wish to mix both quantitative and qualitative data, thus blending them to ‘produce a final product which can highlight the significant contribution of both’ (Nau, 1995: 1). In contrast, Creswell (1994) argues that time constraints and the need to limit the scope of an academic study are significant factors that determine the choice of methods adopted. In assessing quantitative versus qualitative debates, Bryman states that ‘one is ultimately led to the conclusion that both methods of data collection are useful for some purposes and not for others’ (1992: 106).
4.3 Methods

The previous sections of this chapter have offered an overview and analysis of the general methodological issues (philosophical issues) that require clarification at the outset of any study. The following sections offer a critique and justification of the research methods or the 'techniques or procedures used to collate and analyse data' (Blaikie, 2000: 8) that were adopted for this thesis. The first approach to data collection to be discussed in the next section of the chapter is the case study approach.

4.3.1 Case study

Case study research has been extensively critiqued and examined particularly within the context of education (Simons, 1989; Yin, 1989; Anderson, 1990; Stake, 1994; 1995, Schwandt, 1997). Several authors have defined a case study as one single case, temporally, physically or socially limited in size, complex in nature, unique and, thus, not comparable with other cases (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1989; Ragin and Becker, 1994; Creswell, 1994; Stake, 1995). Academic authors dispute what constitutes a case study, Creswell focuses upon:

case studies, in which the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon (the case), bounded by time and activity (a programme, event, process, institution, or social group) and collects detailed information by using a variety of data-collecting procedures during a sustained period of time' (1994:12).

Yin suggests that:

a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (1989:23).

Ragin (1989) also highlights how case-oriented studies by their nature are sensitive to complexity and historical specificity, making the approach particularly valuable to this study. As a strategy the case study highlights complexity, diversity and uniqueness and can provide a powerful basis for interpreting cases historically. All of these factors indicate that the use of a
case study approach will serve as a particularly useful tool for the analysis of the complexity of policy change within the school sport and physical education arena within England.

Whilst definitions of the term case study differ, there appears to be consensus about the complexity and uniqueness of the object of a case study approach (Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1995; Ragin, 1989). Mitchell (1983: 191) suggests that:

the focus of a case study may be a single individual, as in the life history approach, or it may be a set of actors engaged in a sequence of activities either over a restricted, or over an extended period of time.

This suggests that adoption of a case study approach is particularly pertinent to this study as it seeks to solicit the perceptions and views of both individual actors and coalitions in analysing the policy context of school sport and physical education. Some studies employ the use of a single case which may be limiting in terms of its analytical power and pervasiveness on the one hand, and generalisability of the results, on the other (Verschuren, 2003). The employment of a number of cases within a study, rather than just one, is recommended in order to gain greater analytical power and more thorough knowledge.

There is support for the value of the case study approach as a significant research tool because of its potential to contribute to detailed understandings of the policy context (Mitchell 1983, Ragin 1989, Yin 1989, Creswell 1994, Bertaux & Thompson 1997). Glaser and Strauss (1968) also defend the case study approach and argue that 'different kinds of data give the analyst different views or vantage points from which to understand a category and to develop its properties' (1968: 65) and suggest that the case study offers one particular but useful vantage point. Verschuren (2003) maintains that objections to case study approaches are ill-founded, reductionistic misinterpretations of the method, whilst Yin (1989) suggests that the findings and data they generate are, in principle, generalisable to theoretical propositions rather than populations or universes. McPherson et al. (2000)
argue that it is the richness of the detail provided by a well conducted case study that allows for the building of insights that have resonance in other sites, thereby allowing theoretical connections to be explored and established. The challenge for the researcher is thus to generate insights and to make new theoretical connections from what might emerge as highly complex and rich data.

4.3.1.1 Limitations of the case study approach
It is important to recognise that there are some weaknesses and limitations in the adoption of the case study as a research method. One of the major criticisms of case study approaches relates to the capacity to generalise data to a wider population because different subjects in different social contexts are likely to produce different research outcomes (Bryman, 1988). A lack of representativeness is seen as one of the major limitations of this approach to research, as two contexts are never the same. Simons (1996: 21) is also critical of the case study approach because of its tendency to create what he suggests is an implicit ‘tension between the study of the unique and the need to generalise’. Cohen and Manion (1989) also highlight the general unease which qualitative investigators display about the extent to which their findings are capable of generalisation beyond the confines of a particular case. As a methodology, case study has also been susceptible to criticism by positivists who challenge the validity of the data it generates and its lack of generalisability in explanations of social phenomena and predictive claims regarding behaviours and actions. Whilst recognising these criticisms, case study research does allow researchers to capture the reality of the context under investigation and in this study to pursue the potential sources of policy change.

4.3.1.2 Selection of the cases
Decisions surrounding the selection of case studies are challenging and their value ultimately depends on their capacity to generate knowledge of the particular (Hakim, 1988). It is acknowledged that issues of representativeness in the selection of cases are an area of concern. However, in the selection of three aspects of the PESSCL strategy, namely ‘School Sport Partnerships’,
‘School Club Links’ and ‘High Quality PESS’, the intention was to capture the range of institutions and actors involved in the strategy whilst also illuminating key elements of the policy process. A focused sampling technique was adopted, in the hope that the cases selected were able to capture the essence of the policy process whilst also including the diversity of policy actors and organisations involved in the PESSCL strategy. The School Sport Partnerships case study was selected because of its positioning as a central feature of the PESSCL strategy and because it represents the interface of a range organisations and policy actors from sport, education and community contexts connected by the same delivery targets. The selection of the School Club Links case study allows an analysis of the dynamics of school to club interface and an examination of the changing relationships and interdependencies of sport and education agencies. Cricket, athletics and golf were selected for a more in-depth analysis of the School Club Links work-strand. Cricket was chosen as it had a long-standing relationship with schools, was part of the NCPE and was one of the first sports selected for inclusion in the School Club Links work strand. Similarly athletics was chosen because of its tradition within the curriculum of schools, its inclusion within the School Club Links strand and because of the challenges it faces in retaining its status as a curriculum subject. Golf provided a contrast to cricket and athletics; the game did not have a longstanding tradition and relationship with schools, it has lobbied hard to be included in the SCLs work strand and has made major advances in its relationships with schools. In summary, the sports selected as case studies were chosen on the basis that they:

- were involved in the SCL work strand
- were competing for resources and were the recipients of government funding
- all shared a commitment to work to the outcomes of the PESSCL strategy and its PSA target
- were all undergoing or had undergone a period of modernisation
- were all Sport England Priority Sports
- shared a commitment to the outcomes of the SCL work strand
- had varying relationships with NCPE
High quality PESS was the third case chosen for this study and its selection was based on its capacity to illustrate the dynamics of the discourses surrounding definitions of high quality and the tensions surrounding the dual agendas of the NCPE and the PESSCL strategy. The delivery of high quality PESS through a PSA target initially monitored by the PMDU represents a significant element of the PESSCL policy and provides a framework for all the policy actors involved in the strategy.

In sum, these cases have been selected in order to gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of the processes involved in policy change by investigating the underlying structures that have impacted upon policy for PESS. As McPherson et al (2000: 49) suggest ‘case study research is capable of creating thick descriptions and rich understandings of social contexts that have relevance and resonance across social sites’.

4.3.2 Interviews
Rubin and Rubin (1995) suggest that the interview provides an academic and practical tool which allows the researcher the capacity to share the world of others. Britten (1995) highlights how interviews enable researchers to venture below the surface of the topic being discussed to explore what people have to say in their own words. For Lilleker (2003), interviews should be used when a researcher wishes to produce a study with textural depth, as well as empirical strength and in order to provide ‘information that could not be gleaned from official published documents or contemporary media accounts’ (208). Interviews seek to derive rich data from smaller sample groups and Veal (1997) describes how they are particularly suitable when there is only a small population and when the information to be abstracted is too complex to measure through other methods. This makes interview techniques particularly salient to this study and useful in seeking to address the research questions posed. Tuckman (1972) suggests that interview techniques can be used to test hypotheses, help identify variables and relationships and to validate other methods.
Interviews can be classified into four broad categories, structured, semi-structured, unstructured and focus group. The structured interview is the most rigorous and least flexible of the interview types because pre-determined questions (akin to a questionnaire schedule) are posed to interviewees in a specific order and then recorded. The questions are usually ‘closed’, with interviewees having a fixed number of responses which can be coded and easily processed (Bryman, 2001). The aim of the structured interview is to achieve a high degree of standardisation and ease of comparability. The benefit of this technique is that it demands fewer interviewing skills than are necessary for unstructured or semi-structured types (Grix, 2004). A map or interview guide ensures uniform delivery of questions but this technique neither permits flexibility or deviation in order to elicit new information, nor does it provide a strategy to cope with the unexpected. In contrast, unstructured interviews provide very general ideas of the topics to be covered and flexibly ordered concepts or loose questions, which can be converted into spontaneous questions during the interview (Blaikie, 2000). This allows interviewees to provide information from their own perspectives, allowing expansion and focus upon aspects that are important to them, rather than adhering closely to an interview schedule. One of the drawbacks with this type of interview is that data that emerges may lack focus and may not be readily comparable because the content of interviews are only partially standardised. Unstructured interviews can be useful at the beginning stage of a research project when they may open up avenues of investigation through informal discussions on topics and elements not previously considered (Grix, 2004).

The group or focus group interview entails collective rather than one to one interviewer/interviewee interaction. The group dimension can be an important element in obtaining and eliciting data, which involves the interviewer in the role of moderator and facilitator. The group is supplied with a list of topics to be discussed and the interview technique may be structured, semi-structured or unstructured and is recorded in the same way as other interview techniques, either qualitatively or quantitatively (Punch, 2000).
4.3.2.1 Semi-structured interviews
The semi-structured or in-depth interview is where interviewers have a number of questions which do not have to be presented in a specific order. The benefit of this type of interview is its inherent flexibility, allowing interviewers to pursue unexpected lines of enquiry and probe for more information with subsidiary questions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The data that emerges from this method can be compared, contrasted and subjected to statistical analysis if required. This was the interview method of choice for this study, given its relative flexibility and potential to provide insights into the perceptions, beliefs, values and experiences of key actors close to the heart of policy-making. Whilst other methods are certainly capable of providing insights into the nature of policy change within school sport and physical education, the use of semi-structured interviews provides a more 'agent' informed understanding of the historical developments and processes associated with this policy context. A sample of such an interview is given in Appendix A.

4.3.2.2 Interview sample
Information was gathered through 23 semi-structured interviews with elite policy actors who were selected on the basis that they had been involved in policy-making for school sport and physical education at a senior, strategic level for at least five years. Elite interviewing is a particularly popular method of data collection within political science and is of particular relevance to this study, which seeks to engage and solicit the views of a range of senior policy actors, such as senior civil servants, government advisors and senior officials within the range of organisation involved in PESS. Definition of the term 'elite' is not without its problems and Richards (1996) suggests that little attention has been paid to this topic so that consequently there is little agreement on a definition of the term. Richards (1996) offers his own working definition of the expression ‘elite’ which he suggests is a group of actors who hold or have held a privileged position within their society and who possess more influence over the political and policy context than general members of the public. The profiles and backgrounds of the interviewees included in this study are
provided in Appendix B. The range of organisations represented in this study is detailed below:

Department for Education and Skills (DfES)
Departments of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)
Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)
HMI Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)
Association for PE (AfPE)
Sport England (SE)
The Youth Sport Trust (YST)
The Golf Foundation
The English Cricket Board (ECB)
UK Athletics
Local Authority Sports Development
School Sport Partnerships
Specialists Sports Colleges
Local Education Authorities

A recurring criticism levelled at studies employing semi-structured interviews and interview methods in general, is their lack of a 'sampling frame' from which to select individual actors for interview purposes. Attempts to counteract this criticism were reflected in the adoption of 'snowball sampling' within this study which Devine (2002) describes as a system by which interviewees are asked to recommend other potential interviewees, thereby generating a larger sample.

In order to investigate policy change and to acknowledge Sabatier's (1999) demands for a medium term view of the policy process, 23 interviewees were selected from a range of government, sport and education agencies who had been involved in the policy area for at least five years using a blend of purposive and snowball sampling. Initial contact was secured with a range of interviewees through purposive sampling and these respondents were asked to recommend other individuals (snowball sampling) who would be able to deliver an informed account of the policy area under investigation. This technique is also particularly useful if researchers have limited knowledge or
contacts within a particular policy area. Johnson (1990) suggests that the selection of 'ideal' informants should be based on an individual's position and knowledge of the topic under investigation, their willingness to communicate and co-operate and their ability to communicate in a frank and open way. The selection process necessitated the identification of interviewees from each of the cases whose social characteristics and close association with the research topic made them well-suited for interview (Devine, 2002). Devine suggests that the engagement of politicians and those in close contact with the political arena who possess specialist knowledge of procedures and policy-making presents a potentially rich source of data.

4.3.2.3 The interviews
Interviewees were contacted by phone and email and interviews held at their convenience in a location of their choosing, normally in their place of work. Interviews were scheduled for a maximum of one hour, deemed an appropriate length of time which balanced my needs and avoided over-imposition on the time of many of these elite interviewees who had busy work schedules. Before interviews, all research participants were informed of the general nature of the investigation and all agreed that the interview could be tape recorded. As Woods (1986) recommends, interviews were recorded in order to provide maximum and precise detail of exchanges. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and interviewees informed that their permission to use selected quotes would be requested before inclusion in the thesis. Interviewees were sent selected copies of their quotations which were abstracted from the transcripts and included with the surrounding text for contextualization purposes. For those interviewees who wished to remain anonymous, their post of responsibility rather than their name is included in the text. Occasionally interviewees requested that the tape was turned off in order to discuss more sensitive details or to make observations 'off the record'. These comments have not been included within the study. During the interview, brief written notes were recorded in case of the technical failure of the recording device.
4.3.2.4 The interview schedule
A semi-structured interview schedule was adopted that included a range of pre-determined questions with similar wording in order to ensure consistency across the sample. A sample of the interview questions posed is provided in Appendix C. The adoption of a standard interview schedule was complemented by a number of probe questions that were used throughout the interview in order to clarify responses and to pursue leads. Questions focused upon obtaining an informed account of the background to the PESSCL strategy and interviewees' interpretations and perceptions of policy change; the role of interest groups, changing beliefs and values and the impact of key individuals and changes to the infrastructure and resource dependencies in accounting for policy change in PESS. Though structured around these themes, the arrangement allowed for modifications and probes. Grouping questions around these main themes assisted later stages of data analysis. The ordering of questions proceeded from general opening items and progressively narrowed in order to elicit more specific policy detail. The intention was to gain an understanding of policy actors' perceptions and experiences of policy change across a range of organisations in order to elicit an agent informed perspective. This information was supplemented by analysis of a range of government policy documents, NGB annual reports and inspection evidence from quangos, such as HMI.

4.3.3 Documentary analysis
Documentary analysis is an 'integrated and conceptually developed method, procedure and technique for locating, identifying and analysing documents for their relevance, significance and meaning' (Altheide, 1998: 2). Glaser and Strauss (1967) emphasise the potential that documentary material offers in generating theory, whilst Yin (1994) focuses upon the particular strength that documentary analysis offers to case study research and its potential to corroborate evidence from other methods. May (1997) also stresses the benefits of the use of documents which have the capacity not only to reflect the facts but also to construct social reality and generate versions of events. Documentary analysis allows researchers to gather data in an unobtrusive fashion, quickly and inexpensively. However, it is important to recognise that
Documentary analysis is not without its limitations and Hakim (2000) suggests that, in comparison to other methods, it is not a clear-cut technique and that academics often fail to articulate the ways in which they should be used and analysed.

Documentary evidence may be official and private documents, personal letters or memos. Researchers must consider carefully the origins and authors of documents and texts, the purpose for which they were written and the audience they were intended to address (Grix, 2004). Bell (1999) suggests that documents can be divided into primary (a direct product of the actual research process) and secondary (the interpretation of events by others) types. They can be further sub-divided into closed, restricted, open archival and open published documents. The extent to which researchers analyse documentary material is inevitably restricted by the amount of time and resources that they have at their disposal. A process of selection needs to reflect the impossibility of analysing all documents, thus decisions must be made by the researcher about which documents to select. As this study draws on documentation provided by political parties, it is also important to recognise that documents may espouse particular political ideologies.

As documents can be interpreted in different ways, Bell (1999: 113) suggests that the guiding principle in their analysis is that everything should be questioned. She proposes that in considering the value of documentary analysis, researchers need to consider the type of document, who produced it, what its purpose was and the circumstances in which it was produced. This list sensitises researchers to the suitability of documents and selection of those most closely associated with the research themes under investigation. Documents represent an important source of data and were used in this study in order to gather data unobtrusively and to supplement that gathered through semi-structured, in-depth interviews. As with any method, documentary evidence should be regarded as a complementary form of data collection. In order to maintain quality within research processes, it is important to adopt more than one method of enquiry in order to improve reliability and minimise chances of bias.
4.3.4 Data analysis

The data generated by a qualitative study of this nature demands a systematic approach to analysis. Patton (1990) suggests the adoption of inductive and/or deductive content analysis for information gathered from interviews and documentary material. The term content analysis is a broad one which includes any technique used by researchers in order to make systematic and objective deductions. Whilst inductive analysis involves the collation of data, such as National Governing Body (NGB) annual reports or a range of other documentary evidence, deductive analysis often arises from the insights provided by theoretical frameworks, such as the multiple streams and advocacy coalition frameworks discussed in Chapter Three of this study. Both inductive and deductive content analysis methods were adopted in order to deliver a robust account of policy change for PESS.

Ten Have (2004) suggests a two stage data analysis process: firstly open coding of data in which its reduction and simplification into themes helps sharpen the focus of the analysis, then a second phase involving refinement and conceptual elaboration of the data established in the first phase of the process. These phases were used as the basic structure for the analysis of the data generated by this study. Interview transcripts and documentary evidence were analysed and coded into the themes suggested by multiple streams and advocacy coalition frameworks. The themes employed to analyse policy change within PESS focussed upon key individuals, the role of interest groups, the impact of changing values and beliefs and resource relationships between organisations. The use of coding and sorting is an important, even an indispensable, part of the (qualitative) research process (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). As this study adopts a case study approach the purpose of coding was to capture commonalities across and individual uniqueness's within cases. This phase of data analysis involved a within-case and across-case analysis of those case studies selected to represent the PESSCL strategy. Bryman (2001) suggests that a cross-case analytic framework provides opportunity for researchers to examine, identify and highlight similarities and differences across case studies. Analysis of
individual cases enables researchers to understand the uniqueness of
individual cases. After such a coding process was completed, the data was
grouped thematically and deductive and inductive analytical procedures
employed. Having established the phases of analysis and the representation
of the data within this study, it was imperative that the measures employed
ensured the validity and reliability of the research findings.

4.3.5 Issues of validity and reliability
Having chosen to adopt a qualitative research approach, it is essential that the
methodological issues that relate to quality in the data collection process are
discussed. Yin (1994) suggests that careful attention needs to be paid by all
researchers to issues of validity and reliability in pursuit of objectivity and
rigour within research processes. Silverman (2000) also urges qualitative
researchers to consider how they can convince both themselves and their
readers that their findings emerge from a critical engagement with their data.

4.3.5.1 Validity
According to Robson (1993) validity is concerned to address whether
research findings are really about what they appear to be about. Holloway
(1997) highlights the need for researchers to achieve internal and external
validity within their research. Internal validity is indicative of the extent to
which evidence can be provided for the statements made within a study, while
external validity refers to its generalisability. For Bryman (1989) validity is
simply concerned with correspondence between the measure and the concept
in question, whilst for Sapsford and Jupp (1996) validity is defined as the
design of research to provide credible conclusions. For Guba and Lincoln
(1981) validity centres upon four methods for establishing credibility, namely,
host verification or member checks, triangulation and corroboration,
independent observer analysis and phenomenon recognition (i.e. the
recognition of a phenomenon as real by those who experience it). It is evident
that researchers provide differing accounts of the nature of validity.

In order to check the accuracy and credibility of research findings academics
often advocate a number of steps in the research process (see for example
Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 1989; Creswell & Miller, 2000). The identification of the strategies for achieving trustworthiness, credibility or validity (all of these terms are used interchangeably in the literature) has been well-documented. However Creswell (2003) makes explicit reference to eight primary strategies for validating the accuracy of findings which are rank ordered within Table 4.4 from the most popular and easy to implement methods, to those which are less frequently used and more difficult to employ.

Table 4.4 Eight primary strategies for validating research findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triangulation</th>
<th>Use of different data sources of information to build a justification for themes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member-checking</td>
<td>Determining the accuracy of qualitative findings by checking themes, reports and descriptions with research participants to check for accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich, thick description</td>
<td>To transport the reader to the setting and give the reader a sense of shared experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarification of bias</td>
<td>Clarify the potential bias that the researcher brings to the study so that self-reflection creates an open and honest narrative that resonates with the readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrepant information</td>
<td>Discussing contrary information that runs counter to the central themes gives the account greater credibility with the reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prolonged time in the field</td>
<td>This consequently allows the researcher to generate an in-depth understanding of the context and the phenomenon under investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer debriefing</td>
<td>The use of a peer debriefer who asks questions of the study so that the account resonates with individuals other than the researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External auditor</td>
<td>A person who is independent of the study and the researcher who can provide an assessment of the study during or at the conclusion of the research</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Adapted from Creswell (2003: 196)

4.3.5.2 Triangulation

The adoption of triangulation techniques entails using more than one method or source of data in the study of social phenomena. The term has, however, been employed more broadly and often includes triangulation of researchers, sources and methods. Researcher triangulation involves the use of multiple observers in data collection processes potentially resulting in greater
confidence in the data that emerges. Data triangulation is a process in which researchers use multiple sources, measures or variables in order to cross-check information contained within interview transcripts and published papers, such as government policy documents as adopted in this study. Triangulation of methods involves the adoption of two or more methods in order to investigate the same phenomenon and may involve the use of one method after the other, or at the same time, so that a sequence of stages emerges during which checks and balances are applied (Grix, 2004). Yin (1994) argues that the main benefit of such triangulation is that the findings or conclusions that emerge are likely to be more accurate if they are based on several different sources of information. However, it should also be acknowledged that triangulation has the potential to increase error and, therefore, a researcher must be cautious when doing so, identifying potential weaknesses or problems with the data. Triangulation of methods and data sources was also adopted for this study which used different sources, such as government policy documents and the transcripts of semi-structured interviews.

As a form of ‘member-checking’ all interviewees were sent a copy of the transcription of their interview in order to check its accuracy and content. Rigorous application of these techniques is important in ensuring what Patton (2002) describes as high quality research. The second strategy adopted in order to validate the findings was the use of thick description, to deliver a rich and detailed account of elements of the PESSCL strategy informed by the accounts of policy agents and an extensive range of documentary sources.

4.3.5.3 Reliability
Reliability is concerned with the consistency of data and whether a procedure produces similar results on all occasions (Cohen et al, 2000; Mason, 2002; Bell, 2005). As qualitative research can be vulnerable to claims of subjectivity, Yin (1994) has proposed that the use of more than one source of evidence in conjunction with the use of documentary analysis and interviews provides a reasonable basis for reliability. For Denscombe (2002) reliability is concerned with the extent to which instances are assigned to categories by the same observer on different occasions or to the same category by different
observers. Thus, for reliability to be estimated, it is essential that researchers document the procedures they adopt and demonstrate that the themes and categories have been used in a consistent fashion. However, obtaining reliability can be fraught with difficulties as consistency and objectivity are often hard to achieve within qualitative research (Hammersley, 1992; Kirk & Miller, 1986). Various authors have attempted to address issues of reliability within their theorising but it is evident that many attempts to specify reliability within qualitative research has proved problematical (Kirk & Miller, 1986).

Healy and Perry (2000) argue that issues surrounding the quality of any research in terms of validity and reliability should be judged by its own paradigm's terms. However, within the realist tradition a paucity of criteria has emerged which tends to draw upon positivist and constructivist approaches. Thus, whilst positivism considers internal validity, reliability, construct validity and external validity as essential prerequisites for quality; and constructivism regards truth or credibility, neutrality, consistency and applicability as essential criteria for quality (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 1994), no such check list exists for the critical realist paradigm.

Conclusion
This study adopts a critical realist approach and posits that certain occurrences, such as those displayed by policy actors are not always observable and may need to be studied in a way that employs theoretical frameworks which support interpretations of deep, unobservable social mechanisms. These ontological and epistemological assumptions underpin and frame this research project. The research methods or the 'techniques or procedures used to collate and analyse data' (Blaikie, 2000:8) are outlined and justified on the basis of these ontological and epistemological assumptions. The key research methods and techniques employed for this study include case study methods, semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. The use of semi-structured interviews are justified on the basis of their capacity to gather data relating to actors' subjective perceptions, beliefs and experiences, whilst the use of documentary research
is based on its potential to support triangulation of methods. The data collected were analysed using both inductive and deductive techniques and the results are presented and discussed in the final chapter of this thesis.
Chapter 5

The Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links Strategy (PESSCL)

Introduction

This chapter outlines the emergence of the national Physical Education School Sport and Club Links strategy and draws upon empirical data from documentary material and interviews with key policy actors. The chapter is organised around two principal themes, the first of which is an account of the background to the PESSCL strategy and the second a detailed explanation of the structural arrangements surrounding the overarching framework and the funding arrangements, patterns of accountability and resource dependences of the key stakeholders involved. The intention is to identify the key agendas and the main actors and agencies that have been instrumental in the emergence of this national strategy. The chapter acts as a precursor to three case study chapters that focus upon specific elements of the PESSCL strategy, namely School Sport Partnerships, School to Club Links and High Quality PE.

5.1 Agenda Setting

Research by Hardman & Marshall (2000) into the international status of physical education revealed that it had become increasingly marginalised and threatened in schools and, as a consequence, the status of the subject had seriously declined. The concomitant status of physical education in England was indicative of a global problem served by the indifference of national governments towards the subject especially during the latter decades of the 20th century. Despite worldwide legislative commitment to providing physical education as part of the curriculum, widespread deficiencies were notable in both the declining allocation of curriculum time and the paucity of material and human support for the subject. During the 1980s physical education in England had faced a number of challenges from academics who contested its
value in schools and also from the media and governments who suggested that the subject had been corrupted by anti-competitive practices. The challenges and difficulties faced by PE during the latter decades of the 20th century have been extensively documented (see for example, Penney & Evans, 1997, 1999; Kay, 1998; Kirk, 1999, Kirk & Gorely, 2000). Yet, despite facing a bleak future, by 2002 the Labour Government had made physical education and school sport one of its top policy priorities. This chapter outlines and analyses the series of events and the role of key agents and agencies in securing this significant investment and government commitment to PE and school sport.

In an educational climate of scant human and physical resources for physical education, the Youth Sport Trust was an organisation that has come to play a central role in the development and delivery of government's strategy for PE and school sport. The remit of this charitable organisation was to improve sporting opportunities for young people of all abilities in the hope that they could fulfil their potential through physical education and sport. The appointment of Sue Campbell as Chief Executive of the YST was a decision that a Senior HMI suggested was a key moment for PE and for the YST itself because they had appointed 'a brilliant organiser with inspirational, demanding, dogged, energetic and committed personal characteristics' (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006).

The Trust's venture into primary schools through the TOPS programmes (see Section 2.3.2) rapidly became a key source of professional development for primary school teachers. It also coincided with growing concern about the long-term future of foundation subjects on the curriculum of primary schools as a consequence of government drives to improve standards in numeracy and literacy. The YST's TOPS programmes had significant impact upon primary PE at a time when physical education in schools appeared more vulnerable and marginalised than ever before. The cumulative effects of the lack of material investment in the infrastructure for PE in schools and the success of the YST's work in primary schools posed a genuine threat to the
NCPE. A Senior HMI for PE suggested that there had been a growing concern about the influence of the YST in schools and many educationalists:

saw the introduction of these [TOPS] cards as being a genuine threat to the national curriculum. We had got the national curriculum revision in '95 but I knew she [Sue Campbell] was right, so I went along with it and we [HMI] began to develop a close working relationship with critical senior officials from the DfES (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006).

Yet the growing influence of the YST in schools was not universally welcomed by all within the PE profession; many were suspicious of the motives and influence that a charitable sports body was exerting over the PE curriculum of primary schools. Nevertheless, the work of the YST had the support of some powerful and influential individuals, a point that was underlined by Margaret Talbot who, in describing the Trust's difficult position as a sports charity, related how they [YST] had:

stood on the edge of a vacuum before they were sucked in, they showed considerable restraint for two years before the PE associations showed they weren't capable, or willing to get their act together (Interview: Margaret Talbot, 19th July 2006).

Talbot suggested that the YST had, up until that time, shown a degree of restraint in its involvement with schools, which she accredited to Sue Campbell's own background as a PE teacher, her values and desire to remain loyal to the principles of PE and to the work of PE teachers in schools.

In seeking to explain the circumstances behind the rapid emergence of the YST as a key player in the policy context of school sport and PE, a Senior HMI actively involved in PE at the time, pointed to the significance of the appearance of John Beckwith, a successful businessman and benefactor who wanted to invest £1 million in a sustainable, ongoing support structure for young people. This point was also supported by Margaret Talbot who believed that the financial backing and unconditional support he provided was significant because 'he had the money to give the organisation a kick start, but no preconceived or highly developed concept of how that might be achieved' (Interview: Margaret Talbot, 19th July 2006). She also recalled how, before her
appointment as CEO of the Youth Sport Trust, Sue Campbell had been employed by the GB Sports Council to lead a consultation exercise through the Young People and Sport in England Strategy Group. Talbot recalled how in her capacity as member of the strategy group, the research process had highlighted to the group the unique positioning of physical education and schools as a context for engaging all children in sport. In an attempt to seek ways to engage young people in sport and physical activity, the strategy group had:

started discussing an infrastructure ... and using the school system as a basis for development of youth sport and that included considering various models related to community development, the youth sector, governing bodies and local authorities. The thinking was messy but it sowed the seeds for PESSCL, although it was 4 to 5 years before Sue was able to harness it (Interview: Margaret Talbot, 19th July 2006).

In her account of the circumstances surrounding the government’s decision to invest in school sport and physical education, Sue Campbell believed that a number of initiatives had helped to create an early platform for the development of the national strategy for school sport (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006). Champion Coaching (a youth sport coaching programme run by the National Coaching Foundation) had been effective in bringing together a number of key sporting agencies, such as sports clubs, coaches, schools and national governing bodies to work in partnership to improve youth participation in sport. At the same time the Youth Sport Trust was also developing links with the DfES through the work of Connexions which Campbell suggested:

was growing in the noise it was creating within the DfES, particularly in the area of PE and school sport. The work with Connexions combined with the ongoing development the TOPS programmes gave the Trust a degree of access to government departments and civil servants. What became self evident was that school sport was in need of investment and restructuring and a clearer infrastructure for all the organisations involved and sport too, was also in need of modernisation (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

Whilst relatively simple concepts, the development of the TOP PLAY and TOP SPORT programmes from 1995 onwards created a capacity building model

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that by 1997 had made a significant impact in schools and had created the need for an infrastructure to support it. Steve Grainger, the CEO of the YST, accredited the growth and increasing demand from schools for the TOP programmes, combined with the later success of the first 11 sports colleges, in raising the profile of the YST and laying the foundation for the PESSCL strategy (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006). Although the YST had not lobbied in an overt sense during the period from 1995 to 2000, Grainger attributed the success of the YST to the successful delivery of everything it had been tasked with. It was a viewpoint that was corroborated by Matthew Conway, the first Project Leader for the PESSCL strategy, who suggested that the YST represented:

the one sport agency in the last two years which has delivered everything that was asked of it .... they have been tasked with things and they have delivered (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

5.1.1 The emergence and shaping of the PESSCL strategy
The formulation of the model on which the PESSCL national strategy was eventually based was partly accredited to a meeting between Sue Campbell and Charles Clarke when he was a Minister at the DfES. Steve Grainger recollected how:

as Number 3 at the DfES, Charles Clarke had commissioned the YST to conduct a mapping exercise on the range of initiatives and organisations involved in schools because he saw sport as being a big culprit in going into schools from the outside, doing things in schools and in curriculum time, and for him, that was a matter of concern (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006).

Campbell described how the Minister wanted to know how the system for PE and school sport could be improved. The model that was produced for the Minister was based upon ‘providing a lot more people on the ground and was structurally represented by a ‘hub and spoke’ model similar to the one eventually operationalised through the PESSCL strategy’ (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).
The Youth Sport Trust subsequently conducted an in-depth mapping exercise of their own which sought to match school sport and PE activities against broader government agendas such as behaviour improvement, Key Stage 2-3 transition, CPD for teachers and citizenship. It was an exercise through which the YST looked at the agendas and products that were available in PE and school sport:

Many initiatives were already delivering government agendas such as CPD for teachers, TOP Link, Millennium Volunteers. What we needed to do was to make the links more explicit and to look at what was missing (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006).

A Senior Manager from the YST explained how schools provided the stable structure and firm foundation upon which a school sport and PE strategy could be built (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006). There was an acknowledgement by the YST that there was need to embed the development of a strategy for school sport within schools rather than through a disparate range of sports bodies that were often subject to the vagaries of sponsorship and short-term funding.

In its negotiations with government departments, the Youth Sport Trust prioritised the identification of its 'values and beliefs and policy priorities in order to discover what mattered to them' (Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006). This approach allowed the Youth Sport Trust to dovetail its own priorities with government's objectives in an arrangement that was mutually beneficial:

They were trying to raise standards, improve school ethos, tackle behavioural issues, the health of the nation, develop active citizenship ... PE could lever that change ... we could use the inspiration of PE and sport to affect how a school thinks about itself and its pupils (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

The capacity of PESS to deliver on a number of broader social agendas and, in particular, to contribute to whole school improvement was the basis upon which the investment by government was made. As Grainger openly acknowledged the strategy (PESSCL) was not based upon robust research evidence because:
politics doesn't work like that ... but if you can get people to see it with their eyes and kind of believe it in their heart then I will challenge anybody, any minister, any civil servant, to go into what is a good PE and sport programme and come out saying that it is not making a difference to kids, a positive difference for kids (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006).

5.1.2 Soliciting government support for PE and school sport

In her explanation of the events that preceded the government's investment in the PESSCL strategy, Sue Campbell suggested that a number of personalities with shared values in and around DCMS and DfES had been a highly significant factor in policy change. During a period when Kate Hoey was Minister for Sport and Estelle Morris was Minister for Schools, Sue Campbell was making forays into DCMS and DfES to solicit support for the expansion of the TOPS programmes. As a consequence of an opportune meeting between Sue Campbell and Kate Hoey, their conversation focussed on the state of sport and PE. Sue Campbell recalled how Kate Hoey had asked her whether she would be prepared to take on the role of advisor. Having declined the offer, in the same week; Estelle Morris had also enquired as to whether she was prepared to take on a similar role to Sir Cyril Taylor who acted as government advisor on all specialisms within the specialist colleges’ portfolio. Having considered these two offers from senior Government Ministers, Campbell explained how she then said:

if the two of you would appoint me, not as a special advisor, but as an advisor on PE and sport, and if you would let me work across the two departments to begin to combine the thinking that is going on here, because there is a real strange kind of tension between DfES who somehow doesn't think it [PE] is their responsibility, and DCMS that thinks it is, but can't get access to the curriculum and everything they need to do (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

Having made an agreement with John Beckwith, the Chair of the YST, Sue Campbell decided to take on the role of 'subject adviser' which was an unpaid, non-political appointment requiring two days a week. The appointment and its timing represented a key moment for PE and school sport and its significance was underlined by Sue Campbell who explained that:
From that moment, that sort of collision of moment and people and you know if anyone of those three people had been different, it probably would not have worked. And so sometimes in life it's a collision of coincidence really, but there was also this, this growing momentum about something has got to happen (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

Campbell was keen to underline that it was a combination of factors and not just her appointment and personal advocacy that had changed the fortunes of PESS. She explained how the growing momentum was:

not just coming from the YST, it was coming from BAALPE, coming from everybody, coming from schools themselves in fact, and I think from that moment it started to gain a different kind of momentum because for the first time I had real access to civil servants in both departments, and because I had ministerial, direct access to ministers their attention was somewhat different to me (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

Campbell described how 'the noise if you like, in a metaphorical sense, the noise in the department [DfES] got louder about PE and school sport'. With the momentum surrounding school sport and PE growing, Campbell recalled how she was invited to make a presentation for funding for school sport and PE to the Prime Minister and the two Secretaries of State, all the Permanent Secretaries and the Policy Unit. It was a meeting that left her in no doubt that 'there was enormous support from the Prime Minister which made a significant difference' (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006). As a result of the meeting extra funding was released to support the work of PESS and significantly, a commitment was made to support the work through Exchequer funding. With support and funding from government, her new role as non-political advisor for PESS presented a real opportunity for a new approach to school sport. Sue Campbell explained how ‘I found myself absolutely in a fortuitous place with two ministers who could now open up doors’ (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

5.1.3 Developing an infrastructure for PESSCL

Having agreed the principles on which a national strategy for school sport would be based, the next step was the development of a structural framework
for the delivery of the policy. Whilst the framework that emerged did not mean abandoning the structures in situ, there was a perceived need to create a structure around schools and to formalise the relationships between schools and sports and local community organisations. An insight into the values underpinning the model was evident in Sue Campbell's core beliefs about young people and sport:

Children react positively to sport ... this inspired me to continue to develop my career around education; sport benefits the community, helps less privileged children find a positive focus in their lives (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

In the deliberations surrounding the creation of a new infrastructure for PE and school sport, Campbell outlined how a range of models operating in a number of other countries had been considered. The US model and European model were both deliberated but, significantly, neither was deemed appropriate for England. Sue Campbell suggested that the final decision against the adoption of either of these models was based upon her experiences of PE:

I am a great believer that physical education, and I put the emphasis on education, is very, very key to kid's lives. Whilst at school, PE instilled in me the love of moving and playing, being active. It is each child's fundamental right to learn through the physical environment (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

The decision to create a new infrastructure around schools and to reinvest in the profession was regarded as vital to the success of the strategy: 'people are the key, good people, re-inspired, re-motivated, with new names, new titles' (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006). The capacity to lever change was exercised through investment in systemic, structural changes and significant investment in personnel. As Sue Campbell explained, the context surrounding PESS was one in which teachers were under pressure and hadn't got the time, so it was a question of 'how do you crank the system; ... what you needed was people, good people on the ground' (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).
The PESSCL strategy was based upon hubs of schools that could be replicated across the country. It was an approach to PE and school sport that was based on promoting best practice and affording all children the same opportunities to access PESS across England. Matthew Conway explained how there was a strong structural element to PESSCL that was reflected in the positioning of specialist sports colleges and school sport partnerships as the central backbone of the strategy. It was acknowledged that there was not much in PESSCL that was brand new, everything was happening already somewhere, but in a large number of places it wasn’t happening at all (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005). The overall aims of the strategy were wide-ranging and reflected a number of interests and agendas including those of government and the numerous actors and networks involved in the delivery of the PESSCL strategy. For the DfES, academic attainment and improving standards in schools was key to its investment in school sport and PE. This point was reinforced by the PESSCL Project Director who suggested that it was primarily an education programme delivering through sport. However, Conway further indicated that it was also about serving health and elite sport agendas (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

The key role that physical education and sport played in young people’s lives was underlined in ‘A Sporting Future for All’ (DCMS/DfEE, 2001). Whilst schools in England had a proud tradition of PESS, for many schools the hours dedicated to the subject within the curriculum had declined. The policy document indicated the Labour Government’s determination that sport in education, sport in the community and world-class sport should contribute to the social and cultural well-being of the nation. In particular, the policy statement announced the Government’s intention to transform school sport through an offer of entitlement to sport and physical education for all 5-16 year olds. The Report’s ‘Implementation Plan’ also highlighted the role of Specialist Sports Colleges and School Sports Co-ordinators as key, structural components in the new ‘dynamic infrastructure for physical education and school sport’ (DCMS, 2001: 13). The policy document set the conditions for a new coherent strategy comprised of a range of work strands that brought together a range of actors and organisations from sport, community and
education contexts. Schools had a pivotal role to play in enhancing the take-up of sporting opportunities of young people by pooling and linking their resources with sport and community providers. The subsequent publication by the Government's Strategy Unit and DCMS of Game Plan in December 2002, outlined in detail the Government's vision and strategy for sport to the year 2020. Most notably, the policy statement emphasised the obligation to work in partnership in order to deliver sport policy outcomes.

5.1.4 The launch of the PESSCL strategy
In parallel with policy developments for sport, the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links strategy (PESSCL) was launched on the 2nd October 2002 and functioned as the mechanism for a new infrastructure aimed at transforming PE and school sport in England. Funded predominantly by the Treasury, the government initially committed £459 million to transform PE and school sport, with an additional allocation of £686 million to improve school sport facilities across England (DfES/ DCMS, 2003). The investment of such a considerable sum of money represented a defining moment for a policy arena that had suffered from government indifference and a lack of financial investment for many decades. The decision by government to create a new infrastructure for PE and school sport was supported by a joint DfES and DCMS Public Service Agreement target which was monitored by the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit. In its first 18 months of operation, the PESSCL strategy reported to the PMDU, rather than to the Treasury, a requirement that reflected its status as a government policy priority.

The publication of the joint DfES/ DCMS policy document 'Learning Through PE and Sport' (2003) was underpinned by a Public Service Agreement (PSA) target of increasing the percentage of 5-16 years olds spending a minimum of two hours a week on high quality PE and school sport. The two hours included sporting activity both within and beyond the curriculum and focussed upon increasing participation incrementally in both school sport and physical education from 75% in 2006 to 85% in 2008. Matthew Conway, the DCMS/ DfES Project Director from 2002-2005, described how PESSCL had been pulled together as a coherent strategy in the summer of 2002. In describing
the events leading up to the launch of the PESSCL strategy, he explained how:

There were on-going discussions between DCMS and DfES and the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit about what would happen. I assume that there was thinking at the centre of government about this having a higher status than just being another thing that two government departments were doing. But at this stage, and certainly at the stage at which the post was advertised, there was no PSA target in prospect (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

In the months before the official launch of the PESSCL strategy, Conway described how it was amended from the PE and School Sport (PESS) entitlement to include DCMS’ involvement through the Club Links programme (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005). As this interviewee explained, the eventual establishment of the overarching PESSCL strategy was based upon a pragmatic desire to address the PE and school sport entitlement by amalgamating what was already out in the school sport domain with new dimensions of support for the overall initiative (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005). Indicative of the fluctuating nature of the policy at the time, Conway described the process as ‘a bit of a moving feast ... specialist sports colleges, school sport co-ordinators, but being ramped up and being re-focussed on partnerships’.

At the same time as the concept of the PESSCL strategy was reaching fruition Conway described how the sudden appearance of a related PSA target was indicative of:

a political high level decision, to which I think you could probably attribute a significant amount of Prime Ministerial interest. I mean PESSCL spent its first 18 months reporting to the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit, not to the Treasury and that means something that's very significant ...... it [the PSA target for 75% of 5-16 year olds spending two hours a week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum by 2006] just emerged out of Number 10, it is not robust. It happens that it is not actually a bad target, but that was luck; the target is utterly indefensible, it is not evidential (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).
In defending the PSA target, he emphasised how areas of government could get paralysed if the concern was always to wait for the evidence. It was clear that the reality of political processes often militated against evidence based policy decisions. The rule of thumb within government was to base policy decisions upon whether you think it is the right thing to do, 'but don't start off doing it so big that if it goes wrong it's a complete waste of money' (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

The PESSCL strategy was a conglomeration of initiatives and work strands combined into a single overarching strategy. In his assessment of the strategy, Matthew Conway suggested that PESSCL existed with the funding and profile it had because of Prime Ministerial involvement 'or the influence of special advisors at Number 10, who themselves are pushing it because they know that the Prime Minister is interested' (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

5.2 Management and implementation: Implementing the PESSCL Strategy

The PESSCL strategy commenced delivery on the 1st April 2003, run jointly by the DfES and the DCMS (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005). The DfES and DCMS PSA (2003) target placed joint responsibility upon two government departments to work in collaboration within a policy network structured by a number of shared work strands. This innovative attempt at joined-up policy-making and delivery through two government departments was a pioneering approach to working within Whitehall. The post of PESSCL Director was a joint appointment by DCMS and DfES. Matthew Conway believed that the arrangements worked well because:

I neither brought a particular perspective to it, nor at any stage was I more responsible to one department than the other. I was responsible to DCMS only on coaching, but that's kind of separated out from PESSCL. So my job was to bind the two departments together, but that was relatively easy because Sue Campbell [joint advisor to both Secretaries of State] had already done a lot of that work (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).
Moreover, Conway suggested that both departments bought into the ‘whole picture’ and then concentrated on their particular department’s contribution within a context of knowing what it contributed across the board.

The national strategy had originally included eight inter-linked work strands and was subsequently expanded to nine programmes: Sports Colleges, School Sport Partnerships, School / Club Links, the Gifted and Talented Programme, the QCA PE and School Sport Investigation, Step into Sport, Swimming, Sporting Playgrounds and Professional Development. The nine work strands were an attempt to rationalise and connect a number of initiatives into a cohesive framework answerable to government through a PSA target. Sports colleges and school sport partnerships represented two major structural components of the strategy that provided the foundations upon which the national physical education and school sport infrastructure were built. Sports colleges were the focal point of school networks and acted as hub sites for school sport partnerships (DfES, 2004). School sport partnerships were networks of both primary and secondary schools that were normally linked to a specialist sports college which received additional DfES funding to enhance and increase the sporting opportunities for all schools in the partnership.

The other strands were essentially a range of tools that helped support the delivery of the strategy and its PSA target. The QCA PE and School Sport Investigation constituted an area of work led by the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA), with its main purpose to disseminate and exemplify high quality practice and to contribute to the achievement of the 'high quality' outcomes of the PSA target. The Professional Development (PD) programme contained a menu of in-service resources and programmes that were managed by the YST and supported by the Association for Physical Education (AfPE), the PE subject association that was formed as a result of the amalgamation of BAALPE and PEA/UK.
In order to strengthen the links between school sport partnerships, NGBs and community clubs, the School to Club Links programme focussed upon increasing the proportion of young people directed from schools to high quality club sport. A range of in-school coaching sessions, after-school satellite and junior clubs, community clubs, festivals and competitions represented some of the mechanisms aimed at improving the pathways from school to club sport. In order to support more able sports performers, the Gifted and Talented work strand targeted both the identification and development of potential sporting talent through a multi-agency approach. Multi-Skills Academies were created for talented 9-12 years olds as part of the out of school activities programme that was managed and supported by both Sports Coach UK (scUK) and the Youth Sport Trust. Step into Sport represented another multi-agency strand that involved schools, LEAs, County Sports Partnerships, the national governing bodies for sport and sports clubs in promoting volunteering and leadership opportunities in sport. The swimming strand focussed upon the delivery of the Swimming Charter (2003) whose purpose was to support every child learning to swim, whilst Sporting Playgrounds was a programme of investment in junior school playgrounds aimed at enhancing the physical and sporting challenges and improving school attendance and behaviour amongst primary school children.

A board of representatives including the YST, head teachers, OFSTED, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), Sport England, DCMS, DfES, DoH and NGBs exercised responsibility for the overall programme, with elements of the strategy monitored and evaluated by OFSTED and the Loughborough Partnership. The delivery of the strategy’s outcomes was based upon local delivery through a network of partnership arrangements between organisations such as schools, local authorities, local education authorities and local and national sports organisations. The government’s commitment to the PESSCL initiative amounted to over £1 billion and significantly the money was ring-fenced and guaranteed from Treasury rather than Lottery funding. This investment represented a substantial commitment by the Labour Government to a policy arena that had previously suffered from
a lack of investment. The allocation of money to the PESSCL programme and its separate work strands is provided in Table 5.1 below.

**Table 5.1 PESSCL Funding 2003-2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>DfES</th>
<th>DCMS</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003 Baseline</td>
<td>£23.5m Sports Colleges (£23.5m)</td>
<td>£40m SSCo £3m Step into Sport (£43m)</td>
<td>£66.5m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-4</td>
<td>£10m SSCo/Training £10m Sporting Playgrounds £26m Sports Colleges (£46m)</td>
<td>£40m SSCo £3m Coaching £20m Club Capital £4m Step into Sport (£67m)</td>
<td>£113m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-5</td>
<td>£69m SSCo/ Training £39m Sports Colleges (£108m)</td>
<td>£9m Coaching £5m Club/Talent Development £20m Club Capital £4m Step into Sport (£38m)</td>
<td>£146m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-6</td>
<td>£105m SSCO Training £50m Sports Colleges (£155m)</td>
<td>£16m Coaching £5m Club/Talent Development £20m Club Capital £4m Step into Sport (£45m)</td>
<td>£200m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The figures demonstrate an incremental, annual increase in funding for the PESSCL initiative from 2003 to 2006, the relative contributions of both DfES and DCMS transferred after 2004-5 reflecting the relocation of responsibility for the School Sport Co-ordinator Programme from DCMS to DfES. The substantial investment of Exchequer funding was undoubtedly based upon the potential of the policy arena to deliver a range of government objectives. In line with the government’s broader policy agendas, the strategy was a tool to help improve academic standards in schools and improve the health of the nation by engaging more people in sport and physical activity whilst also supporting talented performers. Primarily, the programme was a major instrument in the government’s reform agenda for education in which PESS had a role to play in modernising the school workforce. The rationale for the initiative focussed upon locking systems and organisations together that had traditionally worked to different agendas. The PESSCL strategy served a complex range of education, sport and community agendas through
a network of structural arrangements that involved a diverse range of organisations that had to work to collective outcomes.

5.3 Policy Development

5.3.1 NGBs

The contribution of NGBs to the emergence of the PESSCL strategy was primarily as facilitators, rather than deliverers, of sport. Whilst governing bodies were funded through a range of public sources that included Exchequer funding and Lottery awards, NGB delivery was mainly limited to talent development and elite level sport programmes (DCMS Annual Report 2001/2002). Whilst the government’s strategy document Game Plan (DCMS/SU, 2002) recognised the role of governing bodies as key to the delivery of sport in England, there was an acknowledgement of a failure by all partners involved in sport to invest in people, systems and structures. The commissioning of Deloitte and Touche’s 2003 Report Investing in Change delivered guidance to governing bodies on how they might address these issues. It acknowledged some governing bodies had insufficient capacity to effectively manage growth and to deliver the outcomes necessary for the wellbeing of their sport. The advent of lottery funding provided a boost for sport across the UK, both at elite and grassroots levels. The report called for changes to the way sport in the UK was managed and delivered, from the work of Sports Councils to that of the individual governing bodies of sport.

5.3.2 Local authorities

Local authorities had historically been major investors in the sporting infrastructure in England and the publication of Game Plan reaffirmed the government’s core concern for grassroots participation and the need to address local failures in provision (see Game Plan, DCMS / Strategy Unit, 2002). In the apparent vacuum created by the devolution of local authority activities, other institutions (such as schools, regeneration partnerships, county sports partnerships and commercial sports clubs) became increasingly influential in the delivery of local sports programmes. Research conducted by the Centre for Leisure and Sport Research (2002) reported that sports development was a core activity across a broad range of local services.
However its activity was increasingly defined by the need to fill in the gaps in local sporting provision (see for example Bramham & Henry, 1985; Gratton & Taylor, 1985). Glover and Burton (1998), Ravenscroft (1998) and Henry (2001) reaffirm the changing responsibilities of local authorities which, they suggest, had increasingly become enablers, whilst a mixture of organisations, trusts and commercial companies had assumed a more significant delivery role. Ravenscroft (1998) argues that this overly narrow agenda for local authorities was explained by changing political constructs of participation and the consequent ways in which they sought to encourage people into active sport. Local authorities had traditionally played a key role in ensuring that neighbourhood communities had access to sports facilities and coaching within local authority sports facilities. The relationship between local authorities, schools and sports bodies had weakened over the past two decades and the lack of investment in an infrastructure for the policy sector was due to a failure to secure increased Exchequer funding for sport and recreation.

The current government agenda for school sport, social inclusion and community renewal, supported by local area agreements, arguably, provides the basis for renewed partnerships between local authorities, schools and voluntary sport clubs and organisations serving their communities. With the inclusion of sport and recreation in local authorities’ comprehensive performance assessments, their duty within the 2004 Children Act was to provide recreation for children. The PESSCL strategy also provided the opportunity for local authorities to establish new relationships with the agents and agencies involved in the programme.

5.3.3 Sport England
The foundations of the modernisation process for Sport England emanated from the publication of Game Plan (DCMS/SU, 2002) which was the first produced by two government departments (DCMS and the Strategy Unit, SU). Its action plan for sport contained several cross-cutting agendas and demonstrated the government’s desire to increase and widen the base of participation for sport. Crucially, it set a clear agenda for wholesale reform of
Sport in order to create more effective delivery structures. A newly 'modernised' Sport England was charged with providing strategic leadership for sport in England through a new operating model. It reduced its activities to two funding streams that prioritised 20 sports and the delivery of community sport through nine Regional Sports Boards (Sport England, 2004:2). Significantly, Sport England was in the process of modernisation and the publication in 2004 of its Framework for Sport in England, Making England an Active and Successful Sporting Nation represented a significant shift in its focus and direction. As a consequence of a twelve month consultation process, Sport England’s new remit was to increase and widen the base of participation in sport in order 'to make England the most active and successful sporting nation in the world' (Sport England, 2004:2).

Conclusion
Donovan et al (2006:16) have highlighted the challenges and potential difficulties facing a national school sport strategy that attempted to reconcile 'the historical duality of physical education and sport, in partnership approaches'. Furthermore, they attested to the inherent difficulty in forging relationships between schools, clubs, teachers and coaches, who retained a traditional mistrust of each other's agendas. Some years beforehand, Sue Campbell (in her position as Chief Executive of the Youth Sport Trust), speaking at the PEA/UK Prince Philip Fellows Lecture in 1997, acknowledged the challenges posed by partnership working but argued that groups should work together in the interests of young people, whilst still protecting the integrity of all partners (PEA/UK, 1997). There are inevitable challenges when new initiatives and new levels of financial investment are injected into a policy area with a complex range of policy actors, interest groups and vested interests. Moreover, the policy context for PESS was exacerbated by the government's exacting and extensive range of policy outcomes that included raising educational standards, tackling obesity, addressing social exclusion, the identification of elite sporting talent and the development of pathways for lifelong participation in sport and physical activity. Green and Houlihan (2006) and Houlihan (2000) have highlighted the challenges posed by the creation of this complex infrastructure and an assortment of sport initiatives within a
policy space that already possessed a pattern of power relations that had been established as a result of previous policy initiatives. In deciding to transform PESS, government was investing in a policy context characterised by complex structural arrangements and a diverse range of policy agents.

The decision to invest in physical education and school sport was potentially problematic because for decades the practices of PE and sport were regarded as involving two distinct value systems. Whilst PE focussed upon the education of the child ‘through’ the physical medium, sport has been perceived as bounded by discourses of performance, competition and excellence. Whilst it is not the intention of this study to engage in extensive philosophical debates about the values underpinning these two concepts, it is pertinent to recognise the background to these debates. The lack of a clear philosophical distinction between PE and sport has perpetuated a popular public perception of PE as synonymous with sport. Kirk supports this contention and argues that PE is still dominated by the sport discourses that were conceived in the public schools of male, bourgeois, Victorian Britain (Kirk, 1992). The maintenance of these storylines from the nineteenth century onwards is representative of the ongoing struggles surrounding physical education and sport in schools. Penney and Evans (1999) have suggested that the privileging of sport agendas in government policy for education and PE has been a recurring issue that has framed the debates and disputes within the PE profession and between the media and politicians. It is against a background of what Houlihan (2005) describes as deeply entrenched and established biases within the policy process that the Labour Government decided to invest in a national strategy for PE and school sport.
Chapter 6

School Sport Partnerships

Introduction

The three cases included in this study represent significant elements of the PESSCL strategy. They provide the contexts for analysing policy change in an area that is characterised by a range of actors and agencies involved in the development, management and implementation of PESS. Whilst the three cases represent distinct work strands of the PESSCL strategy, they all operate within a framework that requires a commitment to the delivery of its policy outcomes. The chronology of each of the cases begins from the establishment of the National Curriculum for Physical Education in 1992 as this represents a significant policy watershed for physical education and school sport. The introduction of a NCPE provided a catalyst for the incremental growth of a range of interest groups and actors concerned with aspects of PESS. The emergence of a well resourced National School Sport strategy (PESSCL), whose wide-ranging objectives required the commitment of education, sport and community organisations, provided a rich context in which to examine the role of these agents and agencies in shaping policy. The three case study chapters focus upon key strands of the PESSCL strategy namely School Sport Partnerships, School to Club Links and High Quality PESS and provide the substantive background for analysis in the final chapter of this study.

The starting point for the research in each of the case studies recognises the requirement, emphasised by Sabatier in particular, to study a time-period of a decade or more in order to deliver a more reliable analysis of the process of policy change (see Sabatier, 1988; Sabatier & Jenkins Smith, 1999; Weiss, 1997). This approach rejects the notion of policy change as short term decision-making, in favour of one that acknowledges the process of 'policy learning' that occurs as a consequence of changes to the belief systems of individuals and/or coalitions over time (Sabatier, 1993). A more long-term view
of policy change takes account of exogenous factors, such as socio-economic changes that are external to the policy sub-system which may impact upon the stability of the patterns of interests and exchanges within networks, thus altering the fabric of relationships and interests amongst policy actors (Sabatier & Jenkins Smith, 1999). The critical realist assumptions that underpin this study are ideally placed to account for the antecedent social structures that have framed policy activity bounded by this research. The approach acknowledges that, in providing an account of policy change, people confront social structures that are ‘preformed’ and are the product not of people’s actions in the present, but of actions undertaken in the past (see for example Archer, 1995; Hay 1995; Lewis, 2000; Marsh et al 1999). The adoption of a critical realist position has already been acknowledged and addressed in Chapter 4 of this study. This ontological and epistemological approach enables researchers to acknowledge the ongoing and generative role of social structures and the role of agency in determining policy change.

The complex nature of the PESSCL strategy is indicative of the policy context for PESS, its multiple outcomes and disparate range of actors. The primary stakeholders in the school sport partnerships work strand are represented by DfES/DCMS, the YST, schools and Local Education Authorities (LEAs), whilst its secondary actors include Sport England, County Sport Partnerships (CSPs) and Local Authorities (LAs).

6.1 Agenda setting
6.1.1 Education
In his critique of educational change in the last two decades of the 20th century, Hargreaves (1994) suggested that UK governments looked for:

more systems, more hierarchies, or laid on change, more of the same. Or they retreat nostalgically to pre-modern myths of community, consensus and collaboration where small is beautiful and friendships and allegiance tie teachers and others together in tight, protected webs of common purpose and belonging (Hargreaves, 1994:24).
The specialist schools programme which was founded in 1994 evolved and was shaped by consecutive governments with ‘a notable change coming in 1997, when the demand for specialist schools to benefit other schools in the area was added’ (Penney & Houlihan, 2001). The whole tenor of the specialist schools project reflected government commitment to ‘transformative’ agendas for schools that were to be achieved through working together with local schools (DfES, 2003). The introduction in 1996 of sport as part of the specialist schools programme represented a highly significant development for PESS in state schools in England.

6.1.2 PE in schools
During the late 1990s there was a growing sense that something needed to be done to address the growing concern about PE in schools. In an article in the British Journal of Physical Education (Autumn, 1999), BAALPE suggested that the constraints upon physical education in schools had resulted in many more children than usual ‘remaining physically illiterate.’ These concerns were also echoed by the Central Council for Physical Recreation (CCPR), which suggested that the Speednet survey had provided evidence that ‘PE was being undermined in this country’, a perspective that was endorsed by Pat Smith of the National Council for School Sport (NCSS) who suggested that ‘we are in danger of changing the old adage to read “a healthy mind in an unhealthy body”. The Labour Government’s initial focus upon education and its concerted drive to improve standards of literacy and numeracy in primary schools led to the suspension of the orders for physical education at Key Stages 1 and 2. Primary schools were no longer required to deliver PE as part of the curriculum and, as a result, this led to a diminished role for physical education within the curriculum of many primary schools. The subject eventually regained its statutory status in the revised and reduced National Curriculum 2000 and once again became a statutory requirement for all schools in England.

6.1.3 Specialist Sports Colleges
Specialist sports colleges were introduced in 1996, and one year later the first 11 were designated (YST, 2006). Working in close co-operation with a range
of partners they acted as innovative hubs of school and community
development, providing quality opportunities for all young people, and
positioning physical education and school sport at the heart of school
improvement. As discussed in Chapter Two, their role also extended to
raising both sporting and academic standards in schools and maintaining an
active role in establishing and driving partnerships between schools, the
private sector and the wider community (Evans, Whelan & Neal, 2002; DfES,
2003). The expectation was that specialist schools should be outward looking
and a key driver in seeking innovative and collaborative practices in order to
improve the quality of provision in local schools.

The Technology Colleges Trust was established in 1987 and was led by
Chairman Sir Cyril Taylor who was appointed to the Trust to act as adviser to
government on specialist schools (Specialist Schools and Academies Trust,
2006). With CTCs expanding and the first languages colleges designated in
1994, arts and sports colleges were added to the portfolio in 1996. The YST
was also founded in 1994, and was developing a growing reputation for
innovative work in and around schools. Sue Campbell, the Chief Executive of
the YST at the time, recalled how the success of the TOPS programmes in
primary schools had created a growing market for the product and in attempts
to garner support from DfES and DCMS for these programmes she described
how she was becoming a recognised figure in government circles (Interview:
Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006). In the two years prior to the YST’s
involvement with specialist sports colleges, Campbell explained how she had
been:

going in and out of the DCMS and DfES, banging on about the
TOPs Programmes ... and for reasons I never quite grasped, the
specialist schools trust didn’t want the sport ones ... they were a
charitable trust, they were doing the kind of support work for the
other specialisms and so they asked me, would I take sports
colleges on (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

The reluctance of the City Colleges Trust to take on the work of sports
colleges provided a unique opportunity for a charitable sports organisation to
take on a potentially demanding role in managing a network of schools. Sue
Campbell recalled how the general advice had been against taking on what
had been a Conservative initiative that many had said was likely to ‘wither on the vine’ under a Labour administration (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006). Despite advice to the contrary, the decision was made by the Trust that:

it was better that we were involved and tried to shape them, than somebody else, so we decided to run with them, we were determined if we got involved that we would do a good job (Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

A Senior Manager for the YST substantiated this view and highlighted how the designation of PE as part of the specialist school programme and the contract between YST and DfES to manage specialist sports colleges was a major turning-point for PESS as it ‘gave PE [and the YST] a voice around policy-making and whole school improvement’ (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006).

With access to DfEE secured through its work with specialist sports colleges, Steve Grainger recalled a meeting in 1998 that he and Sue Campbell had with Charles Clarke (MP) whilst he was number three in education. This meeting led to a request for the YST to conduct a mapping exercise that provided evidence of the initiatives and organisations that were involved in PESS. The exercise set the foundation for the development of the model that was eventually operationalised for school sport partnerships. Speaking about the mapping process that was commissioned by the DfEE, Steve Grainger revealed how:

we [YST] looked at those products that were out there in PE and sport … CPD for teachers, TOP LINK, citizenship, CPD …. all these products were coming in. You had got teachers struggling to deliver citizenship in schools and yet we were delivering TOP LINK and sport education and volunteering work. We realised that all it needed was to link the activities together and to plan the activity: we had created the first school sport partnership model (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006).

Whilst the model was to take some years to reach fruition, the template had been created, and the YST ‘kind of waited in a sense for the opportunity to come around’ (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006). In the first few years
of its association with the specialist schools project, the Youth Sport Trust’s access to government was solely restricted to the DfES. Access to the DCMS remained limited due to Sport England’s close involvement with DCMS and, in particular, its work in schools with school sport co-ordinators (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006). The School Sport Co-ordinator scheme was funded by £60m of National Lottery money from Sport England and the New Opportunities Fund and was intended to complement the efforts of teachers in reviving competitive sport in schools.

6.1.4 School Sport Co-ordinators

In June 1999, the government announced a multi-agency initiative of six hundred new school sport co-ordinators to help arrange competitive fixtures between schools and to boost after-school sports. Speaking at the Institute for Public Policy Research conference on its ‘Vision for Sport in the UK’, Schools Minister Charles Clarke announced that it was the job of the school sports co-ordinator to lift the pressure on teachers by arranging better links between schools and sports clubs to increase after-school sport (Clarke, 1999). He went on to explain that the initiative played an important role in ‘raising school standards’ and in establishing competitive sport as a key part of the PE curriculum in every school. The introduction of specialist sports colleges in 1996 and the subsequent announcement of school sport co-ordinators in 1999, helped to heighten the profile of school sport. The new educational milieu for schools was based upon government demands for increased collaboration amongst secondary, primary and special schools; the modernisation of the school workforce through innovative use of teachers and others; and the development of behaviour strategies in schools (DfES/DCMS, 2003). The linkages between education agendas and the potential of PESS to help support the government with its reform agenda for schools had been realised as a consequence of two opportune meetings between Sue Campbell and the Secretaries of State for Education and Sport.

With the momentum for school sport and PE growing as a result of the work of sports colleges and the YST, Sue Campbell’s new position as non-political advisor for PESS afforded her direct access to government that school sport
figures had not enjoyed before. Sue Campbell recalled one particular meeting with senior cabinet members in which she was seeking to secure more funding for PESS:

The Prime Minister is very committed to physical education, no I'd better re-word that, he is very committed to sport; he finds it hard still to grapple with what physical education is, but he is very committed to school sport and you know when we went from £150 million to £250 million we essentially did it, and it sounds just simple but we essentially made a presentation in the Cabinet Room ... the audience were the two Secretaries of State, all the Permanent Secretaries, his Policy Unit, and I presented to him. He asked me questions, I answered them and he said, "What additional money do you need?" and in a flash I said, "another £100 million" and he turned to Charles and said, "Go find it, Charles [Clarke]" (Interview: Sue Campbell 12th May 2006)

As a consequence of the meeting, extra funding was released to support the growing work surrounding PE and school sport. The growth in the budget allocated to school sport reflected the commitment of Ministers and the Prime Minister to the work of PESS. Whilst the initial injection of £250 million was a significant amount of money for this previously cash-starved area of public policy, it should be recognised that it remained a relatively small amount, compared to the budgets of other government departments.

School Sport Partnerships were a significant element of the new PE, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy and involved families of schools whose role was to enhance the sporting opportunities for young people. The partnerships were based upon local networks of schools that typically included a specialist sports college, approximately 8 secondary schools and 45 primary schools clustered around them (DfES, 2003). Each partnership received a grant of just over a quarter of a million pounds to provide funding for infrastructure posts to support the work of PESS and to boost sports opportunities in the locality. The model was based on the hub and spoke concept that both Sue Campbell and Steve Grainger had created as a result of their discussions with Charles Clarke. The programme's key objectives were wide-ranging and involved strategic planning, primary liaison, school and community links, coaching and leadership and raising standards. These outcomes represented a mixture of education, sport and community
objectives and underlined the challenges posed to all the delivery agents in a set of overlapping outcomes that blurred the boundaries of their work. An experienced teacher was appointed as Partnership Development Manager (PDM) from within the sports college or local LEA to take on the role of managing and supporting the work of the SSP. Primary Link Teachers within the primary partnership schools received funding for timetable release for one or two days per month in order to dedicate time to plan and deliver the PE curriculum and make links with other schools and organisations in the partnership area.

At the outset of the School Sport Partnership programme its key outcomes focussed upon:

- Increased participation amongst school age children, in particular girls and young women, black and ethnic minorities, disabled young people, and young people living in areas of socio-economic disadvantage
- Improved standards of performance by children across a range of sports
- Improved motivation, attitude and self-esteem, resulting in increased personal and social development in all aspects of school life
- Increased numbers of qualified and active coaches, leaders and officials in all schools and local sports clubs/facilities

(IYS, 2004:1)

Whilst schools, the DfES, DCMS, YST and LEAs were at the core of the work of school sport partnerships, an increasing range of national and local sports organisations became involved as the work of partnerships grew exponentially. Sport clubs, CSPs, LAs, NCSS and NGBs represented some of the organisations involved in working with school sport partnerships. Specialist sports colleges were a key partner at the hub of school sport partnership structures. Their principal responsibilities centred upon three school related aims:
1. To raise standards of achievement in physical education and sport through the increased quality of teaching and learning
2. To extend and enrich curriculum and out of hours learning (OOHL) opportunities in physical education and sport
3. To increase the take up and interest in physical education and other sporting or physical activity related courses

and two community aims:

1. To raise standards by developing good practice by disseminating and sharing this practice with other schools and groups, including non-specialist secondary schools
2. To work with appropriate local partners, including business and community groups, governing bodies and sports development units, to develop sustainable sporting opportunities which promote both participation and achievement in PE and community sport

(Evans et al, 2002)

The explicit role of sports colleges was to raise sporting and academic standards in schools and local communities and to play an active role in establishing and driving partnerships between schools, the private sector and the wider community (Evans, Whelan & Neal, 2002). The expectation was that specialist schools should be outward looking and, through innovative, consultative and collaborative practices, work to improve the quality of provision with local and national partners (DfES, 2003).

The position of Partnership Development Managers (PDM) was full-time and usually, but not exclusively, based in a sports college. Initially the role was ring-fenced for qualified PE teachers. However, in an attempt to avoid a shortfall of PE teachers, applications for the post of PDM increasingly became the preserve of individuals from local authority sports development backgrounds (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006). Expectations were that PDMs managed local partners in order to deliver key policy
objectives that included increasing participation in physical education, informal activity, community-based sport and inter-school competition. More broadly, their role was also to help facilitate improved attitudes and behaviour, school attendance and attainment and achievement in and through PE. In order to meet these challenging objectives, PDMs were required to network with a range of organisations both inside and beyond school boundaries. These organisations included local sports clubs, local authorities, county sports partnerships, coaches and NGBs plus approximately eight partner secondary schools. The role of the PDM was also supported by a school sport co-ordinator whose job was to guide and direct the work of partnerships in schools and their associated family of primary schools. The school sport co-ordinator (SSCo) was normally, but not exclusively, based in a secondary school and their role focussed specifically on improving school sport opportunities through promoting out of hours school learning, inter-school competitions and supporting school to club links across their family of schools. The Primary Link Teacher (PLT) was a primary school teacher who was funded for release from teaching for 12 days each year to allow them to concentrate on improving the quantity and quality of PE and sport in their primary school.

The publication of the government’s plan for sport Game Plan (2002) and Sport England’s new Framework for Sport in England (2004), led to a refocusing of Sport England’s priorities. Sport England’s new vision was to ensure that people were able to ‘start, stay and succeed’ in sport and active recreation. Based upon a three-year funding agreement with DCMS, one of Sport England’s key priorities was to develop and implement a new delivery system for sport through Regional Sports Boards, County Sports Partnerships and Community Sports Networks (Sport England, 2006: 3). With responsibility for delivery devolved by Sport England to its Regional Sports Boards, the fundamental priority of County Sports Partnerships was to focus upon increasing participation levels in sport and physical activity by 1% year on year. Serving as a replacement for elements of the work of Sport England’s Active Sport Programme, County Sports Partnerships (CSPs) were given responsibility for the strategic coordination of sport and physical activity within
each county. The role of each County Sports Partnership was based upon a set of needs at county level and, whilst their work focussed largely upon supporting national governing bodies to deliver their whole sport plans, a number of strategic partners were regarded as critical in helping Sport England to deliver its objectives to make England an active and successful sporting nation (Sport England, 2006: 4). The remit of CSPs focussed upon the delivery of Sport England’s outcomes for community sport which required closer co-operation with the work of the PESSCL strategy.

6.2 Management and implementation

Whilst schools were directly accountable to the DfES through a process of annual reporting and monitoring by Ofsted, the work of Specialist Sports Colleges and School Sports Partnerships were managed and supported by the Youth Sport Trust (YST). According to a Senior Manager for the YST, the Trust assisted the DfES in managing sports colleges by helping them to achieve specialist designation, whilst also supporting them to deliver high quality innovative practice in PESS (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006). The YST, sports colleges and SSPs, were expected to work in partnership to implement the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links Strategy.

From 2004 onwards, the work of the YST focussed upon supporting government in the delivery of its PSA entitlement for PE and school sport. The School Sport Partnership programme was central to the government’s PESSCL strategy. The work of SSPs was aligned closely to the objectives of specialist sports colleges, whose remit was to enhance and develop its work with partner schools and its wider communities. The introduction of the PESSCL strategy necessitated what Matthew Conway described as a reconfiguration of the work of specialist sports colleges and school sport co-ordinators which were ‘ramped up and refocused on the partnerships as well as the co-ordinators’ (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005). All school sport partnerships received additional funding of approximately £270k per year, to enhance and increase the sporting opportunities available to young people within its local community, with the money supporting the work of the
PDM, the SSCo, the PLT and any additional staffing costs incurred by the release of SSCos from their teaching commitments.

In explaining the funding mechanisms for PESSCL and school sport partnerships, Project Manager Matthew Conway (DCMS/ DfES) explained how the funding streams came through individual departments, with 'Club Links' and 'Step into Sport' a DCMS lead, the other work strands funded by DfES. The mechanics of the funding and delivery mechanisms was not seen as problematic and, despite sports colleges being a DfES lead, advice was sent to Ministers and to the Secretaries of State in both departments, 'even though only one of them really had the constitutional right to do so' (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005). As the joint DfES/DCMS Project Director of the PESSCL strategy, Conway suggested that 'very, very rarely, and only when it was absolutely the right thing and necessary to do, was an issue dealt with on a single departmental basis'.

6.2.1 The role of the YST

For Steve Grainger, the Chief Executive of the YST, school sport partnerships had been devised as an alternative infrastructure to the previous system that had relied upon LEAs and their PE subject advisors (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006). The YST's management of the SSP programme, separated into five areas of the country, roughly in line with the two government office regions and included a team of five people working on a day-to-day basis with local education authorities, schools, school sport partnerships, sports colleges and other partners (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006). This infrastructure provided the interface between policy and practice and allowed the YST the opportunity to keep abreast with developments within the network and to understand the particular challenges it faced. The commitment of extra staff to monitor the work of SSPs had allowed the YST to see:

what we have got right and wrong in terms of the strategy and where we are going with the programmes that we are implementing. We have played a conduit role which has allowed us to work closely with the DfES to support the infrastructure and move it towards the
For a Senior Manager from the YST, the challenge was to ensure that the specialism was having an impact upon supporting the PSA target and whole school improvement. The challenge of working through school sport partnerships was exacerbated by the need to manage a diverse range of partners to achieve a shared set of targets and outcomes. A Senior Manager of the YST described how they worked to ‘huge targets, huge outcomes and milestones and a reporting process that we are supposed to deliver on ....we have got a financial advisor, so it is even more accountable’ (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006). She described how achieving these targets required the commitment of all the organisations involved:

so when we are working with the QCA we are working in the same framework ... but the difficulties arise when you are working with other important partners such as AfPE who want to operate as a lobbying group and don’t have the same accountability and contractual framework that you work to. Organisations such as AfPE have different agendas to those of the YST and whilst I respect them for their stance in championing the pure message of PE, there is a degree of frustration about the naiveté with which they have approached the lobbying process (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006).

Whilst partnership working was a key to the successful delivery of the outcomes for the school sport partnership programme, the YST made a clear delineation between its role in the management and implementation of school sport partnerships and the role and responsibilities of the professional association for PE (AfPE). For the YST, having a strong subject association helped support it own work, but it was clearly stated that it was not the role of the YST to galvanise, motivate and support the subject in a local authority context. For a Senior Manager from the YST, the role of AfPE was to support the subject in schools, especially primary PE,

where I hope AfPE will begin to take the lead. Part of the role of the Youth Sport Trust is to ensure that the way we work with AfPE through the school sport coordinator education training programme, is towards a bigger vision for primary PE which we support whilst they lead it (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006).
However a Senior Member of AfPE questioned the overall involvement and role of the Youth Sport Trust in the delivery of PE, which they perceived as a sports development agency managing an educational infrastructure of specialist schools. Whilst it was acknowledged that the Youth Sport Trust was outstanding in their advocacy and communications, there was a clear tension between their role as a sports charity and their involvement in education and PE. The concern expressed by one member of AfPE was that there was:

a popular misconception out there that PE has had a lot of money through the PESSCL strategy. The only money physical education had out of £469 million is £18 million and that's for CPD. All the rest of the money went into infrastructure posts to support the work of sports colleges, School Sport Partnerships PDMs and the PLTs (Interview: Senior AfPE Member, 27th June 2006).

In the creation of an infrastructure for school sport partnerships, the money had been used to create a number of new posts. This approach was juxtaposed with that of education bodies such as AfPE, whose central concern was to service the needs of teachers, to deliver the NCPE and to improve standards of PE teaching in schools.

6.2.2 The role of partnerships
The work of school sports partnerships focussed upon the delivery of the government’s PSA target for school sport and PE. Whilst directly accountable to DfES, the work of SSPs and delivery of their strategic objectives were managed by the Youth Sport Trust. From October 2004, SSPs worked to a revised set of policy outcomes agreed by DfES, the Youth Sport Trust, QCA and Ofsted. These objectives placed a greater degree of emphasis upon the work of SSPs in supporting activities beyond the school context and in helping to deliver more measurable outcomes such as participation in informal activity, out of hours school learning (OHSL), community based sport and improved quality of community life. Responsibility for the delivery of these outcomes was managed by staff whose posts were funded through SSPs. Furthermore, the new policy outcomes necessitated that these staff work beyond the school’s boundaries and forge new partnerships with a range of community partners. This work was managed through specialist sports colleges, where
the position of Director of Sport was to 'project manage' these new strategic partnerships and to monitor and evaluate their progress, whilst ensuring their contribution to whole-school development. Because specialist schools seek re-designation every three years, specialist sports colleges tend to make these appointments fixed-term contracts (Interview: Darren Turner, 16th June 2006). The re-designation procedure was also perceived as a stick or a lever for the YST in its relationship with them (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006).

A number of new roles were created in order to support the new infrastructure for PESS within schools. Partnership Development Manager posts were funded through the SSP initiative and were full-time positions usually, but not exclusively, based in a sports college. The role of PDMs was created in order to manage school sport partnership programmes, to produce partnership development plans for school sport partnerships and to develop strategic links with key delivery partners in schools, sport and wider communities. Helen Miles, a PE advisor, emphasised that the post of PDM involved managing a family of schools and was not primarily about PE or curriculum development per se (Interview: Helen Miles, 19th June 2006). The role of School Sport Co-ordinators was to focus upon improving school sport opportunities, out of hours school learning, intra and inter-school competition and club links within families of schools. Primary Link Teachers were additional posts of responsibility that were based in primary or special schools and were primary school teachers who were funded through the SSP initiative in order to improve the quantity and quality of PE and sport in their primary school.

Designation as a specialist school required each prospective institution to raise a minimum of £50,000 in sponsorship. In return, the DfES provided a capital grant of £100,000 and an annual grant of approximately £123 per pupil which could be used for appointment of additional staff, in-service training, equipment or outreach work in the local community. Schools were incentivised to gain specialist status because of the extra funding they secured from DfES and their subsequent eligibility for further lottery funding to support the
improvement of their sports facilities. One of the conditions of gaining specialist status was a requirement by the DfES for each school to submit a four-yearly development plan that contained details of how it intended to use the specialism to provide high quality learning opportunities for the local community. In addition to achieving these targets, specialist schools were also required to meet the statutory demands of the National Curriculum. The shared community outcomes of both specialist sports colleges and school sport partnerships, placed responsibility upon both bodies to be proactive in seeking partners outside school contexts. Although Sport England had originally managed the SSCo programme, the creation of the all encompassing PESSCL strategy led to its transfer to DCMS and DfES. According to Matthew Conway, the Director of the Strategy, ‘very early on it was decided that administration of the programme was no longer going to be Sports England’s role, whether they wanted it or not’ (Interview: 12th July 2005). Game Plan (2002) also positioned CSPs as central to the future of the delivery of sport in England and Tessa Jowell, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport announced that the responsibility of Sport England’s new Regional Boards was ‘to nurture and extend County Sports Partnerships so they were able to work effectively with other local agencies’ (quoted in Sport England, 2005: 23). This new framework meant that Sport England no longer had any direct involvement in schools and its new role was to support the work of NGBs in increasing participation in community sport. Regional Sports Boards provided a mechanism for Sport England to deliver its new vision to ‘work with our partners to help people start, stay and succeed in sport at every level’ (Sport England, 2004: 2). Having secured a three-year funding agreement with DCMS, one of Sport England’s new priorities was to manage and implement a delivery system for sport through County Sports Partnerships and Community Sports Networks (Sport England, 2006: 3). In line with the Government's stated objective to increase levels of physical activity within the UK, Sport England’s preferred approach was to invest significantly in and work through County Sport Partnerships (CSPs). The stated core driver for Sport England’s investment in these CSPs was the creation of a network of dynamic, progressive CSPs that made a significant

The role of CSPs was to co-ordinate sport and physical activity on a county basis and to provide the interface between school sport and community sport, helping to support NGBs to achieve their ‘whole sport plans’ and the work of school sport partnerships. A Senior Staff Member from the YST explained how CSPs were bringing club, regional and national governing bodies to school sport partnerships, whilst acting as a conduit for community coaches and volunteers (Interview: 12th July 2006). Although CSPs were funded largely through the DCMS and Sport England Lottery Fund they were also supported by additional finance from the national governing bodies of sport, local education authorities and local authorities. The creation of new local structures meant that Sport England exerted a degree of authority over a number of key partners, such as SSPs, national governing bodies, sports clubs, local education authorities, local authorities, Sports Coach UK and the YST who were now accountable to Sport England through a performance management system.

A County Sport Partnership comprised a number of agencies that worked together within a county to offer a single system of high quality opportunities for people to benefit from sport (Sport England, 2008). Each CSP employed a small number of staff, operating through a Partnership Board to help co-ordinate the activities of their partnership agencies. The key areas of work for County Sports Partnerships were closely interrelated to the delivery of PESSCL strategy, development of links with performance sport and in ensuring that school and community sports was driven by and focussed upon NGB plans. For CSPs there was also an explicit commitment to the Club Links element of the PESSCL strategy, with CSPs supporting the development of these links and the work of high quality clubs, especially in helping to facilitate an increase in their membership (Sport England, 2005).

The move from an ‘active sports’ framework to ‘county sports partnerships’ signalled a more targeted approach to performance measurement in which
CSPs needed to deliver continuous service improvement and increasing participation in sport and physical activity (Knight et al, 2005). Sport England placed an explicit requirement upon its twenty priority NGBs to work through County Sports Partnerships as part of their ‘whole sport plans’. In turn, CSPs were responsible for supporting each NGB in its work with schools and the delivery of the PESSCL strategy. Roger Davis of the NCSS explained how their role was essentially targeted at ‘brokering the interface between NGBs and SSPs at county level in selected sports, whilst also working with PDMs and Senior Competition Managers’ (Interview, 23rd November 2006).

Funded through and answerable to DCMS and Sport England, CSPs were devised as a single system for delivering joined-up sport on a county basis. The intention of CSPs was to bring a degree of coherence to the work of key agencies, such as SSPs, NGBs and LAs in supporting DCMS and Sport England to deliver PSA Target 3 which focussed upon increasing the number of people who participate in active sports at least 12 times a year by 3% and increasing the number who engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity level sport at least three times a week by 3%. Their specific county remit also extended to supporting the delivery of the PESSCL strategy, making them an unique cross-section of stakeholders and partners involved in each SSP (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006). However, for some of the NGBs involved in this study, they were perceived as an extra layer of bureaucracy in which Sport England was attempting to reassert its control over the work of local community sport initiatives that had been created by the PESSCL strategy (Interview: Mike Round, 21st July 2006; Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006).

6.2.3 The role of LEAs

Local education authorities had traditionally enjoyed longstanding partnership arrangements with schools. However the policies of Thatcher governments had served to erode the power and responsibilities of LEAs over their local schools. Whilst the Youth Sport Trust, specialist sports colleges and school sport partnerships had emerged as key players in physical education and
school sport, the role of LEAs and their PE advisors had become increasingly marginalised. The traditional role of the LEA and its advisory system had been decimated as a result of the ERA (1988) which had brought about a devolvement of greater managerial and financial powers to individual schools. The subject of increasingly close scrutiny and financial inspection, the publication of joint Ofsted and Audit Commission Report *LEA Support for School Improvement* (2001) had suggested that some LEAs had inhibited school improvement rather than promoted it. On a more positive note, the report suggested that LEAs were good at ‘partnership’ working but that the complexity of the projects, initiatives and agencies with which they had to work was too great for some. In the report, Mike Tomlinson, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Schools suggested that ‘this report gives little comfort to those who believe that LEAs should be abolished, but it disposes of some of the exaggerated claims that are made for them’. It was in a context in which local education authorities played a relatively marginal role that PESSCL emerged. As Penney and Evans (1999) have suggested, the position and power of LEAs had been eroded by a process of devolving power and control from central and local government to schools. The process of LMS, which has been described in an earlier chapter, led to the collapse of subject advisory services as a consequence of ‘the education market of the 1990s...in which LEAs clearly lacked adequate resources to provide services desirable to support curriculum development in schools’ (Penney & Evans, 1999: 85). Moreover, they highlighted the situation in some parts of the country in which attempts at cost cutting measures had meant that some authorities had been left with a solitary advisor, whilst some LEAs did not have any. This erosion of the powers of LEAs had been a concern for a Senior Ofsted Advisor (PE HMI) who explained how their roles had been marginalised even further at the outset of the PESSCL strategy through what she viewed as the creation of:

> a whole new infrastructure and yet there was an infrastructure there ... subject advisers may not have been in every authority, and not everybody might have been of the same quality as you wanted, but we did have an infrastructure there and that was almost ignored at one point (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006).
The design of a new delivery framework for PESS through the PESSCL strategy was an attempt to dispense with the old in favour of a new system that was sleeker and more efficient. Sue Campbell described how there was a need in the development of the PESSCL strategy to:

\begin{quote}
\textit{disempower parts of the system ... I have tried to disengage bits at times when I have felt that for policy reasons ... and do you know that\'s a judgement call. I am sure there will be times when somebody historically will look back and say I got that wrong} (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).
\end{quote}

Yet, despite attempts to disengage LEAs at the start of the PESSCL strategy, a Senior Ofsted Advisor (HMI for PE) had recently observed a re-emergence of LEA PE advisors because ‘people have learned that you do need to have a strategic overview within a local authority across schools and local authority people are best served to do that’ (Interview: 26th July 2006). Sue Campbell predicted a gradual re-appearance in a revised format of the LEA and its subject advisory system as the PESSCL strategy moved towards a more defined focus for high quality PESS. This argument was also substantiated by a Senior Staff Member of the YST who believed that whilst the role of the traditional PE advisor in local authorities had changed. Those advisors that were still active within LEA systems in England had embraced the changes and were now playing ‘an absolutely vital and critical role within local delivery agencies’ (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006). Indeed, her experience had led her to the conclusion that some LEA advisors had adopted an active role in supporting small groups of school sport partnerships at a local level to strategically align their work in order to operate more effectively at a local authority level. The publication of the Every Child Matters policy (DfES, 2003) meant that the authority was now

\begin{quote}
more central to the positioning of PE and school sport against broader government agendas at an authority level and to making a valued and relevant contribution to supporting SSPs in their work with schools (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006).
\end{quote}

Helen Miles, an advisory teacher for Birmingham LEA, believed that the local education authority should be key to the achievement of local policies,
steering groups and making sure schools within partnerships were working towards the same goal (Interview: Helen Miles, 19th June 2006).

6.2.4 Local Authorities
In September 2006, a new Institute for Sport, Parks and Leisure (ISPAL) was launched as a consequence of the merger of the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management (ILAM) and the National Association of Sports Development (NASD). Speaking at the launch of the new body, Bev Smith, an ISPAL board member, made a call to the sector to rise to the challenge of delivering on government agendas, as it was her belief that the sports development sector had traditionally lacked clarity of definition and purpose (ISPAL, 2006). The creation of ISPAL in 2006 represented a new cross-sectoral body intended to create a new strategic alliance between DCMS and the ODPM to support a new partnership which would parallel and overlap with PESSCL.

However, the challenges of working in a sports development team as a part of a local authority remained challenging. Sue Bell, a senior sports development officer working for Birmingham City Council for over twenty years, recalled the changes from the early 1990s when the City Council had been characterised by a strong, sport specific, development section that funded over 18 officers across 18 different sports. The current situation was one in which the role of local authorities was being progressively eroded by budget cuts and the consequences of government policy which focussed on sport delivered through NGBs and schools rather than LA sports development units. The termination of Sport England’s Active Sports programme which had provided substantial financial funds for the work of sports development teams had been transferred to SSPs, LDAs and CSPs (Interview, Sue Bell, 2nd February 2007). Pete Mintoft, Head of Sports Development at Birmingham City Council, described the effects of Sport England’s new operational arrangements:

As the local delivery arm for sport in the local authority, the Active Sports programme has driven sports development agendas through Sport England for the past five years, but this has meant short-term contracts which have not been good for the stability of the team and for sports development as a whole. The problem for sports
development is that sport is not a statutory service, so it is prone to be cut from budgets (Interview: Pete Mintoft, 7th February 2007).

Mintoft described the emergence of County Sports Partnerships as a significant step for Sport England which was seeking to reassert itself in local community sport. Sue Bell, an SDO, expressed her concern about the nature of the work of sports development officers and SSPs:

> We have developed a professional bid writing culture in which PDMs are active in writing lots of bids to provide an injection of cash into the partnership. At times it seems like firing from the hip because much of the funding is short-term and not long-term funding for a range of disparate activities (Interview: Sue Bell, 2nd February 2007).

Birmingham's sports development unit had managed to maintain its contacts with PDMs, although SDOs had no direct lines of communication with the YST. Most notably, Mintoft had witnessed a distinct improvement in the relationship between the LA sports development unit and Sport England because 'now our agendas are shared, regional officers are more amenable to work with us to help achieve the PSA target (Interview: Pete Mintoft, 7th February 2007). Whilst Phil Veasey of Sport England acknowledged that the role of sport in the community and the work of sports development teams had got closer as a consequence of the reconfiguration of policy agendas, their work, he believed, had been compromised by the lack of a community strand within the PESSCL strategy (Interview, Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006).

### 6.3 Policy development

The findings of the second evaluation of the School Sport Partnerships programme conducted by the Loughborough Partnership reported that partnerships operated within a supportive organisational and political environment that had allowed them to make a positive impact on the lives of young people (IYS, 2006). School sport partnerships were instrumental in driving a number of initiatives that were central to the PESSCL agenda and quickly become a focal point for the work of schools and local and national sports networks. Indeed, the 2005 report on the performance of the SSP programme indicated the very positive relationships between PDMs and a
number of external organisations, and the frequent and supportive interaction between PDMs, School Sport Co-ordinators and Primary Link Teachers (IYS, 2006). Partnerships were also commended for their ‘mutually supportive relationships with sports colleges’ (IYS, 2006:2).

6.3.1 School Sport Co-ordinators and School Sport Partnerships

Since the appearance of school sport co-ordinators as a Lottery funded Sport England initiative in 1999, the scheme had become a core component of the PESSCL strategy, funded directly by government through the DfES. Sport England managed the SSCo programme from 1999 to 2002. Steve Grainger recalled the initial announcement of six hundred coaches to assist in schools and what the press at the time had described as ‘track-suited supremos who were going to sort out PE and school sport’ (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006). In the months leading up to the launch of the PESSCL strategy, the YST foresaw the danger of specialist sports colleges and school sport co-ordinators operating as two overlapping and competing systems:

so we had somehow to try and say, we don’t need a parallel system in which school sport partnerships are separate from schools, we need a single comprehensive system in which sports colleges are at the heart of a partnership of schools (Interview, Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006).

The model proposed by the YST focussed upon making PESSCL a coherent programme, which was centrally managed but ‘had to be owned within the school, so that point was fairly significant’ (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006).

Sue Campbell described how Sport England had originally managed and implemented the school sport co-ordinator programme using Lottery and NOF money:

but at that time they were nothing to do with Specialist Sports Colleges and the two strategies were separate. But when I got into the Kate Hoey, Estelle Morris triangle, that was one of the things that I could force to come together ... and not allow specialist sports colleges to go off in one direction and School Sport Co-ordinators in another (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).
Whether that was for more pragmatic reasons of funding or a desire to retain the values of PE within the initiative is unclear. However in describing the decision by the DfES to embed school sport co-ordinators within Exchequer funding, as opposed to leaving it as part of lottery funds, Campbell suggested it:

was a bold thing to do and the growth of the budget to £250 million has unquestionably been a continued commitment by Tessa Jowell, Charles Clarke and, without doubt, the Prime Minister (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

The school sport co-ordinators initiative was wrested from the control of Sport England and placed on a more secure financial footing within the PESSCL strategy and under the control of the DfES, DCMS and the Youth Sport Trust. In moving school sport co-ordinators away from the control of Sport England and by embedding their role in PESSCL funding, the immediate concern was to ‘re-focus them on school sport partnerships, rather than just the co-ordinators themselves’ (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005). The major focus for PESSCL was on the creation of a solid infrastructure, with school sport partnerships and sports colleges as its backbone. For Steve Grainger, the decision to run school sport partnerships through a network based within schools and using SSCOs as an element of the programme was about building an alternative infrastructure and not investing in LEAs and LEA advisors (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006).

6.3.2 Project developments
The first 31 school sport partnerships were established in September 2000 with the majority located in sports colleges. The intention was for national coverage in England by 2006. More specifically, the Youth Sport Trust’s target was to have 400 specialist sports colleges, 411 school sport partnerships, 2464 school sport co-ordinators and 14,397 primary link teachers by 2006 (DfES/DCMS). This rapid expansion presented a number of challenges for the YST in its management of the programme and in retaining a focus on its core outcomes. However, in the development and implementation of school sport partnerships a number of problems and distractions emerged. One particular area of concern for the YST was that the health agenda was starting
to impact upon the focus of the programme. Steve Grainger expressed his concern that school sport partnerships and specialist sports colleges were allowing health agendas to alter the focus of their work and was distracting them from the core priorities of the strategy. Whilst there was an acknowledgement that the health and obesity agenda was important to schools, his worry was that:

the minute we allow the health agenda and the obesity agenda to begin to dominate what we do in school sport partnerships, what we are actually doing is moving away from education objectives to health objectives and currently this infrastructure is funded by education; you judge it against education objectives and one of the real dangers is that everybody sees obesity and jumps on the bandwagon (Interview; Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006).

Whilst the Department of Health was a member of the PESSCL Board it had not contributed financially to it and, indeed, there was a belief that health had begun to use the infrastructure to deliver its own objectives (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006; Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006). This spillover from another policy sector had created the potential for slippage within the infrastructure. A refocusing upon the delivery of physical activity agendas could potentially alienate DfES. It was important for the long-term security of the programme that the infrastructure stayed focussed on PE and sport:

it is trying to say to people, you have got to stick to what this money has been made available for, otherwise yet again sport money ... physical education money just gets diluted (Interview, Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006).

The capacity of the YST to manage the programme was also being tested, as the number of school sport partnerships increased and adapted in order to meet the needs of their local communities. A Senior Staff Member for the YST described how school sport partnerships were seeking greater flexibility with their funding which had meant that the YST had to monitor closely whether some of the new SSP models were achieving the basic principles and outcomes for the programme:
SSPs are wanting different models, they are challenging and pushing the boundaries, if you are not really clear with your communications, the network feels the message is changing, the goal posts are shifting, when they aren't; we have always been talking about 2 hours high quality PE and school sport (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

Moreover, she believed that there was increasing doubt as to whether the hub and spoke model was any longer 'fit for purpose', a point that was also underlined by the Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Report (2005) which recorded the movement of some SSPs away from a sports college hub. This argument was also borne out by a member of QCA who suggested that 'the initial infrastructure has been moderated and developed over time' (Interview: Crichton Casbon, 13th June 2006). The report also expressed a concern about the sustainability of the line management relationships of SSPs as the remit of partnerships moved both geographically and strategically beyond that of the sports college Director of Specialism (YS, 2006:5). This had brought about a recommendation that DfES, YST and Sport England should monitor the evolution of the relationship between sports colleges and SSPs and keep the preferred model under review as partnerships adopted alternative models designed to suit their particular local circumstances. As school sport partnerships and sports colleges were on the verge of complete coverage of the country by 2006:

identifying and maintaining where the hubs should be, has been quite a challenge; also, and rightly so, school sport partnerships that have been long established have started to challenge the traditional order, started to want to be more flexible with their use of the grants.(Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

Whether the principles and outcomes could be achieved through modified models of school sport partnerships had been challenging for the Youth Sport Trust:

The subtleties of how you get there has been a challenge, and obviously as soon as you introduce flexibility, which is absolutely the right thing to do, when they get to that point where they need a bit of autonomy, everybody else is saying well that is not the model and can we do this? And can we do that? And you would be amazed at
a network of, at the moment, four hundred and eleven, will be four hundred and fifty partnerships; it is a real grapevine and as soon as something happens in one part of the country, within a month everybody knows about it (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

Indeed there was growing evidence that, as the SSP programme expanded, greater demands had been placed upon the YST’s capacity to support the initiative and keep it focussed upon its core objectives. The Loughborough Partnership Report suggested that whilst the Youth Sport Trust remained a key source of advice and support, there were some instances where there had been gaps in provision because of the lack of YST Regional Development Officers. Indeed there was some evidence within partnerships that the role of the Youth Sport Trust appeared unclear to some PDMs and that the YST’s Regional Officers appeared to lack flexibility and often ‘stuck to the party line’ (IYS, 2006:25).

The Monitoring and Evaluation Report for 2005 was unequivocal in articulating the new challenges for the next phase of the programme. These included the need to ensure that school sport partnership objectives remain distinct when partnerships are linked with other area-based sport and community initiatives. Roger Davis of the National Council for School Sport (NCSS) suggested that in his experience of working with the school sport partnerships network there was a need to be clear about who was responsible for each agenda: sport, education, sports development. It was also clear that for one observer this lack of clarity and focus was due to the expansion of the initiative to include all of these agents:

There is a confusion about whether the strategy is a sport and extra curricular initiative, or about core PE provision; strands like SSPs is about extra curricular provision, it’s about competitions, festivals, outside links ... teachers want it to be about core PE (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006).

For the YST, the role of SSPs was an advocacy job designed to tackle whole school agendas, though tensions between sports and education agendas was clear. The current situation was one in which:
there were two processes operating: the school sport and the PE one. Some good lessons have been learned in the out of hours context, but they are not being embraced by PE; there are still issues surrounding changing the values and attitudes of older staff; we are still in a process of change (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

This apparent lack of partnership working suggested some residual tensions between sport and education agendas, though this lack of value consensus was challenged by one senior member of staff at QCA who argued that 'tensions which existed [between PE and sport] are beginning to disappear, and the main reason is because people have to work together for the same set of outcomes' (Interview: Crichton Casbon, 13th June 2006).

6.3.3 Partnership development plans
One way in which all agencies involved in SSPs found a common purpose and shared outcomes was through partnership development plans which ensured that school sport partnerships produced one streamlined development plan (DCMS/CO, 2005). The tendency to subsume the steering group for the Partnership within the one for sports colleges meant that in some partnerships there was a tendency for the SSP to appear as a subcontractor of the sports college (IYS 2006). A concern expressed by one NGB was that the Partnership Development Plan should be written and agreed with all partners; however there was a tendency for schools and PDMs to write plans in isolation. Tessa Whieldon of the ECB believed that national governing bodies had not been engaged in the process and certain sports had lost out in the procedure:

we [ECB] are working with the Youth Sport Trust at a national level to get onboard with PDMs at their induction ... that's something that we need to work on in terms of our inter-agency working to the Youth Sport Trust (Interview: Tessa Whieldon, 27th June 2006).

Yet she acknowledged that, for cricket, engaging with the education network and infrastructure of SSPs and PDMs had proved to be absolutely vital. Furthermore, she argued that those within education knew that they could not
deliver PESSCL themselves; but had to engage with the community and with NGBs to deliver their PDP outcomes.

Whilst there appeared to be some weaknesses in the involvement between schools, PDMs and sports agencies concerning school sport partnership plans, the Ofsted Report (2005) into the SSP programme highlighted the need to integrate the work of the programme more fully into school improvement and subject development plans. At the heart of Ofsted’s concerns was a lack of integration between SSP development and subject and school improvement plans. Ofsted also identified conflict between the focus of SSPs on improvements in core PE provision and the need to address increases in participation within extra curricular sport. The Annual Monitoring and Evaluation report for 2005 (IYS, 2006: 6) indicated a substantial increase in participation levels amongst young people outside curriculum time. However, a Senior Ofsted Advisor expressed her view that there had been a loss of focus on core provision arising from a desire for SSPs to make a significant contribution to the PSA target and broader PESSCL outcomes (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006).

Concerns surrounding the lack of provision of primary physical education in England have already been documented (see Clay, 1997; Penney & Evans, 1999; Hardman et al, 2000) and outlined in Chapter Two of this study. The creation of SSPs, the support of SSCos and the funding for PLTs provided a more supportive environment for primary PE. Indeed there was a strong perception amongst many of those who were interviewed as part of the monitoring and evaluation report for SSPs, that pupils in primary schools had been the biggest beneficiaries of the SSP programme (IYS, 2006). For a Senior Member of AiPE, the concept of families of schools working together to create professional learning communities had been a sensible avenue to pursue. However, she pointed to the reticence of secondary schools and particularly specialist sports colleges to work in an advisory capacity with their partner secondary schools. In her professional role with the subject association she had observed that secondary schools had been:
very quick to launch in and tell primary people what to do, but they're backing off from working alongside their own secondary colleagues. But we [AfPE] do recognise this and we're sort of trying to do something about that in the professional development programme at the moment (Interview: Senior Member of AfPE, 9th June 2006).

Indeed, she was concerned that some of the activities that SSCos imposed upon primary school children were inappropriate for their age and primary school teachers did not have the confidence or the knowledge to challenge them (Interview: Senior Member of AfPE, 9th June 2006). The intended model was one in which primary teachers were empowered to deliver PE through a system that allowed long term sustainability.

6.3.4 The changing role of the PDM
Partnership Development Managers play a key role in managing links between schools and clubs and receive training support from the Youth Sport Trust to help them in achieving partnership objectives. In order to achieve policy outcomes for the partnership, they are required to negotiate with head teachers, directors of specialism, local education authorities, local authority sports development units, the YST, CSPs, Sport England and the Big Lottery Fund. SSP steering groups are intended to help guide and support both the work of the SSP and the PDM in achieving initiative outcomes. The group normally contained secondary and primary school head teachers, school governors, representatives from the LEA, local authority sports development units or leisure services department, pupils, local sports clubs, NGBs and local community groups. The work of partners in delivering SSP plans focuses upon a number of outcomes that are aligned with school development plans and was aimed at establishing and developing links between families of schools, sports clubs, leisure facilities and community providers, enhancing out of school hours opportunities for young people and helping to raise standards of pupils' achievement in school. This represented an array of education, sport and community outcomes for a single PDM whose position was originally funded for two days a week but, as the SSP programme developed, the post became full-time, with 'financial support moving from
lottery funding into mainstream exchequer funding’ (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006). In order for education to retain some degree of control over the initiative and as a result of lobbying from elements of the PE profession, the initial requirement was that PDMs should be qualified teachers (Interview: Margaret Talbot, 7th February 2007). However, as the school sport partnerships programme developed, there was increasing recognition that the skill required of a PDM did not necessarily match those of teachers. Added to this, was a growing concern amongst HMI about the cumulative effects upon curriculum PE of removing over 400 quality teachers from the system (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006). At the same time, the introduction of workforce reform into education highlighted the tasks that should and should not be performed by teachers. As the role of PDM did not require any teaching commitment it was no longer defensible that PDMs needed to be teachers, indeed, those from a sports development background had, from the start, demonstrated a greater awareness of how to network with organisations beyond the school boundaries (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

From AfPE’s perspective, there were growing concerns about the work of PDMs. Their workload and expectations in delivering SSPs outcomes were regarded as onerous. Moreover, there was a developing trend for PDMs to take on the role of ‘mini-advisors’ within partnerships, but without any rigorous support mechanism to be able to conduct the role effectively (Interview: Sue Wilkinson, 27th June 2006). From an NGB’s perspective, the appointment of PDMs made a significant difference to their access to young people. Mike Round of the England Golf Partnership believed that for many NGBs, PDMs were on the top of their hit list. For golf, in particular, the network of PDMs and sport colleges had given them something they could target.

All of a sudden we could dramatically increase our reach and I think that was solely down to the new network of PDMs and school sport partnerships. With access to a PDM we could reach the whole cluster of schools (Interview: Mike Round, 21st July 2006).
For athletics, too, getting PDMs onboard was crucial, as a previous School Club Links Project Director for UK Athletics commented ‘Any sport was going to struggle, no matter how much work they did in the clubs; if PDMs were not on board then it was going to be difficult (Interview: Caroline Smith, 22nd June 2006).

Having been operational for eight years, the SSP programme achieved complete coverage of the country in 2006. The Loughborough Partnership Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Report for 2006 recommended that SSPs needed:

to plan for the next period of programme development when Partnerships have to move beyond the enthusiastic and willing partners and are faced with the challenge of involving the less enthusiastic and sceptical schools and clubs and the more reluctant pupils (IYS, 2006:39).

In seeking to address these problems, PDMs and SSCOs started to work more proactively with community sport networks, county sports partnerships and NGBs. The emergence of CSPs as Sport England’s local community delivery arm and the challenges for both of these bodies in delivering their respective delivery plans meant the need for increasingly mutual support and a shared sense of responsibility between SSPs and CSPs. Margaret Talbot, as the new Chair of AfPE, suggested that opening up the SSP programme so it became more inclusive was the challenge for those individuals involved in the initiative. Indeed a Senior Member of AfPE suggested that the work conducted by AfPE on extra curricular programmes and out of school hours learning indicated that the programme was still ‘showing us that it’s more of the same for the more able’ (Interview: Senior Member of AfPE, 9th June 2006). Indeed, as the SSP programme matured, the potential weakness of SSPs was their inability to deliver with the pace of change required. These warning shots and challenges for SSPs were underlined by a Senior Staff Member from the YST, who believed that there was no evidence to suggest that SSPs had made any impact on the bridge for sixteen year olds on to continuing participation:
It demonstrates that neither system really has understood the role of the other within the overall agenda. If you focus it on the young people, instead of our agenda and your agenda, this is just about young people, and we have got someway to go yet (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

6.3.5 County Sport Partnerships: an evolving role

A new relationship that became increasingly important for SSPs in supporting the programme's outcomes was County Sport Partnerships. As part of Sport England's modernisation delivery plan (2004), it aimed to increase by 3% the take-up of sporting opportunities by young people and adults who participate in active sport at least 12 times a year and to increase by 3% the number of people who engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity sport at least three times a week (DCMS, PSA Target 3.) With Game Plan (2002) having recommended an extension to the role of County Sports Partnerships in order to boost participation levels, Sport England's new community role was to develop and support CSPs via Regional Sport Boards in order to work in partnership with local delivery agents. The Annual Report on SSPs (2005) recognised that 'although the impact of County Sports Partnerships has yet to be felt in most Partnerships, there is an expectation that the CSPs will add to the momentum of Partnerships' (IYS, 2006:39). With CSPs designed to support the delivery of the PESSCL strategy and extend community sports opportunities for young people, their new role was to work in partnership with SSPs and the local network of sport, education and community providers.

One of the challenges for some of the partners involved in working with SSPs was the requirement placed upon them by Sport England to work through CSPs. The threat of the withdrawal of funding, or fear of failure to meet the outcomes of their Whole Sports Plans (WSPs) placed a requirement on NGBs to work with CSPs and led to a degree of resentment and concern amongst some NGBs. A Senior Staff Member at the YST also expressed her concern about a lack of clarity surrounding the role of CSPs:

I don't know whether it is lack of clarity and direction from the top, but a CSP's role is around club development, coach development and volunteer deployment, that's what our understanding of what they need to be doing and what their role is ... Those three things
are absolutely key and some have got that, and that is what they are doing, and some are into a whole range of things which overlap with what partnerships are trying to do (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

For Pete Ackerley of the ECB, the problem surrounding CSPs and SSPs was the time it had taken for them to embed within local sports infrastructures. He described how the 'ECB and Sport England had been working very hard with County Sports Partnerships to support them through the business planning process and to make them fit for purpose' (Interview: Peter Ackerley 27th June 2006). The issue of 'fit for purpose' was highlighted by Stuart Armstrong who believed that CSPs had created problems for governing bodies that operated across a national network of county sports partnerships. He suggested that:

the inconsistencies between each partnership and a lack of a clear and consistent rationale across all County Sports Partnership had not given their NGB the confidence to work through CSPs (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006).

For the sport of golf, the introduction of CSPs provided a potential disruption to the extremely successful relationships that had been developed between golf, SSPs and PDMs. Their role was perceived as an unnecessary and needless extra layer of bureaucracy whose services they were not sure they even needed (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006). Yet, it was acknowledged by all the NGBs involved in the study that it was still early days for County Sports Partnerships. Their most pressing concern at a local level was to be fit for purpose and to support the development of community sport and a number of different sport development initiatives such as Club Links (Interview: Peter Ackerley, 27th June 2006).

For Pete Ackerley of the ECB there was also an acknowledgement that not all County Sports Partnerships were fit for the purpose of playing a brokering role in their work with SSPs. He also acknowledged that, whilst most NGBs were buying into the concept, some were attempting to circumvent it. Furthermore, he explained that:
from a national governing body point of view, some of the smaller sports will have no choice because they haven't got the infrastructure in terms of professional staff that we have; they won't have any choice but to go through this system, but the telling tale will be whether the core team County Sports Partnerships gets the direction that they need from Sport England to know what their job is and more importantly what their job isn't (Interview: Pete Ackerley, 27th June 2006).

Yet, despite the problems that CSPs had created both generally and with their work with schools in particular, there was little argument that a single system for sport development was fundamentally the right thing to do. Despite the reservations expressed by some national governing bodies concerning the rationale behind, and capacities of, CSPs to support regional delivery as part of their ‘whole sport plan’, NGBs had committed to and signed a Heads of Agreement form to work through CSPs.

The challenge for County Sport Partnerships had been in determining who was responsible for local delivery and in agreeing to collective responsibilities that did not overlap with the objectives of SSPs. Clearly, some replication had crept into the work of some CSPs and SSPs, which some PDMs believed needed to be resolved at a local level (Interview: Derek McDermott, 16th June 2006). However, there was evidence that some more mature CSPs had been proactive in elements of the PESSCL programme, in particular in supporting the work of PDMs and NGBs in developing school to club links and supporting the establishment of new clubs in some SSPs. A Senior Staff Member of the Youth Sport Trust also acknowledged that some county sport partnerships were beginning to employ a diverse team of coaches in response to the needs of the SSP. ‘They are deployed from the community clubs into the schools, then the same coaches are employed back in community clubs’ (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006). For Phil Veasey of Sport England, the investment of approximately £150,000 to support the core group of a chief executive and four or five officers had meant that a start had been made by county sports partnership in playing ‘a small role of joining up interaction between governing bodies and school sport partnerships’ (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006). For Sport England, one of the benefits of the programme was its capacity to relieve some of the pressure from PDMs who
had been faced with an overwhelming number of requests and demands on their time from a number of agents and agencies surrounding school sport and physical education. The perceived challenge for county sports partnerships was whether the range of organisations surrounding SSPs, with their different but increasingly collective policy outcomes and interwoven funding streams, could maintain a shared vision and commitment to Sport England's vision for County Sports Partnerships.

6.4 A summary of the role of the key actors
Penney and Houlihan (2001) have outlined the difficulties faced by researchers whose work is set in ever changing and increasingly complex policy structures and networks. Nowhere is this complexity more clearly manifested than within the school sport partnerships programme which represents a significant contributory component of the PESSCL strategy. The tensions and multiple demands placed upon school sport partnerships to deliver education, sport and community outcomes over the past eight years of the programme's existence, has inevitably led to adaptation over that time. The SSP initiative is structurally complex and the range of agencies and agents involved in the delivery of its policy outcomes through a number of funding mechanisms adds to the difficulty of analysing policy change. Nevertheless, a commentary on the roles of and tensions and dynamics between the main policy actors and agencies involved in the SSP initiative is possible as long as it acknowledges the inter-related and inter-dependent policy outcomes that encompass the work of the education, sport and community actors involved in this arena. One constant throughout the lifespan of the initiative has been its core aim to ensure that pupils engage in high quality PE and school sport.

The scale of financial investment in the school sport co-ordinator programme signalled its key role in supporting government strategies for physical education and school sport. It was also clear that the introduction of the SSP programme, with its links to the specialist sports colleges' initiative and the work of the Youth Sport Trust, consolidated the links between education, community and sports bodies. Undeniably, there were changes in the
prominence of certain players in this policy arena, of which the next section provides an account.

6.4.1 Specialist Sports Colleges
The DfEE's announcement in 1997 that it was a requirement for specialist schools to actively contribute to the raising of standards across their family school networks signalled a formal reconfiguration of education policy networks and relations and, in the case of sports colleges, their work had become inextricably intertwined with sporting networks (Penney & Houlihan, 2001). For specialist sports colleges, manifold demands to address education, community and sports agendas through partnership working represented another new challenge for schools more used to working in a competitive rather than co-operative local education market. On its election to office in 1997, the Labour Government retained the specialist schools programme and positioned it as central to its reforming agenda for schools. However, some notable changes and adaptations were made which led to a refocusing of their traditional relationships with other schools in favour of a model that required specialist schools to work collectively in order to benefit other schools in their local area (Penney & Houlihan, 2001). Indeed, it now became a requirement for each specialist school to allocate at least 30 per cent of its budget towards their community plans which contained measurable outcomes that demonstrated its commitment to working not only with a local family of schools but also with other partners such as NGBs, LEAs and other community groups.

Positioned at the interface of policy and practice, a Senior Staff Member from the YST explained the importance of spending more time out in the field in order to gain an 'understanding of the challenges of the work of SSPs and sports colleges and what we at the YST have got right and wrong in terms of the strategy and its direction' (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006). She also went on to explain how there was some disappointment surrounding the progress of certain sports colleges who still needed to raise their own standards in the specialism before they got into a wider partnership agenda of supporting the work of SSPs. There was also a degree of concern
expressed by one Senior Manager of the YST that the involvement of some sports colleges in the SSP programme had led to a degree of slippage from core education priorities to those of sport and health:

Because we have got more kids on programmes? Is that really high quality development? Are they the right young people that are on those courses? Some of those deeper questions are the things that we have got to get to now, otherwise we have just run off with a provision mentality (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

At this stage in their development it was questionable whether specialist sports colleges had got to the point where partners were able to look to them realistically to drive up standards across the entire partnership. Whilst this was not the remit of the sports college per se, it was the requirement of the partnership of which they sat at the hub:

But we haven't had heads of departments or subject leaders in secondary schools within the partnership really engaging with the subject leader in the hub site a great deal. I think it challenges people to understand what specialist school status means and that it is about whole school improvement and using sport to drive up standards in Maths and English (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

Since the work of specialist sports colleges had been modified in 1997 to focus more directly upon working in partnership, sports colleges have been somewhat reticent in their dealings with other secondary schools within their family. This concern was highlighted by a Senior Member of AfPE who believed that this was a weakness amongst sports colleges who had been willing to work with and advise primary schools, but had backed off from working alongside their own secondary colleagues. It was an issue that AfPE had already started to address through the professional development programme in supporting the work of the ‘families’ and the work of secondary schools in supporting other secondary schools. The demands for sports colleges to work to support other local secondary schools was bound to be challenging, given the nature of traditional local school hierarchies, arguably exacerbated for PESS by competitive inter-school sports rivalries. Perhaps, not unsurprisingly, the reluctance of many sports colleges to work closely with other secondary
schools was partly explained by long established local power-relations between them. Whilst recognising that sport was often a key tool for sports colleges, the YST was acutely aware that for DfES and for the government this was essentially an education strategy funded to lever whole school improvement. These concerns had led to a refocusing of the YST's work to concentrate upon working with colleges for the next 12 months to improve the quality of the specialism (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

6.4.2 School Sport Partnerships

In their two Annual Reports (2004 and 2005) on the work of school sport partnerships, the Loughborough Partnership on behalf of the DfES, DCMS, YST and Sport England was unequivocal in emphasising the enthusiasm and commitment of their staff. Indeed, both reports highlighted the supportive political environment in which they operated, a context which had undoubtedly allowed these partnerships to make a substantial impact on young people. A Senior Civil Servant working within the PESSCL strategy was extremely positive in his support for the contribution of SSPs which he believed represented 'an increasingly mature network which was driving change, driving virtually everything we are doing, driving the high quality agenda by showing good practice' (Interview: Senior Civil Servant, 16th June 2006). It is evident that SSPs have provided the structural arrangements and connections that had not previously been established within this policy sector. 'It has provided the opportunity for agents and agencies to work together to the same outcomes but maintain separate although increasingly similar objectives' (Interview: Crichton Casbon, 13th June 2006). Indeed, there was widespread endorsement for the work of SSPs from a number of agents involved in the PESSCL strategy, an endorsement that was supported by the Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Report (2005), which claimed that:

partnerships are rapidly establishing themselves as an important element in the sports infrastructure of communities, integrating their activities with those of sports clubs and the local community (IYS, 2006: 39).
More positively, the data from the SSP programme also suggested that it still possessed considerable momentum. It was an emerging and developing infrastructure that Steve Grainger suggested had provided the YST with the capacity to create the conditions for proper and effective collaborative working, whilst also removing the competitive element between schools (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006). There appeared to be a generally held consensus amongst the various actors involved in the programme that SSPs had brought together a disparate and often competitive assortment of organisations to work together in order to achieve a broad set of mutually shared outcomes.

In its evaluation of the work of SSPs, the Loughborough Partnership recorded the success of these networks in having a positive effect upon local sporting infrastructures through the involvement of a range of partners. The inclusion of local authority Sports Development Units and LEAs as active players in SSP networks marked a definite re-emergence of two partners who had been at the margins of PESS for some years. The opportunity for Sports Development Units to work in collaboration with schools and a range of partners on a local basis represented what Pete Mintoft, Head of the Sports Development Unit in Birmingham, suggested was a great bonus for sport (Interview: Pete Mintoft, 7th February 2007). The links that had been forged between PDMs and SDOs had been particularly beneficial for local sports initiatives. However, he believed that the ultimate success of SSPs remained dependent upon ‘whether head teachers were sold on it and whether it was delivered with conviction’. Fortunately, SSPs were reported by many head teachers and other key stakeholders as having made a positive contribution to improved behaviour and more positive attitudes towards school among pupils. However, in many cases, head teachers were unable to substantiate the precise benefits that SSPs had made.

For local sporting networks and their local communities, the work of SSPs had undoubtedly served to revitalise sports networks surrounding schools (IYS, 2006: 3). The work of PDMs featured as central to the communication network that bridged education, communities and sport. The benefits of
working with SSPs also extended to national sports agencies, such as the NGBs of sport for whom the network had huge potential. For golf, the network of PDMs and sports colleges:

gave us something we could target; all of a sudden we could dramatically increase our reach; golf has now got a really strong foothold in the SSP network, SSPs and SCLs allow golf to be strong (Interview: Mike Round, 21st July 2006).

However there were some voices of caution expressed concerning aspects of the programme. Crichton Casbon (QCA) explained how the involvement of many partners was inextricably 'tied up with funding and survival, and a climate in which you do it as a partner or you don’t get anything at all' (Interview: Crichton Casbon 13th June 2006). Furthermore, he believed that the whole context surrounding SSPs and PESSCL had been one in which funding was driving people to do things.

As with all new and evolving networks, SSPs faced a number of management challenges that required partnerships to clarify their line management structures and to ensure that partnership objectives remained distinct when linked with other area based sport and community initiatives (IYS, 2004: 2). They had the potential to generate what Penney and Houlihan (1991) described as a situation in which actions taken in response to one policy had implications for possible courses of action in relation to another. The work of PDMs is a case in point, illustrating how, with the growth of the SSP programme and demands from sport and community agencies, there was now a:

demonstrable concern about the sustainability of the line management relationship as the remit of partnerships moves both geographically and strategically beyond that of the sports college Director of Specialism (IYS, 2005: 5).

The SSP model is one that appears to be perceptibly diverting away from the core business of whole school improvement in favour of a structure increasingly adapted by external agencies, arguably for their own outcomes. It was a problem identified by Flintoff (2003) who argued that SSPs had allowed for flexibility and local control over the direction in which they developed.
In her assessment of the SSP initiative, a Senior Staff Member from the YST acknowledged that SSPs appeared to be a school sport and not a PE and school sport plan:

It is not an integrated whole yet. Investment has been the key; without it we would not have focussed on PE, but SSPs and their collaborative working are structurally key (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST 12th July 2006).

The picture that emerges is one in which there is uncertainty concerning the direction of SSPs and whether their rationale is concerned with producing an infrastructure for sport or for PE (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). The case studies of school sport partnerships produced by the Loughborough Partnership suggest a degree of adaptation to meet the needs of local partners which carries an inherent danger that, in the process, the core business of ‘education’ and DfES funding, gets lost within a plethora of broader community, societal and sporting agendas. In its reports on the SSP programme, Ofsted expressed its concern about aspects of teaching and lesson quality, assessment of attainment and curriculum design (Ofsted, 2003). These findings were replicated in a second Ofsted report published one year later which challenged the extent to which partnerships were having an impact on teaching quality and standards in PE. Whilst it is recognised that the SSP programme works to a diverse and challenging set of aims which have predominantly focussed upon improving levels of participation in order to meet the PSA target, the danger for the programme is that the core education objectives for which the funding is intended is lost, along with the goodwill and sponsorship from the DfES.

6.4.3 Youth Sport Trust

Since 1994, the YST has emerged as a key player in the policy arena for PESS, in a way that has been remarkable considering its relatively humble beginnings as a sports charity whose intent was to engage young people through sports activities. The appointment of a dynamic Chief Executive, supporters in government, a favourable political climate and a financial
commitment to the PESSCL strategy through Exchequer funds have contributed to the growth of an organisation that has responsibility for managing and supporting much of the work within the strategy. The growth of the TOPS schemes and its work with a range of other sports initiatives, coupled with Sue Campbell's activities that brought her into contact with government departments, led to what was to be a fortuitous decision by the YST to take on the management of specialist sports colleges. With its growing access to DfES and the success of its work with the first group of sports colleges, the YST had obtained a growing reputation of successful delivery. In the absence of any other obvious competitor, the Trust found itself in a unique position in which it was able to harness the support of senior ministers and also gain support from Number 10 for the potential difference that sport could make to the lives of young people. The connection between PESS and its potential to deliver education outcomes was also crucial in securing funding from DfES for the PESSCL strategy.

The management of the school sport partnership strand of PESSCL represents just one element of the YST's work in this policy arena. Having wrested control of the school sport co-ordinators programme from Sport England just before the PESSCL strategy was launched, and in the absence of any notable competitor, the YST was commissioned by both DfES and DCMS to work on their behalf to manage much of the PESSCL programme. The SSP programme represented an initiative with a number of broad targets and outcomes in which an extensive range of organisations were required to work in partnership. As with any programme of such breadth and magnitude that has coverage across England, there is a growing sense that some aspects of the SSP programme are proving difficult to manage. A degree of policy slippage is inevitable in an initiative of this scale. However there is growing evidence, supported by Loughborough Partnership reports, of an increasing need to monitor the evolution of the relationship between sports colleges and SSPs, between Directors of Sport and PDMs and between Sports College steering groups and SSP steering groups (IYS, 2006). In expressing the YST's perspective on these changes, a Senior Staff Manager
defined the main challenge as 'identifying and maintaining where the hubs should be, whilst allowing some degree of flexibility and autonomy at a local level' (Interview: YST 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006).

Having expanded the initiative across the country and met the PSA targets for 2006, the next phase of the work of the YST with its SSPs was to change 'the provision mentality' of offering lots of clubs and activities, to one that encouraged PDMs and SSCos to focus upon quality of provision. There was acknowledgement by the YST that the early work of SSPs had been driven by the Government's PSA 2006 target. Its next challenge was to address the high quality dimension of the PSA target and to achieve an 85% participation target amongst young people by 2008. In order to achieve both high quality provision and increased levels of participation, a Senior Staff Member from the YST suggested that SSPs now needed to think more strategically, 'We are now in a whole different ball game, in terms of which children you need to attract and which strategies you need to use' (Interview, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006). With these challenges to the system and with SSPs pushing the boundaries of the traditional 'family model' of partnership, there was an increased necessity for the Trust to articulate its key priorities through the annual cycle of conferences for partnership managers and SSCos in order to communicate and reinforce the same message.

From some members of AfPE these changes had brought a growing sense that the YST was now seeking the help of other partners in order to address the 'high quality' agenda and improve standards in schools (Interview, Sue Wilkinson, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2006). Having played a marginal role in the early stages of policy development for PESS, a Senior Manager for the YST made it clear that the Trust needed support from a range of organisations to help achieve the outcomes for the strategy. The AfPE, arguably, has an important role to play in supporting the YST and the PE profession to achieve its education outcomes for PESSCL (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2006). In maintaining a positive relationship with government departments as a managing agent for PESSCL, it was vital that the YST maintained a focus on
the strands of the strategy, whilst also acknowledging the educational requirements of its main sponsor, the DfES.

6.4.4 Local Education Authorities
Local education authorities represented one partner whose power and jurisdiction over schools had been reduced by previous Conservative governments. One Senior Advisor for PE and School Effectiveness in Birmingham LEA believed that LEAs remained squeezed out of much of the involvement with schools because ‘we are perceived as too bureaucratic, complex, or there is a concern that money allocated to an LEA might be diverted elsewhere’ (Interview: Helen Miles 19th June 2006). In the creation of the PESSCL strategy there was a clear sense that new structures and systems had been set up and old systems abandoned, in particular ‘LEAs have been cut out of the equation but are still expected to be strategic with no funding and limited authority (Interview: Helen Miles, 19th June 2006).

Ironically, with whole school improvement being a high priority for LEAs, DfES and the YST, the formers’ access to funding to support the work of local schools was problematical. Despite having a potentially strategic and supportive role to play in supporting the work of SSPs and sports colleges, the lack of funding for LEAs to conduct this type of work was disabling. However in her role as HMI, a Senior Ofsted Advisor had observed a growing trend to move back to using local authorities because of a realisation within the system that ‘there was need for a strategic overview within a local authority across schools, and local authority people are best served to do that.’ (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). A Senior Staff Member from the YST described the relationship with LEAs as one based on advocacy and challenge, with some remaining tensions in certain local authorities which still hosted PDMs. As a school based programme, there had been some challenges in seeking particular authorities endorsement for moving the responsibility from the LEA into schools so that they could become part of the overarching management structure for SSPs. One of the most positive factors for LEAs had been the publication of Every Child Matters DfES (2003), which had helped raise the profile of PE and sport and given them a particular role to
play in addressing these new agendas (Interview: Helen Miles, 19th June 2006).

6.4.5 School Sport Partnerships and Local Authorities
One of the consequences of the SSP initiative was the emergence of new partnerships between schools and a range of sports agencies that included bodies, such as the YMCA, LA staff development officers and local leisure providers (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006). Over the past few years sports development in Birmingham had been forced, as a consequence of its funding, to realign itself with City Council strategy agendas, such as crime prevention, health, economic well-being, which were increasingly delivered in and devolved to local constituencies. The relationship between Sports Development Units and schools had previously been based upon an understanding that they were 'obliged not to go into curriculum time and therefore the support of schools and the work of SSPs was solely limited to extra curricular support (Interview: Pete Mintoft, 7th February 2007). However, Sue Bell, a senior sports development officer, highlighted the difficulty for Sports Development in supporting these networks because it often did not make good economic sense to send a Sports Development Officer into a school to help deliver a one-hour after school session (Interview: Sue Bell, 2nd February 2007). The reconfiguration of the work of Sport England had meant an end to the Active Sports programme that had provided substantial funds to employ local Sports Development workers.

6.4.6 Sport England and County Sport Partnerships
Sport England's management of the school sport co-ordinator programme constituted an attempt by a sport agency to support the work of schools at a time when the subject and schools themselves were experiencing a number of major challenges. The emergence in the mid 1990s of a sports body unencumbered by the demands of government and the insecurities of short-term funding was to change the power balance around PESS. In achieving government support and investment in a new national strategy for PESS, the YST brought pressure to bear on Sport England through the DfES to relinquish its control over the SSC programme so that it could be integrated
into the PESSCL strategy. The move also coincided with a period of modernisation for Sport England which resulted in a refocusing of its work to concentrate upon twenty priority sports and a community plan delivered through CSPs, to be funded by Sport England up to 2009 (Sport England, 2004: 18). For Margaret Talbot, the review of Sport England positioned the organisation so it could develop closer relationships with local authorities and local regional working (Interview: Margaret Talbot, 19th July 2006) while, for a Senior Civil Servant, it helped resolve the problem that Sport England had faced by being pulled in too many directions: ‘They are now focussed upon sport and community sport and using the achievement of the Club Mark quality symbol as a modernising tool for sports clubs’ (Interview: Senior Civil Servant, 16th June 2006). In moving Sport England’s role away from schools and giving responsibility to the YST, Phil Veasey believed that it had created a sense of organisational clarity across what had previously been a really confused sporting landscape: ‘However there is always a place where the two interface, so that’s when we connect more heavily with YST and the extended schools club programme’ (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006). With this new working brief, Sport England refocused its work through CSPs and Regional Sports Boards, giving the YST a clear remit to work on behalf of both DCMS and DfES in schools.

Conclusion
This case study chapter has provided a number of insights into the policy process and policy change within SSPs. It has highlighted the complex nature and inevitable tensions within a policy context that is at the intersection of a number of agendas and the work of a range of policy actors. SSPs emerged from a policy context that was framed by ERA (1988) and the introduction of the Local Management of School (LMS). These changes imposed a new set of conditions that diminished the role of LEAs and their previously close associations with schools. The positioning of LEAs at the margins of policy for schools led to a situation in which the YST was able to take on the management role of SSPs unchallenged. The opportunity for the YST to lead the sports colleges’ initiative was indicative of the activism of Sue Campbell and the YST in promoting youth sport and the TOPs programmes. The
creation of this organisational opportunity provided an institutional platform upon which the YST could build its power and influence. The direct relationship that the YST had with the DfES through Specialist Sports Colleges provided the catalyst for the creation of the PESSCL strategy. The framework upon which the PESSCL strategy was based, placed colleges and SSPs as central hubs within local networks. Retaining the coherency of the PESSCL strategy, the DfES and YST were instrumental in the removal of the school sport co-ordinator programme from Sport England’s portfolio so that it could play a more central role within this national school sport strategy. Arguably, Sport England lost a degree of authority and control over its relationship with school sport. Symbolically and structurally, the creation of the PESSCL strategy abolished the old systems and networks of LEAs, advisory teachers, HEIs and LAs in favour of a new system in which DfES, DCMS and the YST were now positioned at the centre of these new networks.

The work of School Sport Partnerships included a complex range of partnerships between sport clubs, CSPs, LAs, NCSS, and NGBs, which reflected the position of the SSPs at the intersection of a number of policy agendas. The programme’s key objectives were wide-ranging and involved strategic planning, primary liaison, school and community links, coaching and leadership and raising standards. These challenging and wide-ranging education, sport, health and community outcomes underlined the challenges posed by the extensive range of their work. The need to serve such a range of targets created tensions for PDMs in managing the balance between the delivery of education and sport outcomes. There was evidence within this case study of the challenges faced by SSPs, PDMs and school sport co-ordinators in maintaining a balanced relationship between the needs of the sports college and the community based sport provision. Sue Wilkinson of AfPE highlighted the concern of the association that school sports co-ordinators had taken on the role of advisors within their SSPs, one which she believed they were ill-prepared to carry out (Interview: 27th June 2006). The emerging challenge for the PESSCL strategy was to clarify whether it was primarily a sport or education initiative. Inevitably with the involvement of so
many agencies and so many demands the boundaries of that work were increasingly blurred.

A distinguishing feature of the policy process as it embeds is captured in the notion of slippage. This case study illustrated the increasing challenge faced by the YST in keeping SSPs focus upon the main policy objectives. There was already evidence within SSPs across the country of structural changes to the hub and spoke model and a refocusing of agendas to serve health rather than education outcomes. Whilst a certain amount of slippage is inevitable, the evidence of policy spillover from health agendas was a real concern for the YST, given that the funding for PESSCL was primarily from DfES funds. Whilst policy actors at the micro-level of policy implementation were reinterpreting policy, Sport England was also attempting to regain some of the authority it had lost within school and community sport. The creation of CSPs within an already crowded policy context provided some evidence of attempts by Sport England to reassert its authority at local level and regain some of the policy influence it had lost at the start of the PESSCL strategy.

As a consequence of modernisation, Sport England’s new community priorities were realised through County Sport Partnerships which provided a delivery system at the interface of school sport and community sport. CSPs represented an initial three-year funding agreement between DCMS and Sport England and their activities were closely linked and, indeed, appeared to overlap with, some of the responsibilities of SSPs and the work of PDMs. The response of NGBs and SSPs to CSPs was mixed, however. Although the work of CSPs was still in its infancy and some were perceived by NGBs as not ‘fit for purpose’, there was a growing sense (expressed by some of the NGBs involved in this study) that Sport England was attempting to exert a stronger influence at local level. Whilst Sport England was attempting to reassert itself within local school sport structures, LEAs and PE professional groups remained marginal and somewhat detached from the work of SSPs.

The work of School Sport Partnerships is undoubtedly highly complex and challenging, given the range of outcomes which they are expected to deliver
and the capacity of the agencies involved. The case study has provided an insight into the complex, dynamic and contested nature of the SSP policy context. This second case study chapter analysed the policy process for the school sport partnership element of the PESSCL strategy. The critical realist ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning the research and the use of the advocacy coalition and multiple streams theoretical frameworks highlighted both the role of agents and structural conditions in shaping policy change. In acknowledging critical realist demands to address the antecedent social structures and conditions that shaped policy change, the case study acknowledged how school sport partnerships emerged from the pre-existing educational conditions created by the Thatcher government as a consequence of the ERA (1988). The subsequent creation of market forces in education through new types of specialist secondary schools run independently of LEAs provided the structural framework upon which SSPs were eventually based. Education policy from the 1980s onwards was underpinned by the need for schools to deliver transformative agendas. This case study revealed how in particular the Labour Government's notion of strong partnerships between local schools centred upon specialist schools as a hub site, informed the thinking around the SSP model for PESSCL strategy. Once again, as the ACF in particular highlights, a shared set of beliefs and values held by government, DfES, DCMS and the YST set the context for a collaborative approach to the initiative by this dominant coalition of policy actors.

The Multiple Streams framework was informative in explaining the agenda setting process that led to the establishment of SSPs. A number of factors such as the Labour Government's continued commitment to the specialist school programme, growing public and media concerns about increasing obesity levels, the reluctance of the Specialist Schools' Trust to take on responsibility for specialist sports colleges provided a 'window of opportunity' for Sue Campbell. Acting as a policy entrepreneur she was in a position to articulate to politicians how PE and school sport could be harnessed through the work of SSPs to support the achievement of their broader political objectives. Both the AC and MS Frameworks support the key role of agents
such as Sue Campbell in shaping and determining policy change. The empirical evidence that emerged from this case study highlighted the central role played by Sue Campbell and the YST in setting the agendas for and shaping policy for SSPs.

The advocacy coalition (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1999) and multiple streams theoretical frameworks (Kingdon, 1995) highlight factors such as the role of belief systems, key individuals, policy entrepreneurs and interest groups in explaining policy change. The involvement of a number of groups or power elites that included DfES, DCMS and the YST in determining policy for SSPs was clearly evident within this work strand of the PESSCL strategy. The Labour Government's willingness to invest in SSPs was ostensibly an investment in school sport in order to raise academic standards. It was also indicative of what Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1999) describe as policy oriented learning in which investment in the school sport policy area was partly explained through an increasing alignment of the core and secondary values of a dominant coalition of policy actors. The YST and Sue Campbell were both powerful agents in presenting SSPs to government departments such as DfES and DCMS, as a network that was capable of contributing to and supporting government in achieving its own policy objectives. As the ACF framework suggests, and this case study in particular reveals, Sue Campbell acted as an effective policy broker who was capable of managing and shaping a policy initiative and its delivery through a working coalition between DfES, DCMS and the YST.

The central role played by these agencies in determining policy and policy delivery for SSPs was set against the marginal contribution of organisations such as LEAs, LAs, NGBs, Ofsted and AfPE. Indeed the contribution in particular of LEAs and LAs to policy-making had already been severely restricted by pre-existing structural conditions imposed by ERA (1988) and policy for the Local Management of School (LMS). As a major focus of successive governments' education policy, specialist schools had access to considerable financial resources that were not accessible through traditional sport funding streams. These circumstances meant that Sue Campbell was
able to capitalise upon her position as non-political advisor for PESS, and the YST's involvement in managing specialist sports colleges, to shape and control this element of the PESSCL strategy. Lukes' (1974, 1978) theorisation of the third face of power is informative in highlighting the struggles and strategies inherent in policy-making processes and in particular between those involved in SSPs. At the centre of Lukes' arguments about the exercise of power is the capacity of individuals and powerful interest groups to ignore and exclude the ideas and views of those who do not match their own. The empirical evidence from this case study chapter highlighted the role and use of power in determining the policy process for SSPs. In particular the empirical findings illustrated the involvement of state actors such as DCMS, DfES and the YST in dominating policy for work strands such as SSPs, whilst subduing the voices and active contribution of others. The action of these dominant policy actors in shaping the agendas for SSPs was evident in the capacity of DfES, DCMS and the YST to impose a set of stringent policy conditions upon other policy actors involved in its delivery. The participation and contribution of sports clubs, NGBs, LAs, LEAs, NCSS and NGBs to policy formation was limited and implementation was framed by tight delivery targets and fiscal conditions set by government. These agents also found themselves increasingly subject to the policy demands of a dominant coalition of policy actors who found themselves in an invidious position in which they were at the intersection of a number of competing education, sport and health policy agendas. Whilst Sport England had attempted to reassert some degree of control over policy for SSPs, it was evident from the empirical research that whilst DCMS, DfES and the YST retained close control over policy agendas in this work strand, LEAs and PE professional groups remained marginal to policy-making for SSPs.
Chapter 7

School Club Links

Introduction
As in the previous chapter, the School Club links case study is organised around four principal themes which address the role of agenda setting, management and implementation, the key policy developments within the case since its inception and finally a summary of the role of the clusters of actors involved in this particular case study. The agenda setting section provides a chronological account of the background to and emergence of the school club links policy and provides an outline of the role and involvement of the key organisations and actors in shaping it. The management and implementation section of the case study provides an explanation of the structural and funding arrangements and the patterns of accountability and resource dependences of the various stakeholders involved. To further explicate these constituent elements, a detailed analysis of three substantial NGBs of sport (golf, cricket and athletics) and their individual approaches to the implementation and management of the School to Club Links work strand is provided. Each of these three case studies provides an account of the relationships between the NGB, sports clubs and schools prior to their involvement in the initiative and their ensuing engagement in the work strand. The third section of the chapter outlines the important policy developments in the case since its establishment and seeks to identify the negotiations, tensions, resistance and policy shifts that have occurred in the time period framed by the initiative. A commentary upon and summary of the role of each of the main clusters of actors involved in the case is presented in the final section.

7.1 Agenda setting
The publication of the Report of the Wolfenden Committee on Sport (1960), focussed attention on the vexed question of how links and connections between PE and sports provision for young people outside the school context
could be bridged. The report highlighted the pervading sense of inadequacy in the provision made for school sport outside curriculum time and, in particular drew attention to the weaknesses of the links between schools and adult sports clubs. The problem was referred to as ‘the gap’, a term that was used to exemplify the marked break between the norms of participation in physical activities for boys and girls inside schools and the lack of comparable sporting activities offered to young people outside. Notwithstanding these cautionary comments, the report suggested that ‘the gap’ was somewhat exacerbated by the fact that junior teams, individuals and groups were often frozen out of sport by the sports bodies themselves (Wolfenden, 1960: 27). Attempts to bridge the gap between the provision of physical education in schools and sport within clubs since the publication of the Wolfenden Report in 1960 have proved to be a challenge. The ability, willingness and capacity of the various actors and agencies to address this gap over time needs to be understood in the light of a number of broader jurisdictional disputes, the differing interests and agendas of the agencies involved and the role of government and government agencies in determining the potency of systematic linkages over time.

During the 1980s, physical education faced a number of other serious challenges, most notably from the media who were reporting a decline in the standard of sport in schools, which they argued was largely attributable to a decline in the competitive ethos in schools (Kay, 1996; Kirk, 1999). Media attempts to discredit the PE profession by suggesting that it was pervaded by endemic anti-competitive sporting practices were aggravated by the teacher strikes of the 1980s which led to the withdrawal of good-will activities and had a particularly detrimental effect upon extra curricular sport. A senior HMI for physical education at the time emphasised the predicament that the strikes of the 1980s created for sport and sports clubs in particular:

The important thing was that the route, the feeding mechanism, the teachers who had helped in after-school competitions and fixtures and school and district leagues were no longer there in numbers. So the edifice of school sport as we knew it was beginning to tumble (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October, 2006).
In seeking solutions to these problems, a Senior HMI described how imaginative approaches on the part of some head teachers, good PE departments and local clubs had resolved the problem by managing the transition from school to club to avoid gaps in provision, so that youngsters who wanted to, or could be persuaded to, were given the opportunity to move through the curriculum experience to the club experience. However, the issue of school to club links was not easy to resolve and a Senior HMI described the policy context during the late 1980s and early 1990s as one in which the education service, the sports lobby, the Sports Council and CCPR were all at loggerheads. In describing the situation surrounding schools at the time, he described how:

teachers were suspicious of coaches, and in some cases with good reason. Coaches were supposedly teaching children, they had a lot of knowledge about their sport but no knowledge at all about children. Now there was a great big lobby group who were very interested ... So for the Sports Council this was manna from heaven. So there was enormous tension, the tension between PE and sport, with this oscillating thing in the middle called school sport rotting at one end, aligned with the very ambitious desires on the part of sports coaches to take off talented youngsters (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006).

These observations serve to illustrate the prevalent tensions that existed at that time and the milieu of general mistrust between these two policy sectors. This observation from a senior HMI exemplifies the suspicions and insecurities felt by many teachers regarding the ultimate interests of sport. These comments were indicative of the over-riding suspicions that marked the relationship between sport and PE and revealed the perceptions from within the PE profession about the predatory nature of sport national governing bodies.

The external pressures faced by physical education have been extensively documented (see Penney & Evans, 1997; Evans & Penney 1999; Kirk & Gorely, 2000) and were, arguably, compounded by machinations within the profession about the purpose and rationale of the subject in schools. The debate focussed upon attempts to clarify the rationale of physical education in school and to illustrate how the subject was substantively different from sport.
Ojeme (1984, 1989) has argued in his body of work that, for many individuals inside the PE teaching profession at the time, there was a strong belief that the subject was characterised by practices that privileged sport and which had corrupted the educative value of physical education. Paradoxically, the lack of a coherent agreement as to the purpose of physical education was indicative of the concerns voiced by some teachers that the physical education curriculum was moving away from a focus upon traditional sports, towards more generic movement skills (HMI, 1978).

Sports bodies such as the CCPR, National Council for School Sport (NCSS) and National Coaching Foundation (NCF) were also part of a debate which emerged in the 1980s surrounding declining standards in competitive sport in schools (Houlihan, 1991). Their implicit assumptions supported the media's view that schools had adopted anti-competitive principles as a consequence of the trendy, left-wing political leanings of some teachers of physical education. Indeed, such was the general concern regarding the decline in competitive sport in schools, that the government itself was forced to act. The Conservative Party Manifesto (1987), The Next Moves Forward, explicitly set out its intention to encourage competitive sport through schools and clubs, whilst also stating its strong opposition to any attempts by left-wing councils to ban competitive sports in schools. However, one consequence of this, arguably, manufactured crisis was that it galvanised the CCPR and the national governing bodies for sport to develop closer relationships with schools and to take a greater responsibility themselves for nurturing sporting talent (Houlihan, 1991). Interestingly, however, Penney and Evans (1999) noted that caution should be adopted in accepting the validity of the arguments concerning the rise of anti-competitiveness in schools, highlighting the lack of hard evidence to substantiate these observations. Nevertheless, the ramifications of these debates served to polarise (at least in the public's eyes) sport and physical education, to emphasise its differences and to undermine the credibility of physical education. They underlined the separateness both structurally and philosophically of sport and physical education and militated against more formal linkages and partnerships between these policy actors. It also emphasised their distinct ideological
differences by creating a degree of suspicion about each other’s motives. It served to stifle any speedy attempts to bridge the gap between school and sport. The precarious status of physical education in schools even prompted the National Council for School Sport (NCSS), a national forum body that represented associations with an interest in competitive school sport, to articulate their concern about the growing interest amongst some sports clubs and the governing bodies for sport in the organisation of sport for school children.

A Sport Council Report published in 1985 on the impact of the Sport for All campaign painted a somewhat bleak picture of the co-operation between governing bodies and schools and highlighted the systemic challenges in linking school and clubs in order to nurture and develop talented youngsters (Houlihan, 1991). Yet, to suggest that the linkages between sport and physical education were inherently problematic would be disingenuous; indeed some relationships between schools, the NGBs and sports clubs remained close. The adoption by many schools of governing body award schemes endorsed by gymnastics and athletics that were delivered during curriculum time served to highlight the close inter-relationship between sport and PE. Nevertheless, Roche (1993) has suggested that the 1980s and early 1990s represented a time during which the organisational and administrative framework for sport was one of fragmentation and disharmony between the various bodies involved in sport and PE.

The indifference of organisations such as the national governing bodies for sport and the Sports Council towards school sport during this period (the mid 1980s) was reported by Houlihan (1991: 246) who suggested that they ‘tended to ignore school sport, assuming that the steady flow of talented youngsters would automatically continue from school to club’. The assumption held by many NGBs was that schools had a responsibility to supply sport with a steady flow of young people who would provide the foundation of the sporting development pathway within their particular activity. However, a number of exogenous factors and changes to the political landscape during the 1980s and 1990s had a significant impact upon the policy context for
school sport which served to impact upon relationships between schools, sport clubs and the national governing bodies of sport. A decline in the national birth rate, an increase in leisure options available to young people and the introduction of new sports that broadened the curriculum in schools meant an increasingly competitive market for sports seeking to garner the interests of talented youngsters. Whilst the CCPR lobbied consistently on behalf of its NGB member organisations during the 1980s in order to protect the resources allocated to school sport (Houlihan, 1997), the Sports Council was somewhat marginal to the debates surrounding physical education in schools as a consequence of the terms of its Charter and close association with government (Houlihan, 1997). Its interest in school sport was galvanised by the creation of the ‘School Sport Forum’ in 1986, whose task it was to investigate and report upon the place of sport within the curriculum of schools on behalf of the Department of the Environment (DoE) and the Department of Education and Science (DES). Houlihan (1991) suggests that the publication of the report added momentum to the Sports Council’s growing involvement in school sport.

Proceedings from a ‘Sport in Schools’ seminar held in 1986 by the Department for Education and Science, questioned the capacity and interest of many clubs to take on the role of developing talented youngsters. The report also suggested that the development of closer links between clubs and schools was based on a false premise that clubs had appropriate structures and the capacity and willingness to receive these young sportsmen and women. This situation was not, however, representative of all NGBs; indeed, certain sports in the 1980s were actively seeking to establish closer links with schools. The Amateur Athletics Association (AAA) the Hockey Association (HA) and the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) represented three governing bodies who decided to invest financial resources in order to generate and develop links with schools. The AAA was particularly entrepreneurial in its links with schools and established a foothold in the PE curriculum in the late 1960s through the development of an athletics award scheme tailored for schools (5 Star Award Scheme) which was to become the most successful secondary school athletics award scheme in the world (McNab, 1969). In
seeking to develop more formal links between schools and athletics clubs, the Amateur Athletics Association (AAA) encouraged its member clubs to 'adopt a school' in order to encourage closer links.

The development of links between schools and some governing bodies of sport corresponded with the development of more child-friendly clubs, particularly within athletics and the creation of adapted forms of mini games by some sports, such as kwik cricket and short tennis that were more suited to the skill levels of younger children. Despite innovative attempts to attract children into their sports and attempts to liaise more closely with schools, Houlihan (1991) suggests that many sports clubs were hampered by a lack of resources to initiate a development policy for young people. The policy context for physical education and sport for young people during the 1980s was one in which there was a number of interest groups that included schools, the governing bodies for sport, the Sports Council and the NCSS. What characterised this period was that, despite attempting to maintain their territorial boundaries, the margins between PE and sport were becoming increasingly blurred (Houlihan, 1991). Whilst there was an obvious need to establish a network of agencies to deal with the whole issue of young children's involvement in sport across educational and sporting contexts, the failure of the Sports Council (which had strategic links with many of these partners except schools) to manage this process reflected the lack of a clear leader in this policy domain. A senior official responsible for physical education illustrated the type of structural problems that compounded the weak links between schools and sports clubs:

In the mid-nineties there was a tension: the community and not the school owned the premises, they paid for it by taxes but the school would lock them up for 14 weeks a year and every week from 5 o'clock was just absurd. We were pressing for people to take more exercise and organised physical activity, pressing for that, and yet we were locking up facilities. So the whole notion of extending school club links started from that premise. Locking the school door was not the answer (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006).

The publication of Sport: Raising the Game set out the details of the Sports Council's new responsibility for promoting school to club links by providing
advice, support and information to schools, the national governing bodies of sport, sports clubs and local authorities (DNH, 1995: 8). Moreover, the policy document made explicit reference to new arrangements for funding and accountability that required NGBs to include school sport projects as a condition of Sports Council funding: 'Any funding of the governing bodies of sport must take into account the degree to which youth sport development projects feature in their plans' (DNH, 1995:8).

The publication of the Ofsted Report PE and Sport: A Survey of Good Practice in 1995 provided insight from an education perspective into the challenges facing schools in terms of their partnerships with outside sports bodies. The report suggested that links between schools and local sport clubs were sometimes strong, sometimes tenuous and occasionally non-existent and, whilst some schools had forged links with clubs overall the process was deemed ad hoc. Where close links had been forged between schools and clubs, this was often because:

> PE teachers were actively involved in the sport themselves and made deliberate efforts to introduce pupils who were sometimes uncertain and reluctant to move to adult sport within the club setting' (Ofsted, 1996:30).

A growing number of sports clubs were reported to be establishing their own youth sport policies and were actively seeking to recruit new members through the appointment of club liaison officers. Some of the schools involved in the Ofsted survey were reported to be fairly selective as to the clubs they recommended to pupils as a result of attitudes and resistance that young people had reported from some club members. The report also acknowledged the sheer complexity of the infrastructure surrounding school club links and how the relationships between schools, sports development officers, governing bodies, sports clubs, players and coaches varied from positive and helpful, to frustrating and obstructive. The report proposed that 'only clearer mapping of what is on offer and a better coordination of both information and provision, will allow young people to find their way through the maze' (Ofsted, 1996:35).
Whilst good schools were reported as guiding their pupils into clubs that matched their ability, not all schools saw this as a prime function. The report concluded with a number of issues for consideration, one of which suggested that, if young people were to find their way more easily into adult sporting activity, a range of structural mechanisms needed to be considered in order to facilitate clearer mapping of local provision and better coordination of information. There was an acceptance within the survey that in addressing the issue of school to club links there were obvious cost implications which, it was acknowledged, could not be met in full. Drawing upon the *Survey of Good Practice* (1995), the 'Action Agenda' arising from *Sport Raising the Game: The First Year Report* (DNH, 1996) also highlighted the need for improved cooperation between schools and sports clubs and a clearer mapping of the provision and co-ordination of information to young people in order to help them find their way more easily into adult sporting activity.

The publication of *A Sporting Future for All* (2000) provided a policy context in which both sport and educational bodies were actively encouraged to work in partnership in order to achieve shared objectives. Sports clubs were targeted for reform and the strategy document highlighted the 'need for a much more professional club structure to complement the role of schools' (DCMS, 2000: 13). It was acknowledged that in England, due to the large number of amateur clubs that were dependent almost entirely on the efforts of volunteers, bringing about change and a more professional approach to the management of clubs presented a challenge. The vital link that clubs could provide between schools and high-level competition necessitated the launch of a new drive to engage a range of partners, such as governing bodies and local authorities in achieving this outcome. Support for clubs who had the capacity to run a number of teams with the potential to progress athletes to higher levels of competition constituted a key feature of widening participation and improving international competitiveness.

The DCMS policy document *Game Plan* (2002) highlighted the government's willingness to intervene in the case of failures in the delivery of sport and where there were 'inefficiencies and inequities which provided a rationale for
government intervention in sport' (DCMS/ Strategy Unit, 2002: 76). The problem of post-school dropout from sports participation was attributed to inadequate school to sports club links and represented a co-ordination failure in sport. The launch of the PESSCL strategy provided an opportunity to address the co-ordination failure between schools and clubs and the School to Club work strand focussed specifically on increasing the proportion of children guided from schools to NGB affiliated clubs.

Building on the impetus provided by Game Plan, the ambition of this element of the PESSCL strategy was to focus on the work of SSPs and seven major sports. The values embedded within the School to Club Links initiative reflected the government's desire to support elite sport: 'Talented young athletes need to be helped to reach elite levels ... there will need to be continued co-ordination, particularly between clubs and schools to achieve this' (DCMS/ SU, 2002: 115). Whilst the School to Clubs Links work strand serviced the needs of elite sport as a by-product, the PESSCL project leader Matthew Conway suggested that this was not its primary purpose:

Club Links and Gifted and Talented work strands are not about making people better sports people, they are about putting them in an environment in which getting better performance is an outcome, but it's something that happens because of what we're doing, not because it's primarily what we're about. So I would not be able to stress enough that this is about education, and everything else flows from it as secondary benefits (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

These different perspectives were indicative of the multiple outcomes for the PESSCL programme which, although primarily funded through DfES to achieve education outcomes, was also part of DCMS outcomes to increase participation and to support the work of NGBs.

The capacity of sports clubs to work in partnership with schools was brought into question in the CCPR survey Boom or Bust (March 2002). The report exposed the demands placed on many of these voluntary bodies who had to cope with increased levels of red tape and mounting financial pressures. The CCPR challenged government to address these shortcomings by investing in
and encouraging the development of grassroots sport. However there was by now tacit recognition that, in order to secure that funding, sport needed to position itself at the centre of broader government agendas. In Richard Caborn's opening speech to CCPR on the 20th May 2003, the Minister for Sport underlined how the government's relationship with sport was 'not the partnership of the past whereby government dished out money and sport says thank you very much, now can I have some more'; new partnerships between sport and government were to be based on the government's priorities of efficiency, delivery, transparency and accountability (CCPR, 2003). As Green (2004) perceptively argues, the government's decision to modernise sport in order to deliver more coherent delivery networks placed greater demands on both sport and education to work together to help government achieve its broader political agendas. The PESSCL strategy, with its tight contractual arrangements between funding agencies and delivery partners, was indicative of the demands placed on public sector services by government. The School Club Links programme required schools, NGBs and sports clubs to work together in an environment that demanded improved levels of efficiency and accountability and the delivery of a set of agreed policy outcomes.

In 2002, the School Club Links work strand was established as a constituent part of the joint DfES and DCMS Public Service Agreement (DCMS/DfES, 2002) for PESS. The School/Club Links initiative represented one of nine work strands whose specific purpose was to strengthen the links between schools and local sports clubs in order to increase the number of children and young people who become members of accredited sports clubs (DCMS/DfES, 2002). The purpose of the Club Links programme was to create and develop links between schools and sports clubs and to increase the number of children participating in sports clubs. The specific target for the programme was to increase the percentage of 5 to 16 year olds who were members of, or participated in, national governing body accredited sports clubs from 14% in 2002, to a target of 25% by 2008. Twenty-two national governing bodies (NGBs) received funding from Sport England to support their accredited clubs in developing sustainable and effective links with schools. The School/Club links work strand tasked both the national governing bodies of sport, sports
clubs, County Sport Partnerships and SSPs to work in formalised contractual relationships. The delivery of the School Club Links programme was managed principally by NGBs who were funded to work in partnership with SSPs in order to improve the percentage of young people making the transition from school to club sport. For government, the School Club Links programme included a number of outcomes aimed at encouraging young people to adopt healthier lifestyles, supporting them to achieve sporting success and engaging them in activities that might lead to lifelong participation. In describing the relationship between government and the NGBs responsible for the delivery of this work strand, Matthew Conway described how:

The challenge for governing bodies, individually, not necessarily collectively, in an era where government support in any aspect of sport cannot be big enough for all governing bodies to benefit, is for individual governing bodies to demonstrate with whatever funding they’ve got now, that they can deliver ... Why is ‘Club Links’ part of PESSCL? – answer – because it’s the link out to lifelong participation. It’s sufficiently important and sufficiently linked that it was brought within PESSCL. (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

The School Club Links work strand was managed by a project board comprised of head teachers, PE professional associations, QCA, YST, Sport England, DCMS, DfES and the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of sport and was monitored by Ofsted. Sport England played a strategic role in supporting the PESSCL strategy by managing the Club Links programme in partnership with the Youth Sport Trust (DfES/DCMS, 2003). At local level the programme was delivered through a process of collaboration between SSPs, CSPs and NGB affiliated clubs, as shown in Figure 7.1.
In building partnerships between schools and community sports clubs, SSPs were required to liaise with local sports clubs in order to explore the opportunities to work in partnership. These links were normally managed by Partnership Development Managers (PDMs) supported by school sport coordinators (SSCos) and primary link teachers (PLTs). Accredited sports clubs were also expected to provide an identified representative who was assigned responsibility for working with SSPs, CSPs and national governing bodies in order to facilitate school-club links. The establishment and maintenance of these links were often supported by local authority sport development units, CSPs and NGBs, which received funding directly from Sport England to develop the programme. The method through which each NGB administered the School to Club Links programme varied, some sports choosing to use CSPs as the conduit, whilst others preferred to administer the programme through the sport’s own county, regional or national officers. The School to Club Links guidance document (2006) encouraged formal agreements between schools, sports clubs and SSPs in order to ensure that all parties adhered to and maintained high standards of delivery that were monitored through quality control mechanisms.
7.2 Management and implementation

The funding mechanisms, patterns of accountability and delivery mechanisms through which the School to Clubs Link was managed were indicative of the government's overriding concerns for efficiency, transparency and accountability in the provision of public sector services. The overall responsibility for the initiative rested with DCMS who managed delivery of the programme through a School Club Links Delivery Board that was directly accountable to the PESSCL Delivery Board. As a Senior Civil Servant explained, 'It was logical to establish a small, tight, delivery board with a core membership responsible for putting the links into practice and ensuring that delivery on the ground happens' (Interview: Senior Civil Servant, 16th June 2006).

The SCL's Delivery Board was chaired by a representative from DCMS and included delegates from DfES, Sport England and the YST's Lead Officer for the Multi-skills Clubs programme. Whilst NGBs and schools were not part of this smaller SCLs delivery board they had representation on the SCLs steering board, which included members from DfES, NGBs, Sport England, YST, CSPs, a PDM, the Operations Group. The role of the Operations Group was divided into three sub groups that included focus sports, multi-skill clubs and other sports whose work was convened by the Sport England Clubs Manager, whilst the Operations Group for Multi-skill Clubs was managed and convened by the Youth Sport Trust. All Operations Groups were required to meet at least once a term and reported directly to the School Club Links Delivery Board. The structural arrangements and lines of responsibility for the governance and management of the School Club Links work strand are illustrated in Figure 7.2.

Delivery of the School Club Links work strand began in September 2003, with PDMs and SSPs as the key drivers in schools and NGBs working on behalf of Sport England. As a number of authors have suggested the funding of sports clubs through Lottery funding and Sport England awards had created a context in which there was pressure placed upon clubs to comply with the
demands to work towards a set of outcomes that met government’s own objectives (Garrett, 2004; Reid, 2003).

Sport England’s role in managing the SCLs programme was to work with and fund NGBs who were best positioned to support their own clubs to achieve the outcomes for the initiative. For NGBs, this meant working with a network of quality assured, junior friendly sports clubs that had the capacity to make connections with schools in the SSP network. In order to ensure a degree of quality control over the clubs involved in the SCLs programme, Sport England placed a requirement upon all NGBs to ensure that their clubs had, or were at least working towards, ‘Clubmark’, the quality kite mark of assurance award.
managed by Sport England. Sport England’s School Club Links Manager explained how Clubmark provided a key quality control mechanism to ensure that clubs were able to address the needs of young people. Following the rapid expansion of the SCLs programme and overwhelming demand from clubs for accreditation, Sport England made the decision to allow clubs to engage in the programme as long as they were working towards accreditation (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006).

The initial funding for the School to Club Links work strand of £4.5 million was distributed to a number of partners, the majority to the governing bodies of sport, whose role was to work alongside clubs to achieve the targets set for the work strand. Sport England monitored the progress of the initiative by a reporting mechanism which demanded that all NGBs in receipt of funding for the SCLs programme reported their progress towards their targets on a monthly basis. Additional funding was also allocated to the YST to manage a new Multi-skills clubs initiative, whose aim was to bridge the gap between school and community sport and provide the first ‘real’ club experience for young people (YST, 2003). Eight hundred Multi-skill clubs were created as part of the SSP network, with each partnership funded by the YST. Each SSP received £500 per club which could be used to cover the costs associated with facilities, staffing and equipment. Whilst Multi-Skills Clubs were managed by the YST and funded through PESSCL, sportscoach UK was a key partner whose role was to deliver the training for Multi-Skill coaches (YST, 2004).

In order to ensure that NGBs were accountable for the funding they received for SCLs, a number of targets were agreed between NGBs and Sport England. Phil Veasey, Sport England’s Club Links Manager explained how, through discussion between the two parties, challenging targets were agreed:

Governing bodies will tell me they aren’t impossible and then I sell that to the PESSCL Board and as long as they are happy with that, they are our targets. And the governing bodies use that funding and put the targets into their whole sport plan funding. It is all part of the work that they should be doing anyway, but this gives them an added emphasis and it enables us to monitor and evaluate it as part of the PESSCL initiative; they are quite demanding targets (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006).
The funding of NGBs was revised when the SCLs programme was expanded from its original cohort of seven sports to twenty-two. In order to achieve more efficiency gains from NGBs, a decision was taken by Sport England to revise the funding mechanism from 2007/2008 so that they were funded on the basis of their performance over the previous two years. The School Club Links Manager for Sport England stated quite unequivocally that:

some of them [NGBs] are going to take a bit of a hit, but that’s fine because they always knew that this was a target-laden programme, and the governing bodies that have done well will get additional funding (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006).

As Veasey asserted, Sport England’s responsibility for the management of the programme meant that they had the capacity to reduce or withdraw the funding of any NGB that failed to deliver its agreed targets for the School to Club Links programme. Whilst it was acknowledged that this was a punitive system it meant that NGBs were accountable for the public funding they received.

The selection of the first seven sports for the Club Links programme was ostensibly based upon: their inclusion in the NCPE; NGB capacity; their popularity and capacity to mentor other sports; and their identification as sports that were the focus of other government initiatives. The programme was eventually extended to include twenty-two sports. As the total amount of funding for the programme was not significantly increased, this meant a significant reduction in financial support for the initial seven sports. For some of the smaller NGBs that were now included in the programme the allocation of approximately forty-five thousand pounds made a massive difference (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006). However, their inclusion resulted in pressure on Sport England to maintain its own targets for the Club Links programme. As Phil Veasey explained:

The smaller NGBs don’t give us the hard hitting big figures that a governing body such as the FA give us, but they are still placed within that broad offer to young people. However, if the Sport England team fails to deliver on its targets, jobs within the organisation may be threatened; all the governing body members of staff who are funded through this initiative are also on fixed term
contracts, so it is in everybody's interests to make sure they continue to improve, because they [NGBs] know that if they don't achieve their targets then there will not be any more funding, so it is high pressure, which is good (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006).

The context in which NGBs operated and their relationship with Sport England was outlined in the UK Sport commissioned Deloitte & Touche Report (2003) *Investing in Change*. The report provided detail of the new responsibilities for NGBs which included the development of its work in schools and a renewed focus upon provision. These new demands extended from the supply of appropriately trained coaches to support teachers in primary and secondary schools to requirements that demanded the development of strong talent identification plans to enable those young people with the interest and ability to reach the top levels of competitive sport.

The SCLs programme operated in a public sector context in which central government was exercising tight fiscal control over the use of public funds, whilst creating a climate of collaborative accountability through a number of policy outcomes that were shared by the policy actors jointly responsible for the delivery of the programme. With the introduction of *Whole Sport Plans* in 2003 there was an added pressure upon NGBs to adopt a more systematic and structured approach to the SCLs programme and the development of its own sports clubs (Garrett, 2004). For NGBs the acquisition of funding through the conduit of Sport England for the SCLs programme was contingent upon the willingness and ability of clubs to adhere to new contractual funding conditions and explicit agreements to support the delivery of the government's policy outcomes. The general requirements placed upon all the agencies responsible for managing and implementing the SCLs programme by DCMS meant that their individual 'sovereignty' and right to govern their own sport as they saw fit was now supplanted by a requirement to meet the demands of broader, government-led agendas.

7.2.1 Three National Governing Bodies case studies

The relationship between NGBs, government and schools has changed substantially since the emergence of NGBs during the latter half of the 19th
century. The core purpose of NGBs was to manage their sport from grass roots to elite level, through funding mechanisms that included a mixture of participation subscriptions and levies, sponsorship, media revenue and government funding. Reliance upon such diverse funding sources and the need to be self-reliant arguably created a competitive milieu in which NGBs focussed upon the need to grow and develop their own sport. With the election of the Labour Government in 1997, the nature of the relationship between NGBs and the government changed fundamentally. A perceived overdependence on public funds led to an announcement by the Minister for Sport that:

some governing bodies had survived despite their weaknesses rather than succeeded because of their strengths ... We aim to ensure that there is a sensible framework against which all governing bodies can judge their performance and one for which those in receipt of public funds will be judged by the provider of those funds (quoted in CCPR, 2003).

The government’s challenge for all NGBs was to adopt more professional working practices in which they found their own sources of funding in order to help them secure their long term futures.

The next section of the chapter provides a detailed account of the involvement of three NGBs (golf, cricket and athletics) in the SCLs’ work strand. Each of the case studies provides an insight into each sport’s approach to the implementation and management of the initiative. The case studies explain the background to each case and the funding mechanisms, resource dependencies and lines of accountability that underpin the delivery of the SCLs in the sports of cricket, athletics and golf.

7.2.1.1 Cricket

Sport England’s national Young People and Sport Survey (2003) highlighted the progressive decline in the teaching of cricket in secondary schools which was coupled with a similar fall in the amount of young people playing cricket in clubs outside school. A lack of appropriate facilities and access to cricket nets, the availability of a range of other sports, the short summer term, GCSE
exams that favour the teaching of rounders and the poor performance of the national team were all factors attributed to cricket's problems in schools. Mark Thomas, the Cricket Correspondent for the Daily Telegraph, writing after the successful Ashes victory of 2005, used the opportunity to highlight the precarious nature of cricket's future in state schools by suggesting that only 33% of secondary and 25% of primary schools offered some form of competitive cricket with far fewer offering regular competition. Undoubtedly cricket's early involvement in the School to Club Links programme proved a timely opportunity for the ECB to arrest the decline by establishing more formal links between cricket clubs and schools.

As one of 'the big four sports' in England, with its long tradition in schools, there was a degree of inevitability that cricket would be one of the first seven sports included in the School to Club Links programme from its inception in 2003. In order to deliver the programme, cricket's governing body, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) were funded over a two year period to deliver the School to Club Links work strand. Tessa Whieldon, the National Club Development Officer for the ECB, explained how the funding for the School Club links programme came into the ECB as a revenue stream from Sport England. The decision taken by the English Cricket Board was to allocate SCL funding across all County Cricket Boards who identified within their strategic plans how it was to be allocated. In order to implement the programme the ECB went through:

- a process via our County Cricket Boards of identifying what we call focus clubs that are really important at a local level, they are strategically important to the County Cricket Board, they have a junior section and they are looking to develop the juniors within their club (Interview: Tessa Whieldon 27th June 2006).

In order to secure funding from the County Cricket Boards to deliver SCL, the ECB insisted that focus cricket clubs must achieve Clubmark accreditation, work alongside their District Development Group to ensure integrated community links, produce long-term development plans and commit to a process of monitoring and evaluation. The framework for the SCL work strand was integrated into the ECB's own plans to create a new regional
management structure across all the major counties and regions in England and Wales. The ECB’s own strategic plan, ‘Building Partnerships’ which focussed upon the theme From Playground to Test Arena articulated cricket’s desire to enthuse young people to participate in cricket. The appointment of five new regional development managers in March 2003 to work with the County Boards and alongside ECB’s Cricket Development Managers ensured the sport had a strong infrastructure that was capable of networking and delivering at local level (ECB Annual Report and Accounts, 2005).

The ECB made all its focus clubs bid for SCL funding and gave its County Cricket Boards responsibility for making the decisions about which clubs received funding. Peter Ackerley, the ECB’s Head of Development for the England & Wales Cricket Board explained why the governing body had decided to use a bidding process to allocate its SCLs funding:

The ECB will work with cricket clubs and cricket people who are prepared to help themselves; the handout culture for us doesn’t exist any more. If cricket clubs actively engage with their community and their local schools, the ECB will work with them; we will find them human, financial and operational resources. Clubs that engage with schools get the funding and what they can then do is use that funding to lever out other funding, to do more of what they want to do. But if you just put your hand out and beg, we just aren’t interested; there is more to PESSCL and Club Links philosophy than just funding (Interview: Pete Ackerley 27th June 2006).

Focus clubs were also encouraged by the ECB to engage in a ‘matched funding’ process, which acted as an added incentive to clubs to seek funding from external sources to match against those funds provided through the formal Club Links bidding process. Due to an overwhelming response, cricket faced a massive capacity issue as too many cricket clubs registered, leaving more disappointed than happy at the failure to secure funds through the bidding process (Interview: Tessa Whieldon 27th June 2006). Whieldon also explained how the overwhelming response to the SCLs initiative was indicative of cricket clubs’ desire to sustain their history and heritage, to be the best they could be in terms of facilities and to have the capacity to seek further funding for their improvement. Whilst the Club Links programme represented one of several funding routes available to the governing body and
its cricket clubs, there was a degree of frustration that the allocation of funding for the Club Links initiative from Sport England had been incrementally sliced each successive year since 2003/4. From April 2007/8 the funding allocated from PESSCL represented exactly half of cricket's original allocation in 2003/4. The cuts to the funding for SCLs had proved difficult:

Our funding has been about halved, which they did articulate to us to some degree and we expected it, but not in terms of the severity ... It is quite tough because we budgeted for it within our club development programmes ... Because we've allocated the Counties Club Link funding, they have been able to go to the table with School Sports Partnerships initially and say, This is what we've got, can you match that, can you add to that? (Interview: Tessa Whieldon 27th June 2006).

Not only was the matched funding principle used with its own focus clubs but County Cricket Boards were also encouraged to obtain funds through SSPs. As National Club Development Officer for the ECB, Whieldon emphasised how the money from the SCL funding stream had allowed cricket to employ more community cricket coaches (CCCs) to support the work in focus cricket clubs. Based in community clusters, these CCCs facilitated links that helped build partnership arrangements between clubs and schools (Interview: Tessa Whieldon 27th June 2006). The appointment of CCCs through SCLs funding was regarded as one of the most significant factors in the success of the Club Links and PESSCL initiative. Peter Ackerley of the ECB emphasised how their employment meant that their services were available to clubs and free to schools and that their greatest success had been in creating cricket communities matched to local school clusters. Involvement in the SCL initiative had proved extremely beneficial for cricket:

We always had lots of approaches from schools and I knew if we had the funding we would be able to work together, and if timetabled correctly and dovetailed, that cricket could engage and create a real community of cricket. This funding and the creation of these new community coaches have allowed us to do just that (Interview: Peter Ackerley 27th June 2006).

Cricket County Development Plans demanded that focus cricket clubs achieved Clubmark accreditation for their period of involvement in the
PESSCL project. The ECB had created a system of accountability and efficiency within the SCLs programme that mirrored the techniques adopted by government to modernise the work of NGBs. Each of cricket’s focus clubs were encouraged to work alongside key local partners such as Community Development Officers (CDOs), County Sports Partnerships (CSPs), Local Authorities (LAs) and School Sport Partnerships (SSPs) to produce an action plan for the development of cricket in their respective partnerships. These plans were produced to a set of benchmark standards based on Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) principles and ECB minimum quality standards and, once costed; the ECB’s role was to direct resources towards delivering cluster activity plans for the Club Links work strand.

Whilst cricket’s involvement with the SCLs programme had been successful in regenerating cricket in local networks, the ECB’s main concern was the long-term sustainability and viability of the work strand, given the regular cuts in funding. Without a firm, long-term guarantee the future of the initiative was seen as problematic and, as much of the financial support for the programme had been invested in clubs and the work of a number of community cricket coaches on three year fixed-term contracts, there was now an obligation on the ECB to sustain these posts in the long term:

Essentially we are talking about people’s lives here, we need to be able to sustain it [Club Links funding], we need to fight to keep that revenue tail so investment is sustained and so is grass roots cricket (Interview: Tessa Whieldon, 27th June 2006).

There was also a degree of concern expressed from within the governing body about the speed of returns and outcomes expected from:

both government and Sport England, who want everything now and at the latest within a 12 month period, whereas we want to do it right and offer high quality; we are looking to 2009 and they [government] look to the next 12 months (Interview: Tessa Whieldon, 27th June 2006).

The demands placed on cricket to deliver its objectives were perceived as onerous and at times purely target-driven. Despite cricket’s disappointment in the reduction of money from the Sports Council for the SCLs work strand,
cricket regarded itself as fortunate enough to have the financial resources to absorb these losses. Indeed in cricket's own review of the School to Club Links strategy between April 2004 and March 2005 it was ranked second in terms of the number of direct club links with schools.

7.2.1.2 Athletics

For athletics the timing of the launch of the PESSCL strategy coincided with a modernisation project for the sport. The purpose of the venture was to develop a consolidated and sustainable strategic business plan for athletics supported by an integrated delivery and management system. The Foster Report, *Moving On* (2004), which had been commissioned by UK Sport and Sport England, suggested that the NGB's structural arrangements required wholesale modernisation and change. The report highlighted the failure of the sport to fulfil its potential and its inability to stem the continued decline in participation in the sport amongst children and young people. The report also revealed fundamental disagreements within the governing body about the purpose of athletics and whether its role was to service the demands of elite sport or mass participation (Foster Report, 2004). Whilst it was acknowledged that athletics remained a key element in the government's own plans to expand school sport, there were concerns within the report about the health and status of athletics in schools. The report suggested that the teaching of athletics faced two major challenges 'within athletics clubs there is an issue about their configuration: with schools the issue is about what they do' (Foster Report, 2004: 27). The failure of athletics clubs to understand and engage with the networks surrounding school sport was compounded by a lack of technical expertise and reported reluctance within some schools to teach certain athletics disciplines due to health and safety concerns. These problems were also exacerbated by a diminishing summer term, coupled with strong perceptions that the sport was losing ground to other activities because it had lost much of its former vitality.

Set against a background of internal upheavals within UK Athletics and a modernisation process following the publication of the Foster Report in May 2004, the Athletics School to Club Links Programme was rolled out across
England in April 2004 following a six-month pilot within several counties. Although somewhat reluctant to take on the demands of the SCL programme, athletics was one of the early recipients of SCL funding. Caroline Smith, the School Club Links Project Director for UK Athletics described how Sport England 'selected the Big Four sports first, then athletics with swimming and gymnastics; our Assistant CEO also sat on the Coaching Task Force' (Interview: 22nd June 2006). There was some acknowledgement that inclusion of the better funded sports reflected their positioning on various committees, working groups and task forces so, as new projects emerged, their positioning at the heart of policy development meant they were often ideally placed to make the most of these opportunities. Despite doubts about the capacity of athletics to respond to the demands of the SCL programme, there was a tacit suggestion that to have refused may have led to cuts in other elements of the work and funding for UK Athletics. During the first five years of the initiative, the money was divided equally between the seven sports which allowed all of the NGBs involved to work together towards a shared vision for the SCL work strand. In the first year that UK Athletics delivered the SCL programme it received £56k to forge 36 links in 9 of its regions, increased to £400k per annum over the next two years (Interview, Caroline Smith 22nd June 2006).

The award made to UK Athletics and agreed with Sport England, amounted to £415,000, with £315,000 used to support staff salaries and £100,000 allocated to the work of CSPs. In an agreement between Sport England and UK Athletics, the targets set for the SCL programme included the development of a minimum of 300 quality school to clubs links and the accreditation of a minimum of 120 quality athletics clubs through the achievement of clubs:future, athletics' own version of Clubmark (Interview: Caroline Smith 22nd June 2006). Whilst Smith agreed that the principles behind Clubmark were sound and included good quality assurance measures, UK Athletics had found it difficult to get clubs to produce evidence files. The government's policy of 'professionalising' sport and the NGBs' responsibility for driving these reforms in sports clubs was inevitably a slow process. As School Club Links Project Director at the time, Smith highlighted the
challenges in working with amateur volunteers who were key personnel in the success and viability of any athletics club, yet who often had neither the time, nor the skills and experience to produce the type of evidence and files that were demanded of them. Whilst the production of this type of evidence was commonplace practice in schools, it was proving more difficult to replicate within sports clubs without significant support from the governing body’s own development officers, who themselves were often under-resourced and overstretched by the demands of their own posts.

The funding received by UK Athletics in the first three years of the SCL programme was enough to make a significant impact on the links between athletics clubs and schools. Caroline Smith explained how the management of the SCL programme in the first instance was very heavily led by DCMS and senior people at Sport England who allowed the NGBs to deliver with little interference, ‘It appeared they were quite happy for all seven of us all to work together, because we just got on and did things; it all worked fairly well’ (Interview: Caroline Smith, 22nd June 2006). However, due to the expansion of the programme to twenty-two sports, Smith explained how Sport England appeared to struggle with its overall management and funding mechanisms: ‘There wasn’t any evidence of any set criteria from Sport England to calculate the funding that each governing body received for the programme and so it appeared to be a bit of a lucky dip.’

UK Athletics managed its School Club Links programme primarily through the CSP structure, was implemented and co-ordinated through athletics English Regional Development Co-ordinators and Partnership Athletics Development Officers (PADOs) who were located within CSPs. UK Athletics had allocated a significant portion of its budget in supporting the work of these officers. However Caroline Smith expressed some reservations about the funding and structural arrangements for both PESSCL and the club links programme:

Funding doesn’t get down to the individual club or school in most cases; funding goes on the structures, to the support officers, to CSPs. Yet there is a lack of funding for schools and for equipment to deliver the SCLs initiative in schools (Interview: 22nd June 2006).
In its Annual Review (2005) UK Athletics reported that the funding for the SCLs programme had created a number of new athletics development posts which had allowed it to engage with the new infrastructure surrounding PESS and the work of SSPs and PDMs. In her role as School Club Links Project Director for athletics, Smith described how PDMs had proved to be the vehicle that had enabled athletics to showcase and promote its curriculum resources, whilst also championing the cause of athletics by providing regular training and resources to support teachers in their delivery of athletics in schools (Interview: Caroline Smith 22nd June 2006).

In order to ensure a systematic approach to the delivery of the SCL programme, athletics development groups and members from schools and clubs had formed to agree and deliver a county plan for athletics within all CSPs. In its report on the progress of the SCL programme, the UK Athletics Annual Report (2005) provided details of its delivery which were embedded in CSP delivery plans, linking directly to other key areas of work, such as the Community Sports Coaches Scheme, Multi-Skills Clubs and the Competition Framework. UK Athletics also reported its active involvement in working closely with a number of key partners such as the YST and the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NAS/UWT) to improve athletics delivery within the curriculum.

Achieving a balance between the funding of personnel, structures and support services for the SCLs programme had proved difficult to manage and the reduction of funding had meant a significant reduction of money to help the work of CSPs from 2004 onwards. The support of PDMs, SSCos and schools and the assistance of national and regional NGB officers had meant that time, resources, training and equipment had nurtured the project in schools (UK Athletics, School Club Links Annual Report, 2006). The initiative had also proved fruitful in enabling athletics to improve its competitive county structures and to link them to CSP Development Plans for the new competition frameworks. The structural and personnel changes brought about by UK Athletics’ process of modernisation coincided with parallel changes to the
infrastructure for PESS. With its own internal review processes and staffing changes in full swing, engaging with the SCL work strand had proved to be a challenging period for the sport of athletics. The decision by UK Athletics (in negotiation with Sport England) to deliver the school club links programme through CSPs had proved to be a double edged sword.

7.2.1.3 Golf
Golf’s active involvement in schools began in the 1950s as a response to a decline in levels of participation in the game and a resultant reduction in the membership of golf clubs. Keen to address these problems, the golf correspondent Henry Longhurst suggested that they should be addressed by working in partnership with schools (Golf Foundation, 2007). The success of a pilot lecture and demonstration of golf in two schools convinced Longhurst and his colleagues that it was possible to make golf instruction available through a process of fund-raising and subsidy. The subsequent launch of the Golf Foundation in 1953 and the publication of its first Progress Report in August of the same year stated that ‘108 Schools and other educational establishments had registered for Golf Foundation instruction, representing around 3500 young people becoming actively involved in the sport of golf’ (Golf Foundation, 2007). With the success of the venture and the exponential growth of interest of schools in golf, the demand for instruction quickly outstripped the funding available. In its First Progress Report, (1953-4) the Golf Foundation outlined its predicament: ‘At least another 100 schools are eager and waiting to start. But we cannot expand to include them without more contributions to our funds’ (Golf Foundation, 2007). Since that time, the work of the Golf Foundation has remained limited by its own capacity to raise funds and by the restrictions imposed upon it by schools and the introduction of the NCPE which did not included golf as part of the syllabus (Interview: Mike Round, 21st July 2006).

The allocation of considerable funds to the major sports of athletics, cricket, tennis and rugby to deliver the School Club Links work strand had galvanised golf to lobbying for its inclusion in the programme. Stuart Armstrong from the Golf Foundation recollected how the civil servants directly involved in the
PESSCL strategy were invited to ‘The Open’ in order to talk about golf’s inclusion in the Club Links programme. Stuart Armstrong, who was working in schools for the Golf Foundation at the time, recollected how:

People heard about it [SCL] by rumour; the first we heard about it was when the ‘Big Four’ tennis, cricket, rugby, football announced they had got significant funding, certainly in the millions, to deliver the Club Link Programme. So golf decided to do some lobbying of its own and we invited the Civil Servant in charge of the PESSCL programme to The Open Championship (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006).

At the time the PESSCL initiative was launched in 2003, golf was not in a position to bid because there was no single body for golf; it was made up of a disparate number of groups and organisations that represented the sport. However, at a subsequent meeting between a Director of the Professional Golfers’ Association (PGA) and Matthew Conway (DCMS) a case was made for golf to become involved in both the UKCC and the school club links programme. Mike Round, the Chief Executive of the Golf Foundation, described how it became clear that the government was not prepared to work with and fund the different bodies involved in golf; if golf wanted to become the recipient of government funding then there was a need for golf to act as a single body (Interview: Mike Round of the Golf Foundation, 21st July 2006).

Before its involvement with PESSCL, golf had four governing bodies: EGU (the men’s amateur body), ELGA (the women’s amateur body), PGA (professional golf) and the Golf Foundation (junior golf), all of which had their own clear areas of responsibility, leaving other areas, particularly golf development, coaching and coach education, where responsibilities often overlapped and replicated each other’s roles. This left clubs, county-based officers, school and community officers, government agencies and sponsors unsure of the golf body to which it should direct funding and resources.

With pressure from government to reform and a desire within the game to seek new opportunities to grow the game, golf established the England Golf Partnership (EGP) with the English Golf Union (EGU), the English Ladies’ Golf Association (ELGA) and the Professional Golfers’ Association (PGA). The
EGP was an initiative supported by the Golf Foundation and Sport England in which the three governing bodies now worked together on the development of the game. Its Plan for 2020 (EGP, 2004) was to increase the number of golfers by 5%, to have 40% of golf clubs accredited to GolfMark, to increase club membership by 40,000, to develop a sophisticated volunteer strategy and to achieve greater national and international success. The immediate result of the formation of the EGP was a significant increase in the financial contribution to the game of golf from Sport England (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006).

Increased government involvement in sport and increased funding for sport and school sport provided a catalyst for the four golf bodies to explore ways of working in partnership to achieve a united front in order to lobby government. Mike Round, Chief Executive of the Golf Foundation, suggested that the creation of one body for golf meant that Sport England was happy to fund golf as there was a single vision for the game. Modernisation had provided the catalyst for England Golf’s involvement in a range of initiatives and its access to government funding through programmes such as PESSCL. There was an acknowledgement that golf had been poor at lobbying in the past and that the formation of a single association for golf had strengthened its capacity (Interview: Mike Round, 21st July 2006 and Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006).

The need for golf to engage with schools and to grow the game was exemplified in the Golf Foundation’s Annual Report (2004) which highlighted the issues and challenges facing the game. Despite a healthy number of players in the game, the traditional club scene was under threat and experiencing a shortage of members. In part, this problem was accredited to a historical legacy whereby clubs had failed to be proactive in encouraging young players and beginners to enter the game.

Whilst money was not perceived as the main ‘raison d’être’ behind golf’s engagement with the school sport strategy and Club Links in particular, it was acknowledged that funding from PESSCL afforded an NGB, such as golf,
greater security and the capacity to plan longer term. As the EGU and ELGA only worked in club settings, the Golf Foundation was the obvious choice to lead on the Club Links initiative as it was already active as a golf charity working mainly with primary schools. A number of sports governing bodies operate charitable trusts, ostensibly for the receipt of commercial and other profits for tax purposes which charity law dictates can only be expended on delivery of sport in education.

Stuart Armstrong, the Golf Foundation’s Programme Manager for the Club Links strategy, explained the motivation behind golf’s desire to get involved in the work strand:

> The main reason for investing in the Club Links programme was because we wanted to increase the participation rate of young people in the sport, in an area (schools) where we traditionally couldn’t recruit. What we wanted to do was to recruit from a sector that wouldn’t ordinarily play in order to broaden the participation rate of the age group (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006).

The Golf Foundation’s main drive was to grow the game and develop golf in schools. Having made substantial inroads into primary schools, the new structural arrangements surrounding sports colleges provided the ideal window of opportunity for golf to engage with a broader range of schools. As a consequence of its inclusion within the SCLs programme, golf decided to consult with schools and SSPs to develop a model for its delivery. Unlike most other NGBs and as a consequence of its consultation, golf decided to work directly with PDMs so that schools could liaise directly with local golf clubs with the support of local golf development officers. Stuart Armstrong suggested that golf’s choice of ‘School Links’ for the title of its work in schools, reflected the major contribution to be made by schools to the success of the work strand (Interview: 21st June 2006). The view of the Golf Foundation was that this approach provided a more powerful tool to support its partnership work with SSPs which, with the support of the NGB, could help guide young people into clubs. PDMs played a key, strategic role in golf’s School Links programme and were given ownership of the project by the provision of
£2,000 for the partnership by the Golf Foundation. As part of a written agreement between PDMs and the Golf Foundation, both co-ordinated projects in partnership with accredited golf clubs (Interview: Mike Round, 21st July 2006). Golf's approach to the Club Links initiative acknowledged that golf clubs did not have the capacity to engage with the intricacies of school sport agendas. This view was reiterated by Stuart Armstrong, who suggested that the Club Links model was predicated on schools, with the support of the Golf Foundation, approaching accredited clubs with the capacity and desire to work with schools. The justification for such an approach was reinforced by the Chief Executive of the Golf Foundation who suggested that:

rather than a sporting body going into schools and saying here is our sport, this is how you must do our sport, we tried to understand what it was that teachers needed to achieve and how we could present our sport to help them achieve that, so we have looked at it from their perspective (Interview: Mike Round 21st July 2006).

The role of the PDM was central to the development of golf's School Links initiative. Mike Round believed that teachers had appreciated golf's approach to working with schools. The approach of the Golf Foundation was to position itself so that it delivered what teachers and education wanted:

We are now in receipt of £120,000 for SCL so it's gone from £80,000 to £120,000 in 3 years; we've had a £40,000 increase. We have appointed a PESSCL co-ordinator who helps with the administrative side of processing applications. We allocated £2000 per partnership, which is not a lot of money but it acts as a kind of sweetener, pump priming funding because the schools have bought into golf and see what golf can offer them; they start to use their own money, apply for BLF money and start doing it for themselves so it becomes quite sustainable. (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006).

Whilst PDMs played a co-ordinator role and were responsible for the School Links budget, golf also targeted another nominated individual within SSPs to help manage the programme. Armstrong also described how:

PDMs are constantly being pushed and pulled by the various sports, so the approach for golf was to work with a teacher in each SSP who had an involvement or interest in the game and who felt that they really wanted to drive the development of this programme (Interview: 21st June 2006).
The funding for the School Links programme was directed into SSPs conditional upon the production of a development plan in which there was an agreement to work with a minimum of two local golf clubs. All project coordinators (PDMs or teachers) were required by the EGP, as its overall managing agent, to provide quarterly updates as a condition of their School Links grant. As an added incentive for schools or PDMs to complete their annual evaluation report, projects returning their monitoring forms were eligible to receive an additional £1,000 grant.

Golf's decision to work directly with SSPs and through PDMs was acknowledged as being at odds with Sport England’s advice to work through County Sports Partnerships:

Our regional officers support the PDMs in putting together their development plan; the PDM then determines when, where and how the programme will be delivered and how the money will be allocated for coaching, competitions, training or equipment ... It's golf's development manager who essentially will scrutinise that plan and ensure the money is being spent against the agreed delivery targets ... golf was not interested in working with County Sports Partnerships because we are still unsure about their remit; no one has ever explained to us what their remit was and we are still unsure of the delivery capacity of the CSP framework (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006).

There was an initial degree of cynicism from those involved in the delivery of golf's Club Links initiative as they believed that CSPs represented a needless layer of bureaucracy which was drawing government funding through Sport England. The sustainability and success of the Clubs Link project and the retention of young people in the game of golf was ultimately viewed as the responsibility of clubs. Each golf club's junior organiser 'was the driver of the initiative, whose role was to engage and persuade the club committee to buy into the programme and its benefits' (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006). While School Links was an undoubted success, the sport's reliance on volunteers and the attitudes of some clubs had created some problems for schools.

There were still residual issues that golf needed to resolve in order to improve its links with schools. Nevertheless the success of golf's School Links
programme attracted comment from senior politicians such as Alan Johnson. Speaking as the Secretary of State for Education at the Sports Colleges Conference in February 2007, Johnson reported to the conference 'that while football, cricket and athletics remained the bedrock of school sport, the number of pupils playing golf had increased by 64% in the past three years’ (The Times, Friday 2nd February 2007). The Golf Foundation’s successful venture into schools was credited to the alignment of its programme with:

the values and principles that School Sport Partnerships themselves are looking to adopt. It is about increasing school attainment, its about high quality PE and school sport and its about engaging children … and what we have done is said that is exactly where we want to go and there is no hidden agenda. Purely and simply we’re not just cherry picking talent; it’s pure participation. We want to encourage as many people to engage in the sport as we possibly can (Interview: Stuart Armstrong- 21st June 2006).

Armstrong also explained how golf was well-positioned to provide schools with resources and support for staff training. The Golf Foundation’s charitable status meant that it was ideally suited to offering young children the opportunity to play golf:

We don’t care if the child has got talent; we just need as many people as possible to be playing golf and if they do that, then we have done our job as far as the wider picture of the requirements of England Golf is concerned (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006).

Mike Round described how golf’s involvement with SSPs and the PESSCL initiative had helped change attitudes towards the sport which in the past had been seen as expensive and elitist:

Those individuals who work in local government sports development and in schools seem to have changed their attitudes. Golf is now seen as a more wholesome, lifelong healthy activity with lots of positive messages (Interview: 21st July, 2006).

The management and implementation of golf’s School Links programme did have some inherent tensions. Golf had felt a degree of pressure from Sport England to forge relationships with newly created CSPs when they believed that this was not in the best interests of the programme. With the introduction
of whole sport plans, NGBs were now required to work in partnership and through CSPs as a condition of their funding, so the capacity of golf to maintain its current arrangements with SSPs remained questionable. In its annual evaluation of the Club Links initiative 2004-5, the Golf Foundation's approach to the School Links programme was endorsed by PDMs whose feedback confirmed that working directly through partnerships was more easily managed than using the CSP in a brokering role. One of the decisions taken by the England Golf Partnership was to set up its own County Development Partnerships, which in the future provided golf with an infrastructure to work alongside County Sports Partnerships.

The biggest challenge for the EGP in delivering the 'School Links' programme was the harmonisation of the work of three separate organisations into a single body. Although golf's governing bodies worked towards the shared aims of recruiting and retaining more young people in golf, the organisations had worked separately. The government's own changing contractual relationships with NGBs that were managed through Whole Sport Plans by Sport England had forced NGBs to address their traditional working practices. The EGP's Whole Sport Plan placed an explicit requirement on golf to work with schools through the PESSCL strategy. This led to a series of new working protocols that were devised to allow golf's regional officers to focus upon SSPs and club development through Junior GolfMark accreditation. One senior member of staff within the England Golf Partnership commented that the approach to working with schools that had emerged as a direct result of the PESSCL Club Links programme had been so successful that it was now used a model of best practice for other England Golf projects outside of the School Links work strand. In order to support the ongoing implementation of the project, the organisations within the England Golf partnership contributed to the recruitment of extra Regional Development Officers to support the existing network. The decision to support the developments surrounding PESS led directly to a strengthening of the infrastructures for sport with both golf and cricket investing in extra personnel.
There was no doubt that the grass roots activities of the Golf Foundation had become more closely linked with the partnerships and networks surrounding PESS. In its Annual Report of 2005, the Golf Foundation suggested its most significant development since 2004 had been the increase in the amount of golf that now took place within schools, particularly within primary schools (Golf Foundation, Annual Report, 2004). The funding that sports received, especially via Sport England, had become very target focussed. For NGBs that were heavily reliant upon volunteer staff, or those with a small workforce, there was now a culture of bureaucratic monitoring and reporting systems. This in itself produced problems for those governing bodies whose work was heavily dependent on government funding. Stuart Armstrong of the Golf Foundation was concerned about these increasing demands and the subsequent effect it was having on the core work of NGBs:

I don't have a huge issue with the target setting, but I do have a problem with the levels of bureaucracy that are involved with government money and I think a lot of governing bodies spend a huge amount of time on paperwork and bureaucracy (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June, 2006).

There were marked similarities and differences in the way that this work strand was funded, managed and implemented by the various bodies and organisations involved. The overall governance of the programme amounted to a top-down model of funding with government directing money through Sport England, whose role was to distribute and manage spending through increasingly target driven and performance related mechanisms. Greater demands upon NGBs for accountability, transparency and efficiency in their working practices were inextricably linked with government funding mechanisms and a set of outcomes largely driven by broader government agendas. The funding distribution model could be exercised punitively, with Sport England having the powers to withdraw funding from those national governing bodies that failed to deliver on their specified targets. Shrewdly, the targets for the School to Club Links work strand were managed and closely interwoven with each governing body's 'Whole Sport Plans', a mechanism introduced in 2003 by Sport England in order to direct funding and resources
to NGBs whilst also including targets that were closely linked with cross-cutting agendas. The outcomes and targets demanded that all parties worked in partnership, with explicit demands placed on NGBs within their WSPs to help schools deliver the outcomes of the PESSCL strategy. WSPs provided a lever and a key management tool through which the overall performance of NGBs could be measured. The seven key performance indicators (KPIs) were closely monitored by Sport England and UK Sport.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were embedded within national governing body WSPs so that Sport England was able to measure and compare each NGB’s performance and allocate and distribute its funds accordingly. The three NGBs included in this study had chosen to fund, manage and implement the Club Links initiative in distinctly different ways. Cricket managed the programme predominantly through its own internal framework of County Cricket Boards and focus clubs, aided by regional cricket development officers (CDOs) working in partnership with local school sport partnerships and PDMs. UK Athletics chose a somewhat different route with the overall School Club Links programme managed by English Regional Development Co-ordinators through the fledgling CSPs. In contrast, golf managed its Club Links programme through the Golf Foundation, a charitable organisation working on behalf of the newly created England Golf Partnership. The agents responsible for the delivery of the School to Club Links work strand for each of the case study NGBs are detailed in Table 7.3.
### Table 7.3 Agents responsible for work strands

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cricket</th>
<th>Athletics</th>
<th>Golf</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government</strong> department responsible</td>
<td>DCMS</td>
<td>DCMS</td>
<td>DCMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quango responsible for funding</td>
<td>Sport England</td>
<td>Sport England</td>
<td>Sport England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGB responsible</td>
<td>ECB</td>
<td>UK Athletics</td>
<td>England Golf Partnership (EGP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGB Managing Agent</td>
<td>County Cricket Boards (CCBs)</td>
<td>English Regional Development Co-ordinators</td>
<td>Golf Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGB Delivery Agent</td>
<td>Focus Clubs</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
<td>Development Officers (PADOs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGB Officers responsible for delivery</td>
<td>Cricket Development Officers</td>
<td>Athletics Regional Development Co-ordinators</td>
<td>School Sport Partnerships (PDMS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGB Accreditation</td>
<td>ECB Clubmark</td>
<td>clubs: future</td>
<td>GolfMark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PESSCL Partner</strong></td>
<td>School Sport Partnerships</td>
<td>School Sport Partnerships</td>
<td>School Sport Partnerships</td>
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### 7.3 Policy Development

It was the way in which the organisations and actors involved in the implementation of the School Club Links work strand responded to the initiative and interacted that shaped this policy initiative over time. Jenkins (1978) has suggested that policy-making does not come to an end once a policy is set out or approved, whilst Anderson (1975) highlights how 'policy is being made as it is being administered and administered as it is being made' (Anderson, 1975: 98). The interplay and interaction between politicians, administrators and service providers in this particular work strand is the focus of this section of the chapter, which delivers a substantive account of policy developments in the process of delivery and implementation since the establishment of the School Club Links work strand.
7.3.1 School Club Links: Potential sources of policy change

Two years after the launch of the School Club Links strategy, the Minister for Sport Richard Caborn announced an expansion of the Club Links programme from seven sports to twenty-two on the basis that ‘Strengthening the links between clubs and schools helps create a culture of participation from an early age - and helps foster a real community spirit in an area’ (Government News Network, 2004). There appeared to be a flurry of interest in the initiative amongst governing bodies that were keen not to miss out on the opportunity to forge formal links though this initiative. The fifteen new NGBs were badminton, basketball, canoeing, cycling, golf, hockey, judo, netball, orienteering, rowing, rugby league, sailing, squash, table tennis and volleyball, and all appeared keen to endorse the initiative. Diccon Gray (National Development Manager of the English Table Tennis Association) suggested that strong school-club links would ‘encourage and lead young people into active lifestyles. In table tennis, players can enjoy lifelong involvement in a sport that brings with it many health and social benefits.’ Pauline Harrison, Chief Executive of England Netball, maintained that it would enable her sport to develop a co-ordinated approach to community provision and broaden access to appropriate netball opportunities in quality facilities: ‘it will allow us to enhance the number of opportunities for young people to access our sport’ (DCMS, 2004d).

Since the announcement in 2003 of a joint DfES and DCMS Public Service Agreement, the target for the School Links strand had been:

To increase the percentage of 5-16 year olds from school sport partnerships participating in high quality club environments from 14% in 2002 to 20% by 2006 and to 25% by 2008, while achieving a floor target for key stages 2-4 of 15% each and 20% by 2008 (DfES, 2006).

The PESSCL Director from DCMS acknowledged that from the beginning of the PESSCL initiative there had always been an intention to involve a wider range of other sports. Target projections for the original seven focus sports would only be able to account for approximately half of the work strand’s PSA
target of numbers of young people moving from schools to clubs by 2006 (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

The allocation of money to Sport England for the development and implementation of the programme was £4.5 million per annum, but with no extra funding another fifteen sports were added to the programme. This posed a particular challenge for Sport England, as one member of Sport England’s staff explained:

The first bit of logic was to choose and invest in seven key sports in the school curriculum; however a couple of years later the decision by DCMS to extend the programme to twenty-two sports, and it was never quite clear what the criteria and the rationale was for the inclusion of those other sports. This meant that the next challenge for Sport England was to try to rationalise how the funds were distributed and what each sport was being funded for (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006).

Once the funds were allocated, Sport England’s Head of Operations for the Clubs Links programme explained how the management of the programme was assisted by the funding mechanisms at Sport England’s disposal: ‘The carrot of funding had proved to be a wonderful tool in managing the programme’ although it was acknowledged that this method was far less effective with the larger, cash-rich sports such as football and rugby. For some of the smaller sports that were new to the programme, such as volleyball, their allocation of £4,500 represented a ninth of their yearly funding and constituted a significant amount of money (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006). Sport England acknowledged that the ‘Big Four’ sports had done extremely well from the Club Links initiative and sports, such as gymnastics had been able to build new regional infrastructures as a consequence of their funding. The benefits to sport had been wholesale and middle range sports, such as badminton, triathlon and lacrosse now had the opportunity to get involved at the fringes of the initiative.

Phil Veasey suggested that the initiative had been an undoubted success and had allowed some NGBs to profit from the new infrastructure, even though they were not funded directly by the programme:
It has given them a chance to get to the party. The interesting thing about those two sports [triathlon and lacrosse] is that they haven't been funded, but they have been coming to the governing body meetings and networking locally via PESSCL, because they know that this is the only show in town (Interview: 30th June 2006).

The structures and frameworks created by PESSCL gave all sports the opportunity to network and gain access to schools even though they might not be directly funded by the School Club Links work strand. This contributed to a strengthening of the position of NGBs and sports clubs and their relationships with SSPs.

The publication of Sport England’s new strategy plan *The Framework for Sport in England* (2004) refocused the priorities of the organisation. As part of its new responsibilities, Sport England supported 20 priority sports. Of the sports that were selected for the case studies, cricket and golf represented England Priority Sports and athletics a ‘UK Wide Priority Sport’. Ostensibly the selection of these priority sports was based on their capacity to contribute to Sport England’s vision of an active and successful sporting nation. Selection as a priority sport brought with it funding in return for a commitment to work with Sport England through Whole Sport Plans (WSPs). The adoption of KPIs as a management tool helped Sport England to measure the achievements and performance delivered by each governing body and to obtain measurable results to ascertain whether it was getting value for money from its investment into NGBs. The broader intent of Whole Sport Plans was to create a number of regional links and to extend the work between all of sport’s partner agencies in order to provide mutual benefits through the sharing of best practice. The seven KPIs addressed in each plan are provided in Table 7.4.
Table 7.4 Sport England Whole Sport Plan KPIs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start and stay</th>
<th>Succeed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation - an increase in participation</td>
<td>International success - performance by teams and/or individuals in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through NGB-driven activity</td>
<td>significant international championships and world ranking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clubs - the number of accredited clubs within the</td>
<td>English athletes representing GB - the percentage of English athletes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sport</td>
<td>in GB teams in sports competing as GB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership - the number of active members of clubs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>within the sport</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Coaches - the number of qualified coaches and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instructors delivering instruction in the sport</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteers - the number of active volunteers</td>
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<td>supporting the sport</td>
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(Adapted from Sport England, 2004)

The 'Start and Stay' KPIs interlink closely with the work of the PESSCL strategy and the SCLs work strand in particular, with the 'succeed' KPIs representing an outcome that could be met as a consequence of greater involvement in the PESS network. One of the conditions of funding from Sport England was that all priority sport NGBs were required to develop business plans in order to detail how they would invest money and resources in their sport over a four-year timescale. Sport England's tool for managing these plans was to make funding conditional upon governing bodies hitting the targets they had committed to in their plans. The new operational climate, context and framework in which the NGBs for sport functioned meant that funding was now predicated upon procedures and systems. These ensured that KPIs were linked with targets that helped government achieve its broader objectives for raising standards in schools through PESS and by using sport as a lever to engage more of the population in sports activities at a young age, potentially leading to lifelong participation.
The KPIs targeted these outcomes by ensuring that NGBs were judged on their capacity to deliver increases in the number of accredited clubs within their sport, the number of active members within their clubs and in participation levels in their respective sports. Sport England monitored progress on KPIs through an annual reporting mechanism based upon NGB returns from individual clubs. Involvement and engagement in the School Club Links initiative helped governing bodies achieve their KPIs and secure increases in the number of participants in their respective sport. Indeed, a senior member of Sport England staff commented upon how ‘jobs and empires had now been created to take care of School Club Links so there was now an incentive to continue’ (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006). The SCLs work strand had contributed to the growth in the work and funding available as a consequence of involvement in the programme. It had allowed many NGBs to appoint extra staff to deliver the growing workload surrounding the programme and had helped some sports to modernise their own internal structures in order to make them more able to respond to, and work alongside, PESS.

The obligation for all of the priority sports to increase the number of accredited clubs within their Whole Sport Plans led to a rebranding of the Clubmark award. In 2005, Knight, Kavanagh and Page were commissioned to overhaul the award:

There was a general perception that it had become outdated and needed to reflect its new status at the core of much of the work between Sport England and sports clubs. We are now investigating the notion of a licence period, so that in order for governing bodies to accredit Clubmark, they would need to have a licence, nothing too complicated, just quality assured clubs getting Clubmark for a shelf life of three years to make sure that it is by far the best process (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006).

This represented yet another modernising tool to meet the government’s growing demands for improved efficiency and value for money for all of the agencies involved in the delivery of sport. For Sport England, Whole Sport Plans, KPI targets and Clubmark represented mechanisms that allowed it to manage and deliver its own targets, through the work of the organisations.
which it funded. Sport England’s new remit focussed upon supporting community sport and the work of NGBs. It effectively ended any previous relationships it previously had with schools:

Sport England’s new focus is on community sports. Schools are not our bag anymore, but there is always a place where the two interface, so that’s when we connect more heavily with YST and club links and extended school sport as the ultimate expressions of that (Interview: Phil Veasey 30th June 2006).

The Youth Sport Trust’s Chief Executive, Steve Grainger, suggested that the progress and work of the School Club Links work strand ‘had proved to be slow because of the nature of working with a voluntary infrastructure of sports clubs’ (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006). Furthermore, he voiced his concerns about the sustainability of an initiative that was heavily reliant on a system where there was a lack of an embedded and solid infrastructure of clubs. One of the difficulties that had emerged as a result of the expansion of the programme was working with such a large number of sports:

At the moment we have got a hundred and six thousand affiliated clubs in this country; we cannot work systematically with a hundred and six thousand affiliated clubs. We [YST] probably need to say that they [Sport England] need to make some harsh decisions ... I think we could probably work with no more than forty-five thousand clubs but that isn’t our role. It has got to be Sport England’s and the governing bodies’ responsibility to do it (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006).

The incremental growth of the SCL initiative, which was managed jointly by YST and Sport England, inevitably led to tensions concerning the capacity of both of these organisations to deliver. Whilst the contribution of education to the work strand was able to draw upon the enormous infrastructure and capacity of schools, sport was in a much weaker position in terms of its capacity to draw upon a network of organisations whose accountabilities and funding mechanisms often militated against a coherent and unified approach.

7.3.2. County Sport Partnerships
The introduction of County Sport Partnerships provided an opportunity for Sport England to bring a degree of coherence to the work of the key agencies
responsible for delivering sport. Whilst their central purpose was to address Sport England's targets to increase participation in sport and active recreation by 1% point per annum through to 2020, CSPs were also expected to support the delivery of the PESSCL strategy. While the role of CSPs was substantially locally determined, they were required to support NGBs in achieving their Whole Sports Plans. According to Veasey, the cross-section of stakeholders and partners involved in each CSP and the range of outcomes they were expected to achieve was what made them unique and unlike any other existing organisation (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006).

Although the principles behind CSPs were sound, the introduction of another body into an already crowded policy space had been received with mixed reactions from the NGBs which formed part of this study. For example from the beginning of the SCL work strand the ECB had made a commitment, in principle, to work alongside all 45 CSPs in order to deliver its KPIs on condition that they were 'fit for purpose'. With Club Links representing one of a number of initiatives involving a similar range of partners there was a growing empathy for their different roles and responsibilities:

I think we've all understood that our agendas are slightly different, but our outcomes are the same. What we want to achieve is exactly the same; we acknowledge that their specific objectives are a bit different from ours, but by doing things together we will achieve similar outcomes. That shared outcome is equally valid for schools as it is for clubs (Interview: Pete Ackerley, 27th June 2006).

However, he was pragmatic in his assessment of the PESSCL strategy and Club Links element. For example in relation to education outcomes he commented that:

It's never going to be my agenda at all, but when I start to translate what I do with kids through cricket - make them more physically active, make them more enthused - an outcome of what we do when we engage with clubs and schools, one of our key outcomes, is that what happens with these kids is their grades improve (Interview: Pete Ackerley, 27th June 2006).

Whilst the validity of this statement is debatable, the impact of the Club Links work strand had helped revitalise the structures and networks surrounding
cricket. Tessa Whieldon described how 'the initiative had helped cricket to strengthen its workforce and employ full-time cricket development managers, regional managers, community sports coaches and full-time coach educators (Interview: Tessa Whieldon-27th June 2006).

A large proportion of the PESSCL funding for athletics was directed through CSPs to support its delivery plans as the result of an agreement between Sport England and UK Athletics (UK Athletics Annual Report, 2005). For UK and England Athletics, its modernisation process, levered by the Foster Report *Moving On* (2004), coupled with upheavals within the governing body, led to an agreement that from April 2005 delivery of the Club Links programme for athletics would take place through the County Sports Partnership structure, co-ordinated through the English Regional Development Co-ordinators (UK Athletics Annual Report, 2005). Athletics development groups involving schools and clubs were established to identify, agree and deliver a coordinated county plan in all CSPs and to negotiate partnership agreements between schools and clubs. Caroline Smith, who was managing SCLs on behalf of UK Athletics, recalled how it was imperative that athletics remained involved in the Club Links programme and engaged with schools. The eagerness of UK Athletics to remain involved with the SCLs programme despite its own internal problems was possibly explained by a growing body of evidence, supported by the findings of a SWOT analysis of athletics in English schools, which revealed a number of weaknesses in the sport's positioning (Annual Congress of Athletics, 2004). The conclusions reached by the analysis revealed athletics' decline in schools was due to its status as a non-essential part of the NCPE and its poor school to club links in some regions caused by difficulties in communication between them. Caroline Smith of UK Athletics explained how the Congress had led UK Athletics to reassess its position in schools and to reposition itself more proactively in selling athletics to School Sport Co-ordinators and procuring local professional athletics development officers to develop school to club links. Whilst athletics had no option at the time but to link to the CSP network, its direct links with schools and SSPs had been weakened as a consequence (Interview: Caroline Smith, 22nd June 2006).
Golf had not previously been part of Sport England’s Active Sport network and its inclusion in the SCL initiative represented a significant moment for the sport. The Golf Foundation’s Annual Report (2004) suggested that the traditional club scenario was under threat and that many clubs were experiencing a shortage of members. Furthermore, the Report illustrated how the shortage was exacerbated by an historical legacy in which clubs had not always been proactive in looking to the future and encouraging young players and beginners (Golf Foundation Annual Report: 2004). A strategic decision was taken by Golf England as soon as it was aware of its inclusion in the SCLs initiative to ascertain how best to manage the work strand for golf. The feedback from a range of partners was that golf should work through school sports partnerships yet despite this evidence:

Sport England wanted us to work through County Sports Partnerships, but we had no interest in working with County Sports Partnerships because (a) we didn’t know what they were doing because no-one had ever told us and (b) there was a difference in the delivery capacity between one County Sports Partnership and another (Interview: Mike Round, 21st July 2006).

In an attempt to clarify the work of CSPs, golf invited a number of them to make a presentation about their role in the delivery of PESS but was disappointed by the lack of consistency in the responses they received. Mike Round, the Chief Executive of the Golf Foundation believed that it would have been ill-judged for golf to have embedded its SCLs work through the network of CSPs because of the lack of a standardised network with which it could engage (Interview Mike Round, 21st July 2006).

Round also argued that the outstanding success of golf’s involvement in SCLs was due to the close relationship it had nurtured between golf, SSPs and PDMs with whom they worked to shared agendas (Interview: 21st July 2006). This last point was borne out by comments from Stuart Armstrong of the Golf Foundation, who conceded that golf’s close alliances with PDMs had helped England Golf to achieve two of its key performance indicators. It had also supported PDMs in achieving their own objectives. Both of the senior officers at the Golf Foundation concurred that Partnership Development Managers
were key agents in securing a sport's success in the SCL work strand. Round suggested that 'if the PDM is on board, then the whole thing has got a good chance of running; without PDMs on board, no matter how much work we do in the clubs, then it is going to be difficult' (Interview: 21st July 2006). This latter observation was in accordance with the views of Stuart Armstrong who pointed out that it had been a collective organisational decision within the England Golf Partnership to reorganise and to position golf in order to deliver mutual benefits:

There was a need for us to understand how different sports and school sport partnerships were emerging and developing, their capacity and how golf could service their needs (Interview: Stuart Armstrong- 21st June 2006).

7.4 A summary of the role of the key actors

During the five year time period framed by this policy initiative, there have been a number of changes to the SCL programme that have been shaped by the clusters of policy actors involved in this work strand. These marked changes over such a short period of time reflected a rapidly changing policy context in which the roles, relationships and agendas have served to shape the direction of policy developments for PESS. This next section provides a summary of the role of each of the key policy players in determining the policy changes that have occurred within the SCLs work strand of the PESSCL initiative.

7.4.1 DCMS/DFES

It is evident that the Club Links work strand was a late addition to the overall PESSCL strategy. The DFES/DCMS Project Director of the National School Sports Strategy at the time explained how the 'CL' for 'Club Links' had only been added to PESS two months before he had been appointed to the post in 2002:

I would not be able to stress enough that this is about education and everything else flows from it as secondary benefits. Definitely recognised, definitely valuable, but not the primary aim (Interview: Matthew Conway- 12th July 2005).
For both DfES and DCMS the School Club Links work strand provided a tool to support the delivery of the overall PSA target, and whilst the funding streams for the separate work strands came from separate governments departments (Club Links and Step into Sport from DCMS; the other six work strands from DfES):

the mechanism was not relevant. What mattered was that the money was contributing to a work strand that sat within a broader perspective and that the crossovers, the links and the synergies were recognised (Interview: Mathew Conway, 12th July 2005).

DCMS funding for the SCLs work strand was managed via the conduit of Sport England which, in turn, exercised tight control over its priority NGBs through a performance management system administered through WSPs. By linking the funding of NGBs and SSPs to the objectives and outcomes of the SCLs programme, DfES and DCMS were able to maintain a high degree of control over the work of all of the agencies involved. In describing the relationship between DCMS and NGBs, the Project Director of the PESSCL strategy suggested that:

in an era where government support in any aspect of sport cannot be big enough for all governing bodies to benefit, it is for individual governing bodies to demonstrate with whatever funding they’ve got now, that they can deliver ... all governing bodies, regardless of their size, would be rewarded on the basis of whether or not they had met, or exceeded expectations (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July).

The modernisation of the working practices of NGBs had brought with it the demands on these organisations for greater efficiency and accountability for public funds. The management of the SCLs work strand exemplified the new relationships between government and sport.

The management of NGBs was not without its inherent tensions and it was clear that there were capacity issues involved in managing the outcomes of twenty-two national governing bodies in their delivery of the Club Links work strand. Speaking of these problems, a Senior Civil Servant highlighted the challenges of overseeing an initiative involving sports bodies, all of which had different capacities, different financial resources and a range of voluntary and
full-time personnel (Interview: 16th June 2006). He illustrated the argument by contrasting cash rich organisations such as the Football Association (FA) with its vast infrastructure of paid employees, with smaller governing bodies such as the All England Netball Association (AENA) which operated with limited financial resources and a handful of staff. In the case of smaller governing bodies, the core funding had afforded these organisations a real opportunity to begin to engage and impose new infrastructures of their own in order to link their sport with SSPs.

The management of the SCLs work strand through the PESSCL Delivery Board represented a complex but effective approach to the performance management of a number of organisations working in partnership to deliver a number of shared policy outcomes. The intricate web of funding and partnership accountabilities had been woven into measurable targets. The fundamental relationships between government departments (DCMS and DfES), NGBs, SSPs and quasi-governmental sporting organisations, such as Sport England in policy initiatives such as the Club Links work strand was based upon hierarchical, contractual, funding obligations, target setting and performance measurement techniques.

7.4.2 Sport England
Whilst the publication of Game Plan (2002) focussed primarily on outlining the value of sport and physical activity to the achievement of broader social objectives, such as social inclusion, it also contained the government’s two overarching objectives for sport, namely to deliver a major increase in participation and a sustainable improvement in success in international competition. One of the four key prerequisites identified by the government for delivering these objectives was the achievement of organisational reform. In particular, before ‘the government considers further increases to its investment in sport, less money should go to bureaucrats and more to the end user. Public, private and voluntary sectors need to work together better towards a common goal’ (Game Plan, DCMS/ SU, 2002:12). This new plan for the reform of sport placed greater responsibility upon sport agencies, such as Sport England to create more effective and accountable delivery systems.
Subsequently, in 2003, Sport England announced a transformation of its own organisational structures in order to focus more specifically upon providing strategic leadership through partnership working in order that people could 'start, stay and succeed' in sport at every level (Sport England, 2004). Sport England's new objectives, which had been outlined in *Game Plan*, focussed upon increasing and widening the base of participation in sport and increased levels of success on an international stage. Sport England's new *Framework for Sport* (2004) led to a modernised Sport England and the creation of nine new Regional Sports Boards delivering through partnerships in which 'everyone has a role to play' (Sport England, 2004: 6). Significantly, Sport England restricted its allocation of financial support to just two funding streams, dedicated to community sport (managed through nine Regional Sports Boards) and a national funding stream concentrating upon the work of 20 priority sports that were responsible for supporting Sport England in its vision for an active and successful sporting nation. Its relationships with a range of sports bodies focussed upon developing and delivering a 'dynamic network of clubs, coaches and volunteers, thus creating a sustainable infrastructure for retaining people's involvement in sport' (Sport England, 2004: 7).

In line with the challenges detailed in *Game Plan*, Sport England announced in 2004 a more co-ordinated, national approach to planning for sport. It was to be achieved through a new, contractual, national governing body, delivery framework of WSPs. The adoption of this system of performance management which was coupled with close monitoring techniques was predicated upon models that had driven a 1% growth in annual participation rates in countries, such as the USA, Australia and New Zealand (Game Plan, DCMS/ SU, 2002). Having conducted research of its own, Sport England maintained that NGBs were supportive of these new management techniques and were willing to operate in a competitive environment in which organisations were rewarded for their achievements and penalised financially for their failure to achieve policy targets (Sport England, 2004). The publication of Sport England's new *Framework for Sport in England* set out its
target of achieving 50% of the population playing sport operated and managed through the School to Club Links programme by 2020.

Commenting on Sport England’s relationship with its twenty focus sports, its Head of Sports Development described how Whole Sport Plans were designed to help it achieve its own targets to raise participation in clubs. By focussing and directing the agendas of the national governing bodies, Sport England was able to monitor and evaluate the contribution of NGBs to programmes such as PESSCL and, more specifically, to work strands, such as School to Clubs Links. It was acknowledged that the work of all of the bodies involved in PESSCL had to contribute to what was described as increasingly target-laden programmes in which funding was dependent on organisational performance (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006). In order to achieve the targets set for all aspects of their work, including the SCL programme, Sport England required all its priority sports NGBs to report on a monthly basis. For those who failed to meet their targets there was the threat of the reduction or withdrawal of funding.

The use of Clubmark as a tool to lever change within sports clubs was reinvigorated as a consequence of the extra demands for the kite mark as a direct consequence of the School Club Links work strand. In order to seek funding from its NGB, or Sport England, the award was a prerequisite for clubs seeking any form of financial support or direct access to SSPs. In order to reposition and strengthen the award and to overcome Sport England’s lack of capacity to manage it internally, a decision was taken to appoint management consultants Knight, Kavanagh and Page (KKP) from April 2006 to do so. Although still directly accountable to Sport England, KKP’s role was to work closely with NGBs and the DCMS to implement processes to ensure that Clubmark was a genuine ‘quality standard’ (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006). Clearly, the rebranding of Clubmark was designed to improve levels of awareness of the kite mark across the country and to make it a high quality award to which all sports clubs aspired. Any organisation or governing body seeking to accredit its own clubs would in future also be subject to a licensing process to ensure a minimum operating framework of cross-sport
moderation that had robustness and integrity within the system (Sport England, Clubmark Review, March 2006). Sport England's intention was that the award should drive up standards in clubs and help Sport England to target its funding towards quality Clubmark accredited clubs.

The introduction of Whole Sport Plans proved to be another mechanism that enabled Sport England to exert a degree of control over the work of NGBs. The Start and Stay targets that were subsumed under Sport England’s Making England Active strand included two key performance indicators that required NGBs to increase the number of Clubmark accredited clubs within the sport and to increase the number of active members of clubs within their respective sports. It was clear that the formation of a dynamic network of sports clubs in order to ‘create a sustainable infrastructure for retaining people in sport’ (Sport England, 2004: 5) was a key element in supporting Sport England to achieve its objective of 1% point annual growth in participation rates. Driven by the agendas of Sport England’s new vision (an active and successful England and backing and support for the Olympic Games), Whole Sport Plans provided the structural framework and lines of accountability through which Sport England managed and controlled its national governing bodies of sport.

7.4.3 National Governing Bodies for Sport
The publication in 2005 of the CCPR commissioned report into NGB funding, indicated that, whilst the introduction of Whole Sport Plans purported to give NGBs more flexibility, in practice their work was still largely defined by Sport England priorities. However, the report also revealed that the results of a survey of sixty NGBs had driven sports to improve their own systems of governance and management (CCPR, 2005:5). Paradoxically, the requirements and demands placed upon NGBs by Sport England brought into sharp relief the often opposing agendas of some club members and clubs that wanted to distance themselves from what was perceived as the instrumental agendas of government and Sport England, who appeared driven largely by targets that related to issues outside sport (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006). The CCPR (2005) report also illustrated the growing tensions and emerging conflicts between the values and expectations of NGBs and their
own clubs. Whilst sports clubs and their members solicited the support of NGBs to help them create an environment in which they could practise their sport for the sake of it, the report suggested that there was evidence that the loyalty of senior officers within NGBs were increasingly shifting towards those of funding agencies in a case of 'he who pays the piper' (CCPR, 2005: 20).

Amongst the NGBs involved in this study, there was a general sense that as a consequence of PESSCL and work strands such as School Club Links there was a clearer sense of purpose for school sport and its infrastructure. However, there were also some doubts expressed about the capacity of sport and its club infrastructure to match the demands placed upon them by initiatives such as PESSCL. As the Chief Executive of the Golf Foundation remarked:

> the school delivery is fairly straightforward stuff; there is an approach that needs to be applied and it is reasonably straightforward, but clubs, with all of their complexities, are a different kettle of fish. As an NGB we have got to balance the needs of members with our agendas and those of our funding agents (Interview: Mike Round, 21st July 2006).

In short, there was a degree of consensus regarding the capacity of sports clubs to rise to the challenge posed by the growing demands placed upon a system that often relied on the goodwill of volunteers who are not necessarily well informed about the new sporting infrastructure surrounding schools (Interview: Tessa Whieldon, 27th June 2006). Steve Grainger, the Chief Executive of the Youth Sport Trust, also expressed his concern about setting targets for a voluntary infrastructure that was already struggling to keep pace with developments within PESS. In short, the evidence suggests that all of the NGBs in this case study were working hard to match the demands placed on them by schools: 'We in athletics have to help the clubs get their act together, to ensure that we are ready to receive all of the youngsters that are getting inspired through the work of school sport partnerships' (Interview: Caroline Smith, 22nd June 2006). She also remarked that:

> For many governing bodies of sport, the revenue received from Sport England often outweighed the money that they received from their
membership. None of the governing bodies that were included in the report, or within this study, believed that they could sustain the work demanded of them for activities such as School Club Links through self-generated income. Whilst NGBs had undoubtedly benefitted both in monetary and personnel terms through their willingness to work with schools and SSPs on initiatives such as the Club Links work strand, the short term nature of the funding period still militated against any long-term stability within sports' governing bodies.

Despite substantial increases in the financial support that NGBs such as athletics and cricket received through the SCLs work strand, subsequent reduction of funds after a short period of time illustrated the difficulty the sector faced in planning for the long term. As Mike Round of the Golf Foundation remarked:

> The lack of funding really hasn't given us the ability to long-term plan, because we just literally go from year to year doing as best we can, so additional funding would have given us some security to allow us to long term plan and that means that we would have been able to plan for growth (Interview: Mike Round, 21st July 2006).

This lack of stability was also a serious issue for the ECB, whose funding streams were dependent upon government revenue funding the details of which were often released at the last minute. As Pete Ackerley of the ECB observed:

> I'll certainly be knocking on the door to find out if we have got any more revenue funding past 2008, because it will have an impact in terms of people. It is people's lives, they are on three-year fixed term contracts and these are community cricket coaches and clubs that are delivering high quality cricket to young people and that's what we need to sustain (Interview: Peter Ackerley, 27th June 2006).

An inability to plan long-term, coupled with funding insecurity, severely compromised the capacity of governing bodies to lever change in clubs in order to make them more welcoming to young people. As Golf's Development Manager, Stuart Armstrong recognised, 'it was the young person's experience of the golf club that made the difference between whether or not they were able to retain the child in the sport' (Interview: 21st June 2006). Because of the disparate nature of golf clubs and their capacity to help the governing body deliver its whole sport plans, golf funded the School Links work strand directly through school sport partnerships. However, in order to modernise golf clubs
in readiness for a potential influx of players from schools, a decision was made by the England Golf Partnership to lever change in its clubs by aligning golf’s club accreditation programme with Clubmark. As Mike Round explained:

Clubs in the past had not seen its [Clubmark] value, so when we had an allocation of £1.2m of Community Club Development Funding from Sport England, we only allowed those golf clubs that had, or were in the process of seeking Clubmark status, to apply for the money (Interview: Mike Round, 21st July 2006).

The ECB had also adopted a similar approach to managing its clubs. Pete Ackerley of the ECB stated that the ECB was prepared to work with and to support those cricket clubs and cricket people who were prepared to help themselves, to qualify their coaches and do the right things:

because there is more to PE in the School Sport Club Links philosophy than just funding. If you will engage with your community, if you will work with your schools, if you will do the right thing we will work with you (Interview: Pete Ackerley, 27th June 2006).

In order to access funding from the County Boards for School Club Links, or any element of the PESSCL initiative, cricket clubs needed to provide an annually approved club development plan, reviewed through core data supplied to a County Board Management System that allowed cricket to monitor and analyse trends. Additionally, clubs had to gain ECB Clubmark and maintain it year on year in order to reassure the governing body that their money was being invested in high quality, community arrangements. Whilst the contribution of sport’s national governing bodies to the School Club Links work strand was performance managed by Sport England through Whole Sport Plans, governing bodies also managed their own clubs through similar systems and the use of Clubmark accreditation.

7.4.4 School Sport Partnerships
The performance and contribution of SSPs and Sports Colleges to this work strand was also tightly managed through a system of agreed targets. The work of Specialist Sports Colleges and School Sports Partnerships was managed through the Youth Sport Trust (YST), itself funded by the DfES. The Youth Sport Trust also played an essential role in supporting both the DfES
and DCMS in the delivery of the national strategy for PE, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL).

School Sport Partnerships represented the structural framework upon which the delivery of government strategy for school sport and physical education was based. The work of SSPs was itself monitored and assessed by seven outcomes, one of which was directly related to the delivery of the SCL work strand and focussed upon increased participation in community based sport and improved quality of community life. These targets were also aligned closely to the objectives of specialist sports colleges, whose remit also demanded that they work to promote sport in their local communities. The work of SSPs was managed by the Youth Sport Trust on behalf of DCMS and monitored and evaluated by the Loughborough Partnership on an annual basis on behalf of the DfES, DCMS, YST and Sport England. In the latest monitoring and evaluation report published in 2005, there was strong evidence that SSPs had achieved a degree of success in encouraging local sports clubs to be more welcoming towards young people. Partnerships were also developing a strong network of links with their local sports clubs and other community groups and had been proactive in developing innovative ways in promoting SCL through the use of websites and the introduction of innovatory approaches such as 'speed-dating' events designed to put schools, SSCos and PDMs in touch with local clubs and NGBs (IYS, 2006: 5). PDMs increasingly played a key role in managing the links between schools and clubs and received training from the Youth Sport Trust to help support them in their role of managing their partnership objectives. Although the overall work of SSPs was managed through a steering group supposedly comprised of a range of local partners, the report highlighted the under-representation of local sports clubs and community groups. Derek McDermott, a PDM in one Birmingham partnership, attributed the limited club input and involvement in steering committees to the high number of part-time and volunteer staff on which most clubs depended (Interview: Derek McDermott, 16th June 2006). Nevertheless, the report's findings suggested a growing strengthening of the relationships between SSCos and representatives of local sports clubs, whilst two-thirds of coordinators were reported to have met with representatives of
local governing bodies of sport at least once per term (IYS, 2006: 29). The report is positive in its assessment of the extent and efficiency of the communication processes and networking amongst partnerships and local clubs; it does however, urge DfES, the YST and Sport England to ‘support PDMs operating in areas where sports clubs were either less common or less willing to cooperate with schools and the Partnership’ (IYS, 2006: 17).

Whilst the positive achievements of the School Sport Partnership programme were acknowledged, especially in developing school to club links, the report was unequivocal in articulating that the challenge for the next phase of the programme was to engage the less enthusiastic and sceptical schools and clubs (IYS, 2006: 39). Nevertheless, it was clear that SSPs had rapidly established themselves as central to the working of a new sporting infrastructure in partnership with governing bodies and clubs. This structural framework of school sport partnerships, supported by a growing workforce and a firm financial base, meant that these partnerships were in a position to take the lead in driving initiatives such as the School to Club Links work strand.

7.4.5 County Sport Partnerships

The publication of Sport England’s new Framework for Sport in England (2004) culminated in a re-focussing of Sport England’s priorities. This new framework for sport set out a clear mandate for Regional Sports Boards to make progress in delivering Sport England’s new vision to ensure people ‘start, stay and succeed’ in sport and active recreation. Based upon a three year funding agreement with DCMS, one of Sport England’s key priorities was to develop and implement the delivery system for sport through County Sports Partnerships and Community Sports Networks (Sport England, 2006: 3). The fundamental priority of CSPs focussed upon increasing participation levels in sport and physical activity by 1% a year. One element of their core funding was to work with clubs, supporting them through the Clubmark accreditation process (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006). Although primarily supported through the Sport England Lottery Fund, CSPs were also supported by contributions from NGBs, local education authorities and local authorities. The role of each CSP was determined individually and focussed,
in the main, on supporting NGBs to deliver their Whole Sport Plans. The core teams and the wider strategic partners they embraced were regarded ‘as “mission critical” to the delivery of an active and successful sporting nation’ (Sport England, 2006:4). Clearly, the establishment of these new local structures allowed Sport England to exercise a degree of control over a localised, county-based delivery system. The involvement of a number of key partners, such as national governing bodies, sports clubs, school sport partnerships, local education authorities, local authorities and, in some cases, local businesses represented a comprehensive range of national and local sports partners, accountable to Sport England through a performance management system.

The national governing bodies for cricket, athletics and golf had all forged very different relationships with CSPs. Due to its own process of modernisation, athletics in conjunction with Sport England had made a decision to deliver its SCL programme through CSPs. Whilst this approach had been relatively successful, it was acknowledged by UK Athletics that it had lost a degree of control over the programme, which meant that the NGB had felt some dislocation from the work of SSPs and PDMs (Interview: Caroline Smith, 22nd June 2006). The England Golf Partnership made a decision (against Sport England’s advice), to deliver School Links through SSPs rather than CSPs. A lack of confidence in the capacity of some CSPs to co-ordinate and deliver SCL on behalf of the NGB, the relative stability of the infrastructure of SSPs and worries about a loss of control over the direction of the initiative were cited as the main reasons behind golf’s decision to deliver directly through SSPs (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006; Mike Round, 21st July 2006). In contrast, cricket took a different approach to the management of the SCL programme and worked through its own network of County Cricket Boards. With the benefit of a strong infrastructure and tradition of community cricket clubs, the ECB was able to exercise control over its own Focus Clubs and to lever changes that helped the NGB to achieve its WSPs and its own objectives: growing the game by working with a range of partners (Interview: Peter Ackerley; 27th June 2006; Tessa Whieldon; 27th June 2006).
Sport England’s move from the *Active Sport* programme to CSPs provided the framework and context for all local and national bodies to work together as a joint force, pooling expertise and resources for the common good. The challenge for County Sports Partnerships was whether the range of organisations with different agendas and different funding responsibilities could maintain a shared vision and commitment to Sport England’s vision for CSPs. Particular challenges for organisations such as the governing bodies that operated across the national network of CSPs were the inconsistencies between each partnership and the lack of a clear rationale (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006). These concerns were also expressed by a Senior Staff Member from the YST who, in her dealings with County Sports Partnerships in her capacity as YST Implementation Director, suggested that they were still ‘a really mixed bag, some were not yet fit for purpose, some still don’t have a leader, or the staff in place’ (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006). In assessing the impact of CSPs to date she made the following comment:

> I don’t know whether it is lack of clarity and direction from the top, but a CSP’s role is around club development, coach development and volunteer deployment - that’s what our understanding of what they need to be doing and what their role is ... those three things are absolutely key and some CSPs understand that, and that is what they are doing, whereas some are into a whole range of things which overlap with what [School Sport] Partnerships are trying to do (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

The challenge for County Sport Partnerships was in determining who was responsible for delivery at a local basis and agreeing to a set of responsibilities that did not overlap with the objectives of SSPs. Clearly, lines of accountability, responsibility and replication, presented a problem within the system and one PDM noted that there was a frequent overlap in the work of SSPs and CSPs which needed to be resolved, in conjunction with organisations such as the YST and Sport England (Interview: Derek McDermott, 16th June 2006).

However, in the case of some CSPs, there was evidence that they had been proactive in supporting SCL and had helped to develop new clubs in some
SSPs. The Implementation Director of the Youth Sport Trust acknowledged that:

some County Sport Partnerships are now employing quite a diverse team of coaches in response to the needs of the SSP: they are deployed from the community clubs into the schools, the same coaches are then employed back in community clubs (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

Clearly, County Sports Partnerships needed time to embed within local sports infrastructures. Pete Ackerley of the ECB suggested that Sport England had worked hard with CSPs to support them through the business planning process and to make them fit for purpose (Interview: 27th June 2006); it is still early days for them. However the establishment of golf’s own county golf partnership designed to network with SSPs was regarded as a more powerful tool for its purposes than the mechanism of CSPs, ‘whose services we don’t particularly need anyway’ (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006). For Pete Ackerley of the ECB, the most pressing concern for County Sports Partnerships at a local level was to be ‘fit for purpose’ so that it was able to support the development of community sport and a number of different sport development initiatives, such as the Club Links programme (Interview: 27th June 2006). In sum, there were reservations expressed by all the NGBs included in this study about the capacity of the CSP model to support delivery across the country. Despite these doubts all these NGBs had signed a Heads of Agreement to work in partnership with County Sports Partnership as part of their arrangements with Sport England.

7.4.6 The Youth Sport Trust

The Youth Sport Trust acquired a significant and core role in developing and supporting the work of sports colleges and SSPs. Clearly its work rapidly expanded beyond this remit to include a range of programmes including Multi-skills Clubs offered as part of SSPs’ after school sport programme. The Multi-Skills Clubs initiative was funded by DCMS and Sport England in partnership with sportscoach UK whose specific role was to train Multi-Skill coaches. With funding from DCMS, the YST was able to draw upon the expertise of yet another sport body sportscoach UK, to help strengthen and support sporting
pathways into clubs and to improve the standard of coaching and the identification of gifted and talented children for the Multi-Skill Academy system.

Conclusion
The launch of the PESSCL strategy in 2002 and the subsequent publication of the DCMS/DfES strategy document 'Learning Through PE & Sport' formalised the partnerships arrangements and roles and responsibilities of a number of agencies in delivering the government's agendas for school sport and physical education. Since the introduction of the SCLs programme there have been some discernable shifts in the infrastructure surrounding PESS. The exponential growth of SSPs and the programme had led to a sense of a growing imbalance in the capacity of sports clubs to match the demands from SSPs. As PDM Derek McDermott emphasised:

for our programme [School Club Links] to become sustainable and for the government to keep investing money in it, they have to start to see some improvements in it, so I reckon nationally it is about twelve percent to fifteen percent of children actually involved in clubs or involved in the school to club link programme (Interview: Derek McDermott, 16th June 2006).

Whilst in principle the concept of SCL was undoubtedly sound, Derek McDermott suggested a failure to identify the initiative as a separate funding stream within SSP budgets had led to a lack of targeted investment in the programme. Consequently, the initiative was heavily reliant on the interest and goodwill of PDMs and staff who were often over-stretched in delivering other components of the PESSCL initiative. It was perceived as a serious weakness that had potential to impact upon the programme's long-term success:

I have had no money specifically come in for school to club links. It is part of the whole PESSCL strategy budget so in terms of our development plans it kind of just fits into that, so we have basically just to budget our money (Interviewee: Derek McDermott, 16th June 2006).

Whilst the SCL work strand had brought about significant benefits for schools and for clubs, McDermott suggested that some issues still needed to be
resolved. As a PDM for the Bishop Challoner School Sports Partnership, he expressed a degree of concern over the imbalance between the capacity of schools and sports clubs to address the targets for the Club Links programme: 'Education has now got its act together; clubs now need to get their act together too' (Interview: 16th June 2006). He also suggested that the Club Links initiative was one of the most demanding aspects of partnership working and forging relationships with sports clubs represented a challenging aspect of trying to lever change. The Director of Sport at one Specialist Sports College suggested that whilst schools had a number of full-time staff working to help support school club links, sports clubs were often:

heavily, if not exclusively in some cases, run by a volunteer workforce, who is often willing, but not able, to devote the same amount of time and the same working hours of many of the school-based or partnership staff (Interview: Darren Turner, 16th June 2006).

However, it is important to recognise that despite this frustration, the staff employed by the Sports College welcomed the opportunity to work in partnership with their local sports clubs and believed that the Club Links programme was a valuable initiative. Whilst sports college staff endorsed the initiative, there was a concern that as the work of school sports partnerships grew exponentially, the Club Links strand represented just one of several initiatives they needed to address. As one PDM observed, the tasks surrounding the Club Links programme generated a degree of bureaucracy and were time consuming, as the job required more time than one person could realistically manage and, according to McDermott, the programme alone required a full-time person within the partnership (Interview: 16th June, 2006). Moreover, the numerous demands placed upon PDMs was highlighted as an area of concern that had led to some disquiet about their often limited proactivity in supporting the school to club link (Interview: Darren Turner, 16th June, 2006). This last point is borne out by another PDM who suggested that the inability to make contact with some sports clubs during the day and their lack of capacity to deal with the extra demands generated by the increased number of young people was areas of concern (Interview: Clare Place, 16th June 2006).
One senior member of staff from AfPE expressed her unease about the overly target-driven nature of the Club Links work strand in which clubs and schools were under pressure to meet these objectives within three years:

Someone has got to convince the civil servants and ministers that high quality anything, sport, PE, takes time to embed and move from a quantitative to qualitative evidence-base. I think there are so many expectations on clubs and no infrastructure or money to support them (Interview: Sue Wilkinson, 27th June 2006).

Both Steve Grainger, the Chief Executive of the YST (Interview: 16th June 2006) and Derek McDermott, a PDM (Interview: 10th July 2006) believed that there was a gap in the capacity of sport to address the growing demands placed on it by schools. The development of the Club Links work strand appeared to have developed in a piecemeal fashion. Clare Place, in her work as an SSCo and more recently as a PDM, recalled that from the outset of the initiative, she had ‘no idea what local sports clubs were able to engage in the club links programme, and the clubs were certainly not proactive in approaching schools to forge links’ (Interview: Clare Place, 16th June 2006).

A lack of clear, targeted, ring-fenced funding for the initiative, coupled with the prohibitive price of some club memberships for the most disadvantaged children, had created some frustration in attempts to increase the target number of young people moving into clubs. As Derek McDermott suggested, there had been a concerted failure to address two major issues, the cost of transporting pupils to and from clubs and a failure to address the need to secure parental support in order to facilitate these links. These two systemic failures had the potential to determine the eventual success of the club links work strand (Interview: 16th June 2006).

From the outset of the initiative, PDMs had received little formal guidance on how to facilitate links with governing bodies and clubs. One PDM explained how they were initially faced with how best to develop the initiative: ‘I discovered through experience that the best way forward was to conduct an audit of the children to find out which clubs they were linked to and then build the link’ (Interview: Clare Place, 16th June 2006). The ad hoc nature of approaches to policy development was reflected in another PDM’s account of
how his particular interest had helped secure links with his own golf club, which, again through his personal commitment, had achieved GolfMark. He also attested to the ongoing problems faced by SSPs in working with many sports clubs due to the challenges in ‘changing hearts and minds and getting them [sports clubs] to engage with these new structures’ (Interview: Derek McDermott, 16th June 2006).

However, golf’s involvement with the SCL programme had exceeded all its expectations, with schools instrumental in encouraging young people to join golf clubs. Mike Round suggested that ‘if nothing else, one of the reasons Club Links was successful because School Sports Partnerships were actually doing club development for us’. However, he urged a note of caution in placing too much credence on golf’s early success in its engagement with the Club Links initiative. It was acknowledged that the relationship between golf clubs and schools was still heavily reliant on the interests of school sport partnerships and PDMs whose support, interest and pro-activity was a key factor in securing links to clubs (Interviews: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006 and Mike Round 21st July 2006). In short, the golf Club Links initiative appeared to have helped formalise and cement stronger relationships between SSPs and local golf clubs, as well as improving the pathway from participation in school, to participation within clubs. The PESSCL Club Links Annual Report for Golf (2006) described how golf had achieved a measurable impact with over 30,000 pupils introduced to golf in schools and 197 accredited clubs, which represented a 233% increase from March 2005. The EGPs remaining concern was ‘to help and support its own clubs in the process of change, to move with the times and to present the sport as an attractive alternative activity for young people’ (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006). In delivering his account of the School Club Links initiative, the CEO of the Golf Foundation warned that sports needed to ‘get their act together’ to make sure that they were ready to receive all of the youngsters who had been inspired to join clubs as a result of the work of school sport partnerships (Interview: Mike Round, 21st July 2006).
The school club links work strand is a demonstration of how a range of sport and education agencies which have in the past shown a degree of reluctance to work together, can do so in order to deliver and implement government policy for PESS. The success of the initiative has depended on ensuring that all partners are responsible for the delivery of measurable outcomes that are a condition of funding. For sports colleges the outcomes were interlinked with the school’s re-designation every four years. For NGBs, the outcomes were directly related to funding through their Whole Sport Plans. This level of accountability for all the partners involved in the School Club links initiative had undoubtedly represented a key driver in engendering partnership working. There were, however, undoubted benefits for all actors and organisations involved beyond that of funding; for NGBs and sports clubs, involvement with school to club links had allowed them access to young children, some of whom might become members of clubs or potential elite players in the future. The actors and agencies working within this strand have not always made comfortable bedfellows and at times there were clear tensions in the delivery of the work strand. Whilst all partners undoubtedly had their own agendas that they wished to pursue through this initiative, a shared set of delivery outcomes, milestones and targets framed by tight government funding mechanisms ensured that the government’s own agendas were also realised.

The School Club Links work strand provides a number of insights into the policy process and policy change for PESS. The inclusion of this element of the PESSCL strategy was an attempt to address the enduring weaknesses of the links between the provision of PE within the school curriculum and the participation of young people in sports clubs, identified as a concern by the Report of the Wolfenden Committee on Sport (1960). Part of the enduring failure to bridge the gap between schools and clubs was the lack of formal systemic linkages or a shared consensus between the PE profession and clubs. Whilst there was evidence of a growing advocacy of youth sport during the 1980s and 1990s from agencies, such as the CCPR, NCSS, NCF and NGBs, it was not until the creation of the PESSCL strategy that there was any opportunity or funding to create a formal structure to link schools and clubs.
In her position as non-political advisor for PESS, Sue Campbell was able to address this ongoing problem by including the School Club Links work strand as a formal element within the PESSCL strategy. Her decision was based on her belief that the gaps between school and clubs had not improved since the publication of the Wolfenden Report in 1960 (Interview: 12th May 2006). The PESSCL strategy gave Campbell the formal opportunity to address the gap between schools and clubs and to tackle the long-standing divisions between sport and PE. Whilst DCMS was responsible for the work strand, it was jointly managed by the YST and Sport England and its outcomes were formally related to the delivery of a dedicated PSA target which focused specifically upon increasing the number of children moving from SSPs to accredited sports clubs. These new arrangements meant that NGBs and SSPs were formally linked through funding arrangements and delivery targets. The YST was responsible for the work of SSPs which was managed through Partnership Development Plans, whilst Sport England used Whole Sport Plans in its arrangements with NGBs.

The desire to reassert control over local sport delivery systems was evident in Sport England’s attempts to ensure that bodies, such as UK Athletics and the Golf Foundation delivered the School Club Links work through County Sport Partnerships rather than School Sport Partnerships. The introduction of County Sport Partnerships into an already crowded policy space inevitably created tensions. The close and successful relationships that had been developed between NGBs, such as golf and School Sport Partnerships were threatened by Sport England’s demands that NGBs work through County Sport Partnerships as part of their Whole Sport Plan arrangements. Inevitably the introduction of County Sport Partnerships also created tensions with School Sport Partnerships over who was leading the delivery of the SCLs programme at a local level. The introduction of WSPs as a result of modernisation strengthened Sport England’s control over the work of NGBs. It also created a situation in which these organisations were increasingly positioned as agents of Sport England in the delivery and implementation of the SCL strategy. Sport England was also able to regain influence over sports
clubs by making Clubmark a requirement for all clubs seeking funding through the SCLs programme.

This case study chapter provided an analysis of policy for the school club links element of the PESSCL strategy. As the research was underpinned by critical realist ontological and epistemological assumptions, attention was directed towards an understanding of policy change for PESS that was cognisant both of the structural conditions and the role of agents in shaping policy. In acknowledging critical realist demands to address the antecedent social structures and conditions that shaped policy change, an outline of policy developments over the past 40 years in schools and clubs revealed that there had been little substantive systemic change to the policy conditions surrounding school to club links until the launch of the PESSCL strategy in 2002.

The adoption of both the multiple streams (Kingdon, 1995) and advocacy coalition theoretical frameworks (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1999) focussed attention upon a number of key variables such as the role of belief systems, the involvement of key individuals, policy brokers or entrepreneurs and interest groups in explaining policy change. The research findings in this case study highlighted marked changes to the belief systems of politicians and government officials that subsequently led to recognition of the policy potential of PE and school sport. Sue Campbell was instrumental in using her technical knowledge and understanding of the PESS policy context and her privileged access to government departments and key political actors to lobby for investment in school to club links. The empirical research highlighted her key role as a policy entrepreneur in shaping and determining policy for the school to club links work strand. However her actions were not that of a sole policy actor and as both theoretical frameworks suggest, a number of interest groups such as DCMS, DfES, the YST and Sport England also acted as powerful advocates for the school to club links work strand.

As the ACF suggests, policy was initiated through the actions of power elites such as the YST, DCMS, DfES and Sport England who collectively shaped
and framed policy for the school club links work strand. Whilst this coalition of policy actors determined policy delivery for school to club links, the structural and operational conditions in which the work strand operated was tightly controlled by government. The activities of all the agencies involved in the initiative operated within a government controlled policy context characterised by tight fiscal and operational control determined by Public Service Agreements, Key Performance Indicators and Whole Sport Plans.
Chapter 8
High Quality Physical Education and School Sport

Introduction
This final case study chapter focuses upon high quality PESS which serves as a fundamental element of the delivery of the PSA target for PESS and the PESSCL strategy. The chapter employs the same themes as the previous case study chapters and commences with an exploration of the background to the case and the agendas and contexts that have framed the policy process. The second theme addresses the management and implementation processes involved and describes the organisational patterns of accountability amongst key stakeholders. The third section of the chapter explains how the agendas surrounding high quality PESS have been transformed during the implementation phase of the strategy and examines the role of interest groups and stakeholders in shaping and determining policy change. The final section provides a commentary on the role of each of the key stakeholders involved in this public policy arena and describes their involvement in shaping policy change.

The chapter is concerned to investigate what constitutes ‘high quality’ PESS and how the delivery of the related PSA target has been addressed. The achievement of high quality is embedded within the DfES/DCMS PSA target which focuses upon increasing the percentage of school children in England spending two hours a week on high quality PESS. Whilst the quantification of changes in participation provides a partial measure of the achievements of the PSA target, the assessment of whether the provision is of high quality is undoubtedly problematical. Notwithstanding the range of stakeholders involved in the delivery of the PESSCL strategy, there were no published agreed benchmarks against which the high quality target could be assessed. This case study outlines the role of the various agencies in delivering high
quality PESS and examines who is able to speak with authority on issues concerning high quality delivery (Ball, 1990). It has been suggested that any work that seeks to analyse policy-making and policy change is incomplete if it fails to address the relationship between past and present practices (see for example Archer, 1995; Hay 1995; Lewis, 2002; Marsh et al 1999). In accepting this view, the chapter commences with an historical account of the agendas and practices that provide the background to the case. It begins with an overview of the long-standing and sometimes difficult relationships between PE and sports agencies that have shaped this policy arena.

8.1 Agenda setting

8.1.1 Defining high quality PE and school sport

Since its emergence from the public school system of the 19th century, physical education has found its terrain inextricably linked with the political ideologies and cultural, economic and social values of British society. The games ethic and the notion of sport as character building represented what Houlihan (2002) has described as discursive storylines that have revealed the normative assumptions and value orientations surrounding definitions of physical education and sport over time. The maintenance of these storylines from the nineteenth century to the present day is indicative of the ongoing struggles surrounding definitions of physical education in schools and what Houlihan (2005) has suggested are deeply entrenched and established biases within the policy process. This viewpoint is shared by Kirk (1992), who has contended that the values surrounding physical education that emerged from the public school system of male bourgeois Victorian Britain remain a highly influential and powerful educational ideology today. These tensions and debates have focussed upon the nature of the outcomes and purposes served by PE and sport and whether PE should be defined by education or sport discourses.

Seeking any workable definition of what constitutes high quality PESS has been exacerbated by the profession’s own lack of agreed definition and rationale for the subject. The difficulty in agreeing what constitutes defines
and separates the concepts of physical education and sport has been the source of ongoing debate over the past few decades (see Evans & Penney, 1995; Evans, Penney & Davies 1996; Gilliver, 1999; Penney, 1998). The long-standing inability of the teaching profession to articulate the defining characteristics of PE has done little to clarify, for the general public and the government, how PE and sport are substantively different. The Education Reform Act of 1988 delivered the opportunity for the profession to achieve some consensus as to the nature of PE in the creation of the first national curriculum for physical education that was to be delivered across all state schools in England.

8.1.2 High quality and ERA

The Education Reform Act (1988) was a major piece of government legislation which sought to resolve reported declining academic standards by making fundamental changes to the ways in which schools operated. It provided a watershed in the development of state education in England and Wales and represented what Docking (2000) suggested was a triumph for those politicians who had campaigned for greater accountability and a return to traditional academic knowledge in schools. The central part of the Act was a new, standardised national curriculum for all state schools which prescribed the content for all subjects. However, Basini (1996) has suggested that in the rush to construct and deliver the new curriculum, advice from those involved in the consultation process often went unheeded.

The new national curriculum included the 'core' subjects of Mathematics, English and Science and 'foundation' subjects such as PE, Geography and History. As a consequence of the Conservative Government's desire to raise academic standards in schools, the core subjects were introduced shortly after the publication of ERA (1988). Physical education did not become part of the mainstream national curriculum until 1992 which indicated what Penney and Evans (1999) suggested was PE's lowly status in the school subject hierarchy. The implementation of the national curriculum and the subject consultations that took place signalled what Ball (1990) described as a range
of ongoing struggles about what counted as subject knowledge and pedagogy in this new national curriculum. Furthermore, he described the tensions and dynamics surrounding each of the 'subject working groups' as representing a microcosm of the ideological struggles surrounding education generally. The introduction of this new, statutory national curriculum was accompanied by the introduction of a number of formal mechanisms, such as teacher appraisal, school development plans and a system of inspection for all state schools in England. School standards and the quality of teaching and learning was monitored and evaluated by the creation in 1993 of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) whose role was to ensure that schools were made accountable through a process of regular inspection (Webb & Vulliamy, 1995).

8.1.3 High quality and the NCPE

The creation of a new curriculum for physical education was never going to be easy given its history which had been characterised by ongoing struggles over particular definitions of 'what counts' as physical education (Evans, 1992; Kirk 1992). Searches for a clear and consensual view as to the form, purpose and nature of what constituted a 'physically educated' child had not met with universal success or agreement (Alderson & Crutchley, 1990). The challenge of designing a new national curriculum for physical education presented an opportunity for those involved in PE to achieve a consensus and direction for the subject. The chance to debate and reconstruct physical education pedagogies and curricula in order to help children meet the challenges of new and changing times was presented by the ERA (Penney & Evans, 1988). Yet the very nature of the political context that existed at that time and the conflicting discourses of the individuals and groups involved in designing a new statutory curriculum for PE failed to resolve the lack of clarity about the nature and purposes of physical education. Indeed, Penney (2000) argued that the government's growing interest in sport and particularly the role of traditional team games, was reflected in the selection of a number of high profile sports performers to the working party for PE.
Penney and Evans (1997) have suggested that the process of defining the form and content of the NCPE was a highly political act in which definitions of the subject were inextricably linked with political and ideological agendas that resulted in the privileging of sports rather than educational discourses. The inclusion of PE as a subject within the national curriculum was not a foregone conclusion, given the media criticism surrounding the decline of competitive school sport. Margaret Talbot, a member of the original NCPE Working Party, described the precarious situation surrounding PE's status in schools at that time:

The governing bodies realised that there was a real threat to the future development of British sport. As a result, the sport community was absolutely rock solid behind us [PE] and so was the Harley Street Mafia ... there's a sport element of the medical profession which can be harnessed from time to time, so you know the old Bart's, old London hospitals, rugby playing mafia, were very important to the future of PE in schools (Interview: Margaret Talbot, 19th July 2006).

The realisation that PE might disappear from the curriculum of schools alerted sport's governing bodies to the implications this might have for the number of young people feeding into their sports clubs from schools. Although sport and PE were arguably divided by their focus upon different outcomes, there was also a degree of mutual interdependency which brought the agencies together to protect each other's interests. Mason (1995) reinforces this view by suggesting that the support and lobbying of the major team sports on behalf of PE's inclusion within the national curriculum was more out of self-interest, than any real concern for PE. The establishment of an Interim Working Group for PE by the DfEE included, at the behest of government, a number of individuals from sporting and educational backgrounds. The selection of the PE subject working group was indicative of the Conservative Government's desire to see a restoration of traditional games as a major element of the PE curriculum (Penney & Evans, 1999).

Although the content of the NCPE was subject to much debate amongst a number of bodies both inside and outside schools, the appointment of John Major as Prime Minister, a supporter of Chelsea Football Club, president of
Surrey County Cricket Club and member of the MCC, proved to be a powerful advocate for sport. An HMI for PE during that time described how sport had found a key ally in government:

John Major was totally devoted to sport .... you had a Prime Minister who was interested in sport, he talked regularly about sport. If you throw into that mix, that incredible mix, the fact that we [national sports teams] were losing everything in sight: we had lost at soccer, lost at cricket, lost at rugby, lost at hockey, lost a significant number of medals in the Olympic Games - we had got a political context for the first time in which someone was interested in doing something about that, someone who was interested in physical education but not necessarily for education reasons (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006).

This personal interest of a Prime Minister who was keen to restore Britain's halcyon days as a powerful sporting nation on a world stage resulted in a renewed concern for sport in schools. In the various revisions of the NCPE since 1992 and amidst much talk of change, the physical education curriculum has remained primarily organised around the discrete areas of sports activities and team games (Penney, 2000). The privileging of sport and the servicing of the needs of elite performance, rather than those of educational discourses, reflected the overt political involvement and intervention in the policy processes surrounding the formation of the NCPE for PE (Penney & Evans, 1994; 1995; 1998; 1999; 2000).

The function of PE as a mechanism for supporting national success on an international sporting stage permeated government sport policy documents, such as Sport: Raising the Game (DNH, 1995); Labour's Sporting Nation (Labour Party, 1996); the DCMS Sports Strategy A Sporting Future for All (2000) and Game Plan (2002). They all identified physical education as having an integral role to play in improving standards of sport performance and developing sporting talent. It is clear that physical education operated in a policy context in which the discourse of competitive sport dominated such that, if those traditional expectations were not fulfilled, the physical education profession was open to criticism (Leaman, 1988). This point is also emphasised by Fisher (1996) whose research highlighted the external
pressures placed upon schools to conform to the demands of politicians, parents and the general public for more competitive sport in schools.

Although there was a growing impetus for school sport during John Major's period of office, the election of the New Labour Government in 1997 and its prioritisation of education led to the suspension of the Statutory Orders for the NCPE for Key Stages 1 & 2 between 1998 and 2000. The suspension allowed primary schools to focus upon the government's education priorities of raising academic standards of literacy and numeracy in schools. The decision had a profound and detrimental impact upon the provision and quality of primary physical education. This period marked a low point for PE in primary schools and Ofsted inspection evidence confirmed that the suspension of the PE Orders in many primary schools had resulted in a deleterious effect upon the provision and quality of PE. A Senior HMI indicated his concerns for the subject in a report in the British Journal of PE (Interview: 19th October 2006) highlighting the inadequacy of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) for primary PE and in-service provision for physical education which had led to a marked decline of PE subject knowledge in primary schools. These problems were compounded by the publication of DfEE Circular 4/98 Teaching – High Status High Standards, which did not place statutory demands on ITT providers to dedicate time within their programmes for primary physical education. It was not until September 2002, when both the Standards for the Award of QTS and a new circular were introduced, that the problem was addressed.

From 1988 onwards a whole range of government legislation served to erode, restrict and control the involvement of higher education and LEAs in policy and practice in PE. Evans, Penney and Davies (1996) suggested that the moves to take teacher education out of higher education represented an attempt to break the connections between the study of education and its practice in schools. Indeed, the result of successive governments’ attempts to encourage more school-based teacher training and restriction in the time allocated to PE in initial teacher training (ITT) meant that many primary teachers had limited subject knowledge in PE. LEAs' ability to influence policy and curriculum development in schools was also compromised by the ERA
which imposed constraints upon their involvement in schools whose increased autonomy meant they were able to shape, challenge and adapt their own pedagogical practices within the constraints of their statutory requirements. Prior to the ERA (1988), LEAs had provided subject-specific support for teachers in schools and had also acted as an inspection and quality control system. Evans and Penney (1993, 1994, 1995, 1998 and 1999) extensively documented the effect of the ERA on PE and the changes it wrought in the funding and management of schools. The Act precipitated a fundamental shift in the nature of the relationships between LEAs, schools and teachers. Local education authorities were constrained by the conditions and demands imposed upon them by ERA, whilst the cumulative effect of government legislation served to erode, restrict and control the involvement of LEAs in matters of policy and practice in physical education (see Evans, Penney & Davies, 1996). The involvement of a range of agencies in the creation of the NCPE revealed how the process of policy-making was permeated by the interests of a number of agencies from within and outside of the education policy context. Houlihan has described how policy for PE was particularly permeable to outside interests, making it especially difficult for PE teachers to assert significant policy leadership (Houlihan, 2000: 178).

8.1.4 The emergence of high quality PESS

The Conservative Government of John Major undoubtedly sponsored a model of physical education whose dominant discourse involved servicing the needs of elite sport for whom quality was defined in terms of sport performance outcomes (see for example, Evans & Penney, 1995; Penney & Evans, 1997; Penney, 2000). A number of researchers argue that this conceptualisation of physical education ‘as sport’ has been responsible for a continued failure to fully enhance and promote the broader educational values surrounding physical education within schools (see for example Lee, 2003; Penney & Evans, 1997; Penney & Chandler, 2000; Penney & Jess, 2004). It is against this background of such blurred and imprecise professional, public and political definitions of what constitutes the nature and purpose of PE that the provision of high quality PESS was set.
8.1.5 LEAs and high quality

Until the election of the Conservative Government of Margaret Thatcher in 1979, LEAs had maintained close relationships with their local schools. One of the many services provided to schools by LEAs was a subject advisory system that supported schools in the delivery of high quality pedagogy which also acted as a local mechanism of quality control in schools. The ERA (1988) dramatically changed the relationship between schools and LEAs through the Local Management of Schools (LMS). Subject advisory teams were now dependent upon individual schools and head teachers allocating their budgets to purchase in-service provision for PE. The introduction of a series of measures in which schools were accountable for their performance which was measured through academic league tables, created a situation in which in-service provision for PE was no longer a priority for many schools.

LEA involvement as a key player in determining educational practice in schools diminished as a direct consequence of the ERA. LEAs also became the subject of much closer scrutiny and financial inspection by the Audit Commission for the services that they offered. The publication of the joint Ofsted and Audit Commission Report LEA Support for School Improvement (2001) highlighted the weakness of many LEAs in their capacity to support school improvement. It also drew attention to the unsatisfactory performance of many LEA advisers and the weakness of inspectors in a third of LEAs. Whilst the report did acknowledge that LEAs were good in developing their partnerships with schools, it was clear that the complexity of projects, initiatives and agencies with which they often engaged had proved too difficult for some LEAs to manage. In his foreword to the report, Mike Tomlinson, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, stated that 'This report gave little comfort to those who believed that LEAs should be abolished, but it disposes of some of the exaggerated claims that are made for them' (Ofsted/AC, 2001).

Government legislation had a marked effect on the capacity of LEAs to provide their traditional services of inspection, advice and in-service support to schools and left some LEAs on the edge of extinction (Ball, 1993; Evans &...
Penney, 1993; Rizvi, 1993). The ERA undoubtedly diminished the role of the LEA and its control over schools and created a situation that had 'serious consequences for the curriculum, especially those 'low status subjects' such as physical education' (Evans & Penney, 1994: 520). These new arrangements in which schools had a greater control over their own human and material resources acted as a catalyst for redefining the relationship between the LEA and schools (Ball, 1993). The role of the LEA had substantially changed from one of advice to inspection and from support to accountability (Evans & Penney, 1994). Moreover, they suggested that whilst ERA had strengthened the surveillance and control powers of central government, it had subordinated those of the LEA whose influence over curricular issues in schools was substantially weakened. These changes, when aligned with the relatively low status of PE in many schools, meant that in-service provision for PE, especially in primary schools, was dependent upon whether individual head teachers wanted to purchase the expertise of LEA advisory teachers. Not surprisingly, the delegation of budgets to individual schools meant that money was often diverted away from the in-service needs of PE teachers to other priority areas within schools (Evans & Penney, 1994).

Sharp (2002) suggests that whilst the implementation of the 1988 Education Reform Act encouraged schools to opt out of LEA control, their administrative functions remained. Towards the end of their period of office, the Conservative Government acknowledged that LEAs still had a role (although somewhat limited) to play in local education provision (Hannon, 2001). The election of a new Labour government in 1997 did not bring any distinct changes to the status of LEAs who were informed that they must 'earn their place' (DfEE, 1997: 66) in the national education system as one of a number of partners. LEA responsibilities remained primarily focussed upon a limited range of essential functions which the government believed could 'not be undertaken satisfactorily at the level of the individual school' (DfEE, 2000: 7). As Sharp (2002) observed, education policy priorities now focussed upon building new partnerships for raising standards that extended beyond LEAs and which included a broader range of external agencies. An Audit
Commission discussion paper (1998) on the role of local education authorities suggested that LEAs now needed to earn their place in these new partnership arrangements and to demonstrate that they had the capacity to add real value to these new local partnerships (Audit Commission, 1998).

The greater independence that the ERA had given schools meant that LEAs now had to market the services of their advisory staff. Penney and Evans (1994: 85) suggested that, although some LEAs retained their subject advisers in physical education, 'elsewhere in England, cost saving cuts in staffing meant that some LEAs were left without any physical education inspectors, advisers or advisory teachers'. As Hannon observed, LEAs were now one of a number of local delivery agents that operated under licence and in a context which had placed them under far greater scrutiny (Hannon, 2001).

8.1.6 Initial Teacher Training and high quality

Successive government policy changes directed at schools brought with it parallel changes in the education and training of teachers. The DfEE (1997) suggested that 'good teachers using the most effective methods are the key to high standards' (DfEE, 1997: 1). The 1980s and 1990s witnessed a number of government interventions aimed at addressing the quality and delivery of Initial Teacher Training. In 1994 a new Teacher Training Agency (TTA) was established to take responsibility for the quality of teacher training and the development of a framework of National Standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The Green Paper Schools Building on Success (2001) outlined the government's intention that schools, rather than higher education institutions, should lead on the training of teachers. It also announced an expansion of school-centred initial teacher training schemes (SCITTs) and the creation of the first group of Training Schools which government tasked with providing high quality and innovative forms of initial teacher training. The policy document also announced a package of measures aimed at supporting teachers' professional development through an investment of £92 million to raise standards in schools. The decision to move to a mixed economy of teacher training in which schools had a greater responsibility for its delivery
was criticised by some, who questioned whether these changes to a school-based approach had the capacity to educate teachers who had the required depth of understanding of children and who had the capacity for innovation in their teaching practices (Evans et al, 1996).

8.1.7 Ofsted and high quality
The need to make schools accountable for their educational standards was the responsibility of Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), a non-ministerial government department acting on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of School (HMCI). Formed in 1993 as a direct consequence of the Schools Education Act of 1992, Ofsted was responsible for inspecting standards in schools and for preparing annual reports on the overall quality of education provision in England. Ofsted's role was to visit and inspect every state school in England every four years in order to assess the overall quality of teaching and learning in the school, and to monitor the statutory requirements of the national curriculum. Lee and Fitz (1995) suggest that whilst Ofsted did not have direct responsibility and accountability for quality in schools, it did have a duty to report on standards in them to the Secretary of State for Education.

8.1.8 High Quality PE, Specialist Schools and School Sport Partnerships
In its White Paper *Excellence in Schools* (1997), the Labour Government emphasised the key role of specialist schools in modernising the comprehensive principle and in raising standards in schools through the advancement of their pedagogical practices. Since 1997, it has become increasingly clear that the government's vision for sport in education, which was articulated in the DCMS document *A Sporting Future for All* (1999), was to be realised through the work of specialist sports colleges. They were expected to provide the lead in innovative practice and to work in partnership with secondary and primary schools and to raise standards. The specialist subject acted as a key driver for improvements across the whole of the curriculum (Penney, 2004) and to 'raise standards of teaching and learning in physical education and sport which should benefit children of all sporting
abilities, including those with special needs' (Ofsted 2000: vii). Penney and Houlihan (2001) have suggested that the DfEE had numerous expectations for sports colleges which included raising standards of achievement in PESS, acting as regional focal points for excellence in PE and community sport, extending links between families of schools by sharing resources and developing and spreading good practice.

The aims for specialist sports colleges are provided below and reflect the contextual complexity and multiple agendas that permeate their work. Sports colleges have been expected to:

- Raise standards of achievement in PE and sport through the increased quality of teaching and learning.
- Extend and enrich the curriculum and out-of-hours learning opportunities in PE and sport.
- Increase take up and interest in PE and other sporting/physical activity related courses, particularly post-16.
- Raise standards by developing good practice and disseminating and sharing it with other schools and groups, including non-specialist secondary schools.
- Work with appropriate local partners, including businesses and community groups, clubs, governing bodies and sports development units, to develop sustainable sporting opportunities which promote both participation and achievement in PE and community sport.

(DfEE, 2000)

Clearly, a significant component of the work of sports colleges was to develop good practice and to contribute to improved standards and achievement in PESS. Their role in delivering high quality PESS was also supported by the work of SSPs, whose responsibility incorporated the delivery of high quality outcomes which included raising participation in high quality PE, Out of School Hours Learning (OOSHL), informal activity, competition and performance. Houlihan (2000) has highlighted the tensions that this created
for sports colleges in attempting to balance a number of objectives that included increasing participation and standards of performance whilst also improving academic standards.

Set against this background of policy developments which repositioned a number of agencies in relation to PE was the introduction of a well-funded national strategy for physical education and school sport that focussed upon the delivery of an entitlement for all young people in England to have access to high quality PESS. In line with government demands for efficiency and accountability, PSA targets were introduced in order to monitor and control the work of all public sector services including PESS.

8.2 Management and implementation

8.2.1 Government PSA targets

The publication of the White Paper Modernising Government (1999) signalled the government’s explicit intention that all of its departments should deliver public services that were high quality and efficient (Cabinet Office, 1999: 1). The delivery of quality services was embedded in the government’s proposals for modernising government, which were representative of a broader political milieu in which joined-up and strategic policy-making was central to achieving the government’s core objectives in order to secure key improvements and increased accountability from public sector services (Cabinet Office, 1999).

PSA targets were introduced by the Labour Government following the 1998 Comprehensive Spending Review. James (2004) has suggested that Public Service Agreement Targets (PSAs) presented a novel and ambitious tool of governance which incorporated improved priority setting, detailed performance information and incentives for government ministers and officials through a system of performance targets. PSA targets detailed a government department’s high-level aims, priority objectives and key outcome-based performance targets. It was the first time government targets had been shared publicly, reflecting a desire to deliver better public services and value for money (Lee & Woodward, 2002). PSA targets were integral to the government’s spending plans and provided a clear statement of priorities and
a sense of direction for each of the government’s key departments (Oliver, 2004). PSA targets were part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer’s Comprehensive Spending Review and the allocation of a PSA target for PESS, which was monitored by the Prime Minister’s Delivery Unit (PMDU), reflected its status as one of government’s key policy priorities.

Due to the success of the PESSCL programme its supervision by the PMDU was relatively short-lived. Nevertheless, before it relinquished its direct control over the PSA target it was influential in directing a strategic move away from the creation of an infrastructure for PESS towards a focus upon the delivery of the target’s high quality outcomes (Interview: Crichton Casbon, 13th June 2006). A Senior Manager for the YST explained how the PMDU had ‘set the targets, the measures, the milestones, the steering group, the PESSCL board - the PMDU wanted to see the delivery of a quality evidence base’ (Interview: 6th July 2006). The allocation of a PSA target accelerated the combined work of all the agencies involved in the delivery of PESS and placed accountability for its implementation on all the agencies involved (Houlihan & Penney, 2001).

8.2.2 High quality PESS and PESSCL
The aim of the PSA target was to increase the percentage of school children in England who engage in a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75% by 2006 (DfES, DCMS, 2003). Crichton Casbon, the QCA’s PE Subject Officer, described how responsibility for the PSA target was divided between the major organisations involved in the PESSCL strategy. Whilst the DfES had a particular interest in all the activities surrounding the delivery of high quality PESS, the YST’s role was to manage major elements of the programme and in particular the Professional Development strand of the PESSCL strategy. Ofsted’s role was to provide an inspection and evaluation mechanism for the strategy, whilst the QCA acted as a research arm which ensured that high quality practice was exemplified through a number of case study projects conducted in partnership with schools (Interview: Crichton Casbon, 13th June 2006).
8.2.2.1 The PE and School Sport Investigation

The purpose of the *PE and School Sport Investigation* programme pursued by the QCA in supporting the work of schools and SSPs was the exploration and development of ways of improving the quality of PESS. QCA's role in managing this initiative was to act as an advocate on behalf of PESS and to work in partnership with the agencies involved in the delivery of the PESSCL strategy. A key role was to exemplify good practice in PESS and to demonstrate the impact of high quality PESS upon young people and the work of schools. The QCA's role was to test and develop innovative approaches to PESS that focussed upon redesigning the PE curriculum, developing purposeful activities before school, during break times and after school, and also on exploring ways to support adults, junior leaders and teachers in the delivery of high quality PESS (DfES/DCMS, 2003). Case study findings were published and disseminated through the QCA's own website and circulated to schools.

8.2.3 The Professional Development Programme

The Professional Development work strand was a separate element of the PESSCL strategy managed by the YST. The programme focussed upon meeting the in-service needs of teachers and other adults and supporting them in the delivery of high quality PESS through the provision of a range of free courses and resources that were delivered through Local Delivery Agencies (LDAs) such as LEAs and HEIs. The overall aim of the programme was to provide teachers with the necessary support to enable them to deliver high quality PESS capable of acting as a tool for raising academic standards and whole school improvement. The resources and support provided were intended to allow teachers to develop their pedagogical practices and to encourage them to adopt more creative approaches towards the delivery of the PE curriculum (DfES/DCMS, 2003). The Professional Development programme began as a pilot scheme in 2003 and was then introduced in a phased operation across England from 2006 onwards.
During the initial phases of the PESSCL strategy work had focussed predominantly upon the creation of a national infrastructure for PESS. As this infrastructure became more established and embedded there was recognition by the DfES that there was little material evidence to validate or corroborate that the strategy had delivered the high quality requirements of the PSA target (Casbon & Walters, 2004). In order to address this issue, the QCA and its subject advisors for PE were given responsibility for working closely with schools and School Sport Partnerships to ensure that the PE curriculum was one which motivated and challenged young learners. The QCA’s advisor for PESS explained how the role of the QCA in supporting schools to deliver the national curriculum changed as a result of its work with the PESSCL strategy. Rather than focus predominantly upon the subject of PE itself, there was now a greater concern for how the subject facilitated the learning process and contributed to whole school improvement (Interview: Crichton Casbon, 13th June 2006). Casbon went on to add that the QCA’s involvement in the national strategy for PESS had shifted the focus of its work for PE away from the more prescriptive demands of the national curriculum to one which concentrated upon supporting schools to be more flexible and innovative in designing their curricula to engage young people.

The QCA’s main role was to provide schools with material that exemplified high quality outcomes for PESS and provided evidence to support the achievement of the PSA target. Whilst the PSA target for PESS set clearly measurable targets against which participation rates could be measured, the assessment of the high quality component of the objective proved more conceptually challenging. In order to collect, verify and supply this data for PESSCL monitoring purposes, the QCA embarked upon a consultation exercise with a number of key agencies in order to produce a set of high quality, measurable outcomes that could be used by education and sports agencies (Interview: Crichton Casbon, 13th June 2006). Inevitably, seeking agreement as to what constituted high quality was difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, the objective was seen as the glue that helped to give the different groups involved in PESSCL a shared purpose in striving to achieve the outcomes framed by the PSA target (Interview: Crichton Casbon, 13th
June 2006). This interviewee readily acknowledged that the assessment of the high quality component of the PSA target was problematic and not robust. In 2003 the QCA published a guide that illustrated ten outcomes of high-quality PESS, produced as a result of a consultation exercise with a number of key partners involved in the national PESSCL strategy. The document *Learning Through PE and Sport* (2003) was supplemented one year later with another guide, *High Quality PE and Sport for Young People* (2004) which provided more detailed information about the key characteristics of high quality PESS. Both sets of guidelines were produced to support the delivery of PE in schools and were also intended for use as high quality outcomes for sports clubs, players, leaders and coaches (DfES/QCA, 2004b).

The assessment and monitoring of high quality standards was the responsibility of Ofsted whilst the Loughborough Partnership, a higher education body, secured a contract to monitor the work of SSPs on behalf of DfES, DCMS, Sport England and the YST. Ofsted's system of monitoring and reporting was based upon the deployment of HMI inspection teams into schools in order to observe and make judgements on the standards of teaching and learning in schools, focussing on the delivery of the statutory requirements of the national curriculum. Ofsted provided schools with a set of criteria against which high quality provision in PE was judged and which were used as the basis for Ofsted inspection. These outcomes were different from those provided by the QCA which had devised ten high quality outcomes specifically for the purpose of assessing the impact of the PESSCL strategy. The QCA's subject advisor explained how their guide to high quality PESS was intended for use by a range of sport and education agencies in order to allow them to make their own evaluations of the quality of their work with young people (Interview: Crichton Casbon, 13th June 2006). For schools it provided another separate framework against which they were able to assess their provision of PESS. It also provided them with a set of criteria against which high quality provision could be assessed for the purposes of the PESSCL survey.
8.2.4 Ofsted

Ofsted played a key role in monitoring and assessing the delivery of high quality PE and, by law, scrutinised the work of all state schools through a regular cycle of inspections. Since its establishment through the Education Act of 1992, Ofsted’s duty was to provide a judgement on standards in schools whilst also acting as an independent and external body that reported its annual findings to government. In addition to its general responsibility for inspecting the work of schools, Ofsted’s role also extended to the assessment of a range of school-based initiatives. In addition to responsibility for inspection of the national curriculum and specialist sports colleges, Ofsted’s role was extended in 2003 to take account of the work included within the PESSCL strategy and the monitoring of the PSA entitlement (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). Matthew Conway, the Project Director for the PESSCL strategy described how Ofsted played a key role in judging the quality target for the programme, although he also recognised the difficulty posed by the quality outcome: ‘You can’t be purist about this, as there is a degree of slackness in the rigour in which high quality is assessed’ (Interview: 12th July 2005).

In describing inspection arrangements for PESS, an HMI for Physical Education explained how the DfES had helped to create and shape a national framework for Ofsted inspection which had been applied across all school subjects in order to achieve consistency across all curriculum areas (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). In explaining Ofsted’s involvement in monitoring and assessing the PESSCL strategy she explained how:

Ofsted operated as a gatekeeper of standards, reporting without fear or favour. We also have a lot to contribute to policy and practice, but it is very difficult because as an Ofsted inspector you can’t advise, you can only use inspection evidence to support and try to frame policy. There needed to be more joined-up thinking between the DfES and Ofsted about the high quality issue before the PSA target was set (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006).
She questioned the degree to which the high quality dimension of the PSA target had been considered and emphasised Ofsted's lack of jurisdiction and authority over a target that was not a statutory requirement in schools:

They [schools] cannot be judged by Ofsted by the number of hours they teach PESS; the government's PSA target is not a statutory requirement and so schools have no obligation to deliver the two hour target for PE. The NCPE is the only statutory requirement upon which Ofsted can make judgements (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006).

Such concerns surrounding the monitoring and evaluation of the PESSCL strategy were compounded by the relationship between Ofsted and QCA, both of whom appeared to have overlapping responsibilities in supporting schools in providing high quality PESS. A senior member of AfPE explained the growing confusion faced by many schools in deciding whether they should adopt the QCA's high quality outcomes or those supplied by Ofsted which provided the criteria against which schools were formally inspected (Interview: Sue Wilkinson, 27th June 2006). Although the two sets of criteria were not substantially different, the confusion raised by this issue reflected a growing separation between the remit and status of the QCA in supporting the PESSCL strategy and that of Ofsted, whose primary obligation was to ensure that schools maintained their statutory duty to deliver the NCPE.

The decision by the PESSCL Board that the QCA should lead on the exemplification of high quality PESS for schools was not without controversy. It led to a situation in which schools were unsure about the relative status of the two sets of outcomes. An HMI for PE explained the confusion that had arisen in schools:

People are asking me nowadays, do I use the ten high quality outcomes, or do I focus upon the Ofsted criteria? There is a confusion: we've got a national curriculum which is our statutory minimum requirement and we also have to assess against the National curriculum attainment targets ... now they [teachers] are not sure whether they are supposed to be assessing them against this criteria, or should be making youngsters achieve the ten high quality outcomes (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006).
A Director of one of the specialist sports colleges involved in the study explained how Ofsted criteria focussed primarily upon placing the young person at the centre of the learning process, whilst QCA's ten outcomes focussed more upon the outcomes of what the pupils learn (Interview: Darren Turner, 16th June 2006). One Ofsted Inspector acknowledged that the QCA's ten high quality outcomes were useful in acting as a reference point for personal development, well-being and commitment but lacked any detailed benchmarks for the expectations surrounding high quality PESS at different stages, ages and for different abilities. Indeed, due to the confusion surrounding the assessment of high quality PE (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006) there was a suggestion by one member of AfPE that they had been commissioned to synthesise QCA's high quality statements with those of Ofsted (Interview: Sue Wilkinson, 27th June 2006). Despite these initial problems, Wilkinson was keen to underline how the work of the DfES, QCA and Ofsted in securing high quality outcomes for PESS was a long term project that required time to embed. The criteria provided by Ofsted and the QCA are detailed in the table below.
Table 8.1 High quality statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QCA High quality outcomes</th>
<th>Ofsted criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners show commitment to PE and school sport</td>
<td>Learners make good progress in skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of the PE curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners have the confidence to get involved</td>
<td>Achieve well compared with their prior attainment and compared with pupils in similar schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners willingly participate in a range of activities</td>
<td>Demonstrate good skills, knowledge and understanding in the four strands of the PE attainment target and across most areas of activity, with little or nothing that is unsatisfactory in terms of standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners show a desire to improve and achieve</td>
<td>Do not under perform in PE; are involved in school, regional and national teams and/or activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners enjoy PE and school sport</td>
<td>Like PE and take part in all it offers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners know and understand what they are trying to achieve</td>
<td>Are normally interested in or excited by their work in PE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners understand that PE and school sport are part of a healthy active lifestyle</td>
<td>Are keen to achieve as well as they can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners have the skills and control they need</td>
<td>Behave well in PE lessons and are willing to undertake work of their own accord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners think about what they are doing and make appropriate decisions</td>
<td>Have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and take up opportunities to do so with enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners have stamina, suppleness and strength</td>
<td>Develop good work-related skills in line with their personal qualities in PE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respect and value each other, which is demonstrated by their positive attitudes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.2.5 Schools and High Quality

Specialist sports colleges were central to the government’s intention to transform secondary education and raising academic standards in schools (DfES, 2001). Their centrality to government education objectives was clear in the explicit targets set for specialist sports colleges, which focussed upon developing good practice by extending and enriching the curriculum, whilst also disseminating and sharing good practice amongst schools and other groups involved in the delivery of PESS (DfEE, 2003). Sports colleges were also expected to act as local hubs for the development of excellence in PE and community sport and were directly accountable to the DfES for the quality of their work. The QCA’s role was to support schools through a process of
collaborative and action-based case studies in order to exemplify the benefits of innovative approaches to PE.

The Youth Sport Trust managed the specialist sports colleges’ programme on behalf of the DfES. Its extensive involvement in the PESSCL strategy and its responsibility for several of its work strands ensured that it had a vested interest in guaranteeing they focussed upon the delivery of high quality of PESS. The PSA target placed an expectation upon the YST and SSCs to ensure that all pupils participated in high quality PESS for a minimum of two hours each week. As part of a number of conditions placed upon SSCs by the DfES, schools were required to submit school development plans against which their overall performance could be measured. Penney (2004) has described how these development plans acted as a reference point for each school’s annual report which provided a mechanism by which specialist schools were measured in the redesignation process required to maintain their status.

Sports colleges were positioned at the centre of a network of local schools and communities that were key to the delivery of high quality PESS. The performance of SSPs was managed through a set of outcomes that were annually assessed and focussed upon the PSA target (DfES, 2005). A Senior Staff Member of the YST emphasised how the quality of the work of PDMs, SSCos and PLTs was crucial in supporting YST delivery of high quality targets set out by the PSA agreement (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006). The YST’s role in driving the high quality agenda through SSPs and SSCs had been a central feature of their work from the start of the national strategy for PESS (Penney, 2004). She also emphasised how the role of the YST was to ensure that SSPs were accountable for their work and the outcomes of the PESSCL strategy. However she was keen to emphasise that the YST’s role did not extend to matters pertaining to curriculum content, structure or teacher methodology, ‘It is our role to advocate and promote quality in out of school hours activities whilst also challenging PE teachers to respond to and adapt to the speed of external changes’ (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006). Although the YST wished to distance itself
from direct involvement in issues concerning curricular provision, its close relationship with schools had led to a lack of clarity amongst some teachers concerning the role of the subject association [AfPE] and that of the YST in supporting the professional development of teachers (Interview: Darren Turner, 16th June 2006). The PSA target’s demand for high quality outcomes had been compromised by a rush to provide more activities in order to meet the demands of its participation target. The prioritisation by many schools of participation rather than high quality provision had presented a challenge for the YST who needed to redirect the focus of schools towards the latter. A Senior Staff Member of the YST described how her role required a renewed focus upon it, especially in seeking to engage more disaffected children in PESS (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

One of the mechanisms for tackling the quality of PE in schools was the integration of a PESSCL funded Professional Development programme into the national strategy. It focussed upon improving the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers had ‘the tools and expertise that they needed’ (DfES/ DCMS, 2004). The Professional Development programme was managed nationally by the YST and on a local basis through Local Delivery Agencies (LDAs) who organised a range of courses and workshops free of charge to all teachers in state schools.

8.2.6 Professional Development

The incorporation of a Professional Development programme as part of the national PESS strategy, demonstrated what Matthew Conway, the first Project Director, suggested was a commitment to the in-service support to PE teachers that was bigger in terms of government spend than its allocation to numeracy and literacy support in schools (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005). He stated that the rationale behind the investment in Professional Development was a desire by government to raise standards of PESS through in-service provision that helped to embed high quality practice in schools. The outlay of government funds to support the professional development of PE teachers marked the end of decades of under-investment in professional
support for their work in schools. It also marked a substantial shift of emphasis away from a local system of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provision to one which was structured nationally and delivered locally.

The inclusion of a DfES funded Professional Development programme as a separate strand of the PESSCL strategy acknowledged the explicit role that PESS played 'as a tool for whole school improvement particularly in terms of attendance, behaviour management and attainment' (DfES/DCMS 2003). The resources for the Professional Development Programme were developed through a consortium of professional organisations and managed on a local basis through Local Delivery Agents (LDAs), such as LEAs, HEIs and SSPs. The programme was monitored on behalf of DfES and the YST by the Institute of Youth Sport at Loughborough University, which acted as an independent body evaluating it against its stated aims and objectives. The work of the programme was overseen by a Professional Development Board whose role was to develop a national strategy that was supported by the delivery of quality assured courses.

The Professional Development Board was directly accountable to the PESSCL Delivery Board and its membership originally included the YST, the British Association of Advisors and Lecturers in Physical Education (BAALPE), the Physical Education Association of the United Kingdom (PEA/UK) and sportscoach UK, all of whom had a vested interest in the programme. The national PESSCL strategy was marked by a distinct shift away from the previous LEA dominated model of in-service support to one in which a number of agencies, such as SSPs and HEIs, rather than LEAs, acted as LDAs. Indeed, one LEA PE advisor suggested that the introduction of the National Professional Development programme had started a shift in which SSPs were increasingly acting as LDAs and managing their CPD requirements separately (Interview: Helen Miles, 19th June 2006).
8.2.7 High quality and school sport

The drive for high quality PESS was not just the responsibility of education and PE teachers; sport organisations and sports clubs who were actively engaged in the work of the PESSCL strategy were also required to adopt a more professional approach to their work in order to complement the efforts of schools (DCMS, 2002). Specialist sports colleges were identified as key mechanisms in supporting sports clubs and governing bodies of sport to increase the number of participants engaged in school sport.

The production of the QCA's guidelines on the outcomes of high quality PESS was intended to support schools and the sports organisations in the delivery of the PESSCL strategy. The case studies highlighted markedly different attitudes towards tackling and addressing high quality PESS amongst education and sports bodies. For NGBs the measurement of high quality PESS was assessed primarily through retention and participation rates within individual sports. Mike Round of the Golf Foundation admitted that golf had never explicitly referenced the high quality issue in the School Links programme beyond that of retention numbers in golf clubs (Interview: Mike Round, 21st July 2006). Stuart Armstrong, the Golf Foundation's Development Manager, also confessed that golf had been told of the QCA's high quality documentation by chance during a County Sports Partnership meeting (Interview: Stuart Armstrong, 21st June 2006). UK Athletics, however, had been part of the QCA's consultation process and working party that had shaped the high quality outcomes for PESS. UK Athletics had distributed the QCA high quality guidelines to all its athletics clubs but acknowledged that 'once the information gets to our athletics clubs, it's up to them to interpret it and use it as they see fit; there is no formal reporting mechanism back to the governing body' (Interview: Caroline Smith, 22nd June 2008). Tessa Whieldon the National Club Development Officer for the ECB explained how the primary focus for their cricket clubs was the achievement of Clubmark and their KPIs which meant that there had been little chance to focus explicitly on the QCA guidance.
Whilst schools were directly responsible to the DfES, QCA, Ofsted and the YST for the maintenance of high quality provision, sports clubs were answerable to their governing bodies and Sport England. Pete Ackerley of the ECB suggested that there was reluctance on the part of government to set up any legislative powers to regulate high quality provision in sports clubs beyond mechanisms such as Clubmark and NGB KPIs (Interview: Pete Ackerley, 27th June 2006). The NGBs involved in this study believed that the formal introduction by sportscoach UK of a new, five level UK Coaching Certificate (UKCC) would be the main mechanism through which sports would achieve a high quality control system across all sports.

Until the system was operational, Caroline Smith of UK Athletics described how:

> the recruitment and retention of participants at grassroots level would remain indicative of high quality for athletics. We only retain them [young people] in the sport if they have a high quality experience at their local athletics club (Interview: Caroline Smith, 22nd June 2006).

Phil Veasey of Sport England also suggested that high quality targets in sport were assessed both on the basis of participation but also in relation to the number of elite level performers and international successes that the sport generated on an annual basis. He also suggested that KPIs were the major determinant of a sport’s funding, which meant that NGBs had a vested interest in ensuring that their coaching systems were high quality (Interview: 30th June 2006).

Clearly attempts to measure high quality PESS was fraught with problems, which were exacerbated by the separate funding and accountability systems operated by schools and sports bodies. The reporting system surrounding PESS appeared heavily dependent upon data supplied by sports colleges, schools and SSPs for the purpose of Ofsted inspection and to those independent bodies whose role was to monitor and assess the PESSCL strategy and its PSA target.
8.3 Policy development
The launch of the PESSCL strategy in October 2002 and its associated PSA target undoubtedly provided a focus for all the agencies involved in the initiative. Steve Grainger, the Chief Executive of the YST, described how 'high quality provided the glue, the coherency amongst the various individuals and groups involved' (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006). Ofsted, one of the principal bodies responsible for monitoring and assessing the quality of PE in schools and the progress of the PESSCL strategy, announced fundamental changes to its inspection practices as a consequence of the Education Act of 2005. The new system significantly altered the nature of the relationship between Ofsted and schools and introduced new reporting mechanisms that were founded primarily upon the production of a school's own Self Evaluation Form (SEF). This change marked a distinct shift from Ofsted's previous role as the principal external arbitrator and judge of the quality of standards in schools, to a system in which schools were responsible for identifying their own strengths and areas for development through a SEF.

David Bell, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, suggested that the radical new inspection arrangements provided in the Education Act (2005), were designed to provide a more objective and less burdensome system. The new framework for inspection meant that responsibility for inspection was reduced for successful schools, allowing Ofsted inspectors to spend more time in failing ones. The inspection process also changed its focus to concentrate upon the central management systems of schools rather than individual subject inspections that were now conducted on a cyclical basis. For primary schools the new arrangements meant less frequent subject inspections and a move towards self-evaluation mechanisms. These fundamental changes to the Ofsted inspection process brought about a transformation in the dynamics of the relationship between Ofsted and schools. Ofsted's new role was to judge the efficacy of a subject department's self-assessment of the quality of their provision. As a consequence of these changes, the agencies involved in monitoring and evaluating the PESSCL strategy relied on self-evaluation evidence provided by schools. For PESS, the SEF data was now used by Ofsted and the Loughborough Partnership to
monitor the impact of the work of components of the PESSCL strategy. The SEF information also provided the evidence upon which decisions surrounding the re-designation of specialist sports college status was made by DfES and the YST. The mechanism of self-evaluation provided data to support evaluation of the PESSCL strategy, Ofsted Reports and sports college re-designation. These changes to the inspection arrangements for schools were mirrored in the new arrangements for teacher training from 2005 to 2011. The new regulations for the award of qualified teacher status (QTS) required all ITT providers to be inspected twice in each six year period. For all secondary ITT providers, Ofsted inspection of secondary subjects was periodic with a sample of subjects chosen during each inspection visit. For primary ITT, inspection was reduced to short generic inspections that focussed solely upon the core subjects.

The new Ofsted inspection arrangements had changed from in-depth subject inspections to a more targeted focus on the central management systems of schools. One PE HMI explained how ‘Ofsted inspections were now generic and assessed quality across all subjects; the reality is that Ofsted no longer has the power over schools that it once had’ (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). Ofsted’s role in monitoring and reporting on the PESSCL strategy and the work of specialist sports colleges was supplemented by independent research teams who were contracted by the DfES, DCMS, YST and Sport England to provide an evaluation of the SSP programme. Whilst Ofsted had statutory powers to report to government on the quality of work in schools and the delivery of the national curriculum, the independent reporting mechanism provided by the Loughborough Partnership delivered feedback on the work of SSPs. Whilst the inspection processes surrounding the assessment of high quality PESS were the subject of education policy change, a significant policy development that was intended to contribute to the delivery of high quality PESS was the introduction of a new national competition framework.
8.3.1 A national schools competition framework

A new National Schools Competition Framework was announced in December 2004 and represented what Roger Davis, the National Development Manager for the National Council for School Sport (NCSS), described as the final piece of the PESSCL jigsaw and high quality PESS. The concept emerged from discussions between the YST, Sport England and the NCSS and was endorsed by a number of NGBs and National School Sport Associations. The new infrastructure for high quality competitive school sport was managed by the NCSS, an umbrella body for the national school sports organisations. The aim of the new competitive framework was the creation of a world class competitive school sport structure which focussed upon improving levels of participation, the identification of talented performers of school age and the delivery of the PSA target.

The Competition Framework was superimposed upon the network of school hub sites provided by SSPs and was integrated into the competitive systems of individual sports and their Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) performance pathways (Interview: Roger Davis, 23rd November 2006). The initiative was funded through the PESSCL strategy and managed by the YST. Roger Davis was seconded by the YST to work on behalf of the NCSS as National Development Manager for the new Competition Framework. The aim was to create a competitive structure that took the pressure off teachers, through the creation of a network of Competition Managers funded through the PESSCL strategy on three year contracts.

Competition managers became an integral part of the work of SSPs and were directly accountable to PDMs. Their role was to manage and co-ordinate the planning and implementation of a National Schools Competition framework through a programme of inter-school competition linked to local SSPs. The work of Competition Managers involved liaison with CSPs, NGBs and local School Sports Associations to provide a national network of competitive sport that connected schools more closely with their local sports networks. The NCSS National Development Manager explained how extra funding had been
made available by the government from 2006 to 2008 in order to support and expand the work of the PESSCL strategy and to rejuvenate competitive sport in schools (Interview: Roger Davis, 23rd November 2006). He explained how the PESSCL Board decided that, having embedded the PESS infrastructure, there was now an opportunity to address the competitive sports networks surrounding schools.

The purpose of this new initiative was to rebuild and reintegrate high quality competitive opportunities as one of the four key elements of high quality PESS provision. The outcome that underpinned the initiative was that 'by 2010 all pupils should have access to locally provided opportunities for competitive sport that acted as a conduit for talent identification and development' (Interview: Roger Davis, 23rd November 2006). The four key elements of the PESSCL strategy are outlined in the diagram below which illustrates the intended outcomes and pathways for each of the strands of the initiative. The competition framework provided the final element of the school sport strategy which ensured that pathways were available for talented young people to realise their potential through a co-ordinated system of competitive sport.
In September 2005, Exchequer funding was released to support the work of twenty Competition Managers with the promise of at least 90 additional posts by 2007. Subject to the next spending review, the aim was to have a Competition Manager in each SSP by 2010 (Roger Davis, 23rd November 2006). Working as part of the SSPs network, Competition Managers were to encourage and provide young people with the opportunity to take part in sports days, sport festivals and school competitions. In order to create a seamless pathway from school competitions to the competitive structures of sport was essential that the NGBs of sport were also committed to the initiative.
Roger Davies explained how in designating and creating this new framework ‘the challenge was to engage the support of NGBs for a new initiative that often meant an overhaul of their own long-standing competitive systems’ (Interview: Roger Davis, 23rd November 2006). Furthermore, he also suggested that the difficulties in creating a new competition framework was compounded by a lack of forward planning in failing to link the new competition framework with NGB WSPs. The lack of significant funding for this element of the strategy meant a lack of investment beyond the employment of Competition Managers. No money was available for NGBs which meant that some ‘lacked the financial capacity to engage in yet another initiative that stretched their resources’ (Interview: Roger Davis, 23rd November 2006). Despite this lack of funding for NGBs, he believed that many sports were still keen to engage because they felt it was the right thing to do, whilst others did not want to miss out on the opportunity to be actively involved with schools. The twenty priority NGBs linked with Sport England had all agreed in principle to commit to different phases of the pilot project. For some of sport’s smaller governing bodies, lack of funding and staff restricted their capacity to engage in the initiative.

As the project was still in its infancy, teachers were somewhat reserved in their judgements about the new competition framework. For one Director of Sport, the initiative had the potential to wrest a degree of control from PE teachers (Interview: Darren Turner, 16th June 2006). One PDM questioned the need for a new school competition framework and was doubtful whether it could be sustained, given the lack of availability of external coaches (Interview: Derek McDermott, 16th June 2006). Whilst it was still too early for many individuals to make informed judgements on the progress of the competition framework for school sport, it was clear that there were still unresolved debates surrounding its value.

8.3.2 CPD

The National Professional Development programme for PESS was launched in 2003 with an allocation of £18 million over a three year period, to ensure
that teachers had the tools and expertise they needed to provide high quality PESS. It was managed by the Youth Sport Trust and delivered through a consortium of organisations that included the British Association of Advisers & Lecturers (BAALPE), Physical Education Association (PEA/UK) (later to merge into the single association AfPE) and sportscoach UK. The YST managed and coordinated the programme with the support of other members of the consortium through a National CPD Manager and area CPD managers. The National CPD Programme was funded by DfES through the PESSCL strategy and offered a number of modules and resources that were designed and standardised at national level and delivered locally through a number of LDAs. The focus of the programme was to support teachers in delivering high quality PESS whilst also helping to ensure broader benefits, such as whole school improvement and innovative approaches to the NCPE. The data that emerged from a three year project that was commissioned to evaluate the National PESS Professional Development Programme indicated that there was clear evidence that the initiative had made a substantial impact upon both teacher and pupil learning (Armour & Makopoulou, 2006).

Despite the undoubted progress that had been made by the Professional Development programme in supporting teachers' understandings of good practice, there were some concerns about how this particular policy had been implemented. One senior figure within HMI suggested that the infrastructure for PESSCL had been created at the expense of an advisory service (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). This, she argued, had created a situation in which SSCos had by default adopted the role of advisory teachers in primary schools. Her concern was that SSCos were acting as self-appointed subject advisors without any CPD support, or quality control measures, to monitor their work. One LEA advisory teacher for PE also claimed that the new model of Professional Development had moved the focus of CPD provision away from LEAs and HEIs to a system in which SSPs were increasingly acting as their own LDAs (Interview: Helen Miles, 19th June 2006). Moreover, she suggested that as schools had become increasingly autonomous in managing their own CPD provision, local authorities and HEIs
no longer retained any real power in monitoring the quality of provision in schools.

In 2006 a further £11.6m was allocated from the PESSCL strategy to support Professional Development and to contribute to the training and development of teachers. Some individuals from within the PE profession questioned the PESSCL strategy’s real commitment to delivering high quality teaching and learning in schools. One senior member of AfPE argued that, whilst the PESSCL strategy had created an excellent sporting infrastructure for PESS, it was disappointing that this commitment had not been matched by a similar commitment to CPD (Interview: Sue Wilkinson, 27th June 2006). Moreover, Wilkinson added that, in working alongside partners involved in the delivery of the strategy, AfPE needed to lobby hard on behalf of the PE profession to ensure that CPD had a higher priority within the strategy and was seen as the quality foundation for all PESSCL work.

In March 2006 BAALPE and PEA/UK, the two professional PE associations, formally merged. Although the merger had proved a long and difficult process, the creation of a single body meant that the PE profession ‘had a stronger lobbying organisation that was better placed to influence and support the delivery of high quality PESS’ (Interview: Senior Member of AfPE, 9th June 2006). The creation of the association provided the YST with a partner that could support it in driving high quality provision in schools. The Chief Executive of the YST stated how, ‘AfPE needs to support us in the drive to achieve high quality in schools and to support and exemplify good practice in the delivery of high quality PESS’ (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006). A Senior Manager for the YST also believed AfPE had a central role to play in ensuring high quality provision, rather than focussing upon quantitative targets, ‘Its mission is to be proactive in the pursuit of high standards of PESS through the development of exemplary learning and teaching, and evidence based practice and research’ (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006).
One of the consequences of the new funding arrangements for the PESSCL strategy and of AfPE’s involvement in initiatives, such as the Professional Development programme was that AfPE was no longer autonomous in its working relationships with the PESSCL strategy. Margaret Talbot, the first Chief Executive of AfPE, explained how the work of the new body was to act in an advocacy role and to provide leadership for the PE profession (Interview: 19th July 2006). Its responsibilities also included provision of guidance on high quality standards and development of communication channels in order to influence and inform policy and practice for PESS both nationally and locally. AfPE’s work focussed specifically upon the provision of Continuing Professional Development and securing contracts with external partners, such as DfES, TDA and LAs. As the YST had secured funding for the Professional Development work strand of the PESSCL strategy, AfPE’s focus was redirected to more bespoke funding from both private and public sectors. In order to facilitate this development, AfPE created a new National College for Continuing Professional Development (NCfCPD) which was launched in July 2006. The intention was that the College should play a major role in improving and protecting professional standards in PE through the development of systematic accreditation systems for CPD that promoted its safe and ethical delivery (AfPE, 2006). The intention of the NCfCPD was to ensure that the CPD opportunities available to teachers and other adults met the appropriate Teacher Development Agency (TDA) criteria. The College offered a small range of self-funding CPD courses (i.e. not funded through the PESSCL strategy) that complemented its CPD provision (Interview: Sue Wilkinson, 27th June 2006). AfPE’s Business and Development Manger outlined how the intention was to raise the profile of the National College in order to extend the reach of AfPE’s CPD provision and to work with other national agencies to ensure that high standards of CPD provision were maintained by those organisations and individuals offering professional development courses through the PESSCL strategy framework. With AfPE’s National College still in its infancy, it remained unclear what status the College retained in servicing the needs of PE teachers.
8.3.3 Schools and PPA time

Evidence from Ofsted and SSPs evaluations testified to the positive effects that the PESSCL strategy had upon the provision of PE in primary schools (see Ofsted, 2006; IYS, 2004; 2005). From September 2005, as part of broader government workforce reform measures, all teachers had a legal entitlement to a guaranteed reduction of at least 10 per cent of their teaching commitments. The introduction of guaranteed planning, preparation and assessment time (PPA) for all teachers was intended to raise standards in schools by addressing their heavy workloads. Whilst secondary schools had a tradition of non-contact time, for primary schools this was not the case and the introduction of these measures had major implications for staffing. Although evidence as to the effects of PPA time on primary schools was still limited, there was growing evidence of the use of sports coaches in primary schools during curriculum time to provide cover for primary school PE lessons (Interview: Clare Place, 16th June 2006). Although the extent of such practices was still anecdotal, there was a concern amongst the staff in one of the SSPs involved in this study about the quality of work of some external sports agencies that had been employed in some of their partner primary schools.

One PDM commented that head teachers had the power and autonomy to employ sports coaches to deliver curriculum PE which, given the lack of confidence of many primary school teachers in teaching PE, had provided schools with a simple option in covering PPA time (Interview: Darren Turner, 16th June 2006). The prevalence of games coaches in some schools had led to an imbalance in the delivery of primary PE and, in some instances, a predominant focus upon football. One PDM suggested that there was a real concern that PPA time had provided a mechanism that was deskillling some primary school teachers (Interview: Derek McDermott, 16th June 2006).

Although there was recognition of the growth of these practices in primary schools, one civil servant involved in the PESSCL strategy believed that these decisions were the responsibility of individual head teachers. He suggested that the future direction of primary PE provision would operate as a mixed economy in which teachers and coaches delivered curriculum PE (Interview: Senior Civil Servant, 16th June 2006).
8.4 A summary of the role of the key actors

8.4.1 Sports Colleges

The findings of Ofsted and annual surveys commissioned on behalf of DfES provided substantial evidence that the PESSCL strategy had helped to improve the quality of provision in PESS. The reports had also generated information that suggested ‘teachers were aware of the ten outcomes of high quality PE and school sport and were striving to meet them’ (Ofsted, 2006:2). Whilst there was clear evidence that the policy initiative was improving the quality of PESS, the Ofsted report also concluded that the national partners responsible for the SSP programme needed to provide

further guidance for schools on how to effectively use the programme’s 10 outcomes for high quality PE and school sport alongside the National curriculum, to show clearly what pupils should know, understand and be able to do across different Key Stages (Ofsted, 2006: 3).

Furthermore, the report also suggested that there was a need to ensure that the entitlement to two hours of high quality PESS was inclusive and extended to all pupils in secondary schools, in order to maximise the impact of the programme. Phil Veasey, the Head of Sports Development for Sport England, expressed his concern that the PESSCL strategy had failed to attract the young people that were not actively engaged in sport (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006). He believed that this was an issue that needed to be addressed urgently if the government’s PSA target was to be met beyond 2006. Sport England had commissioned a study to inform policy and discover what strategies could be implemented in order to attract more young people into club sport. The preliminary conclusions had indicated that:

the offering in the PE curriculum in schools has to be spot on for these young people; it has got to be varied and incredibly inclusive and differentiated, because a lot of the kids suggested that one of the main reasons why they weren’t looking to participate outside of the school gates was because it [PE] wasn’t something that they associated with being nice, good, or useful for them ... A lot of the barriers they talked about were the barriers of sport itself. What we need is greater support from the school side of the school gates to make those connections. (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006).
As the PESSCL strategy became embedded, the drive to achieve high quality PESS became more challenging in the light of a revised PSA target for 2010. Whilst the selection of the first specialist sports colleges had allowed a degree of cherry picking, this was no longer the case and the expansion of the programme across the whole of England posed challenges for the delivery of high quality outcomes in some sports colleges (Interview, Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006). An HMI for PE suggested that the expansion of the sports college system meant that they now ranged from the highly successful to those that were in special measures (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006).

A retired HMI for PE believed that a point had been reached where 'SSPs needed to stop adding programmes and new initiatives to their portfolios and to start focussing much more on the delivery of quality' (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006). A Senior Ofsted Advisor suggested that the PESSCL strategy had created a situation in which the expansion of the range of sports available in curriculum time, had adversely affected the curriculum range available in schools and had 'created a scenario in which schools were offering more discrete and shortened sport specific blocks of work, to the detriment of sustained quality provision' (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). A Senior Staff Member of the YST also expressed her concern that, despite the focus upon high quality PESS, a dualism still remained surrounding the provision of PE in schools and school sport outside of formal curriculum time:

> School sport provision remains distinctly different from curriculum provision. The way sport is engaging the disengaged in out of hours does not seem to be applied back into curriculum content; there is still much to be gained by sport and education working more closely together (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST , 12th July 2006).

The final section of the chapter provides a commentary on the roles of the key agencies involved in shaping the policy for high quality PESS. It explains the agendas and tensions that have framed policy developments and provides a summary of the relationships between the key policy actors, the lines of accountability and resource dependencies between these stakeholders. An
overview of the roles and responsibilities of the DfES, QCA, Ofsted, YST, sports colleges and AfPE in delivering high quality PESS is also provided.

8.4.2 DfES

The government’s confidence in the PESSCL strategy was reaffirmed in an announcement by the Prime Minister in 2004 that it intended to commit a further £519m of Exchequer and Lottery funding to the project. This brought the total amount of funding for the national school sport strategy to over £1.5 billion, a significant proportion of which was allocated by DfES to support its infrastructure. The decision to allocate a PSA target to the strategy ensured that the work of all stakeholders was focussed upon its delivery. However, the explicit wording surrounding high quality provision provided a challenge for all of the agencies involved. As we have already noted, there was an acknowledgement by the PESSCL Project Director that the assessment of high quality provision was not an exact science:

There is a degree of slackness in the rigour in which the high quality is assessed, we hope it’s high quality and we have asked for it to be high quality; there will be a separate Ofsted report looking at high quality PESS and that system is pretty robust (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

It appeared, however, that there were some growing concerns surrounding PSA targets. Sue Campbell, the government’s non-political advisor, suggested that there was a growing debate within government about whether PSA targets had been a good or a bad thing. She believed that concern surrounding the PSA target for PESS were indicative of the difficulties in setting targets that needed to be measurable and suggested that ‘in writing the PSA target, the reference to high quality PESS should have been aspirational rather than a precisely measurable target’ (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006). Unlike target setting in other organisational contexts in which goals could be modified and adapted, the DfES and DCMS were committed to a government PSA target whose outcome was subject to public and media scrutiny.
Despite these problems, Crichton Casbon, the PE Advisor for the QCA, believed that the PSA target had provided the DfES with a useful tool to lever change in schools:

> to move them from an input-based model, to one which refocused upon the delivery of outcomes and a focus upon the impact of the programme as the basis for the achievement of high quality outcomes (Interview: Crichton Casbon, 13th June 2006).

The need for stakeholders to demonstrate accountability for the significant investment of public money into the PESS policy arena was generally accepted as a justifiable requirement by all the agencies funded through the PESSCL strategy. Nevertheless, lack of consultation with key stakeholders in the design of the PSA target was indicative of what one interviewee described as 'the predominant values of those within positions of authority that had created the target in the first place' (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). Similarly, Casbon and Walters (2004) suggested that one of the major weaknesses of the PSA target was its predominant focus on narrow objectives, rather than the delivery of broader quality outcomes. Their concern was that the PESSCL strategy was predominantly a government policy that had been centrally initiated, with limited opportunity for local consultation and negotiation. PSA targets placed an emphasis on milestones and outputs and on selecting a target for PESS that focussed upon the delivery at high quality, a target that was aspirational and not easily measurable.

The government played a central role in determining the PSA target and the direction of the PESSCL strategy. One interviewee emphasised how some stakeholders needed to adopt a greater political awareness:

> Some policy actors do not understand the process of politics and how the wheels turn. At the end of the day the Prime Minister’s Delivery Unit sets the targets, set the measures, the milestones, the steering group and the PESSCL board, you’re not going to change that engine (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006).

This view was supported by the Chief Executive of the YST, who suggested that it was the responsibility of the agencies involved in the implementation
and delivery of the PESSCL strategy to develop a quality evidence base for these targets. He proposed that this should be developed through the CPD programme and the work of SSPs, LDAs and PE professional associations, who had a central role in advocating high quality PESS and the two hours entitlement (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006).

The juxtaposition of the provision of high quality PESS and its measurement through a weekly entitlement target led to a degree of tension between government departments and those responsible for the delivery of PSA targets. Sue Wilkinson, the new Business and Development Manager for AfPE, explained how the Association had lobbied for a focus on high quality outcomes, although the PMDU had only really been concerned with the collation of statistical, quantitative data. Her perception was that the two hour target inevitably became the major focus of the PESSCL strategy in the first few years, to the detriment of quality provision (Interview: Sue Wilkinson, 27th June 2006). The AfPE successfully solicited the support of Ofsted who were also keen to stress that time should not be an overriding issue because quality PESS was crucial to the long-term success of the national PESSCL strategy.

The timescale required to embed high quality provision was now determined by government departments that demanded evidence of improvements over short time periods that were related to government spending reviews. Margaret Talbot, the Chief Executive for AfPE, believed that it was:

not in the best interests of civil servants to ask the quality question because one of the problems they face is the way in which political projects are led and managed. Civil servants have milestones, targets and objectives against which they are measured. It is therefore not in their best interests to look at the details (Interview: Margaret Talbot, 19th July 2006).

8.4.3 QCA
The QCA operated as a non-departmental public body sponsored by the DfES to develop and review the national curriculum. The organisation acted as the major partner in supporting both the DfES and DCMS in their delivery of the PSA target and in exemplifying and supporting schools to deliver high quality
outcomes. Crichton Casbon, the PE Advisor for the QCA, explained how the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit was hugely influential in moving the national PESS strategy away from setting up an infrastructure to looking at outcomes and quality. 'At the PESSCL Delivery Board meetings, members of the Unit were keen to emphasize that it was high quality provision that would make the difference' (Interview: Crichton Casbon, 13th June 2006). The role of QCA within the PESSCL strategy was to investigate how schools could make improvements to the quality of PESS. This was to be achieved by working with them on innovative approaches and acting in an advocacy role (DfES/DCMS 2004). By adhering to a number of milestones the QCA had responsibility for producing information and mechanisms through which schools could measure the impact of quality PESS.

The QCA was commissioned by the PESSCL Board to produce guidelines for PESS that could be used by schools to judge the quality of its work. The process of consultation culminated in the production of ten outcomes that, according to Casbon, were mutually agreed and owned, by both sport and PE bodies (Interview: 13th June 2006). These were published in 2004 and supplemented by further publications that exemplified high quality PESS. The QCA guide provided a detailed list of outcomes and indicators for both schools and sports whose efficacy was questioned by some individuals. One senior member of AfPE was concerned that the QCA high quality guidelines had actually confused people.

You can't measure enjoyment; its qualitative, anecdotal. How do you measure and quantify that? It is now the framework of a school's self-review for PESS that we have to work with and it's got to be improved (Interview: Sue Wilkinson, 27th June 2006).

QCA's role within the PESSCL strategy was to drive the high quality agenda, and Crichton Casbon explained how the guidelines were designed to provide a framework for schools, individuals and organisations involved in monitoring PESS such as PDMs, CSPs, LEA school improvement teams, inspectors and researchers. For schools the guide was intended to be used:
alongside the national curriculum and the Ofsted inspection framework to get an overview of the quality they are achieving. Clubs should use it alongside Clubmark or NGB accreditation processes (QCA, 2004:2).

The positioning of the QCA as central to the high quality agenda for the PESSCL strategy and its role in exemplifying high quality outcomes had provided some confusion within the PE profession and amongst sporting bodies. A Senior Ofsted Advisor observed that there had been an appreciable shift in the work of schools towards a focus upon the delivery of the non-statutory outcomes of the PESSCL strategy, to the detriment of the statutory obligations of the NCPE (Interview: 26th July 2006).

8.4.4 Ofsted

During the time period framed by the PESSCL strategy, the dynamics of the relationship between Ofsted and schools and the nature of the inspection process had been the subject of manifest change. Despite these modifications, Ofsted played an important role in contributing to the delivery of high quality PESS through its involvement in improving services and reporting on the quality of the work in schools. Ofsted's input was regarded as critical to driving the high quality objectives of the PESSCL strategy and 'invaluable in terms of steering the strategy, reporting on school sport partnerships and increasingly helpful in pulling out some big issues that we won't always necessarily agree with' (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

Ofsted's main responsibility was the quality of the delivery of the national curriculum in schools. An HMI for PE expressed her concern that there was no curriculum strand in the PESSCL strategy, which had created a situation that she believed had moved the focus of PE teachers away from the objectives of the NCPE to the outcomes of a PSA target (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). The introduction of a new Education Act in 2005 had significantly altered the role of Ofsted and its relationship with schools. A senior member of AfPE explained how the new inspection arrangements meant that Ofsted's role had diminished to a point at which there 'may now only be about 30 inspections a year for PESS out of 22,000...
schools, which makes issues surrounding the consistency of high quality difficult to establish' (Interview: Sue Wilkinson, 27th June 2006). The nature of these changes meant a potential shift of power which afforded a greater opportunity for certain agencies to keep issues and problems concerning high quality PESS (formerly a constituent part of the Ofsted’s remit), off the agenda. Another interviewee confirmed the key role that Ofsted played in helping to secure high quality PESS, but acknowledged that the impact of the new focus of self-assessment upon measures of high quality still needed to be realised (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006). A Senior Ofsted Advisor explained how the new inspection arrangements meant:

that Ofsted would increasingly rely on PESSCL survey data, LA data and other people’s evidence. Ofsted’s inspection no longer looks at separate subjects in any depth and so subject inspection evidence is now minimal (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006).

As a consequence, the new arrangements meant that teachers needed to work more closely with the inspection criteria as they engaged more in self-evaluation exercises. Although Ofsted was seen as key to raising the quality of work in schools and in supporting the achievement of the high quality PSA target, the reality was that its powers and resources had been limited by fundamental changes to the way in which the new inspection system was run and its marginal role in the PESSCL strategy.

8.4.5 Sports Colleges

The aims of sports colleges were broad and included working with external sports partners to enhance sustainable sporting opportunities for young people. In addition, they were required to help raise standards of achievement in PESS through the quality of their teaching and to raise standards by developing good practice with their family of local schools (DfEE, 2000). Sports colleges were vital hub sites for the DfES in helping it to realise its objectives for driving educational reform and improving standards. They were also vital for the DCMS in supporting its role in strengthening the sporting infrastructure surrounding schools, so that young people had the opportunity
to engage in sporting activities beyond the school context (Penney & Houlihan, 2001).

Their work became central to the PESSCL strategy and the delivery of the government's PSA target for PESS. SSCs were expected to act as focal points for excellence in PE and to raise standards of achievement in physical education (DfEE, 2000). Through the creation of their own ethos and their role in spreading good practice, the work of SSCs was vital in helping DfES and the YST to achieve the PSA target for PESS. Indeed, since their establishment in 1997 and as a consequence of the repositioning of organisations, such as Ofsted and AfPE, SSCs had become more centrally located in the delivery of high quality PESS and the achievement of the PSA target. Penney (2004) acknowledged that in its position as a managing agent for specialist sports colleges, the YST had repeatedly stressed that a major feature of their role should be a willingness and desire to share good practice and to foster collaborative agendas. A Senior Civil Servant reinforced this view by suggesting that whilst the work of the QCA was to exemplify best practice, increasingly the work of the sports colleges and SSPs needed to focus on achieving high quality through 'teachers sharing with teachers through the partnerships that we have formed that have fostered that sharing of best practice and high quality PESS' (Interview: Senior Civil Servant, 16th June 2006).

The nature of the PESSCL strategy meant that SSCs were positioned as central hubs whose remit was to ensure the delivery of high quality PESS. However, the capacity of all sports colleges to take on this role had become more difficult as the programme expanded to cover the whole of England. A Senior Manager for the YST explained that one of the main criteria for sports college designation was a school's plan which demonstrated how the quality of provision of PESS both within the school and within the local community was to be realised. Moreover, she explained that, as there was no requirement that a school's specialism was of the highest quality, the YST increasingly worked with sports colleges to support them in raising the quality of the specialism within their own school (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th...
July 2006). There was also an acknowledgement from another Director of the YST that although the role of sports colleges was to contribute to the development of high quality PESS, as the programme had expanded, many sports colleges had not been mature enough to act in that capacity (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

Despite these challenges, there was a sense from the interviews conducted with the Directors of the YST that, those sports colleges that were fit for purpose were starting to use PESS to raise standards in the specialism and to address whole school attainment and achievement. Nevertheless, a Senior Manager for the YST believed that there was still some way to go before sports colleges were able to fulfil their role as research and development hubs, in which their work was established as cutting-edge practice (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006). A second major challenge facing the YST in its management of sports colleges was in moving those responsible for the delivery of PESS in sports colleges and SSPs from the provision of extra sports activities to focus upon high quality development (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

The Ofsted report (2005) delivered some mixed findings surrounding high quality provision in schools and reported that whilst many of the schools visited by inspectors were using the PESSCL guidance on high quality outcomes for pupils, many remained unsure how the outcomes were linked to the national curriculum. A general lack of understanding about what pupils were expected to know, understand and be able to do at different stages had led to a number of differing interpretations and widely varying expectations as to what constituted high quality PESS. In its survey of good practice in SSPs one year later, it suggested that, in order to increase the impact and effectiveness of high quality PESS:

those with national responsibility for the school sport partnership programme should provide further guidance for schools on how to use more effectively the programme's ten outcomes for high quality PE and school sport alongside the national curriculum to show clearly what pupils should know, understand and be able to do across different key stages (Ofsted, 2006: 3).
Two of the PDMs involved in the study admitted that their assessment of high quality for the PSA target was not robust, while acknowledging that this was an area that they were now able to prioritise, having achieved the PSA target for 2006. One PDM explained that subjectivity characterised the assessment of high quality, which she suggested was:

open to interpretation. One person’s idea of what high quality is not necessarily my judgement of high quality, and in some way I disagree with some of the published high quality guidelines (Interview: Clare Place, 16th June 2006).

It appeared that the judgements made by schools in their assessment of high quality PESS for the purpose of the PESSCL strategy and the PSA target, were ‘best guess’, given the highly subjective nature of ‘high quality’. There was also a degree of confusion created because of the publication of separate high quality guidelines from Ofsted and QCA. Due to the pressure on schools to achieve PESSCL objectives, teachers and schools had forgotten the bread and butter work of delivering the NCPE (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). This led to a feeling amongst some PDMs, that more support and further work was needed to help sports colleges and SSPs to judge high quality outcomes and develop high quality provision (Derek McDermott, 16th June 2006).

8.4.6 YST
YST involvement in delivery of high quality PESS was linked closely to the work in managing the specialist sports college programme, SSPs and the Professional Development programme. However, the role of the YST extended beyond these and involved operating on behalf of both DfES and DCMS across most of the work strands of the PESSCL strategy. Their work had extended exponentially across the English regions to five geographical areas that complemented those of government regional offices. By September 2006 the YST had extended its portfolio to include a national network of over 400 SSCs and SSPs. Through its involvement in the Professional
Development programme of the PESSCL strategy, the influence of the YST extended to over 130 LDAs involved in the delivery of high quality CPD. With such an extensive portfolio of programmes within the PESSCL strategy, the YST's interests extended to almost every area of PESS, except for direct involvement in the delivery of the NCPE.

The success of the Youth Sport Trust in securing funding for PESS and involvement in the PESSCL strategy had been secured because of its reputation amongst government departments. One senior civil servant explained how the YST, alongside the DfES, DCMS, QCA and Ofsted, were the major players in determining policy for school sport. Moreover he added that:

it [the YST] is the body that supports us [DCMS and DfES]. It's because of their involvement with sports colleges, with partnerships, and the support structure they offer, as well as the messages that they filter back to us from the coal face. The YST acts as an invaluable mechanism for us (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

This view was echoed by another civil servant, who reaffirmed the esteem with which the YST was held in government circles:

It is singularly the one sport agency in the last two years which has delivered everything that was asked of it. They have been tasked with things and they have delivered and the challenge for other bodies, individually, not necessarily collectively, but individually, in an era where government support in any aspect of sport cannot be big enough for all organisations to benefit, is to demonstrate with whatever funding they've got now, that they can deliver. The YST is influential because it deserves to be. It deserves its status (Interview: Senior Civil Servant, 16th June 2006).

The YST's Director of Education emphasised that one of its main roles was to ensure that PESS was a strong and vibrant subject, to shape policy and to make sure that the sports college specialism was making an impact. The YST's role in ensuring that sports colleges achieved re-designation and that the quality of their work was maintained had led to the recognition by YST, DfES, DCMS and others that there was a requirement for closer links between
the YST and AfPE. Indeed the YST needed to enlist the support of PE’s professional association so that:

sports colleges buy their schools evaluation guide, so that we can build on it in relation to the support we give so we are able to signpost far more the support that AfPE can provide PE subject leaders (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006).

The developing relationship between AfPE and YST may in the future provide the potential for a future coalition surrounding PESS. There had been a degree of tension in the relationship between the YST and PE associations since their involvement in the 1990s with the delivery of the TOPs programmes in schools. A lack of capacity and confidence amongst the two PE associations to address the problems in schools during the 1990s had allowed the YST to secure a foothold into their work (Interview: Margaret Talbot, 19th July 2006). With an inevitable overlap in the responsibilities of the YST and the new, single professional association for PE, there appeared to be some confusion amongst teachers concerning the responsibilities of the two organisations. Within the CPD programme, there was growing evidence from YST CPD managers that LDAs were soliciting significant help with their strategic role in delivering high quality PE. However, the YST was clear in delineating its responsibilities, ‘It's not our role to galvanise, motivate and/or support a workforce that is leading the subject in a local authority context. That is AfPE's role’ (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006).

The successful delivery of the 2006 PSA target for PESS brought about another extended PSA target to achieve 85% participation by 2008 and an ambition that, by 2010, all young people would have the opportunity to access four hours a week of sport that included two hours of curriculum physical education. In order to be able to address these new demands posed by the PSA target it was recognised that the YST needed to increase its personnel in order to support the delivery of these challenging aspirations. This meant the creation of focussed teams of Development Managers to work with SSPs, in order to widen opportunities and to work with LDAs and sports colleges to develop high quality PE (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July
Clearly, there was recognition that these new targets required the YST to operate using more creative and innovative methods whilst seeking to engage more disaffected young children in PESS. The Chief Executive of the YST emphasised the challenges that it had faced in ensuring that the activity target for the PSA agreement was achieved; now the focus for the YST needed to be upon ensuring quality provision with quality outcomes:

The message we delivered to just over two thousand school sport coordinators in their conferences last month was: fantastic job, there is lots going on in PESS, but we have really got to start to look at the quality of what we are delivering (Interview: Steve Grainger, 10th July 2006).

Grainger also suggested that at the latest PESSCL Delivery Board meeting, high quality had been a major topic for discussion and the need for greater clarity about how the PSA target linked to OFSTED outcomes had been highlighted. A Senior Manager for the YST described how a successful delivery mechanism needed to strive for improved quality provision, whilst ensuring that the YST was able to measure how well it was doing. This would then enable it to secure further funding and credibility with new partners who would realise the benefit of involvement in PESS (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006).

8.4.7 AfPE

The involvement of the PE professional associations in issues surrounding the provision of high quality PESS had been somewhat marginal. The operation of two separate subject associations, namely BAALPE who represented lecturers and advisory teachers and PEA/UK whose membership was mainly comprised of PE teachers, meant there was no single voice to represent the profession. Operating as two distinct bodies, the role of the PE associations was primarily to service the needs of its membership and to act in an advisory capacity on issues pertaining to PE. A senior civil servant responsible for the PESSCL strategy explained how the professional associations had made no impact upon the formulation and direction of the PESSCL strategy:

I've never had a problem with engaging with them [BAALPE/ PEA/UK]
and having a healthy debate, but they've never really fully signed up to what we're doing. So whatever influence they might have had, they've never been able to exercise it. PEA/UK they were too small. I think we would really have liked to work with them more, but they just did not have the capacity, the resources, and because BAALPE dragged its feet in merging with PEA/UK, collectively they've not been able to engage (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

The high quality agenda was seen by many as repositioning AfPE more centrally in the work of schools, whilst the YST saw the role of AfPE as providing guidance to subject leaders in PE, 'I think the associations would feel that pushing the high quality side is their remit' (Interview: Senior Member of AfPE, 9th June 2006). It was evident however that there was a degree of tension between AfPE and the YST. One YST interviewee suggested that:

AfPE needed to realise that government was not going to change the PSA target and if it was changed or dropped, the investment would go, because they [government] are hugely hooked on the targets to 2008 and 2010 and then working towards the Olympics (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006).

For the YST, AfPE's role was to support the YST in its management contract for the new national CPD programme and to kite mark and ensure the quality of its courses that were provided both locally and nationally. To support the achievement of high quality PESS, a Senior Manager at the YST suggested that, as the PESSCL programme developed, there would be an increasing need for the YST, QCA and AfPE to work strategically together (Interview: 6th July 2006). The relative lack of investment in the CPD programme was regarded as a disappointing feature of the PESSCL strategy and there was, as has been noted, some disappointment in the imbalance of investment heavily in favour of the infrastructure, in preference to raising standards in schools (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July). The distribution of the extra funding to the separate work strands is outlined in Table 8.3 below. The majority of the funding (£361 million) was invested in the infrastructure for sports colleges and SSPs, with a separate £11.5 million provided for the training and development of teachers.
Table 8.3 Government spending - PESSCL Strategy (2006-2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£361m</td>
<td>Sports colleges and school sport partnerships</td>
<td>£6.75m</td>
<td>New Competition Managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£40m</td>
<td>Community Club Development Programme</td>
<td>£9m</td>
<td>To enhance links between schools and clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£32m</td>
<td>The coaching project</td>
<td>£8m</td>
<td>To increase volunteering opportunities for 14-19 year olds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£28.5m</td>
<td>Playing for Success</td>
<td>£5.5m</td>
<td>To ensure all children learn to swim safely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£11.5m</td>
<td>Training and development for teachers and other adults</td>
<td>£4m</td>
<td>To support gifted and talented athletes in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£11.5m</td>
<td>To enable partnerships to use more coaches</td>
<td>£1.5m</td>
<td>Coaching for Success</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Adapted from: *Boost to School Sport* Leaflet December 2004

8.4.8 Professional Development

The decision by the DfES to allocate a relatively small sum of money for the professional development of teachers was justified on the grounds that the programme did not require the substantial structural changes that had been required to support sports colleges and SSPs (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005). Despite the lack of investment in supporting this aspect of teacher’s professional development, there was evidence of closer working relationships through the commissioning of AfPE by the QCA to look at the contribution that PESS could make to the *Every Child Matters* agenda that was beginning to permeate education policy (Interview: Sue Wilkinson, 27th June 2006).
In response to the inconsistencies and lack of clarity surrounding what constituted high quality PESS and similar demands from within the profession, AfPE had responded by producing a practical school self-evaluation guide that was intended to be used as exemplar material for the new self-review processes introduced by Ofsted. AfPE also launched its own National College for Professional Development (NCFPD) with the intention of providing a range of high quality courses to support the in-service needs of teachers. These courses were not, however, funded through the PESSCL strategy.

Conclusion
The development and implementation of the PESSCL strategy and a PSA target for PESS had to be developed and implemented within a tight time frame. A recently retired PE HMI described the challenges of these time-scales for the delivery of policy initiatives such as PESSCL:

A government has got five years ... they've got five years to implement any new changes in policy they want to implement, and to be able to demonstrate within five years that it's working. Now that's the timescale that very few people ... very few organisations work to. Education finds it difficult to cope with that (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006).

The production of a PSA target for the PESSCL strategy illustrated this point, and Matthew Conway, the civil servant originally responsible for it, described how the PSA targets were being "negotiated" [his quotation marks] between the two departments and the Office of the Prime Minister and the Treasury (Interview: 12th July 2005). He explained how:

the PSA target had just emerged one day as a target with wording and that was it. It wasn't necessarily agreed, it just kind of emerged as something the two departments would deliver (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July, 2005).

The initial focus on the delivery of the target undoubtedly concentrated upon the development of a new infrastructure. However, Casbon and Walters (2004) suggested that as the PESSCL strategy was put into place, there was a realisation that there was no valid information about whether the programmes were delivering high-quality pupil outcomes. One senior HMI (PE) described how the PSA target and its wording reflected a lack of wider
consultation with key agencies, 'because if they had done so, we [HMI] might have suggested a more restrained use of the term high quality' (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). Similarly another HMI highlighted what he suggested was Ofsted's view that time was not an evidence base for quality. Another senior member of AfPE believed that for some agencies involved in the strategy the overriding concern was to hit the quantitative target, 'but the PE profession needs to keep reminding people that it is not sufficient just to increase participation rates' (Interview: Senior Member of AfPE, 9th June 2006).

The agencies involved in the delivery of the PESSCL strategy were required to meet both the high quality and participation elements of the PSA target. Although the PSA target for 2006 was met, there was a lack of robustness and rigour in the measurement of high quality PESS across the range of agencies involved. Whilst the need for high quality PESS provision cannot be challenged, how it is exemplified and assessed as a PSA target is problematical. The production of guidelines and exemplification of good practice by the QCA, AfPE and Ofsted's inspection criteria provided support for the assessment of high quality, although an initial lack of consultation between these bodies led to a degree of confusion amongst teachers as to the relative status of QCA and Ofsted criteria. Moreover, a senior HMI suggested that the focus upon the delivery of the PSA target and the PESSCL strategy had created a situation in which schools were now focussing on the latter's outcomes rather than the 'bread and butter' work of the NCPE (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006).

With the nature of Ofsted's inspection processes moving away from specific subject inspection to a process of a more generic focus upon the central management practices and self-evaluation processes of schools, the rigour and time devoted by Ofsted to subject inspection was inevitably reduced. As an inspection body it now relied heavily on inspection advice commissioned independently by DfES, YST and DCMS. These changes meant that the data gathered on high quality PESS through PESSCL survey statistics and self-evaluation assessments of high quality made by schools, PDMs and SSCos
formed the most substantial evidence for provision (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006). It is, therefore, questionable whether assessments of high quality PESS were secure and robust. The Chief Executive of AfPE believed that the way in which the data was collected did not allow interrogation of high quality and what it constituted. She also believed that the latter was not limited to the subject of physical education:

I’m not sure we’re alone in our understanding of what good learning is, what effective learning is; and because of the way in which the PESSCL programme has been rolled out, and because of the focus on participation, for ministers and therefore civil servants, the quality issue is either backed off from, or it’s ignored (Interview: Margaret Talbot, 19th July 2006).

There was no statutory obligation for any of the partners involved in the PESSCL strategy to deliver the PSA target. Nevertheless, the various agencies involved in the delivery and implementation of the national strategy were obliged, through a variety of mechanisms, to support its achievement. Sports colleges' work was linked to re-designation as specialist schools, their development plan agreements and funding, whilst SSPs were similarly linked through funding and development plans. These mechanisms proved to be valuable management tools available to organisations such as the YST in assisting them to lever changes within PESS and to ensure the delivery of the PSA target.

The HMI involved in this study emphasised how the PESSCL strategy had shifted the focus of the work of schools away from the NCPE to a number of work strands that involved sport and community initiatives beyond the traditional boundaries of the school context (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). These arguments were borne out by reports into the work of SSPs which suggested that the effects of high quality PE had yet to make any significant impact on the curriculum in secondary schools (IYS, 2004, 2005). Nevertheless, the data provided by the Loughborough Partnership and by QCA indicated that there had been substantial improvements in participation, and in the amount of curriculum time allocated to PE. In agreeing with these
findings, the Chief Executive of AfPE suggested that it remained difficult to explain why these changes had occurred and whether it was because schools were more focussed that investment had increased, strategic planning had improved or that the interrogation of the curriculum was better (Interview: Margaret Talbot, 19th July 2006).

There was still some concern that, despite achieving the 2006 PSA target and the positive evaluations that had emerged from the work of sports colleges and SSPs, examination results remained the dominant measure of success for many schools. One HMI commented that for many schools the SATs results for the core subjects acted as the main yardstick by which they were judged and that the two hours per week target for PESS within the PSA target was not high on all schools' agendas (Interview: Senior Ofsted Advisor, 26th July 2006). This point was acknowledged by Sue Campbell who suggested that it was important that teachers were advocates for their subject and emphasised the need to deliver high quality PESS whilst gathering the evidence that it was able to impact upon behaviour and on school standards. Moreover, her belief was that:

the quality issue is a people issue; it is about how we get quality people, people who really understand the subject and what we are trying to do in PESS. That is what will turn it from quantity to quality. It is the quality of the people and so that is why CPD and all these other things to me are really important, getting the CPD delivery right (Interview: 12th May 2006).

Phil Veasey, the Head of Sports Development at Sport England, explained how he believed that it was in everyone's interests to make sure that they continued to drive the high quality agenda in order to ensure that there was sustained funding for the initiative (Interview: 30th June 2006). There was also an acknowledgement that there was a real pressure for all partners to deliver whole school improvement, aligned with 'a greater accountability in the world of sport; high quality outcomes now drive the work of all partners; high quality is about government getting a return on its money' (Interview: Crichton Casbon, 13th June 2006). The concern for high quality PESS was not solely a concern for the education agencies involved, and whilst sport and PE arguably have a different set of outcomes, the PESSCL strategy had provided
a common framework of high quality outcomes. In his observations surrounding high quality PESS, one HMI articulated his view on the debates surrounding high quality and the PSA target: ‘Quality is the only thing that matters. You can give young people as much sport and PE as you like, but if it’s rubbish, it will have little impact’ (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006).

In his observations on the work of specialist sports colleges, Houlihan (2000) reported on the limited role that physical education teachers were playing in the development of the specialist sports college initiative, and suggested that decisions about priority sports, curriculum content and design was influenced by external organisations. In many ways that observation remains true; demands by government for accountability, efficiency and target setting have framed the work of agencies such as DCMS, DfES, YST, QCA and Ofsted. Substantial evidence has yet to emerge from evaluations of the work of sports colleges and SSPs that confirms that the strategy has had any substantial effect upon the quality of the PE curriculum. Whilst it is acknowledged that the reports emerging from independent bodies, such as the Loughborough Partnership bear testament to undoubted improvements in performance and participation levels in PESS, there still appears to be a lack of substantial evidence that the work of those agencies involved in the PESSCL strategy has made a substantial impact upon the curriculum. Ofsted’s report (2005) on the PESSCL strategy suggested that schools needed to consider the impact of these new opportunities on its overall design in order to improve pupils’ learning. More worryingly, the report suggests that the proportion of very good teaching remained static and schools needed to ‘measure the programme’s [PESSCL] impact on the quality of physical education and school sport by ensuring rigorous data collection and analysis’ (Ofsted, 2005: 5).

As Penney (2004) has suggested, there are inherent tensions in any policy initiative in which there is a diverse range of interest groups and a number of competing agendas. The case of high quality PESS is a case in point and demonstrates the challenges posed by a policy initiative that is framed by a
PSA target whose delivery and funding is channelled via DfES and DCMS to a sports charity. The YST is extensively involved in the management of all of the major elements of the PESSCL programme, such as specialist sports colleges, SSPs, CPD and the new competition framework. Conversely, education bodies, such as AfPE have had limited funding and control over the direction of the initiative and over issues, such as what constitutes high quality PESS. The reduced role for Ofsted in subject inspection as a consequence of the Education Act (2005) also means that its responsibility for judging high quality PESS will draw upon the work of independently appointed reporting bodies, rather than its own judgments. Whilst QCA’s role was to assist and exemplify good practice and to monitor the NCPE, its responsibility and relationship with schools is advisory rather than judgmental. The evidence from inspection reports attests to the significant benefits that have accrued to sporting agencies and the delivery of programmes, such as School Club Links and the work of SSPs and PDMs in creating a strong sporting infrastructure surrounding schools. However, these significant gains do not appear to have been mirrored in schools and improvements in the quality of aspects of the delivery of the NCPE, especially in secondary schools, still remains to be fully realised.

New inspection systems for judging the quality teaching and learning were introduced as a consequence of the ERA (1988). Ofsted was the quango responsible for visiting and inspecting every state school in England in order to assess the overall quality of teaching and learning and to monitor observance of the statutory requirements of the national curriculum. The introduction of specialist sports colleges placed a specific responsibility upon these schools to address whole school improvement and to act as regional focal points for excellence in PESS. The introduction of the PESSCL strategy brought with it a dual challenge for schools which required them to meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the PSA target as part of the PESSCL strategy.

QCA’s appointed role in supporting the PESSCL strategy was to develop innovative approaches to PESS and to provide a set of outcomes that
exemplified high quality. The QCA’s guide provided ten outcomes of high-quality PESS in an attempt to support those involved in the PESSCL strategy to address the high quality component of the PSA target. Measuring high quality PESS had proved problematic because of its subjective nature. QCA’s new role in exemplifying high quality for the PESSCL strategy was juxtaposed with the guidelines provided by Ofsted to support the delivery of the NCPE, indicating the growing separation of their work. Since the ERA, Ofsted had played a key role in monitoring and assessing delivery of PE. However the introduction of new inspection conditions placed an emphasis upon school self assessment and generic rather than subject focused inspections. As a consequence, Ofsted was increasingly reliant on PESSCL survey data and other people’s evidence. Ofsted’s powers and capacity to influence PESS was diminished by these structural changes to the new inspection system.

The creation of the Professional Development work strand was a separate element of the PESSCL strategy which was managed by the YST. The programme focused upon the in-service needs of teachers and other adults involved in supporting the delivery of the PESSCL strategy. Courses were delivered through Local Delivery Agencies (LDAs) as the result of bidding processes which allowed LEAs and HEIs to reassert some influence over high quality PESS. Whilst the PE professional associations had some involvement in validating the quality of these courses, they remained at the periphery of policy developments for high quality PESS. In 2006, AfPE launched its own National College for Continuing Professional Development (NCfCPD) which provided the opportunity for the Association to expand its own interests in shaping and supporting the delivery of high quality PESS. Whilst AfPE was attempting to reassert some control over high quality PESS, LDAs and SSPs were also seeking to manage their own in-service needs. As they secured contracts to do so, the traditional in-service support provided by LEAs and advisory teachers was replaced by a new system administered by SSPs.

This final case study chapter analysed the policy processes surrounding the delivery of high quality PESS within the PESSCL strategy. The ontological and epistemological assumptions of this study acknowledged the pre-existing
conditions that framed this element of policy for PESS. The delivery of high quality PE and school sport was inextricably linked with long-standing normative assumptions and value orientations in which high quality school sport was associated with traditional and largely unquestioned beliefs about the capacity of sport to deliver a broad range of outcomes. Indeed Sue Campbell in her role as policy entrepreneur was a powerful advocate for the potential of high quality PESS as a policy solution to raising educational standards and tackling obesity. The empirical evidence from this case study highlighted the continuing struggles amongst many policy actors surrounding definitions of what constituted high quality physical education and school sport. It provided further evidence of what Houlihan (2002) has described as long-standing biases within the policy process. Indeed, the research provided evidence of the continuing domination of sport agendas rather than education outcomes in determining and defining what constituted high quality PESS provision within the PESSCL strategy.

The empirical evidence provided by this case study highlighted the involvement of a dominant coalition of policy actors who were instrumental in determining what constituted high quality within the PESSCL strategy. The delivery of high quality PESS which permeated the whole of the PESSCL strategy was defined by a government imposed PSA target determined by the Office of the Prime Minister and the Treasury. Accountability for the delivery of the PSA target and high quality PESS was channelled through DfES, DCMS and the YST who were dominant in determining policy for this element of the PESSCL strategy. The advocacy coalition theoretical framework helped direct attention to key variables such as the role of belief systems in explaining the policy processes that defined high quality PESS. The close alignment of the beliefs and values of a close group of dominant policy actors about what constituted high quality PESS was at odds with agencies such as Ofsted, LEAs and the PE professional associations. The capacity of DCMS, DfES and the YST to dominate policy was indicative of the role of the state as a key policy actor (Lukes 1974; 1978). The empirical findings revealed that whilst there was no statutory requirement placed upon the agencies involved in the delivery and implementation of the PSA target, the exercise of power was
manifested in the capacity of powerful interest groups to exclude the voices of those whose views of high quality PESS did not resonate with their own. The research evidence indicated that education bodies such as Ofsted and AfPE had limited control over the direction of the PSA target and what constituted high quality PESS. The advocacy coalition framework's contention that policy processes and policy change can be explained by the dominance of a coalition of policy actors who retained tight control over policy for the delivery of high quality PESS was supported by the empirical evidence that emerged from this case study. The case study exemplified the continuing marginalisation of education agencies such as Ofsted, LEAs and AfPE from debates surrounding high quality PESS. The emergence of the PESSCL strategy and its PSA target appears to have diverted attention within SSPs away from the statutory demands of the NCPE, towards the delivery of 'high quality' outcomes defined by government.
CHAPTER 9

Conclusion

Introduction
This chapter reflects upon processes of policy change for selected elements of the PESSCL strategy through the use of the empirical data generated from the three case studies. The first section of the chapter reflects upon the latter and provides a detailed overview of policy processes using data gathered during interviews with senior policy actors and from documentary evidence. This section explores and analyses policy change for selected elements of PESSCL by examining processes of agenda setting, management and implementation and policy development across all three cases. The second section critically evaluates the efficacy of the advocacy coalition framework (ACF) and the multiple streams framework (MS) and their capacity, as theoretical tools, to provide an account of policy processes for selected elements of PESSCL. The chapter then moves on to consider and critically reflect on the efficacy of the selection of these two theoretical frameworks from the range of meso-level models available. The final section of the chapter outlines the limitations of the study.

The data that has emerged from the three case study chapters provides the material for an analysis of policy change. This is achieved through a focus upon four key factors that represent potential sources of policy change and draws upon agenda setting processes across all three case studies.

9.1 Agenda setting
The background to this study was framed by a policy context that was marked by the failure of politicians and governments world-wide to recognise the policy benefits of physical education and school sport (Marshall and Hardman, 2000). The years preceding PESSCL were characterised by ongoing and acrimonious debates about the nature of physical education and whether its purpose should serve education or sport outcomes. These problems were
compounded by the apathy of successive governments towards PE and school sport (Kirk, 2003). The failure of the PE profession to articulate and agree a clear and coherent rationale for the subject militated against the development of formal policy relationships between education and government. At the crux of the dissonance were debates within and between politics, the media and the physical education profession itself about the distinctive purposes and practices of physical education. For Penney and Evans (1999: 43) these arguments focused upon whether the rationale for physical education should be:

- children’s physical, mental and social development, as distinct from a view of physical education as essentially about performance in specific activities (sports and particularly team games) achieved through the attainment of specific skills.

The account of the design of the NCPE offered in Chapters Two and Eight of this study exemplifies the distinct, normative assumptions made by the teaching profession, government and policy-makers. The creation of the NCPE reflected these ongoing tensions and highlighted the capacity of government to influence and shape policy. In her interview, Margaret Talbot, a member of the Working Party for the NCPE described how government was prepared to exercise control over policy-making in order to ensure that its recommendations were based on an activity based curriculum with a strong focus upon traditional team games (Interview: 19th July 2006). What emerges from this study is the strength of traditional, hegemonic beliefs about the value of team games and sport’s character building qualities which have continued to frame policy for PE. The data also highlights the enduring failure of politicians to understand the arguments presented by some educationalists about the nuances of the distinctions between sport and PE. Indeed, it is argued that the dissonance between the PE profession, the PE professional associations and politicians has militated against any dialogue about the capacity of PESS to contribute to broader government agendas. Sue Campbell’s comments reinforced this point and, in describing her conversations with politicians and civil servants, she described how ‘they find it difficult to grapple with what physical education is’ (Interview: 12th May 2006). It is argued, therefore, that one of the factors that secured government
support for the national school sport strategy was her ability to articulate the benefits of PESS in a way that resonated with its own values and expectations. Various exemplifications within this study have illustrated Campbell’s ability to engage with senior politicians and present a clear vision for school sport that resonated with their belief systems. By her own admission, she was prepared to abandon philosophical debates concerning whether education or sport discourses should prevail, in favour of a pragmatic approach which presented PESS as a solution to government policy problems. Sue Campbell acknowledged that she had to present PE through the language of sport:

The tension has always been that the people you are trying to convince to invest in PE and school sport aren’t necessarily listening to the messages surrounding purist PE. For some groups it has to be about a pure message. The difficulty for me sometimes is that a pure message wasn’t going to help me get where I needed to go (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

The ability of Sue Campbell and the YST to make such a significant impact on policy for PESS was indicative of her expertise in packaging it as a solution to ‘their’ policy problems. It is suggested that the relative ease with which the YST were able to assume control over major elements of the PESSCL strategy owed much to a lack of its embedded systemic relationships with government and other organisations or policy actors. The background to the PESSCL strategy provided in Chapters Two and Five of this study provides an account of a policy context in which the ERA (1988) and LMS had imposed a set of conditions that had rendered organisations such as LEAs, HEIs and LAs tangential and unable to contribute to policy-making in any formal way. It is argued that the tight regulatory control and conditions imposed upon these organisations created a policy vacuum that allowed Sue Campbell and the YST to exert control over policy-making processes for PESS.

9.1.1 Lobbying and interest groups
The history and background to PESS provided in this thesis explains the consistent failure of the PE profession and its professional associations to
lobby effectively on its behalf. Indeed the policy area has been characterised by the lack of policy actors or interest groups capable of uniting the disparate agencies involved in PESS. From 1990 to 1997, despite the fact that Prime Minister John Major was a keen advocate of sport, fundamental differences between educationalists and politicians remained. Prior to the PESSCL strategy, the relationships between the PE profession and government were confined to arguments about the status of PE in schools. Whilst there was evidence of brief periods of lobbying in response to crises, the potential strength of a collective PE and sport lobby group was never realised. The empirical data highlights the enduring tensions between PE and sport that have framed this policy area and its lack of any institutional representation until Sue Campbell was appointed non-political advisor to DCMS/ DfES. The introduction of tight government regulatory control imposed by ERA (1988) effectively wrested power, funding and control from agencies such as LEAs, HEIs, LAs and diminished their capacity to influence the policy-making process for PESS. In this policy vacuum, the establishment of the YST in 1994 proved to be a significant turning point for PESS. From its beginnings as a relatively small but well-funded sports charity, the YST became an organisation that wielded significant policy influence over PESS.

9.1.2 Key individuals

The importance of key individuals in explaining policy change in PESS is especially important given its lack of institutional representation within government. In the account of the background to PESS provided in Chapter Two it is evident that a number of significant policy actors and politicians have shaped the current policy context over time. Most notable of these was John Major, the Conservative Prime Minister whose personal interest and advocacy for sport brought about a gradual revival of government interest in sport. Steve Grainger, the Chief Executive of the YST, emphasised the influence that senior politicians, such as Major and Tony Blair had played in shaping the current policy context for PESS: 'it was having the right politicians in the right place, at the right time, with the right delivery system behind it' (Interview: 10th July 2006). The involvement and interest of a senior politician such as John
Major provided a more favourable environment in which sport had heightened political status. The publication of *Sport: Raising the Game* (1995) was indicative of its new political profile and the power of individual political actors to shape and influence policy agendas.

The PESSCL Chapter describes the more recent involvement of a succession of Labour Ministers in bringing school sport to the forefront of policy-making. Table 9.1 provides the names and backgrounds of the three key policy agents described in Chapter Five who, it is argued, played a significant role in raising the profile of school sport. The simultaneous appointment of Kate Hoey as Minister for Sport (DCMS) and Estelle Morris as Secretary of State for Education provided a policy context in which two senior politicians had an interest and empathy for both physical education and school sport.

Table 9.1 Key actors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Period in Office</th>
<th>Background</th>
<th>Government Department</th>
<th>Position held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estelle Morris</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Trained in PE Secondary school teacher- Sidney Stringer Coventry</td>
<td>DfEE</td>
<td>Minister in DfEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td></td>
<td>DfES</td>
<td>Appointed Secretary of State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Hoey</td>
<td>1976-1985</td>
<td>Ulster College of PE Senior Lecturer- Kingsway College</td>
<td>DCMS</td>
<td>Minister for Sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1999-2001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Campbell</td>
<td>1970-1972</td>
<td>PE teacher</td>
<td>DCMS/ DfES</td>
<td>Non-political adviser to DCMS/ DfES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1985-1995</td>
<td>Chief Executive, National Coaching Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1995-present</td>
<td>Chief Executive, The Youth Sport Trust</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000-present</td>
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These key political appointments provided PESS with the institutional links that it had previously failed to secure. With Estelle Morris as Secretary of State for Education and Kate Hoey Minister for Sport at DCMS, PESS had powerful advocates within government. In her interview, Sue Campbell described the significance of this situation in which three people who were committed to the power of education and sport as a catalyst in young people's lives had access and power to shape policy-making processes (Interview: 12th May 2006). Steve Grainger, the Chief Executive of the YST described these fortuitous circumstances as critical moments for PESS in which:

we were in a position where we had two insiders who had a previous involvement with school sport strategy who were keen to promote and support school sport (Interview; Grainger, 10th July 2006).

A former Vice-President of PEA UK and current CEO of AfPE described how Sue Campbell had used this opportunity to skilfully position PESS at the centre of education and sport agendas:

I doubt whether the government would of its own accord have made the connections between PE and school sport, and its capacity to deliver on a number of agendas including raising educational standards in schools (Interview: Margaret Talbot, 19th July 2006).

A Senior Manager of the YST described the 'Hoey, Morris and Campbell triangle as a very powerful piece of fusion' (Interview: Senior Manager YST, 6th July 2006) which she believed had led to the creation of the national infrastructure for PESS. A number of key policy actors bore testament to the personal qualities of Sue Campbell and the skilful political role she played in harnessing the interest of government ministers. A Senior HMI described Sue as a lobbyist, who was:

highly influential, articulate, knowledgeable and sensitive to catching the moment, the thing about lobbying is that you have got to catch the Minister's eye. Sue understood this, and her great strength was her quality of thinking, her commitment and the fact that what she said made sense (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006).

Phil Veasey, Head of Sports Development for Sport England explained how she had:
a vision and packaged it for civil servants so they could then sell it to Ministers. Because if government can’t see milestones in their project plans, they aren’t going to sign it off’ (Interview: 30th June 2006).

Her political ability and clarity of thought was also combined with what a Senior Manager of the YST described as a total and relentless advocacy for PESS. Margaret Talbot attested to her ‘skilful policy entrepreneurship, her ability to persuade, her commitment, her workaholism, her total single-mindedness’ (Interview: 19th July 2006), whilst a Senior Staff Member of the YST believed there were few individuals like Sue Campbell with the capacity to gain access and deal effectively with politicians and civil servants.

The endorsement of Prime Minister Tony Blair emerges as another critical factor in shaping policy for PESS. Atkinson and Savage (2001) describe how the creation of a new political climate within Whitehall allowed the Prime Minister to play a more personal role in shaping the direction of public policy and pursuing his own, pet projects. Sue Campbell affirmed the personal interest of Tony Blair and the ‘enormous support from the Prime Minister who had made a significant difference to PESS’ (Interview: 12th May 2006). This was particularly relevant in securing the release of significant Treasury funds for the PESSCL strategy. One senior civil servant emphasised the importance of the support of both the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer:

> The Prime Minister is absolutely behind sport, he believes very passionately in sport and I think it’s for a complex number of reasons. I think he also cottoned on to what sport can do in terms of the education reform agenda and he certainly has personally intervened on behalf of school sport on a number of occasions. The Chancellor equally is right behind what we’re doing; both the Prime Minister and the Chancellor now devote a number of days each year in their schedule to promoting the National School Sports Strategy. (Interview: Senior Civil Servant, 16th June 2006).

Government Ministers, such as Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell (DCMS) and the Minister for Sport Richard Caborn also represented key policy actors who had given their personal support and endorsement to the PESSCL strategy. It was evident that there was a groundswell of political support for school sport from within the Labour government. Not only Estelle Morris and Kate Hoey but
Charles Clarke, the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer were all instrumental in supporting PESS. Sue Campbell, as a charismatic and highly influential policy entrepreneur, was able to harness that support and position PESS as a subject that could contribute to policy-making. Significantly, she was able to skilfully articulate to politicians how PESS could help them to achieve their broader political agendas.

9.2 Management and implementation
The political climate in which the PESSCL strategy developed had an undoubted effect upon how the strategy was implemented and managed. Moran (2005) suggests that policy in the UK was framed by the Labour government's desire for administrative decentralisation. The launch of the PESSCL strategy coincided with a shift in the government's approach to public sector delivery which focussed upon policy outcomes and quantifiable performance indicators and targets. The new PESSCL strategy abandoned formal ties with many of the old PE structures in favour of new arrangements in which organisations and policy actors worked together to meet policy outcomes that were tightly managed and controlled by government. Chapter Five provided a detailed account of these new structural arrangements that centred upon the work of specialist sports colleges and school sport partnerships. In seeking to explain these new arrangements, the SSPs case study highlighted how the new framework for PESSCL positioned LEAs, HEI and the PE professional associations at their periphery.

9.2.1 Modernisation
The PESSCL strategy operated in a broader political context in which the Labour Government's approach to public service delivery was framed by the Next Steps Review (Cabinet Office: 1997). The White Paper encouraged greater co-operation and co-ordination across departmental boundaries through joined-up government and a seamless delivery of services. These systemic changes meant that Secretaries of State, such as Charles Clarke (DfES) and Tessa Jowell (DCMS) were required to take a much closer
involvement in target setting and policy delivery within their respective departments. The PESSCL strategy's joint DfES/DCMS PSA (2003) target was indicative of this new approach to policy delivery and represented an innovative and pioneering attempt to bring together two government departments to deliver a new national strategy for PESS. Indeed the evidence provided in Chapter Five suggests that it was a ground-breaking piece of policy-making that was 'so successful, it became the model of good practice across Whitehall' (Interview: Senior Civil Servant, 16th June 2006).

The PESSCL strategy was managed by a board of representatives that included the YST, head teachers, OFSTED, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), Sport England, DCMS, DfES, DoH and NGBs, with the notable exception of the PE professional associations. One of its main, beneficiaries as the evidence reveals was undoubtedly the DCMS, which gained substantial support through funding contributed by the DfES. The PESSCL strategy was also strongly defined by a number of work strands, such as School Club Links, Swimming and Step into Sport which focused upon extra curricular provision. Matthew Conway described DCMS as:

a stretched division which is challenged in its capacity to deliver sport in terms of the numbers of its officials. It's stretched and it's trying to do its best. Having a PSA target keeps the pressure on Ministers not to change things (Interview: Matthew Conway 12th July 2005).

The DCMS benefited from the significant financial contribution provided by DfES which rose from £23.5m in 2003-4 to £155m from 2005-6, whilst over the same period the DCMS contribution remained static at £45million. The senior civil servant responsible for managing the initiative explained the significance of these funding ratios:

the reason that DfES will be putting in 96% of the funding by 2005/6, is because this [PESSCL] is about improving academic attainment - full stop. As far as I was concerned there was never any doubt about that, it's primarily an education programme. That it was delivering through sport... was actually almost happenstance (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).
Although the PESSCL strategy is regarded primarily as an education policy, the empirical chapters of this study suggest that it has had a significant effect upon strengthening sport structures and sport agencies within and outside schools. There were inevitable tensions in seeking to justify and defend an education strategy which appeared to comprise a range of sport initiatives. Steve Grainger the Chief Executive of the YST described how Alan Johnson, on his appointment as the new Secretary of State for Education, had questioned why DfES' was funding the PESSCL strategy with its overt focus upon sport initiatives (Interview, 10th July 2006).

In its management of significant elements of the PESSCL strategy, the YST was sensitive to the delicacy of balancing education and sport outcomes and the significant funding streams provided by DfES. The power and control exercised by YST over many of its elements is explained, in part, by its capacity to respond quickly to the policy demands and time-frames posed by government spending reviews and PSA targets. One of the institutional strengths of the YST was its flexibility and capacity to respond to government targets and to engage with new initiatives without recourse to lengthy bureaucratic decision-making processes. In commenting on the YST's profile within the PESSCL strategy, Sue Campbell described how they:

had brought in good people. We have the ability to make things happen, to turn a statement by government into a practical thing on the ground, it makes a difference and gains you a reputation (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006).

One PE HMI believed that the YST had secured responsibility and funding for many of the PESSCL work strands because they were flexible, dynamic and were able to work to a 'political timescale that few people and organisations in education can work to' (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006). The YST had secured direct responsibility for the management of specialist sports colleges, SSPs, PDMs, Step into Sport, Gifted and Talented and Professional Development work strands and the new structures surrounding Multi-Clubs and the National Competition framework. It represented a new landscape for school sport which was led by a sports charity who received significant
amounts of DfES and DCMS funding. In his assessment of this new policy context for PESS, Phil Veasey of Sport England believed that there was now greater organisational clarity and lines of responsibility across the sporting landscape as 'school sport has been taken over by the YST, they now drive it and publicise it very well.' (Interview: Phil Veasey, 30th June 2006).

9.2.2 Sport England

In May 2003, during his opening speech to the Central Council for Physical Recreation (CCPR), the Minister for Sport, Richard Caborn set the parameters for a new sport policy context for which the government watchwords were delivery, efficiency, transparency and accountability. The Government was entering into new partnership arrangements with NGBs which meant that:

Sport must now prove its worth and demonstrate in a transparent manner what it can achieve. Indeed, sport is already doing so within the education platform. The government did not commit £459 million for PE and school sport on the basis of sport for sports sake. This additional funding was committed because we could demonstrate that PE and sport improves pupils' attendance behaviour and attainment, thereby driving up whole school standards. Sport has so much to give to this, and other government agendas. I am confident sport will continue to rise to this challenge (Richard Caborn, Opening Speech at CCPR Conference, 20 May 2003).

The SSP and SCL case study chapters highlighted how NGBs operated in a sport policy context in which government exercised tight control over the use of public funds through quangos, such as Sport England, whose role was to distribute or withhold public funds based upon performance targets. The involvement of NGBs in the PESSCL strategy was managed by Sport England through the use of Whole Sport Plans (WSPs) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The SCL case study, in particular, highlighted how Sport England used the opportunity afforded by these new structural arrangements to exercise control over the work of NGBs. Phil Veasey, the Head of Sports Development at Sport England explained how this gave Sport England 'the capacity to reduce or withdraw the funding of any NGBs that failed to deliver its agreed targets (Interview: 30th June 2006). The SCLs case study provided evidence of Sport England's attempts to assert control over NGBs by placing
explicit requirements upon sports clubs to secure Club Mark accreditation as a condition of funding.

What also emerges from the SSP and SCLs case study chapters is the increasing use by Sport England of County Sports Partnership as the conduit through which they were able to exercise control over sport at a local level. Sport England's new policy priorities meant abandonment of the old delivery systems of Active Sports, in favour of County Sports Partnerships and Community Sports Networks (Sport England, 2006: 3). The SSP case study chapter exemplified how athletics and golf were pressurised by Sport England to work through CSPs rather than SSPs. The adoption of target setting principles by Sport England had also worked largely to the advantage of the more affluent sports, such as golf and cricket that had the resources, administrative support and the infrastructure to comply with these demands.

The joint DfES/DCMS PSA target for PESS impacted upon the work of all the agencies involved in the delivery of the PESSCL strategy. The achievement of a PSA target which focused upon the quantitative measurement of high quality provision for PESS was fraught with problems. The High Quality case study described how the QCA was positioned centrally within the new PESSCL framework. The decision by the PESSCL Delivery Board that the QCA should lead and manage the high quality element of the PESSCL strategy was not without controversy. What emerges from this particular case study is the conflict between Ofsted and QCA about definitions of high quality and the relative status of the PESSCL PSA target and the statutory requirements of the NCPE. The High Quality chapter also revealed the concerns of HMI and AfPE about the diminished status of the NCPE in schools in the light of demands and pressures placed upon schools to conform to the demands of the PSA target. The situation illustrated re-emerging tensions surrounding education and sport discourses and evidence to suggest a refocusing of the QCA's work towards the high quality outcomes framed by the PESSCL strategy. Both the High Quality and SSP cases suggest a growing disconnection between the delivery of core PE and such
outcomes. There was also little empirical evidence that OOSHL was substantially contributing to any strengthening of curriculum PE.

9.3 Policy development

Since the establishment of specialist sports colleges and the launch of the PESSCL strategy there have been some notable policy developments within PESS. The gradual expansion of the PESSCL strategy placed enormous demands upon the YST to keep the range of organisations involved in its delivery focused upon key outcomes. The SSP case study revealed how, as the remit of school sport partnerships had grown geographically, there was a sense that they wanted to exert more control and flexibility over local delivery. A Senior Staff Member of the YST described how a number of SSPs wanted to implement different models and to test the boundaries of what was permissible (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST 12th July 2006). Wildavsky (1980) and Bowe et al (1992) describe this concept as 'policy slippage' in which gaps between policy intentions and implementation grow over time.

Steve Grainger, the Chief Executive of the YST expressed his concern about the way in which school sport partnerships and specialist sports colleges were allowing health agendas to distract them from the core educational priorities of the strategy. The SSP case study also illustrated the threat posed by the spillover of health agendas into the PESSCL policy area and highlighted the continuing vulnerability of school sport. What emerges from the empirical chapters is a genuine concern that, if health agendas begin to frame the work of SSPs, then the long-term sustainability of the PESSCL strategy and DfES funding may be threatened. The notion of slippage is a common problem in policy implementation and, in the case of SSPs, was indicative of the capacity of agents and organisations to interpret and adapt policy at the micro-level of policy implementation.

Indicative of the strengthening of sport interests surrounding the PESSCL strategy was the changing profile and role of Partnership Development Managers. At the commencement of the PESSCL strategy, the PE Associations had lobbied hard to ensure that PDMs were qualified teachers (Interview: Margaret Talbot, 7th February 2007). As the work of SSPs
developed and focused more specifically upon the provision of extra curricular school sport, a growing concern about the withdrawal of quality teachers from the school system weakened the argument that PDMs should be qualified teachers (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October 2006). The PDMs who were interviewed for this study suggested that a sports development background provided a skill set that was more aligned with PDMs roles in networking with agencies beyond the school context. Although the changes in the person specification for PDMs can partly be explained by a pragmatic need to retain experienced teachers within schools, the SSP case study revealed a continued strengthening to the sport discourses surrounding PESSCL.

The National Schools Competition Framework described in the High Quality case study was a late addition to the PESSCL strategy. The inclusion of this new initiative supported schools in rejuvenating competitive inter-school sport competitions through a new network of Competition Managers. Chapter Eight revealed how this new initiative emerged as a result of lobbying from the YST, Sport England and the NCSS on behalf of high quality competitive sport (Interview: Roger Davis, 23rd November 2006). Funded by the DfES from 2006 to 2008, the aim was to have a Competition Manager in each SSP by 2010.

Whilst the High Quality PESS case study highlighted the inclusion of sport organisations, such as the NCSS more centrally within the PESSCL strategy, education agencies such as AfPE and LEAs remained on its periphery. AfPE had made only limited impact upon policy for PESSCL and its positioning at the margins of the Professional Development strand suggested that it remained an 'outsider' in determining policy for PESS. In July 2006, AfPE launched its own National College for Continuing Professional Development (NCfCPD) which focused upon working with other national agencies to ensure high quality CPD provision. The creation of this new agency was a chance for AfPE to re-establish some degree of influence over high quality PESS. Significantly, it was positioned outside the PESSCL framework and its courses did not receive funding from DfES. The High Quality case study also revealed how the new arrangements for the Professional Development strand of the
strategy had allowed SSPs to assert control over their own professional development needs by acting as local delivery agents (LDAs). One PE advisory teacher described how this had created a situation in which SSPs were now operating their own systems of CPD and were increasingly taking on the role of advisors within local SSPs (Interview: Helen Miles, 19th June 2006). The case reveals a continuing shift in the dynamics of the relationships between policy actors as a consequence of the structural changes imposed by PESSCL. Increasingly the empirical data from the case studies suggests that arrangements for the PESSCL strategy have kept education interests and organisations, such as LEAS and AfPE as policy outsiders. Chapter Eight also provided evidence of the diminishing power of Ofsted to contribute to policy for PESS. Key structural changes described in the High Quality case described how fundamental structural changes and new inspection arrangements placed a greater emphasis upon school self-assessment and generic rather than subject focused inspections. These new conditions meant a less prominent profile and role for Ofsted which was now increasingly reliant on data PESSCL survey data in its assessment of PE.

Whilst organisations such as AfPE appear somewhat dislocated from the PESSCL strategy, the empirical case studies also indicated a growing consensus between some education and sports agencies. As Houlihan and Green (2006) suggest in their research into policy change for PESS, this may represent a period of coalition formation. A senior member of AfPE believed that there was a growing understanding of the responsibilities placed upon each organisation involved in the PESSCL strategy:

I think we know how we are different, but we are working towards a common goal. The profession’s [PE] better committed now to a concept of PE that embraces this continuity ... it is no longer just about the national curriculum, that’s only part of it. There is a greater willingness of the profession to accept PESS as two concepts that are inter-related and can be worked together to advantage everyone (Interview: Senior Member of AfPE, 9th June 2006).

Margaret Talbot, the Chief Executive of AfPE and formerly Chief Executive of the Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR), suggested that PE and sport were closer than ever before, a situation that she partly attributed to the
fact that NGBs were increasingly led by people with more empathy towards PE and school sport than fifteen to twenty years ago (Interview: 19th July 2006). Mirroring these observations, a Senior Staff Member of the YST believed that national governing bodies were endeavouring to understand physical education, whilst schools were also becoming more aware of the role and purpose of community sport clubs. Nevertheless, she suggested that there was still some way to go before all the actors involved in the delivery of PESSCL 'understood that we can both exist together and generate a shared set of values' (Interview: Senior Staff Member YST, 12th July 2006).

In delivering his overall view of the success of the PESSCL strategy to date, a Senior Civil Servant, explained how the success of the strategy had forced Whitehall to rethink its own operations:

so instead of having individual fiefdoms and empires, government departments work in partnership with each other. There has been a sea change in government and government departments and I also think there has been a sea change in schools too (Interview: 16th June 2006).

9.4 Examining the efficacy of the frameworks

9.4.1 A reflection on the multiple streams framework

The multiple streams framework focuses primarily upon the agenda setting phase of policy processes and was designed to facilitate an understanding of the structures and patterns of governmental agenda setting. The framework rejects the view of policy-making as a linear, stage-like process, in favour of an approach that emphasizes the non-sequential and often chaotic nature of decision-making processes. In essence, this is represented by a 'garbage can' of policy choice, in which problems and solutions requiring attention and resolution are dumped. Kingdon's (1995) central tenet is that policy ideas aimed at addressing these problems emerge from a number of contradictory selection processes.

There was little evidence from the case study chapters of this thesis that is supportive of a logical, coherent and systematic policy-making for the
PESSCL strategy. Indeed, in explaining the emergence of the national strategy for PESS, the data that emerges is supportive of Kingdon's (1984) contention that policy emerges from a random set of circumstances. The remarkable reversal of fortune for PESS was in marked contrast to its positioning at the margins of school curricula described in Chapter Two of this study.

The MS framework provides a set of assumptions which suggests that policy solutions emerge as a consequence of a diverse and paradoxical set of selection processes and involves happenstance, opportunism and the involvement of significant actors. The empirical data that emerges from this study supports this explanation of policy change. Sue Campbell described the emergence of the PESSCL strategy as:

\[ a \text{ collision of moment } \ldots \text{ sometimes in life it's a collision of coincidence} \]
\[ \text{really, but there was also this growing momentum about something's} \]
\[ \text{got to happen}' \quad \text{(Interview: 12th May 2006).} \]

Crichton Casbon, Advisor for PE at the QCA suggested it was:

\[ \text{the coming together of people who brought different things to PESS at} \]
\[ \text{that time. Sue Campbell had the ability to turn ideas into action, people} \]
\[ \text{arriving at the same sort of time, coupled with the demise of Sport} \]
\[ \text{England}' \quad \text{(Interview: 13th June 2006).} \]

Kingdon's' description of inconsistent patterns of involvement by politicians provides an informative explanation of sudden political advocacy and interest in PESS. A Senior HMI described the political context at the time as one in which:

\[ \text{we had Sports Ministers who were interested, departments that} \]
\[ \text{wanted to work together, Estelle Morris in this very powerful position,} \]
\[ \text{health becoming very significant. It had been an incredible} \]
\[ \text{coincidence, it was a new government, a change of attitude to co-} \]
\[ \text{operation, and it was interesting relationships between government} \]
\[ \text{ministers and individuals. It was a wave, these things came together} \]
\[ \text{producing a wave of change (Interview: Senior HMI, 19th October} \]
\[ \text{2006).} \]

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During his interview, Steve Grainger, Chief Executive of the YST described the fortuitous circumstances surrounding the emergence of the PESSCL strategy:

You had got Estelle Morris in the Department for Education and Science and you had got Kate Hoey as Sports Minister and I don't think we can underestimate the power of those two coming together but with a real genuine interest in this area. There are maybe a few moments in your life when you see two people with a commitment to something, now if it had just been Kate in sport, or if it had just been Estelle in education would it have happened? I don't know. The two of them getting together with Sue Campbell and Sue being asked to advise them was probably a fairly defining moment (Interview: 10th July 2006).

The circumstances in which Sue Campbell became non-political advisor for PESS and the way in which her policy ideas were realised through the PESSCL strategy is supportive of the MS framework's explanation of the selection and rejection of policy ideas by the various decision-makers involved.

A significant feature of the MS model is its analogy of a 'policy window' which can be exploited by individuals or groups who have the capacity to advance their own proposals. This explanation resonates with the supportive political environment described in Chapter Five which described how Sue Campbell had formulated her ideas for a radical overhaul of PESS some years beforehand. In describing how her policy ideas came to fruition, Campbell described the preceding events as a:

strange piece of this jigsaw puzzle. Some years before, Charles Clarke had been Minister for Schools; he asked me if I could change the system, what would I do? I drew that hub and spoke thing, I have no idea of where it came from, but I drew it and I kind of played with it from then (Interview: 12th May 2006).

The acceptance of her proposals for a new framework for PESS met two of the MS framework's criteria for 'policy survivability'. Her ideas were technically feasible, given Sue Campbell's extensive background and involvement in PE and sport and her position as Chief Executive of the YST and non-political advisor. Secondly, the proposals for the PESSCL strategy also addressed a
number of government objectives and pressing policy concerns. As Kingdon (1995: 52) has suggested:

part of a group's stock in trade ... is its ability to convince governmental officials that it speaks with one voice and truly represents the preferences of its members.

As a skilful policy entrepreneur, Sue Campbell was able to maximize a window of opportunity to push for the adoption of her policy solutions. Her particular skill was in redefining PE and presenting her ideas in a way that was acceptable to politicians.

The MS framework’s description of the imprecise nature of the opening of the policy window is also matched by the unpredictability of the length of time in which the window remains open. In line with the speed at which the highly complex PESSCL strategy was launched, the empirical evidence provided in this study is supportive of the MS contention that the vagaries of political life and the need to realise policy outcomes within tight time frames governed the process of policy implementation in this case.

One of the most significant benefits of the multiple streams framework is its account of the role of agency and the involvement of powerful policy actors in determining policy change. Although Kingdon (1995) is supportive of the notion of a policy entrepreneur, it is also argued that no single individual can be solely responsible for the high status of a subject within a policy area. The MS framework offers an explanation of policy change which emphasises the involvement of a range of influential actors. Whilst the empirical analyses are supportive of the significant contribution that Sue Campbell made to the salience of PESS, the involvement of prominent politicians, such as John Major, Tony Blair and government ministers, such as Estelle Morris and Kate Hoey also played a crucial role in determining the policy fortunes of PESS. Indeed, it is argued that while the presence of Morris and Hoey in key government positions at DfES and DCMS was vital to the agenda setting process, it was the presence of more senior politicians within DCMS and the Treasury that had the power to endorse Sue Campbell’s policy ideas was a
key factor. The MS framework highlights such 'political processes' and the capacity of politicians to influence the choice of policy solutions. Sue Campbell verified the strong support within government for her policy ideas 'I think the commitment to the PESSCL strategy has unquestionably been a commitment by Tessa Jowell, Charles Clarke and without doubt the Prime Minister' (Interview: Sue Campbell, 12th May 2006). A central feature of the MS framework is that policy solutions require a receptive political context and a favourable environment. Whilst the circumstances described in Chapter Five provide an account of Sue Campbell's opportune meetings with Estelle Morris and Kate Hoey that can be attributed to a degree of coincidence and happenstance, it was also clear that she was able to judiciously harness the favourable political climate and support of these key decision-makers.

The role of the policy entrepreneur is a critical feature of MS frameworks explanation of policy change and has resonance with the agenda setting process for PESS described within this thesis. Kingdon's (1984) profile of a successful entrepreneur as a persistent, tenacious individual with technical expertise and political savvy is well-matched to the personal characteristics of Sue Campbell. The case study chapters provide evidence of Campbell's undoubted ability to offer solutions to problems and to win the support of powerful politicians in order to realise her policy ideas and objectives. Crichton Casbon, the PE Advisor at the QCA, described how Sue Campbell was 'the best networker you've ever seen. She works a minimum of 20 hours a day, she's absolutely straight and she's also good at listening' (Interview: 13th June 2006). Her career history had given her invaluable insights into both education and sport policy contexts and had allowed her, over time, to develop a clear vision for PESS. A Senior HMI described her qualities as:

inspirational, demanding, dogged, energetic, committed, you could put in as many adjectives as you like in there and you wouldn't catch Sue. She was interested in developing youth sport and she was a lobbyist. She was highly influential because she's articulate, she's knowledgeable, she's determined, and she's sensitive to catching the moment. You need to catch the moment and say the right things. Sue knows how to catch the time, and say the right things (Interview: 19th October, 2006).
The MS framework’s explanation of policy formation as a consequence of the confluence of three distinct processes or streams supports the explanation of the policy process provided in Chapter Five. This chapter described the favourable political climate created by the interest of key politicians, such as Tony Blair and Estelle Morris (the political stream), a political desire to tackle academic standards and obesity (problem stream) and Campbell’s proposals for change (policies) which were conjoined by Sue Campbell (policy entrepreneur) during a window of opportunity. The MS framework’s explanation of policy formulation offers a coherent and plausible explanation of major policy change that resonates with the agenda setting process that led to the formation of the PESSCL strategy.

In sum, the MS framework provided useful insights into the features of policy change for PESS and supported an account of the agenda setting process which closely matched the emergence of the PESSCL strategy. It also provided an explanation of the linkage between macro and meso-levels of analysis by linking the involvement and ideas of individuals and groups, with broader political events (Zahariadis, 1999). The focus it places upon the origin of ideas, the role of policy actors and policy entrepreneurs and the role of the state through departments, such as DCMS and DfES provided a clear framework for an analysis of the agenda setting process for this study. It also acknowledged the role of agents and the central role played by prominent individuals and policy entrepreneurs.

Yet the MS framework does have some notable shortcomings in its capacity to deliver a robust and rounded account of policy change. Its overt focus upon the agenda setting element of policy processes neglects other elements, such as policy implementation and evaluation. Whilst the MS framework sensitises researchers to the nuances of the agendas that structured the emergence of the PESSCL strategy, it does not have the capacity to deliver a holistic account of policy processes. Significantly it fails to explain the longer term changes to political systems and structures that preceded the design of the PESSCL strategy. The influence of John Major, the publication of Sport: Raising the Game (1995) and the structural changes that led to the weakening
of the position of LEAs are not accounted for within this model of policy change. Sabatier (1999) is also critical of the MS framework's idiosyncratic explanation of policy change which he suggests is over-reliant upon concepts, such as happenstance rather than clear causal drivers. The most significant weakness of the MS framework is its unsatisfactory and vague conceptualisation of power which is simply explained through the 'coupling' of streams. As a result the framework fails to account for the role of interests and interest groups and the capacity of institutions, such as the civil service to resist or contribute to policy-making. A more detailed critique of the MS framework is provided later in this chapter.

9.4.2 A reflection on the advocacy coalition framework

In contrast with the MS framework, the ACF is principally a socio-economic model of policy analysis. It provides an account of policy change that is based upon the central premise that policy-making occurs through the dynamic interplay of advocacy coalitions who compete to influence the course of policy selection and who are bounded by policy beliefs (Sabatier, 1988). In comparison with the MS framework, the advantage of applying the ACF is its capacity to attend to the policy process as a whole. The ACF’s explanation of processes of policy change contrasts sharply with the randomness of those policy processes that characterise the MS framework. The ACF focuses primarily upon the dynamic interplay of ideas, beliefs, interest groups and policy brokers and their impact upon policy processes. It is suggested that over time, actors tend to coalesce into a number of advocacy coalitions which compete for influence. The advocacy coalition framework also proposes that a vital factor in policy change is the entrepreneurial role of policy brokers which is crucial in prompting important people to pay attention to specific policy solutions, whilst also managing coalition conflict within acceptable boundaries.

Chapter Two provided the historical background to this study and described how the policy context for PESS had been characterised by ongoing and acrimonious debates about whether PE should serve education or sport outcomes. The failure of the PE profession to articulate and agree its own coherent, shared rationale for the subject illustrated the difficulties surrounding
attempts to form a consensus about the purpose of PESS. The policy context for PESS has been punctuated by temporary coalitions of policy actors, normally as a consequence of some externally imposed crisis that threatened the subject in schools. Despite these brief periods of collective lobbying, there has been little evidence to support Sabatier's (1998) contention that policy change for PESS emerged from a competitive policy context of rival coalitions competing for influence. Indeed, Chapter Two describes how, prior to the introduction of the PESSCL strategy, the PESS policy context was characterised by a relatively inactive policy subsystem in which coalitions formed for brief periods of time, solely in response to external threats.

Chapter Five provides little evidence to support the ACF’s explanation of policy change as the outcome of changes to the belief systems of coalitions within the policy subsystem. It has been argued throughout this thesis that the policy context for PESS has been characterised by a distinct lack of a consistent message about the nature and value of PE. Indeed, PE coalition groups were fragmented and there was little evidence of any collective and purposeful lobbying on behalf of PESS. The dramatic policy changes surrounding the launch of the PESSCL strategy were more satisfactorily explained through the influence of key individuals and organisations that were able to use windows of opportunity to ensure that their vision for PESS prevailed.

Unlike the MS framework which provides a more narrow analysis of policy change by focusing on the agenda setting process, a major advantage of the AC Framework is its capacity to investigate policy change over time. The purpose of taking this longer term view of policy change is the capacity to uncover longer-term changes to coalition belief systems that occur as a consequence of new information or experience (Sabatier, 1998). In order to account for ‘policy oriented learning’, the study focused upon changes to policy processes for PESS since the mid 1990s. It was a period during which the advocacy of Prime Minister John Major, the creation of a new National Curriculum for PE and the emergence of the Youth Sport Trust served as a catalyst for the establishment of a more supportive policy environment for
school sport. Sue Campbell described how a number of successful youth sport initiatives such as the TOPs schemes, TOP Link, Millennium Volunteers and Connexions demonstrated to DfES and DCMS the broader benefits of sport (Interview: 12th May 2006). Growing evidence from this period onwards of the benefits of sport initiatives undoubtedly alerted politicians and civil servants to the potential value of PESS in serving government policy priorities for education in particular.

9.4.2.1 The policy broker
Sabatier (1999) describes the crucial role and involvement of policy brokers in determining policy change and prompting important people to pay attention to specific policy solutions. Brokers may be part of or outside government, retain an elected or appointed position, or be part of an interest group. The definition of a policy broker provided by Sabatier and Jenkins Smith (1993) is of an individual who is willing to invest their time, energy and reputation in the hope of future returns. Policy brokers play an important role in managing coalition conflict within acceptable boundaries and Sue Campbell’s success in brokering an agreement between DfES and DCMS to design and operate a new national strategy for PESS was testament to her abilities. There was no evidence of any coalition actively opposed to her policy ideas for school sport and the successful collaboration of two government departments to deliver the PESSCL strategy was ground breaking policy at that time. Matthew Conway, the DfES/DCMS Project Director for the PESSCL strategy, described how, as joint advisor to both Secretaries of State for DfES and DCMS, Sue Campbell had already done a lot the background work in bringing the two departments together before he took over the position (Interview: 12th July 2005). What emerges in Chapter Five is her exercise of power as a non-political advisor to disengage agencies, such as AfPE from policy debates.

LEAs, AfPE and Ofsted’s detachment from the PESSCL strategy can, in part, be explained by the retention of a set of beliefs that have remained relatively impervious to change even to the more fundamental ‘secondary aspects’ of policy. Sue Campbell explained that in her negotiations with government the pure message of PE and school sport had not got PESS the resources and
profile it needed (Interview: 12th May 2006). The case studies suggest that organisations, such as AfPE, LEAs and Ofsted have retained what Sabatier describes as their 'core belief systems' and a strong commitment to the educational values of PE. The case study chapters also reveal how arrangements for the PESSCL strategy positioned LEAs and AfPE at the margins of the policy context as a consequence of their failure to embrace a vision of PE that was consistent with their own value systems. It is acknowledged, however, that in some areas LEA advisory teachers have re-emerged indicating a re-engagement of some authorities in local PESS.

Chapter Eight highlights how tensions have arisen between Ofsted and QCA because of the demands of the PESSCL PSA target. QCA's substantial commitment to the PESSCL strategy revealed how its involvement with the PE and School Sport Investigation within PESSCL had aligned its work more closely with the strategy's discourses and outcomes. The empirical evidence suggests that the PESSCL strategy has made little or no change to the belief systems of organisations, such as Ofsted, LEAs and AfPE. Indeed, Chapter Eight highlights Ofsted's concern about the inordinate influence of the PSA target, whilst AfPE's positioning on the margins of the strategy was indicative of their continuing reluctance to support a vision of PE that was framed by governmental rather than educational priorities.

The policy context in which the PESSCL strategy exists is still maturing and evolving, yet there is growing evidence of a dominant advocacy coalition involving the YST, DfES and DCMS in arrangements that have been brokered by Sue Campbell. Sport England, NGBs, SSPs, CSPs sports colleges, sports clubs all appear to be 'insiders' who are actively involved in, and who share, a commitment to the values of the PESSCL strategy. Their relationships appear to be predicated upon what Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993) describe as a sharing of 'policy beliefs'. There are, however, those agencies, such as AfPE, LEAs and Ofsted who appear to be 'outsiders' and whose views and values appear to be at odds with those of the dominant policy coalition.
9.4.2.2 The impact of key individuals

The policy context for PESS has been characterised by long-standing divisions between policy actors and, therefore, the suggestion that policy change can be attributable to the work of a dominant advocacy coalition with a clear set of beliefs and values is not supported by this thesis. Whilst there is little evidence to support Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith's (1991, 1993) contention that major policy change for PESS was a consequence of the work of an active and dominant coalition, their acknowledgement of the role of significant individuals in determining policy change is more helpful.

Undoubtedly, the advocacy and support for sport and school sport provided by Prime Minister John Major provided the catalyst and subsequent momentum for policy developments within sport and school sport. The mid 1990s featured as a significant period in which interest and investment in youth sport grew exponentially within a supportive political climate. Unfettered by the polarised debates surrounding PE and sport, Sue Campbell was active in seeking support for the work of the YST and in expressing to politicians a clear vision for school sport. Campbell’s broad and passionate vision for PESS, when combined with her technical expertise and long-standing involvement in sport, undoubtedly resonated with and captured the interest of a number of influential politicians. Within the AC framework the concept of power is described through the possession of technical information within policy communities and policy sub-systems. One senior civil servant described how as a:

non-political advisor Sue was able to convince Estelle at a very early stage that this was a runner. The National School Sport Strategy brought two government departments together so we were able to agree an approach and move forward quickly (Interview: 16th June 2006).

Another civil servant described how the whole of the PESSCL strategy was based upon the vision provided by Sue Campbell and the YST (Interview: Matthew Conway, 12th July 2005).

Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith’s (1993) framework suggests that political actors are seldom able to retain a majority position through the exercise of raw
power and, instead, must convince other actors of the unassailability of their position in defining policy problems and feasible policy alternatives. In seeking support for her ideas for school sport, Sue Campbell described how:

Estelle Morris was a huge player in all of this and so was Kate Hoey and since then Richard Caborn has taken over and he has carried it on. So ministerial support in trying to get this mission accomplished was key. It wouldn’t have happened otherwise (Interview: 12th May 2006).

The arguments and plans for school sport were technically feasible and engaged a number of key politicians who were convinced of the robustness of these arguments. The commitment and involvement of Estelle Morris as Minister for Schools and later Secretary of State for Education and that of Kate Hoey as Minister for Sport were two senior political figures in key positions that were able to advocate and invest in school sport. Campbell was able to align the value systems of these senior politicians with those of her vision for PESS and, most importantly, to secure funding for the school sport co-ordinator programme by embedding it within Exchequer provision.

9.5 Examining the efficacy of the MS and ACF frameworks

This final section of the thesis critically reflects on the insights offered by the two theoretical frameworks for policy analysis that were adopted for this study. It assesses the relative strengths and weaknesses of both the multiple streams framework and the advocacy coalition framework as tools for the analysis of policy for PE and school sport. The chapter concludes with a brief appraisal of these theoretical models and the efficacy of their selection as analytical frameworks for policy analysis.

9.5.1 Multiple streams framework

One of the reasons for pursuing this area of research was to seek an explanation as to why, after decades of neglect, the Labour government had decided to invest significant Treasury funding in the PESSCL strategy. In seeking to obtain an explanation of the sudden political interest in PESS, the agenda setting process was of particular interest. The selection of a
Theoretical framework with the capacity to illuminate and explain the rapid rise of PESS onto the political agenda was an essential factor in the decision to select the MS framework as a one of the theoretical tools for analysing the policy-making process for PESS. In justifying his approach to policy analysis, Kingdon (1995: 1) suggested that more attention needs to be placed upon the role of agenda setting processes:

We know more about how issues are disposed of than we know about how they came to be issues on the governmental agenda in the first place, how the alternatives from which decision makers chose were generated, and why some potential issues and some likely alternatives never came to be the focus of serious attention.

The intention, therefore, in using the MS framework was to provide an in-depth analysis of agenda setting processes. The MS framework's focus upon the selection of policy ideas from a 'garbage can' of policy choice was a useful analogy for explaining the random nature of the selection of Sue Campbell's proposals. Its identification of the role of three policy streams conceptualised as problems, policies and politics helped sensitise me to the dynamic interplay of rising concerns surrounding obesity levels and academic standards and the involvement of Sue Campbell as a policy entrepreneur, her role in offering policy solutions and the involvement of government departments, such as DfES and DCMS and supportive politicians (e.g. Tony Blair) in determining policy change. The multiple streams' description of the chaotic and random nature of the agenda setting process clearly resonated with the series of events that preceded the formulation of the PESSCL strategy provided in Chapter Five.

Kingdon's (1998) notion of coupling was particularly useful in describing the critical timing and set of circumstances that provided Sue Campbell with a window of opportunity to sponsor her particular policy solutions for PESS. The involvement of 'policy entrepreneurs' and the description of the characteristics of these policy actors was especially helpful in explaining the influence, skill and role that Sue Campbell played in bringing about policy change for PESS. One of the undoubted strengths of the multiple streams framework was its focus upon the involvement of highly motivated policy actors which provided
an insight into the involvement of key decision-makers. This directed the focus of attention of the research in Chapter Five onto the central role of key politicians such as Tony Blair, Estelle Morris and Kate Hoey in adopting and supporting the policy ideas proposed by Sue Campbell. Unlike theoretical models for policy analysis that focus upon the role played by institutions in explaining policy change, given the lack of any strong institutional focus for PESS, the selection of this framework was particularly pertinent for this study.

The concept of policy spillover which is adopted by the ACF in order to explain policy change also illustrated how established and embedded policy areas, such as health and education had shaped policy for PESS. Indeed, the notion of spillover captures the very essence of the policy area for PESS which has had a long history of serving the needs of other policy areas. This point was reinforced in Chapter Five by Steve Grainger who described the challenges of managing a national strategy funded by DfES for educational outcomes, which was increasingly being defined as a policy to support health and obesity agendas (Interview: 10th July 2006).

In sum, the MS framework supported a detailed analysis of the agenda setting process for the PESSCL strategy. Its undoubted strength was its capacity to illuminate and capture the sudden government interest and support which had not previously existed. In its explanation of the randomness of the policy process, the MS framework provided a counterbalance to the use of policy cycle and ‘stagist’ approaches which have dominated much of policy analysis research (Parsons, 2001). Instead, the MS framework focuses attention on the role of key policy actors, their ideas and their capacity to influence government. In line with neo-pluralist accounts of power, the MS framework acknowledges the openness of policy formation in which the YST and Sue Campbell were able to influence policy formation.

Whilst the multiple streams framework captured the essence of the agenda setting process for the PESSCL strategy, the relatively short temporal dimension within which this process was framed, militated against any account of ideological or structural changes over time. Another major criticism
levelled at Kingdon’s multiple streams framework is its failure to explain and explore the role of power in the policy process (Sabatier, 1996; Schalger, 1999). Power is seen as vested in ideas and the coupling of streams by policy entrepreneurs and so the role of interest groups, interests and institutional power is neglected. The separation of agenda setting from other stages of the policy process inevitably means that the MS framework fails to provide any substantial account of policy implementation. Dudley et al (2000) argue that the strong element of serendipity involved in Kingdon’s model of policy change in which policy-making is a matter of chance, fails to acknowledge the role of cogent arguments, political expediency and public opinion in shaping policy agendas and outcomes. Despite these weaknesses, the multiple streams framework had much to offer this study and its explanatory framework helped to deliver a rich account of the agenda setting process for PESS.

9.5.2 Advocacy coalition framework

Unlike the MS framework which selectively focuses upon the agenda setting dimension of the policy process, the AC model served as a useful tool in providing a holistic account of policy change. The PESSCL strategy is situated in a highly complex policy environment in which a range of policy actors and agencies operate in order to deliver government priorities. As such, the selection of a model with the capacity to analyse the complexity of the relationships between organisations such as Sport England and NGBs and the resource and management arrangements within work strands, such as School Clubs was paramount. The ACF was, therefore, particularly useful in supporting an analysis of the complex arrangements for SSPs included in Chapter Six of this study and for illustrating how agencies such as Sport England have used WSPs and CSPs to exert power and influence over policy-making processes.

As a model for analysing policy change the ACF has been particularly useful in focusing upon the centrality of ideas within the policy process. Chapters Two and Five of this study direct attention to the accumulating issues and
growing policy concerns surrounding youth sport that emerged from the 1990s onwards. What characterised the period before the launch of the PESSCL strategy in 2003 was the lack of a coherent vision or ideas about how PESS could be harnessed in order to address policy concerns. The ACF’s focus upon the role of ideas and information as a major force for change proved useful in mapping the ideas that have framed the PESSCL strategy.

Sabatier (1998) suggests that a period of 10 years or more is required in order to deliver a more informed explanation of how policy oriented learning has impacted of the belief and values of the various policy actors over time. The AC framework proved valuable in providing a more long-term view of policy change. An emphasis upon the inclusion of a temporal dimension to the study helped to provide a more comprehensive view and complete picture of the policy process. Insights into policy change from the Callaghan Government onwards and the influence of individuals, such as John Major and events, such as the introduction of the NCPE are two factors that have shaped the patterns of interactions within the policy context for PESS. The prominence given to explaining policy change through changes to belief systems over time directed the research towards accumulating evidence surrounding PESS which had convinced ministers and government departments, such as DfES and DCMS to invest in this policy area. It also supported a focus within the case study investigations on the changing values and belief systems of the policy actors involved in SSPs, SCLs and the delivery of high quality PESS in accounting for policy change. The ACF’s particular focus upon the process of enlightenment and the re-orienting of ideas helped to provide a framework which accounted for changes in government disposition towards school sport and also described how these changes impacted upon the relationships and networks of SSPs, CSP, LEAs and NGBs.

A central assumption of the ACF is that ‘coalitions’, rather than individual decision-makers, are involved in the design of ‘policy ideas’. The concept of a policy sub-system was informative in directing attention to coalition behaviour that has framed the PESSCL strategy. In particular it proved to be a useful tool in delivering insights into the positioning of agencies, such as Sport
England more centrally to the PESSCL strategy and the work of DfES, DCMS and the YST. Extensive, detailed accounts of coalition behaviour within selected elements of the PESSCL strategy identified the growing influence of a dominant advocacy coalition centred upon DfES, DCMS and the YST. In addition, the ACF’s attention to the role of dominant coalitions suggests that consideration should be given to those coalitions within the policy subsystem who are ‘outside’ policy-making processes. Chapter Eight illustrated the contested nature of value changes amongst the coalitions involved in the delivery of the PESSCL strategy and, in particular, highlighted the positioning of education agencies, such as Ofsted and LEAs, whose belief systems remained at odds with those of the dominant coalition and positioned at the margins of this policy context. The ACF also emphasised the role of the policy broker within the PESSCL strategy and their involvement in managing the activities of coalitions in order to seek policy solutions. Sue Campbell’s capacity to broker and handle the relationship between two government departments and sport and education agencies was indicative of her capacity as an outstanding policy broker.

One of the main weaknesses in adopting the ACF as a theoretical framework for this study was the model’s failure to address the role of power in favour of an account of the role of ideas and policy orientated learning. John (1998) in particular is critical of the advocacy coalition’s failure to pay sufficient attention to the role of institutions and structural concerns within the policy process. It is acknowledged that within this study this framework failed to account for the institutional arrangements and formal structural mechanisms that currently frame public policy in England. The case studies provided a detailed account of the role of government imposed PSA targets and the privileged position of agencies such as the YST and Sport England which was not adequately addressed and acknowledged by this framework. Indeed, the empirical evidence from the three case study chapters illustrated how government was able to exercise its power and control (often through quangos) over all aspects of the policy process. Chapter Seven, in particular, demonstrated how the structural conditions imposed by the modernisation of Sport England and NGBs created new hierarchical relationships that had a marked effect upon
the delivery and implementation of policy within the SCLs and SSP work strands of the PESSCL strategy. The ACF’s failure to deliver a more comprehensive account of the role of power failed to explain the contribution played by agents and agencies in actively excluding organisations, such as LEAs and AfPE, from policy debates. A further limitation of the ACF was its failure to acknowledge the role of ideas in shaping policy and the active involvement of some policy actors in behaving more out of self interest than as participants involved in rational decision making processes that had emerged as a consequence of policy learning over time.

The adoption of both the multiple streams and advocacy coalition frameworks as theoretical models for this study provided a rich account of the policy process. The use of two models provided both a long-term perspective of policy change and the opportunity to focus in-depth upon the dramatic circumstances surrounding the emergence of the PESSCL strategy. Both the ACF and MS were useful models in supporting an analysis of a complex and multi-faceted policy context.

In conclusion, it is argued that by repositioning itself to deliver government policy objectives, PESS had a much stronger and visible role to play in policy-making. The establishment of the PESSCL strategy provided a robust infrastructure for the future development of physical education and school sport. It is acknowledged, however, that divisions still remain within policy subsystems that are based upon traditional and ongoing tensions between education and sport discourses. Policy actors, such as AfPE, LEAs and Ofsted appear to be increasingly positioned at the margins of policy-making for PESS and the work strands of the PESSCL strategy. As the PESSCL strategy has embedded there is evidence of an effective advocacy coalition for physical education and school sport led by the YST.


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Lesley: The current Labour Government has chosen to invest significantly more resources in school sport and physical education than any previous government. How do you account for this development?

Interviewee: Well I think it's been a long term process, during the latter eighties and early nineties there was a lot of, well I'm not sure it was lobbying because it wasn't coordinated enough to be lobbying but there were people who were talking to people about the need for physical education and school sport to retrieve some of the position it had lost. And I think it certainly came to a head when the subjects of the National Curriculum were first published and physical education wasn't there and that meant lobbying and there was a lobby and for the first time in my professional memory, the governing bodies immediately saw the need, they realised that if they lost physical education from the National Curriculum there wouldn't be much school sport in state schools and therefore the sport lobby was really, really good behind the physical education lobby and that was a big step forward because there had been such polarization between physical education and the governing bodies and I think things have moved on, so that was terrific.

Lesley: Why do you think there was support for this?

Interviewee: It difficult to know because there's no discernable leader at that time, there wasn't anyone voice, the two associations were in disarray and in fact scope had just gone out of business for you know that abortive attempt to bring the associations together. I think it's really difficult to know, I just think that somehow, the governing bodies realised that there was a real threat to the future development of British sport and I suppose in terms of physical education it was easy to use the argument you know the phraseology around National Curriculum of a broad and balanced Curriculum seemed a bit silly without physical education because everything else was an ology of some kind and so it was actually quite useful to have that. I think at the time the National Curriculum Council made quite a play for physical education as well because the person who had it, he actually had a very holistic view of children's education, so I'm just speculating here, I really can't see any one coordinative reason why it happened anyway, it did get back onto the list and although physical education was one of the last three subjects to be developed and that meant that it was in a somewhat residual position along with art and music,
at least it was there, we then had a good chair of that National Curriculum (can't hear) and it was a huge relief. Oh the other thing was that after the National Curriculum came along, of course physical education got itself together and had that shadow group for National Curriculum. So there's quite a lot of preliminary thinking being done, led mainly by xx, politically I don't think she was leading but in thinking she was leading and therefore that gave us a platform from which to move and I am just thinking back about your question, I think also at that time there was sufficiently, there was a sufficient number of physical education background people in the GB sports council to give some impetus, because they actually supported that group. And xx thought very highly of xx because of the desk study she'd done. So there had been some preliminary work so that was all a good thing and it was perhaps the first instance of physical education getting its act together and doing something for itself instead of whinging from the outside, so all of that was a good thing. And then when the National Curriculum Group did get together, Ian Beer was appointed and I actually remember xx ringing me about a month before the news was published before anyone knew who was going to chair the working group and she said who do you think it's going to be? and I said well I have no idea and she said well xx is on every bodies lips. It was interesting because the governing bodies had actually been very supportive. But anyway people were very scared that it was going to be Peter and when Ian was appointed there were questions asked about why would a public school head be chairing this? And I asked that question but he was a brilliant chair he is to his very bones a teacher, first and foremost he's a teacher and he was extremely good in being a one man buffer zone between ourselves and politicians and we didn't know until the end of the process just how strong he had had to be in that process.

Lesley: Can I just check who actually selected xx to Chair the Working Party?

Interviewee: Well the Secretary of State makes the appointments, who suggested him I don't know, he was at the time on the exec of the RFU and he subsequently for short time served as president and he'd been one of the leaders of the public schools group but then I don't know who put him forward. I actually don't know the process, but he did turn out to be absolutely superb. The process of the National Curriculum was quite interesting in the sense that we were in retrieval, lots of investment had gone into the core subjects and they were already starting review because there were far too many objectives. So we knew that there was going to be a claw back into the school system and of course as we were convening for the first time, that was when Kenneth Clarke decided that he
would ask the question, should it be compulsory at key stage four? And we managed to fight that off and again the sport community was absolutely rock solid behind us and so was the Harley Street mafia really. And I do think you know that there's a sport element of the medical profession which can be harnessed from time to time, so you know the old Bart's, old London hospitals, rugby playing mafia, very important and I had used them a lot during his chairmanship. So we fought that off and it was almost the first thing we did was to sit down and say are we going to fight this? Or are we going to say okay well we'll look at a non compulsory key stage four and we decided that we would contest and fortunately we were successful. And it was at that point that we recognised the power of the pen in the sense that so many people wrote and we also recognised because we were supported by some very up front honest civil servants who told us that ministers didn't really want to know the quality of responses, they wanted to know how many people had made responses. And this apparently caused more responses than anything else. So getting the professional mobilised was successful and then of course there was the whole issue of time because we were constantly interrogating the civil servants about was there a time allocation? How was physical education ever going to get curriculum time, given what had happened with the implementation of the other curriculum subjects and that was one area where DES as it then was, was completely obdurate because they didn't want to go into primary legislation, which is what it would have taken. Now during the couple of years following the implementation of the National Curriculum, because of some of the dissemination work which various others had done, notably xx, myself, xx, we began to meet more often than we would have otherwise have done and we started saying why aren't we operating in a more coordinated way? The two associations at this time were really not working well together, this was before the memorandum of collaboration and it seemed that we were more fragmented than ever before, now by this time, National Curriculum Council had become SCAA and again there was the impending review of the National Curriculum, the Dearing review and I have just remembered the first conference where he presented the Dearing Review and he said, here it is, it is the one inch Curriculum. He was so skilful that day and of course I still feel we lost quite a bit in that review because we lost all the elements about equity and inclusion which I felt had been so important in a National Curriculum document and which gave us leverage and we've been praised for that actually by some writers on racial equality in a policy analysis that the only subject that did take it seriously was physical education so I was actually quite pleased with that. But unfortunately it got lost in the Dearing review of the SCAA reframing of it and we were at this SCAA
conference where they were talking about National Curriculum, physical education and how it should be implemented as it was reframed and really we just said, we have got to do better than this, we have taken our eye off the ball, we had politically because we were all in jobs which were very demanding and so I said well isn't there some way we could have a fast response group? We don't want another organisation, we definitely don't want another organisation, so that's how Speednet got going and we managed to build enough trust so that the various organisations gave us delegated power to get on with it so bless him xx came on behalf of BAALPE and xx came on behalf of the HEI network, xx for the British Sports Trust, xx the National Council for School Sport and xx. And at that point, PEA UK had not been asked because they seemed to be so far away from where we were trying to get and it is to the enormous credit of Interviewee Whitehead that she asked to attend, she took some flack for what had been happening but she was vice president and therefore president elect and she was determined that PEA UK should be part of it and she then got flack from some members of PEA UK so she was very brave and really resolute, some of the stuff you wouldn't be able to use.

Lesley: No, no that's fine.

Interviewee: And then for what three maybe four years we did drip feed the kind of information that was needed into the labour opposition, so I used to ring xx who was then the shadow spokesperson and say Tom you've got a debate on education next week this is what you need to say, this is what's happening and he was superb actually, he was really good at using the bullets that I sent in. And he would ring me up if he knew a debate was happening and ask for further information, and there were one or two of the then MPs who are now Labour Peers, Baroness xx, in particular who were interested in the inclusion agenda particularly from the point of view girls and the point we were making there was that curriculum physical education was the only way to get at all children and still is. So she would use that from her point of view as well. So I think actually Speednet did have an effect and I was asked to write a section in the Labour Party Manifesto for the 1997 Election for sport and so there was a very clear element of the Speednet agenda in that which again that meant you had a lever with the incoming Government to say well you have said this what are you going to do about it. So that was all then. Then in 2000 David Blunkett gave the order in primary schools and the Speednet survey collected the data which do show that we lost curriculum time big time. Estelle Morris had said that when we wrote initially to say that she didn't feel that it would result in the loss of curriculum time, the data was really powerful, we
managed to get, cobble enough money together to do this survey and the person who worked with me was just like a terrier after information and we used the silly season in August to announce the results and to be honest we hadn’t actually got the whole lot of data in but the trends were so powerful that they decided that we couldn’t miss the silly season, so we published anyway and the headline was ‘Half a Million Hours Lost’ and we got fantastic media coverage. So I think that laid some of the foundations along with what the governing bodies were doing in terms of some of the development work in participation at that time there was still a solid group of people in the GB Sports Council who were physical education background and trained.

Lesley: Was there any recognition of the need for qualified physical education specialists?

Interviewee: No, no where near. And of course xx was Director of Development and this was when they first mooted the notion of School Sports Coordinators and the first definition of School Sport Coordinators was that they were going to be coaches and not teachers and xx and I marched into x’s office and said you can’t do this they have got to have QTS it’s absolutely essential. x’s concern was about teacher supply and would the system have the capacity to produce enough people to do this role and that question is still being asked in terms of teacher numbers and so it was quite an interesting time because we were doing lots of ‘Hearts and Minds’ stuff within the sport community. xx had employed Sue Campbell to do a lot of work on strategy at the time. xx was MD of the GB Sports Council and then the first Chief Executive of Sport England. I can’t remember precisely when it changed over. But he had employed Sue to do work on strategy and particularly on young people. Oh I should have said I was also Vice Chair of the Young People and Sports Strategy Group for GB Sports Council and Sport England during most of this time, in fact almost until I’d left xx in 2000 and Sue was on that group as well. So we did a lot of strategic thinking, there was a Young People and Sport Consultation exercise, I did the analysis of that, the responses to that which showed very clearly the unique role of school physical education in getting to all children and then we started talking about infrastructure and I think this is when the seeds were sown for PESSCL that here was the first inkling and that this is slow drip feed stuff, it went on maybe over four five six years before Sue harnessed it, got it together and sold it as it were. And we started talking about how you could use the school system as a basis for development so that was all happening and I’ve got various little models that we drew at the time and which are actually still quite relevant but seem a bit dated now and we started
talking about the big picture and how it related to community development, what was the youth sector doing, that still hasn't been factored in of course. What the governing bodies did and what they claimed they did, which was interesting and what local authorities did and how essential they were and this analysis actually led to the recognition and game plan that there were four sectors delivered but the government doesn't deliver sport, the four sectors deliver sport and that's education, local authorities, commercial sector and voluntary sector including the governing bodies. So that you know there is a continuity of thought and a development of thought but it wasn't linear, it was messy as thought is. And I can also remember ringing Sue to say are you aware that DES is advertising for secondments of experts into the department to work in specialist areas and she said oh who do you think we should send? And having no idea that she might do it herself I suggested one or two people and then next I heard she was in there. So that was all a long lead up, so there was a lot of foundation laying and thought process which went on and nobody has a monopoly on that, I mean there were lots of people adding to it because the other thing which was frustrating us at the time was the extent to which universities and colleges, for instance, were totally outside the picture and to a large extent still are, which is, is such a waste. But particularly the long neglect of physical education and the lack of investment and the implementation of national curriculum. So, you know, all of that was going on.

Lesley

What do you think the government wants in return for this investment?

Interviewee: Well I think it's very clear what they want now. Whether it was clear when they started off is another matter. I've always said never underestimate the power of sports groupie-ism amongst politicians, because... and business people, because why else would businessmen put loads of money into failing football clubs, they would never treat their own businesses like that.

LESLEY: OK

Interviewee: So, common sense goes out the window. So I think there's an element of sport's good and young people are good, and there's a need for young people to have a decent sports strategy and if we're going to have a decent sports strategy, physical education needs to be part of that and it's to Sue's internal credit that she kept physical education in the agenda, all the way through and of course at that time as well, school sport coordinators were there but specialist colleges came on the horizon and at that point, as far as I remember in conversations with her, the concept was very crude, East
German talent ID type specialist sports colleges and they weren't about the development of physical education in school sport as a development tool and, you know, again it was a question of turning that round and presenting it as a different model within the thinking of the time and I'm not quite sure when that happened in relation to all the rest, but it certainly happened within that context of young people and sport strategy, etc., etc. So all of that was going on and so the government had some pet schemes, specialist schools being one of them, they had this whole thing about investing in young people, they had "Education, Education, Education", they had a review of sport as a whole going on, because the [PAUSE] yeah, the [Quinquennial] Review of Sport England, was it... I'm just trying to work... yes the [Quinquennial] Review of Sport England started in early 2000 and again was highlighting these, these delivery sectors and the need for more effective relationships with local authorities and investment at regional and local level. So there were shifts happening in sports policy as well and then there was the Cabinet office review which eventually led to Game Plan, there was an awful lot going on and there were reviews in all directions. There was the Bannister Review on talented athletes and sports scholarships, which actually was a bit dated even before it was published because I think Sir Roger was seeing everything through an Oxbridge eye, and really wasn't aware of the way in which modern universities were run. But all of that was happening, there was an enormous amount of things happening, there was an enormous amount of things happening and there were, there were all the things about DCMS's education and training policy for sport - forgotten that. Because that had been going on with, you know the whole thing about national occupational standards, all of that stuff. So I was chairing the FE group within the national DCMS strategy for education and training at that time. So there were... there was a focus on education that hadn't been there before. And then you'd got a skilled operator, like Sue, you'd got people in DCMS - oh sorry, and there was the academy, the notion of the national academy, which the previous Tory government had taken on board and which the incoming Labour government allowed DCMS to rework and reform, so that it was rather different, so that the original concept was this, you know the whole thing about national occupational standards, all of that stuff. So I was chairing the FE group within the national DCMS strategy for education and training at that time. So there were... there was a focus on education that hadn't been there before. And then you'd got a skilled operator, like Sue, you'd got people in DCMS - oh sorry, and there was the academy, the notion of the national academy, which the previous Tory government had taken on board and which the incoming Labour government allowed DCMS to rework and reform, so that it was rather different, so that the original concept was this, you know, sort of, palace to the memory of whichever Minister for Sport managed to establish it, and instead it was the network which I personally still think hasn't addressed the hotspots of development that were already there because it wasn't brave enough and it wasn't well informed enough. But nevertheless, all of that was going on as well and because of that then you got this, this realisation of what a mess the sports system was in. So all of that was, was... and I suppose that allowed, allowed people to say "Well,
here's an area where we can actually make a difference", which is what politicians always want to do.

LESLEY: In terms of the PESSCL strategy and the PSA target, do you where the PSA target came from and how it emerged?

Interviewee: No, I'm not, because I wasn't really involved at that stage, I was appointed at CCPR in 2000 and by that time PESSCL was up and running, although fairly, fairly in its early stages, but the target did emerge, a lot of us were very critical of it because of it's fluffiness and the capacity for head teachers to manipulate it in whatever way they wanted really. But it was better than nothing and we all recognised that and the Trust of course had really got going with its TOPS programmes and had demonstrated that it could make difference in terms of supporting teachers. So you could see all sorts of things coming together, but the PSA target I don't know who set it.

LESLEY: What is your view on the target of having two hours of high quality PE for 85% of pupils by 2008 and can it be measured accurately with the current system?

Interviewee: Well, the way in which the data at the moment is collected doesn't allow interrogation of the high quality, it is quantitative and to be fair, we were actually discussing this yesterday in a key partner's meeting from DfES because one of the things we want to do is to interrogate that and to say "How do you know it's high quality?" because one of the things that, that we still haven't achieved in physical education and I'm not sure we're alone in this subject and it is to know what good learning is, what effective learning is and because of the way in which the PESSCL programme has been rolled out and because of the focus on participation, particularly by ministers and therefore by civil servants the quality issue is either backed off from, or it's ignored because it's not in the best interests of civil servants to make that question and I think one of the problems with the way in which political projects are led and managed is that civil servants have milestones and objectives against which their performance is measured. It's therefore not in their best interests to look at the bigger picture. So when, for instance, the coaching review started and then was rolled out with the support of the Minister. One of the frustrations was that the other education and training strands weren't being rolled out at the same time and wouldn't have the same investment either. Okay, well, it's not a perfect system and it was good to get the money into education and coaching but the person who was at that time project managing it actually said to me "I don't want to know about systemic problems, I've just got milestones to meet". Because what I was saying to him was, "One of the elements of the coaching review should be
securing mainstream funding, which can then make the whole system of delivery sustainable over the longer term," and actually that's the very problem they've hit now; and it gives me no pleasure to say "I told you so" but the civil servant didn't want to know, because he knew he would be out of there in two years and his promotion prospects would be served by making sure that the milestones were met and he did meet the milestones. But they set the wrong milestones.

LESLEY: Can we just go back to the question of what the government now wants to see as a return on its investment in PE and school sport?

Interviewee: Well, they seem to have cohered around the attendance, behaviour and attainment agendas. I think they've backed off a little bit from social inclusion and anti-crime. They've started to recognise that schools can't do everything. But the behaviour and attendance elements of those agendas are there and it's interesting that the data which has been collected by QCA primarily, but also by other people, do indicate that there are improvements. Now whether that's because of the involvement in sport and physical education, whether it's because the school is more focused, because it's a specialist sports college, and of course the investment, whether it's because the strategic planning is better and the interrogation of the curriculum is better is very, very difficult to track back, very difficult. So, but it is interesting as well, that that kind of evidence is, is mirroring, or at least reflecting some of the evidence that's happening in different parts of the world. So there's some evidence from I think Belgium, where they'd done some tracking around particularly attendance and behaviour, of the influence of well-structured physical education programmes. Japan data, because they've had good attainment data for decades because they're obsessed about attainment, indicates that as, as time spent on physical education within the curriculum increases, attainment does not drop and in some cases goes up in Japan over a long period of time, and Richard Bailey's sort of interrogated that, that set of data. And there are little fragments of evidence which [ICCSPE] have gathered together, partly through Richard Sportive Education project, partly through some of the other people who've presented at ICCSPE conferences, that that kind of targeting and that kind of focus does make a difference. So, it's not... although you might well criticise the QCA research gathering and the way in which it's presented, the general trend seems to support it.

LESLEY: What's your perception of how and why the Youth Sport Trust emerged as such a major player within physical education and school sport?
Interviewee: Well, in the early days Youth Sport Trust tried really hard not to go into schools and they were talking about clubs, they were talking about the youth sector and to be absolutely fair to the Trust, and I've said this many, many times before, they've stood on the edge of a vacuum before they were sucked in and they were sucked in, there's no doubt about it. I think they showed considerable restraint for almost, it must have been at least two years, before the physical education organisation showed they weren't capable or willing to get their act together and start, start getting on with it and then to be fair to them, they were not in a good state, you know, BAALPE had very little money, was a shrinking workforce, almost a rump at that stage, PEA UK had been led not well, in my view, and they had not been served well by well personal ambition really, on the part of certain officers, which was sad, it was very sad. So neither organisation had the capacity and they certainly didn't have the confidence to step into the abyss and the Youth Sport Trust were lucky, they had a... well, it was nobody's idea but John Beckwith's, you know, he... it was notion that he should do something for young people and he didn't want to sponsor an event, he didn't want, you know, sort of put his name to the London Marathon or something like that, he wanted a sustainable, ongoing support structure for young people which would do more than make a big splash and to his credit he had a concept, not highly developed at the time, but he had a concept which was about sustainability and support rather than impact and when the post was advertised it was quite interesting that that came through. Now he also had money to give it, so the kick start was massive compared to any other organisation anywhere else and Sue was appointed and...she very quickly made an impact, now she's a very good implementer and she's very good at seeing talent and getting good talented people to work for her. So the first materials were very quickly produced, she appointed an extremely able fundraiser, who's still there, and you know, for the first time there was a very focused agency out there and as I said at first it tried not to go into schools, then it got sucked in and as it got sucked in it decided to do it properly and sadly physical education organisations were on the margins, their faces pressed against the glass, ironically, the Youth Sport Trust would never have been able to deliver without the members of those organisations. But they weren't able as organisations to harness their talent. But the Trust was. And then the skilled policy entrepreneurship of, of, of Sue, her ability to persuade, her commitment, her workaholism - I mean the number of times she must have sat up all night getting, getting things ready and total single-mindedness about these things; and there's a whole combination of factors about what makes the Trust successful.
and what has made the Trust successful particularly in the early days.

LESLEY: Could you just explain how we've come to the point where we have now got a single association for the PE profession?

Interviewee: A 30 year process, at least, on average. Well, I think possibly the advent of the Trust helped in a perverse kind of way. There were people all along who were frustrated and exercised by the fact that there were two organisations and not so much in very recent years, but certainly, you know, ten years ago were actually competing with each other, jockeying for position, saying, saying different things and that's why Speednet was put together to try and stop that happening and to try and present a unified voice, not just for physical education in schools but for the education sector, hence the HEIs being there as well, and [BASES] was in there as well, by the way, which was great, because xx was a wonderful link between the sports scientists and physical education. So there was long-term frustration and I can remember in my 1987 Fellows lecture, saying "What are we doing?" and in various BAALPE [plenaries] and key notes and so on xx had said the same many, many times, I think this time there were several triggers, as I said I think the Trust having achieved so much and having moved into territory which you might have thought would have been a Subject Association, must have been one of the things that made people realise the need. But that was one thing. There was an attempt five to four years ago to unify and I think it was a better attempt than had happened before and again perversely the fact that both organisations had benefited from the PESSCL strategy had increased their capacity. So they actually were less financially fragile, particularly BAALPE, which had been very entrepreneurial and had benefited from the CPD agenda. PEA UK less entrepreneurial, but with the strength of its membership, because we had a rather bigger membership and the credibility which came from that. So there's an element of confidence, people working in, within the national strategic context were impatient about why there were two associations, "What on earth's going on, this is silly" and most teachers didn't give a damn one way or another, they just wanted to be properly represented and to get access to what they wanted. So that was all happening. What started it off onto a successful path I think was some careful preparation. So, BAALPE and PEA UK signed the memorandum of collaboration and that I think did stem from the collaboration that had developed from the Speednet working together and that was due good leadership and trust emerging. Interviewee Whitehead has a lot, a lot to be given credit for; xx has a lot to be given credit for. So that was all a good thing and so for the first time two associations either were at the same table at
meetings or would allow one to represent them both at some
and they'd share and share out, so that was all good and it was
good for the government to see that that was happening. As
that developed leaders of the two associations really took the
bull by the horns I suppose and xx here showed great
leadership with PEA and oddly because xx was ill and couldn't
take on the presidency, she had longer to do it, because
BAALPE has one year... or had one presidencies which is
always a problem for voluntary organisations, but during...
during that period there were these forays into, into looking at
unification. At that point - now when was it? It would be 2000...
end of 2002, something like that I was asked to do a feasibility
study on the possibility of dissolution and unification and from
the point of view of the memoranda and articles as the
constitutional bases of the two organisations, well of course by
then I at was at the CCPR and they were both CCPR members
and I... I asked for help with this from xx and xx because we
were going to do it mainly by interview of key actors really in
the associations and by review of the documents. And that
took about, about seven months of quite intensive interviewing,
lots of reading of documents, until we were cross-eyed, lots of
checking against charity law and constitutional governance
arrangements and we produced a report which that there
seems to be overwhelming support, that, among the people
we'd interviewed, that the reservations appear to be from a
very, very small minority and to represent actually quite
isolated interests but quite vocal and therefore possibly were
used to getting more credence than they deserved. We didn't
say it in those terms it was much more... and we presented at
the two respective AGMs that year, the report went down very,
very favourably, one of the recommendations was that they
should apply to UK Sport, because at that point they had some
modernisation money for governing bodies and organisations,
which had come from the game plan strategy and they did and
they were successful and a woman called xx was appointed to
look at the constitutional arrangements and at the
recommendations that we'd made, one of the particular
preoccupations was this, this hang up about BAALPE being a
trade unit and, I remember commenting, "Well, you know, a
trade union with less than 500 members isn't really a trade
union. Come on, stop being so precious." But I didn't say that
either, it was much more positive.

So things like that that they had to interrogate the fact the PEA
UK was a charity, BAALPE wasn't, all of that, how would you
manage the trading and so on and so on. So there were
various recommendations made about what kind of corporate
governance you would have and Jan's job was to explore that
and to move things forward and at that point the two
organisations also put into place a joint working group, which
looked at the mission and strategic areas of development for the new association. They never talked merger, they never talked about takeover, they always talked about a new single association; and I think the other thing that made it happen as well as all of this being very carefully managed and Jan was, I think very skilful at this, as the independent consultant, was that the two president must have spent thousands of hours of their time doing a road show all round Britain, winning hearts and minds. So xx and xx, and again are showing great courage and determination, did win hearts and minds.

Sorry, I should go back, when we presented to the two AGMs we had almost total support within PEA UK. There were some reservations expressed by BAALPE but actually for a very small number and when we presented at BAALPE, one of the people who represented one of the four dissents came up to us afterwards and said "I totally withdraw my opposition now." So it was interesting that the process was in itself positive.

So they did the road show - sorry, a year later - they did the road show, there was... I should say that there was one vote which failed in the interim, which I think was, was unfortunate BALPE vote that failed, before the feasibility study, and, and that had happened before, about 12, 15 years before and then at the two AGMs 95 and 96%. So overwhelming support and so those organisations had a mandate and they got on with it.

LESLEY: How do you see the future of AfPE and its working relationship with the Youth Sport Trust? Do you have clear lines of responsibility?

Interviewee: We’re working on that, I mean it takes time to build trust. There are areas where I feel there is occupation of areas which we logically should be leading on. But they have a contract with DfES which they have to fulfil, particularly for specialist colleges of course. Where we have to be sensible and mutual is it would be very damaging if they developed an agenda on a particular theme and we developed a different one, because our role is to support the whole physical education constituency, their role is to do something very specific with specialist sports colleges and their families of schools and we are working on that. We’re fortunate in that DfES over the last two to three years I suppose there was a consultative paper which went out in 2003 have decided that Subject Associations are a good thing. So that gives us a context within which we can develop our role, particularly in the CPD and I think that’s an area where we will work very hard to make sure that we’re the lead agency because we should be and I think we already are from our precedent organisations and where the Trust can see what we’re trying to do and I think there are areas of
development where again it's not in their interest to do what we would like to do and the big area that I think won't be contested at all is primary physical education and remodelling that whole agenda, which is very much about professional leadership as a Subject Association should do.

LESLEY: I want to ask you on the basis of your long involvement with school sport and PE, do you perceive that there is any consensus amongst the groups involved in PESSCL surrounding the values, beliefs and ideas about the role of school sport and physical education?

Interviewee: Yeah I think there is. I think... and it's not just PESSCL that's done it, it's been quite interesting. During the time I was at the CCPR the whole notion of the long term athlete development plan gathered momentum amongst the governing bodies and Sport England - I'm saying pedalled, it sounds a bit cheap and I don't mean it like that, but it promoted it very, very hard? Can't remember, anyway, he's been made redundant which is very sad, and xx came to it with passion and commitment, partly because he understood early motor development. So I've said once or twice that there is sort of three, three sides to... three corners to a triangle which bring together more than ever before the notion of some kind of shared, if not pedagogy, at least some shared approached to children's development in through sport, so one is LTAD, without a shadow of doubt and although, you know, again you can criticise it and, you know, it's not as proven as it's painted, but nevertheless there's a lot of ideology there which, which you can take on board. The whole physical literacy ideology and the whole motor development side of physical education; and then the other one is the data from leisure studies and from long term demographic studies which illustrates that actually the more you can keep young people in the system the more likely you are to find people in the system who can develop and grow, so the participation stuff basically; and that gives you quite a powerful little tripod really to put a shared pedagogy in, because it's about inclusion, it's about potential and it's about development as opposed to "Here's this sport, here are these techniques and let's flog the life out of these kids so that they get there." So I actually think we are closer together than we've ever been before and I think that the governing bodies have on the whole developed much more closely towards education than they did 15-20 years ago, and they're led by people perhaps who have got more empathy than those who were there 15 or 20 years ago.

LESLEY: What is your perspective on the current infrastructure for school sport and PE?
Interviewee: No, I don't think it's embedded enough and I think there's an emerging infrastructure which needs to be looked at in terms of how can this be supported and where's the win/win? And one of the interesting things I've noticed over the few months I've been in this post is that I had been somewhat critical of the way in which PESSCL has tended to sideline and marginalise subject advisors and I think that's a pity, I think if they could have embraced and utilised and developed them in the earlier stages then we would have been several stages further on. Now, I think the best of them have adapted and chameleon-like have managed to use the situation to advantage, so in those local authorities where there are talented subject advisors at a strategic level that's the best sort of model. But the interesting thing is that in authorities where either they'd lost them prior to PESSCL because there was already, well before PESSCL and we must acknowledge that - hence the rump - prior to PESSCL there'd been an attrition, but in authorities where, I mean where... which had never had a subject advisor, some which had lost one, there's an emergence of the need for strategic management and the reappointment of advisors and teacher advisors. So I was in Norfolk the week before last and they kept an advisor but he's managed now to get another teacher advisor appointment and he's just about to appoint another; and he's been able to do that because of the impetus of PESSCL. So there's, to some extent a reversal of the attrition which happened before PESSCL, by no means universal but hopeful enough to say "Maybe it'll happen in other places as well, and maybe we can nudge that along and I think this is something that we need to look at as a whole PESSCL partnership to say how can the infrastructure be made more sustainable by strategic leadership? Because I'm really thrilled about that, I think it's a terrific development. I don't think there's been enough planning on it, because it's strategy and embedding anywhere near and of course my big concern is about the CPD and that's a challenge for us, because obviously our income is very dependent on that. But it's our raison d'être. So that's important to us. But I think the whole... all of the strands of PESSCL should be interrogated on sustainability embedding and I've already given you the example of the coaching review, which, one of whose objective should have been from the start how to get mainstream funding through Learning and Skills Councils. Now there's a groundswell beginning to happen, not just in sport but generally across voluntary sector at the negative impact of Learning and Skills Council's policies on 16-19 and people without Level 2 priority, which has had a double whammy in that it's withdrawn funding from adult volunteers but also maybe more expensive. So physical education is in a national coalition for active aging and the Falls Prevention people can't get money for their volunteers to up-skill and train,
which they had before, these priorities were set to work in care homes to stop people falling, now that's just perverse. It's just silly and I know that the Minister has written to the Secretary of State - the Minister of Sport has written to the Secretary of State for Education about this, but it was Ruth Kelly, I have no idea whether he's had a response from the new one. In fact I'll write to him and ask him.

LESLEY: There are a number of organisations and individuals involved in the physical education and school sport policy context, which ones do you believe have had an impact on policy change?

Interviewee: CCPR did whilst I was there, I think, I don't think it's got one now. I think it's backed off totally, the division of interested organisations, which tells you what's important isn't really a division any more it's just a series of clusters. They've back off work on education and training, saying that Skills Active can do it all, but I don't think the governing bodies can depend on Skills Active. And they certainly aren't flogging physical education any more. I think what we did with the commitment, the CCPR commitment... and with declaration, the national summit declaration helped to push the government into the 2010 commitment for two hours inside the curriculum and we're still pushing on that. But the CCPR isn't we are.

LESLEY: Thank you.

[END]
## APPENDIX B

### THE INTERVIEWEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pete Ackerley</td>
<td>Head of Development-England and Wales Cricket Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stuart Armstrong</td>
<td>LTAD Project Manager – The England Golf Partnership</td>
<td>Previously Senior Development Manager - Golf Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Campbell</td>
<td>Chair of UK Sport and non-political advisor to DCMS and DfES</td>
<td>Previously Chief Executive of the Youth Sport Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Senior HMI</td>
<td>A Senior - HMI OFSTED</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crichton Casbon</td>
<td>Adviser for Physical Education - Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matthew Conway</td>
<td>First PESSCL Project Director-Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roger Davis</td>
<td>National Development Manager - National Council for School Sport (NCSS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Senior Civil Servant</td>
<td>A Senior Civil Servant - DfES/DCMS National School Sports Strategy</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steve Grainger</td>
<td>Chief Executive – YST</td>
<td>Former Vice-President of PEA UK Anonymous</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Senior Member of AfPE</td>
<td>Board Member AfPE.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Derek McDermott</td>
<td>PDM - Bishop Challenor School Sport Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helen Miles</td>
<td>Advisory Teacher - Birmingham Advisory and Support Service (BASS) PE and Sport</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Senior Staff Member YST</td>
<td>Implementation Director-YST</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Senior Ofsted Advisor</td>
<td>HMI – Ofsted Special Adviser for Physical Education</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clare Place</td>
<td>School Sport Co-ordinator - Bishop Challenor Sports College and Swanshurst Training School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Round</td>
<td>Chief Executive- The Golf Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caroline Smith</td>
<td>Senior Development Coordinator -</td>
<td>Previously School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position and Previous Roles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margaret Talbot</td>
<td>Chief Executive – Association for Physical Education (AfPE)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Previously Chief Executive - Central Council for Physical Recreation (CCPR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darren Turner</td>
<td>Director of Sport Bishop - Challenor Sports College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phil Veasey</td>
<td>Sport England - Head of Sports Development</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Previously LTA Education Development Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Senior Manager YST</td>
<td>Education Director – YST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tessa Whieldon</td>
<td>National Club Development Officer - England and Wales Cricket Board-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sue Wilkinson</td>
<td>Business and Development Manager – AfPE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Previously Continuing Professional Development Manager - BAALPE</td>
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APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The questions for the interviews were selected in order to enable the interviewer to investigate four possible sources of policy change. These reflect the topics that emerged from the theoretical frameworks that underpin the study.

1. Lobbying for policy change by the various interest groups involved in school sport and physical education, changes in lobbying capacity.
2. Changing values, beliefs and ideas about school sport and PE that may have lead to a consensus amongst those involved in the sector subsequently raising its status amongst politicians and decision-makers.
3. The significance of influential individuals, the role of opportunism, networks, connections and the potential to attach solutions to policy problems.
4. Changes to, and strengthening of, the sector's organizational infrastructure as a consequence of growing investment in school sport and PE.

As each of the interviewees was providing a different perspective and represented different elements of policy development, the questions were adapted for each interview. Two examples of the specific questions are represented below.
Questions for Sue Campbell 12th May 2006

1. The current Labour Government has chosen to invest significantly more resources into school sport and physical education than any previous government, could you explain why this is the case?

2. Has the Labour Government adapted and/or added to policies for school sport and physical education established during John Major's period of office, or are the policies of New Labour quite distinct?

3. What are the major outcomes the Government wants from its investment in school sport and physical education? How have these priorities emerged? If you were to rank order the Government's priorities for school sport and physical education what would they be? Are there tensions between the delivery target of 2 hours of 'high quality PE' for 85% of pupils by 2008? Which is the main priority?

4. Could you explain the extent to which these priorities for school sport and physical education have necessitated changes within the sector's organizational infrastructure?

5. How was the PESSCL Strategy and the related policies/programmes for school sport and physical education formed and who were the main individuals, groups and institutions involved in this process?

6. How have the individuals, groups or organisations involved in school sport and physical education responded to the current policy initiatives for school sport and physical education?

7. Apart for the YST could you tell me which groups, individuals or organisations that you believe have had the greatest influence over Government policy for school sport and physical education? Why have other groups failed to influence policy?

8. Have any groups or coalitions within school sport and physical education formed in order to lobby for their particular interests within this policy arena? Was the merger of BAALPE and PEAUK a response to this marginalization or was it for other policy reasons? What was the role of the CCPR?

9. During your long involvement with school sport and physical education policy, do you perceive that there is now a consensus regarding the values, beliefs and ideas about the role of school sport and physical education amongst all the groups and individuals involved in the delivery of these policy initiatives? If not what would you say are the issues or values which continue to divide the sector?

10. What has been your role in the development of government policy for school sport and physical education? Do you feel that the YST is now a significant policy player independent of you, are you gradually withdrawing from it, or is it heading that way? With your role as Chair of UK Sport and the run up to the Olympics, will you be able to give school sport and physical education the same attention as you have done in the past?
Questions for Mike Round 21st July 2006

1. How and why did golf become involved in the Club Links Strategy?
2. Did your sport collectively lobby to get involved in the Club Links Strategy?
3. How is golf involved in the Club Links Strategy? Could you explain the infrastructure that now exists in order to deliver School Club Links?
4. What are the major outcomes that golf wants from its investment in the School Club Links Programme? If you were to rank order these priorities what would they be? Are these priorities shared with your partners in education? Are there any tensions between the beliefs, values and agendas of golf as a governing body, golf clubs sport and your partners in education?
5. What involvement and links did golf have in schools prior to its involvement in the Club Links strategy?
6. How much funding does golf receive through PESSCL?
7. What difference has the School Club Links strategy meant in terms of staffing, organization, rationale and infrastructure for golf as a governing body?
8. What are the implications for golf as a governing body if the School Club Links funding was to cease?