

LEVEL 5/6 PROFESSIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

PRIMARY SCHOOL PE SPECIALISM AND PE SUBJECT LEADERSHIP

Donna Smith [afPE member]

Having been awarded the Level 5/6 Professional Learning Centre of the Year by the Association for Physical Education (afPE) and Sports Leaders UK, TS Education Services reflects on the implementation, impact and future of its Level 5/6 professional vocational qualifications.

BACKGROUND

In September 2015, TS Education Services added Level 5 Primary Physical Education Specialism and Level 6 Physical Education Subject Leadership to our range of teaching qualifications. Initially, the courses were delivered to small groups of selected learners near our base in Hampshire, largely made up of teachers, School Games organisers (SGOs) and sport specialists embedded in a number of primary schools in the area. Since then, our delivery has grown to encompass more schools across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, as well as a number of SGOs in Kent, with the aim of implementing Level 5/6 there too. To date, over 200 delegates have taken part in the training and, as a result of our local strategic influence and success in improving primary physical education (PE) provision in Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Kent, we were awarded the Level 5/6 Professional Learning Centre of the Year 2018 by the Association for Physical Education (afPE).

ABOUT TS EDUCATION SERVICES

TS Education Services is committed to inspirational and engaging PE. Based in Hampshire, we work in partnership with Hampshire County Council and other local authorities, as well as schools, education groups and sport coaching companies. Together we aim to improve the standard of primary PE across the region and ensure all pupils have access to high quality, sustainable PE programmes that will ultimately improve their physical health

and enrich their lives and those of the communities around them. Our vision is to see every young person reach his or her full potential, and to see individuals become the athletes they dream of becoming.

This is achieved by providing the tuition and assessment that is essential for the continual professional development (CPD) of PE. TS Education Services operates as a delivery centre for a huge range of teaching qualifications, including Level 2 Multi-Skills Development in Sport (QCF), Level 3 Certificate Supporting the Delivery of PE and School Sport (QCF), British Gymnastics Primary Award and the Sports Leaders UK

Playmakers Award, as well as the Level 5/6 Certificates in Physical Education Specialism and Subject Leadership.

We also offer advice and consultation on Bikeability, dance, swimming, outdoor education, after-school clubs and many more aspects of PE. We believe the key to high standards of PE lies in the tracking and assessing of teaching staff. If teachers perform at their best, children will too. So TS Education Services aims to help staff develop fun teaching programmes that will inspire and engage their pupils and place children at the centre of what they are learning.





All of our programmes are created in a sustainable format that reflects National Curriculum and Ofsted requirements. They're also backed with innovative teaching methods and staff expertise. For example, as the company owner, I have been a primary school PE consultant for over 20 years. Prior to that, I worked with elite athletes in enhancing movement and performance. This experience has formed the basis of what TS Education Services is all about, and has shaped the delivery, implementation and success of our Level 5/6 qualifications in upskilling PE professionals and achieving high quality, sustainable PE across Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Kent.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

From the early days of delivery, TS Education Services found that learners needed support in all areas of the National Curriculum for PE. Being flexible in approach, we responded to delegate needs by including a 1st⁴ Sport qualification in multi-skills and the British Gymnastics Primary Teaching Award. We later progressed to offering the 1st⁴ Sport Level 3 Award in Dance as well as the IOS Fundamentals in Primary School Swimming. As a result, all learners could obtain practical knowledge and the ability to develop a high quality PE, sport and physical activity programme, not only creating professional development opportunities bespoke to delegates' needs, but helping to achieve the overall aims of Level 5/6 by increasing the standard of PE and its delivery.

COURSE APPLICATION AND PROMOTION

TS Education Services' Level 5/6 courses are available to all primary schools, education groups and sport coaching companies across Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Kent. At the beginning, the course was promoted by word of mouth through a network of schools already working with TS Education Services and others in local communities. We then linked with Hampshire Outdoor Education, PE and Duke of Edinburgh Award Services, which recognized the Level 5/6 as being evidence of safe practice in PE, sport and physical activity in line with afPE guidelines. We were also approached by Take Pride, a sport and PE company based in Kent, which wanted to implement the courses in schools across its region too.

Though promotion has been minimal, the relationship between TS Education Services and local authorities and sports bodies has opened doors to significant opportunities in increasing course participation. Since 2015, TS Education Services has had over 200 delegates through our system.

COURSE IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

Training is bespoke and can be delivered at a location that works best for the learners. TS Education Services has a training centre in Romsey, providing a central base for most Hampshire schools, while individual schools in Kent and the Isle of Wight can be used for groups there.

The course tuition takes place over an academic year, with one day of training each half-term. Usually, the first day of training looks at provision in delegates' schools. Days two to five cover practical qualifications in gymnastics, dance, physical literacy and swimming, while day six covers theory. Learners have the opportunity to develop an inclusive curriculum map that includes units of work for all classes, complete with tracking and resources, across all key stages.

All learners are assessed by TS Education Services' tutors, through both written and independent practical assessment. Learners are asked to make sure their written responses to tasks are linked to their own school's development plan, ensuring their work has purpose in their individual schools. While learners regularly share their work during the course through a working document, it isn't until the end of the course that final assessment is made.

We encourage schools to have more than one person on the course – often a teacher and a teaching assistant or embedded coach. The reason for this is to ensure sustainability and continuity. As one of the aims of the delivery of Level 5/6 is to increase the sustainability of high quality physical education, having more than one staff member per school offers accountability and support for teachers in the implementation of the course practice. It also increases the likelihood that course teaching will be carried on from one academic year to the next and integrated with changes in the curriculum, ensuring the longevity of its practices over time.

RESOLVING CHALLENGES AND MAKING AN IMPACT

At the end of the course, we ask learners to complete a comment-based feedback form. This helps us to shape the teaching according to what learners felt worked or didn't work and informs course content for future sessions. This feedback provides more than constructive direction. For us, one of the most rewarding aspects of delivering the Level 5/6 is hearing about the positive impact it has on teachers, schools and pupils. Here is a brief summary of feedback from 2017-2018 participants:

- Increased confidence
- Stronger subject knowledge
- Improved working relationships between teachers and teaching assistants
- Improved engagement with pupils
- Motivation and passion
- Assistance in building curriculum
- Useful resources formed from course assignments
- Training is adapted to suit learners' needs
- Opportunity to practise in practical sessions.

In addition, we have seen delegates overcome more specific challenges through the Level 5/6 qualifications. We found that a number of delegates felt they had been given a role of subject leader or a supporting role in PE but had no idea how to approach it. For those individuals, creating and delivering a teaching programme that would work specifically for the pupils in their school presented a challenge, and they felt they had little time or support to develop programmes to their full extent. We addressed this by adapting their programme so that it was bespoke for each school, providing delegates with provision that met their schools' needs.

The result was increased knowledge and support that was specific to each learner. One teaching assistant from Romsey said that, having come from teaching Reception to teaching Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, she felt ill-equipped to support the subject leader in delivering PE programmes to the older pupils. After completing the Level 5 she had the skills, knowledge and resources she required. She said:

“TS Education Services supported me to learn the requirements and showed me how to actually run a successful lesson. The course assignments form a useful set of resources, which cover all aspects of running the PE curriculum within a school, including curriculum plans, the curriculum requirements and how to adapt activities to make them inclusive.”

Deb Gerrett from Take Pride, a Kent-based sports company working with TS Education Services, said:

“Delegates have taken advice and ideas and made significant changes in their schools, particularly in their curriculum mapping and provision for swimming. They've involved governors and provided evidence to support their wishes to change historical practices and delivery within their schools. Many schools no longer have to employ external providers for certain areas as they now have qualified staff within the workforce.”

Other delegates faced challenges in completing the course itself. Being able to commit to the training days throughout a busy academic year, completing the portfolio of work and being observed delivering the numerous sessions in order to demonstrate the necessary competences were anxieties for some before undertaking the qualifications. But TS Education Services' approach acknowledged and remedied the concerns of these delegates, with an embedded PE specialist from Andover providing the following feedback:

“TS Education Services is really flexible in order to allow candidates the best opportunity to attend all the necessary training days as well as the required observations. The resources also make the portfolio work interesting and easily achievable alongside full-time working hours.”

For others, completing the Level 5/6 simply meant they felt more knowledgeable, better equipped and more confident in undertaking primary PE. The Andover PE specialist said:

“Since completing the course, I personally feel a lot more confident in my delivery. I have a far greater depth of knowledge regarding physical activity in primary schools, as well as an armoury of new lesson plans and ideas. The qualifications gained for gymnastics, dance and swimming now allow me to explore more sessions with greater understanding and allow me to deliver a wider curriculum to young people, which I am looking forward to doing.”

Deb Gerrett also noted an increase in delegate confidence. She said:

“By the end of next year, we will have had over 50 teachers and higher-level teaching assistants complete the course. We have observed a massive increase in delegates' confidence in the teaching of PE due to the inspiring practical sessions.”

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COURSE

TS Education Services is continually adapting the course to ensure the ongoing improvement of primary PE and the ability of staff in Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Kent to consistently deliver a high quality physical activity programme in their respective schools. One focus for the course will be to continue to personalise teaching for learners. While this is already being weaved into our work – for example, by adding outdoor and adventurous activities to a training programme in Kent following requests from learners – a greater emphasis will be placed on making course content even more bespoke to each school's needs. This will be done at a fair price, ensuring learners have access to the exact training they need in the most cost-effective way possible.

With a passion to see every delegate, and subsequently their pupils, achieve their full potential, TS Education Services will continually review and improve our award-winning delivery of Level 5/6 professional courses, aiding the CPD of primary PE teachers in Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent and beyond. ■



The Level 5/6 Professional Qualifications in Primary Physical Education were written by afPE and are accredited by Sports Leaders UK. To find out more about the qualifications in general, and to search for your local delivery centre, visit: <http://www.afpe.org.uk/physical-education/level-56-professional-vocational-qualifications-primary-school-specialism-and-subject-leadership-in-pe-school-sport/>

Donna Smith is the founder and owner of TS Education Services. For more information, visit <https://www.tseducationsservices.com/>