

About Sport Northern Ireland

Sport Northern Ireland is the lead agency for developing sport in Northern Ireland. Its corporate vision is: "a culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport which contributes to a peaceful, fair and prosperous society".

The full report 'Review of Physical Literacy Programmes Delivered through Governing Bodies' is available to download from www.sportni.net.

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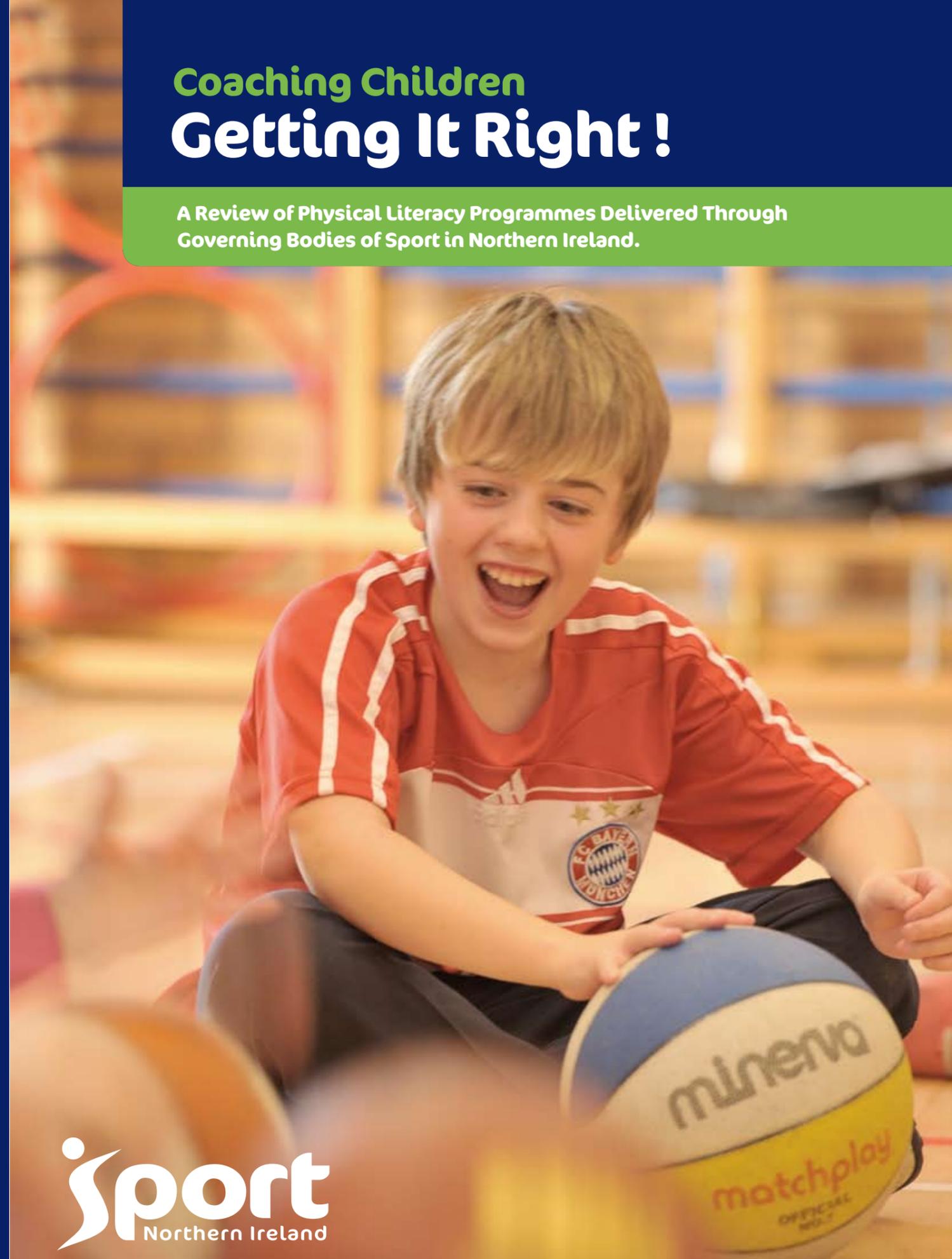
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Coaching Children Getting It Right!

A Review of Physical Literacy Programmes Delivered Through Governing Bodies of Sport in Northern Ireland.



The lead agency for developing sport in Northern Ireland



Sport Northern Ireland advocates that children’s early experiences of sport and good quality coaching that develop physical literacy¹ are crucial building blocks to lifelong participation and success in sport or physical activity.

Governing bodies of sport in Northern Ireland have been advised by Sport Northern Ireland to incorporate the Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) or Lifelong Involvement in Sport and Physical Activity (LISPA) participant development models into their organisational activity and programmes, starting with Active Start and FUNdamentals for children.

The grassroots programmes for children delivered by governing bodies of sport and sports clubs can therefore be viewed as an effective way of developing children’s physical literacy. This is an important area due to the prominence of physical literacy within ‘Sport Matters’ - the Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2009-2019’.

What did the review involve?

The four-phase review was conducted by the University of Ulster with the 31 governing bodies of sport who are currently in receipt of investment from Sport Northern Ireland.

Table 1

Phase	
1	An online survey with nominated representatives (26 responses; 84% return rate).
2	Three focus groups of policy leaders, development officers and sports coaches (15 attendees).
3	Interviews with 24 coaches (drawn from a paid and voluntary capacities).
4	Desk research to identify local and international best practice.

1. Physical Literacy is “the ability to use body management, locomotion and object control skills in a competent manner, with the capacity to apply them with confidence in settings which may lead to sustained involvement in sport and physical recreation”. (Sport Northern Ireland)

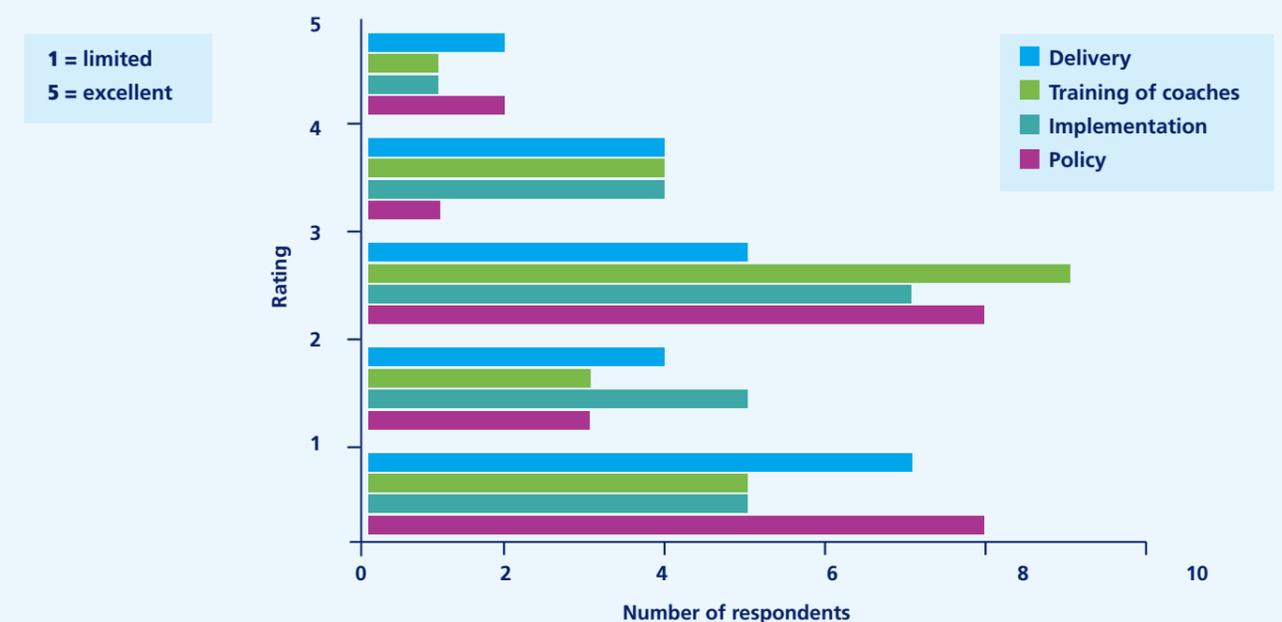
Headline findings

- 86% of governing bodies of sport reported that they had a participant development model in place.
- 70% indicated that the model that they are implementing is based on LTAD; 13% based on LISPA.
- 76% viewed this model as having influenced participant and coaches’ experiences.
- 23% were unsure if their model had influenced the delivery of physical literacy.

Understanding of physical literacy and fundamentals

- Overall governing bodies of sport have a limited understanding of physical literacy, as demonstrated in figure 1.
- The majority of people surveyed were aware of the definition of ‘physical literacy’ and how it links with fundamental movement skills, health, long-term participation in physical activity and development through sport. Results indicate that paid coaches are more likely to be aware of physical literacy and its application than volunteer coaches.
- The majority of coaches are aware of the term ‘fundamental movement skills’ and their importance for the development of the individual child in their own sports.

Figure 1 - Level of understanding of physical literacy / fundamentals at various levels within governing bodies of sport



Training received

- 61% indicated that they had received training relating to LISPA or LTAD.

Table 2

In-house	55%
Sport Northern Ireland	46%
sports coach UK	36%

- 91% would attend future physical literacy training events.

Delivery of movement fundamentals to children

- Five key components were identified to assist in the delivery of fundamentals:
 1. Coach Education;
 2. Continual professional development;
 3. Guidance / mentoring;
 4. Resources; and
 5. Sample session plans.
- 33% viewed their sport as successful or extremely successful in the delivery of fundamentals.
- 66% indicated they would like further guidance.



Multi-skills experience

- 83% view providing a multi-skill experience as an opportunity to develop their sport and identified a wide range of activities currently being delivered. However there was also a degree of uncertainty as demonstrated in table 1.

Table 3 Range of activities currently delivered by governing bodies of sport

Phase	Yes	No	Not Sure
Multi-skill activity	58.3%	25%	16.7%
Fundamentals of movement	84.6%	7.7%	7.7%
Fundamental sports skills	81.3%	12.5%	6.3%
Mix of above	76.9%	15.4%	7.7%



- 52% of governing bodies of sport provide coaches with guidance on what they should be delivering at specific development stages (fundamentals workshops, resources and current coaching course materials).
- 38% do not provide guidance and 10% were unsure.
- Some respondents suggested that if they do not provide sport specific skills to children, parents question why their child was participating in generic skills rather than playing the sport.
- The delivery of either fundamental movement skills or sport specific skills may differ between volunteer and paid coaches.
- It is acknowledged that volunteer coaches may not have the same amount of available time to dedicate to develop skills necessary to deliver fundamentals.



Barriers to implementing physical literacy

- 66% highlighted barriers to implementing physical literacy including:
 - A lack of physical resources;
 - Funding restrictions e.g. for producing new resources;
 - Resistance to change;
 - A lack of knowledge, guidance, and understanding of the links between physical literacy and development within the sport;
 - The potential impact that physical literacy may have on programmes and coaching structures; and
 - A lack of paid staff to deliver on a more permanent basis.
- Despite identifying these barriers, 82% indicated that they would like to be supported and guided further in developing physical literacy.

What would assist the implementation physical literacy?

- ✓ Long-term training opportunities for coaches on how to integrate fundamentals into their sport - linking theory to practice with online resources.
- ✓ Flexible training opportunities which credit volunteer hours and link to the National Qualifications Framework.
- ✓ Sports specific training from governing bodies of sport on how to integrate fundamentals / physical literacy.
- ✓ Funding for coaches on the ground and to explore where governing body expertise lies.
- ✓ Coach mentoring.
- ✓ Training on how to change attitudes of existing coaches to include fundamentals.
- ✓ Awareness of educational aspects such as the curriculum and an understanding of the training that teachers receive.
- ✓ Sharing of information and practice across various sports, particularly on what and how they deliver.

Key learning points

1. Training

Appropriate training on the integration of Physical Literacy and fundamental movement skills into sport specific settings requires further development for paid and voluntary coaches.

2. Terminology

The term 'physical literacy' is not clearly understood across all governing bodies of sport at both policy and delivery level.

3. Support

Support from parents and other adults is vital to ensure the development of physical literacy; information and education is needed to ensure that this happens.

4. Programme Structure

Coach development programmes for coaches of children should be structured and include education and/or resources that fit the needs of all sports.

This review identifies the significant amount of work that has been achieved by some governing bodies in Northern Ireland to develop physical literacy and fundamental movement skills in children through structured, professionally driven and evaluated movement skills programmes. However, it also highlights the need for further training and support for all coaches, alongside the sharing of information and best practice across governing bodies of sport.

