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REPORT OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION REVIEW GROUP

I am pleased to attach a copy of the above report, produced by the Physical Education Review Group.

This report makes a number of recommendations aimed at local authorities, schools, initial teacher education providers and teachers themselves, as well as the Scottish Executive. The Group and I expect that the implementation of these recommendations will improve the health and well-being of young people in Scotland. The Group hopes it will result in more young people being more active, more of the time, a commendable, and I believe achievable, aspiration.

I heartily support and endorse the report and recommendations. Not only do I accept all of the recommendations, it is my intention to move beyond these and sanction the biggest boost to physical education in schools for generations. I am doing this because I believe that this is an area of the curriculum which, exceptionally, needs greater priority to support the health and well-being of young people in Scotland. We must build the foundations for healthy and active lifestyles at an early age and we know that physical activity can help improve motivation and achievement in many other areas of school life. In recognition of this, and as a direct result of the report, I intend to pursue the achievement of three key aims. To provide:

- **More time for physical education**
- **More teachers of physical education**
- **More choice in physical education**

I intend to support these by taking the following 10 actions:

- I will provide for 400 additional PE teachers to support the growing emphasis on physical education.
- I will ask the curriculum review group to ensure that there is sufficient flexibility in the curriculum to allow schools to accommodate the provision of at least 2 hours of good quality physical education for each child every week, and more if possible. This should be achieved by schools over the coming four academic years.

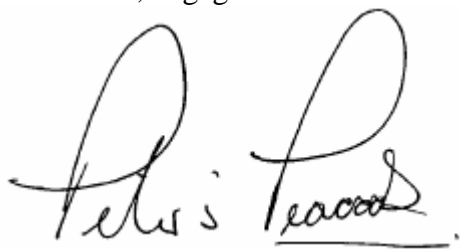


- I will ensure that the physical education curriculum is reviewed as a priority in the 2nd phase of the curriculum review. This will include the development of advice on an appropriate pre-school curriculum to encourage participation in school-based physical education.
- I will issue guidance to local authorities on physical education within the context of our National Priorities planning and reporting under the 2000 Act to help monitor progress in meeting these three key aims.
- I will ensure that appropriate research is supported by the Scottish Executive to inform future learning and teaching.
- I will ask HMIE and Learning and Teaching Scotland to work together to gather and disseminate good practice in physical education. This will include advice on making a wider range of activities available for young people which responds to their needs and aspirations.
- I will ask HMIE to monitor implementation of the move to 2 hours per week as part of the future inspection.
- Learning and Teaching Scotland will also work with relevant agencies to hold regional seminars to raise awareness and understanding of the report. These will take place over the next academic session.
- I will continue dialogue with the teacher training institutions to secure the additional places needed for the expansion of the additional PE teacher numbers.
- I will ensure more opportunities are made available to Primary Teachers to enhance their qualifications to support more physical activity in schools.

These measures are an important extension of support for an area of educational provision which I consider to be in need of more attention. While I know there are many schools providing the high quality physical education aspired to by the Review Group, my response aims to make this a consistent approach across Scotland.

I would encourage all schools and education authorities to act on the recommendations as soon as they can. I place significant importance on consulting with pupils on how best to improve programmes and increase participation as part of the improvements sought.

With this report, Scotland has the opportunity to address strengthening learning and overcoming problems of inactivity and growing obesity in young people. The report provides the template and I will provide the support to help schools and education authorities achieve the outcome to which we all aspire – supporting the health and well-being of our young people and improving their motivation, engagement in school life and attainment.



PETER J PEACOCK

