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The Benefits of Sport and Physical Education for Young Men in Prison:

An Exploration of Policy and Practice in England and Wales

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Introduction

Sport and physical activity is a universal addition to regimes across the secure estate in England and Wales and elsewhere. Although early criminal policy interventions incorporating sport were typically based on notions of deterrence and punishment — namely by enforcing physically and mentally demanding regimes on young offenders by means of American style ‘boot camps’ — attention has more recently been focussed on how the delivery of sport in prisons can confer benefits in terms of improving prisoners’ health and well-being^{1,2,3}, promoting social control⁴, improving quality of life in prison⁵, facilitating behavioural change⁶ and supporting rehabilitation^{7,8}. However, to date there has been no comprehensive exploration of the delivery of sport and physical education (PE) within prisons in England and Wales, nor the extent to which current practice corresponds with existing policy. This paper seeks to summarise existing relevant policy and explore the extent to which current policy agendas are integrated into the everyday practice of delivering physical education and sport in prison establishments holding young offenders.

The Policy Context

The Physical Education Prison Service Instruction⁹ states that, if circumstances reasonably permit, prisoners over 21 years old shall be given the opportunity to participate in physical activity (including a wide range of sporting activities) for at least one hour per week, whereas provision should be made for those under 21 years old to participate for an average of two hours per week. Taking part in physical education activities is not mandatory, but prisoners are actively encouraged to do so¹⁰, and a number of parliamentary publications refer explicitly to engagement — or lack of — in sporting activities in the context of promoting purposeful activity in prisons^{11,12}. Contemporary policy regarding the delivery of sport in prison — in kin with social policy more widely — has also increasingly advocated the use of sport and physical activity as vehicles to achieve non-sport policy objectives¹³. The Prison Service Order¹⁴ stated that PE programmes must not only offer sufficient access to physical activity, but also incorporate the key elements of regime provision, education, training and employment, resettlement and offending behaviour (where the balance between these elements is determined by national and local

1. Buckaloo, B. J., Krug, K. S., & Nelson, K. B. (2009). Exercise and the low-security inmate: Changes in depression, stress, and anxiety. *The Prison Journal*, 89, 3, 328-343.
2. Nelson, M., Specian, V. L., Tracy, N. C., & DeMello, J. J. (2006). The effects of moderate physical activity on offenders in rehabilitative program. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 57, 4, 276-285.
3. Verdot, C., S. Champely, S., Clement, M., & Massarelli, R. (2010). Physical practice as a means to limit the noxious effects of prison confinement: impact of a physical program on prisoners' perceived health and psychological well-being. *Psychologie Du Travail et Des Organisations*, 16 (1), 63-78.
4. Murtaza, T. S. & Uddin, R. (2011). Probing study on facilities of competitive sport in District Jail, Lucknow (India). *European Journal of Business and Management*, 3 (8), 69-79.
5. Johnsen, B. (2001). *Sport, masculinities and power relations in prison*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Norwegian University of Sport and Physical Education, Oslo. Retrieved from: <http://www.krus.no/upload/PDF-dokumenter/disp01.pdf>
6. Farrington, D., Ditchfield, J., Hancock, G., Howard, P., Joliffe, D., Livingston, M. & Painter, K. (2002). *Evaluation of two intensive regimes for young offenders*. London, UK: Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Publications. Retrieved from: <http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hors239.pdf>
7. Andrews, J. P. & Andrews, G. J. (2003). Life in a secure unit: the rehabilitation of young people through the use of sport. *Sport Science and Medicine*, 56, pp. 531-550.
8. Meek, R. (2012). *The role of sport in promoting desistance from crime: an evaluation of the 2nd Chance Project Rugby and Football Academies at Portland Young Offender Institution*. Southampton, UK: University of Southampton.
9. Ministry of Justice (2011). *Physical Education (PE) for Prisoners*. PSI 58/2011.
10. National Audit Office (2006). *Serving Time: Prisoner Diet and Exercise*. London, UK: The Stationary Office.
11. Conservative Party (2011). *Prisons with a Purpose. Our Sentencing & Rehabilitation Revolution to Break the Cycle of Crime. Security Agenda* (Policy Green Paper No. 4). Brentford, UK: Conservative Party.
12. Home Affairs Select Committee (2004). *The committees Prison Diaries Project*. Retrieved from: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmselect/cmhaff/193/19325.htm>
13. Bloyce, D. & Smith, A. (2010). *Sport Policy and Development: An Introduction*. Abington, UK: Routledge.
14. HM Prison Service (2009). *Physical Education*. PSO 4250. Issue No. 308.

needs as well as the availability of resources). Although this Prison Service Order's subsequent replacement, the 2011 Prison Service Instruction on physical education⁹ no longer states that these elements must be incorporated in provision, it still advocates that they can be. Consequently, the delivery of sport in prisons intersects a number of policy objectives, including health promotion, addressing addictions and reducing reoffending.

In terms of health promotion, at the European level the World Health Organisation's *Health in Prisons*¹⁵ and nationally, the Department of Health's strategy for improving the health of prisoners¹⁶ outlined a whole-prison approach to promoting health, thus explicitly placing responsibility for improving the health of prisoners with all relevant departments and staff within prisons, rather than lying solely with health care professionals. Furthermore, policy directives have indicated that local plans for health promotion must address active living as a minimum requirement¹⁷, and that physical activity should be considered as an accompaniment to healthcare interventions and detoxification programmes^{9,18} thus confirming that physical education departments clearly have an intrinsic role to play in offender health promotion.

With regard to linking sporting activity with the reducing offending agenda, European Union level recommendations for the reintegration of offenders stipulate that instilling an interest in new sports in prisoners (particularly young offenders) can assist in

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reducing the chances of re-offending¹⁹ and it has consistently been found that young offenders frequently cite having something to do other than participating in crime as a primary factor that might help them desist from offending^{20,21,22}. Reflecting these issues, the prison service physical education order (and to a lesser extent, the subsequent PE instruction) as well as the regimes for juveniles²³ order stated that activities should have a structured approach to support prisoners to tackle their offending behaviour, impact upon individuals' attitudes and behaviour,

enable prisoners to gain vocational qualifications and link effectively with resettlement policy and community provision, as well as to encourage the purposeful use of leisure time after release¹⁴.

Method

Data extracted from reports published and made public by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons was utilised to capture variation in the delivery of sport across the male young offender estate. Specifically, the content of current published inspectorate reports for all thirty-four establishments holding male²⁴ young offender populations²⁵ in England and Wales were analysed in order to identify the provision, practices and problems

identified with regard to the delivery of PE and sport in relation to the policy areas of participation, health promotion, education, offending behaviour, resettlement and community partnerships. The prison establishments under consideration included those holding male juveniles aged 15 to 17 only ($n = 6$),

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15. World Health Organisation (WHO) (2007). *Health in Prisons: A WHO guide to the essential in prison health*. Copenhagen, Denmark: WHO.
 16. Department of Health (2002). *Health Promoting Prisons: A Shared Approach*. Retrieved from: http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4006230
 17. HM Prison Service (2003). *Health Promotion*. PSO 3200.
 18. HM Prison Service (2000). *Clinical Services for Substance Misusers*. PSO 3550. Issue No. 116.
 19. EQUAL (2007). *European Union's level recommendations for the reintegration of (ex) offenders*. Retrieved from: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/data/document/0707-recomoff.pdf
 20. Audit Commission (1996). *Misspent Youth — Young People and Crime*. Oxford, UK: Audit Commission.
 21. Cripps, H. (2010). *Children and young people in custody 2009-2010. An analysis of the experiences of 15-18 year olds in prison*. HM inspectorate of Prisons/Youth Justice Board. London, UK: The Stationary Office.
 22. Summerfield, A. (2011). *Children and young people in custody 2010-2011. An analysis of the experiences of 15-18 year olds in prison*. HM inspectorate of Prisons/Youth Justice Board. London, UK: The Stationary Office.
 23. HM Prison Service (2004). *Regimes for juveniles*. PSO 4950.
 24. Establishments holding female young offenders were not considered for the purposes of this study, but the authors are currently investigating the role of sport in this prison population in a separate study.
 25. All establishments holding young offender populations in September 2010 were considered, although it is acknowledged that for some of these establishments their reception criteria has since be reconfigured and they no longer hold young adults.

young adults aged 18 to 25 only ($n = 9$), both juveniles and young adults ($n = 4$) and split sites holding young offenders and adults ($n = 15$). Each establishment and the published year of the respective Inspectorate reports analysed are listed in Table 1. Analysis was conducted on the most recent inspectorate report that had been published for each establishment by September 2010, and in cases where a more recent inspectorate report had been published by April 2012, these were also analysed.

Table 1:
Prison establishment Inspectorate analysed

Establishment	Year of Report (s)
1. HMP Altcourse	2010
2. HMYOI Ashfield	2010, 2011
3. HMYOI Aylesbury	2009, 2011
4. HMYOI Brinsford	2009, 2011
5. HMP/YOI Chelmsford	2009, 2011
6. HMYOI Deerbolt	2009, 2011
7. HMP/YOI Elmley	2009
8. HMP Exeter	2009, 2011
9. HMYOI Feltham	2010, 2011
10. HMP Forest Bank	2007, 2010
11. HMYOI Glen Parva	2009
12. HMP Gloucester	2010
13. HMYOI Hindley	2009, 2011
14. HMP Hollesley Bay	2009
15. HMP Hull	2008
16. HMP Huntercombe	2008
17. HMP/YOI Isis	2011
18. HMYOI Lancaster Farms	2011
19. HMP Lewes	2007, 2010
20. HMP Lincoln	2007, 2010
21. HMP/YOI Littlehey	2011
22. HMP/YOI Moorland	2010
23. HMP/YOI Northallerton	2008, 2011
24. HMP/YOI Norwich	2010
25. HMP/YOI Parc	2010
26. HMYOI Portland	2009
27. HMYOI Reading	2009
28. HMYOI Rochester	2009, 2011
29. HMYOI Stoke Heath	2010, 2010
30. HMP/YOI Swinfen Hall	2009, 2009
31. HMP/YOI Thorn Cross	2008
32. HMYOI Warren Hill	2009, 2011
33. HMYOI Werrington	2009, 2011
34. HMYOI Wetherby	2009, 2010

Note: All inspectorate reports were authored by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons and published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons, London and can be accessed at: <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/inspectorate-reports/hmi-prisons/prison-and-yoi>

It is recognised that although inspectorate reports provide a valuable overview of the provision and practices observed and reported upon at the time of official inspection, the level of detail and focus is dependent on the type of inspection (i.e. full/short/follow up), the specific previous recommendations raised by the inspectorate for each establishment, and the time of inspection. It is acknowledged that there will be instances where the most recently published inspectorate report available for an establishment is dated (these may be up to four years old at the time of writing) and will not necessarily accurately reflect current practice and provision. As such the analysis provides a provisional insight into the diverse practice of sport delivery in young offenders' institutions whilst acknowledging that provision and practice in establishments changes rapidly and consequently cannot be comprehensively captured with absolute accuracy.

Provision and participation

Across the thirty-four establishments accommodating male juvenile and young adult offenders a wide range of team and individual sports were available, including (but not limited to) football, rugby, cricket, basketball, volleyball, rounders, boxing, table tennis, dance, weight lifting, swimming, racquet sports, mountain biking, climbing, athletics, exercise classes and other gymnasium activities. Most establishments were observed by the inspectorate to offer a sufficient range of sporting activities and, not surprisingly, the reports indicated that the variety of sports offered within individual establishments was largely determined by local resources and preferences, mirroring the National Audit Office's¹⁰ finding that the type of facilities available determines the range of activities offered to prisoners. All establishments appeared to offer both individual and team sports, with most having a combination of both indoor and outdoor provision, although no outdoor provision was available at one split site, and access to outdoor provision was lacking at one of the juvenile establishments and one split site.

In terms of promoting good practice of the use of sport and leisure activities in work with young men in prison, the content of the inspectorate reports suggests that Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) may need to engage in further prisoner consultation, and target specific groups (e.g. vulnerable prisoners or those less likely to engage in sport) in order to establish which activities would best promote participation and motivation¹⁰ and are consequently most effective in meeting prison targets. Offering taster sessions for sporting activities has already been identified as one way of effectively promoting

participation in sporting activities²⁶ however, such promotion should be done with an awareness that academic research has demonstrated that activities primarily focusing on the physical and individual aspects of sport (as opposed to the wider associated psychological processes) can result in negative outcome such as increased aggression^{27,28}.

Analysis of the inspectorate reports also revealed that the amount of time prisoners were able to participate in PE per week and the resulting participation levels varied substantially across the different establishments — although it should be noted that the majority of establishments achieved the minimum recommended provision of two hours per week for those aged under 21 years old. It should also be acknowledged, however, that establishing baselines for participation in physical activities and making meaningful comparisons across establishments is difficult since few YOIs hold identical populations or have comparable facilities¹⁰. In the reports analysed, prisoner participation levels ranged from 93 per cent in one juvenile establishment to 37 per cent at a split site holding young offenders and adults. Participation levels in three establishments holding young adults, one prison holding both juveniles and young adults and one other split site for adults and young offenders were also deemed to be low. In a minority of instances, Inspectorate reports identified that access to PE was perceived to be insufficient or not equitable due to unclear selection criteria, whereas the provision at some establishments far exceeded minimum requirements. For example, one juvenile establishment scheduled six hours per week of core PE, plus additional access to recreational PE, thus offering young people up to 10 hours of PE a week. Promisingly, surveys of juveniles coordinated by the Inspectorate of Prisons have revealed that the number of young people who said they attended the gym at least five times a week and could exercise outside

everyday has increased consistently over the last four years^{20, 21, 29}.

In some instances, although access to sufficient PE was deemed readily available, inspectorate reports revealed that participation was low, explained due to it being perceived as voluntary or due to clashes with other regime activities. The National Audit Office¹⁰ previously identified low uptake rates being directly influenced by the range of activities and facilities available, the emphasis on particular activities within certain establishments, equity of access, and staff availability. Within juvenile facilities specifically, the type of facility has also been identified as contributing to participation levels — whereby higher proportions of young men attending the gym regularly were identified in dedicated sites for young offenders as opposed to split sites holding diverse age groups^{21, 26}. Consistent with the National Audit Office's¹⁰ findings regarding the entire prison estate, inspectorate reports have also indicated that increased access to PE in YOIs was often related to the prisoners' Incentives and Earned Privileges status, which comes as no surprise since access to the gym is widely acknowledged to be an important tool in rewarding good behaviour. For example, an inspection of an establishment holding young adults in 2011 noted that those

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on 'basic' status and 'standard' unemployed prisoners were entitled to one session of PE a week, whereas a 'standard' level employed prisoner would be entitled to two sessions of PE per week, and an 'enhanced' status prisoner would be entitled to three sessions per week. As such, although policy advocates equitable access to physical education among prisoners, in practice sport is often used as a reward for good behaviour and/or a punishment for poor behaviour. As research continues to explore how physical activity can be used most effectively in prisons, efforts may need to be made to ensure that prisoners who have reduced privileges or specific needs (such as

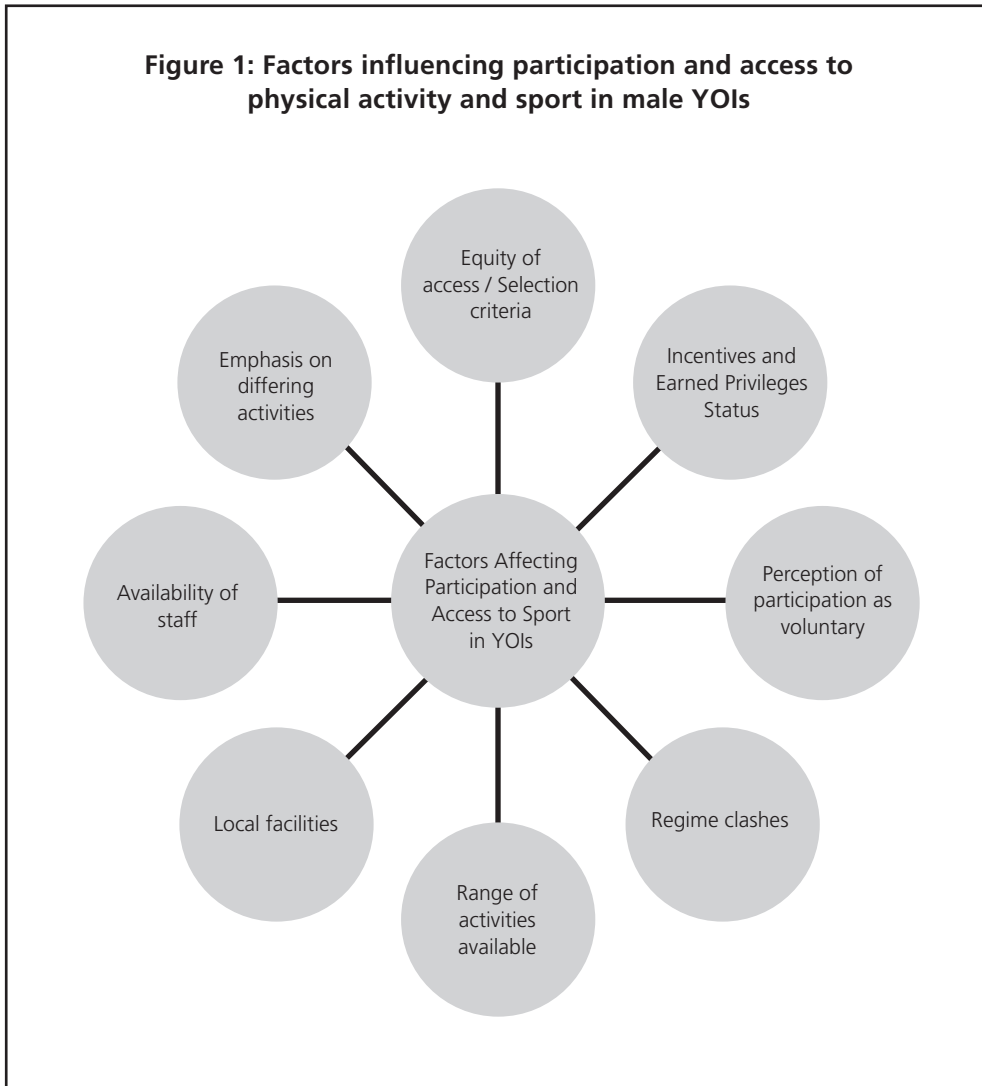
26. National Audit Office (2008). *Promoting Healthier Lifestyles for Prisoners*. London, UK: National Audit Office.

27. Rutten, E., Stams, G., Biesta, G., Schuengel, C., Dirks, E. & Hoeksma, J. (2007). The contribution of organised youth sport in antisocial and prosocial behaviour in adolescent athletes. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 36, 255-264.

28. Trulson, E. (1986). Martial Arts Training: A novel 'cure' for juvenile delinquency. *Human Relations*, 39, 1131-1140.

29. Tye, D. (2009). Children and Young People in Custody 2008–2009. *An analysis of the experiences of 15–18-year-olds in prison*. HM Inspectorate of Prisons/Youth Justice Board. London, UK: The Stationary Office.

Figure 1: Factors influencing participation and access to physical activity and sport in male YOIs



substantial mental health needs³⁰) have the opportunity to participate in appropriate and effective forms of physical activity.

In summarising the policy literature and content of the inspectorate reports, we propose that access to and participation in physical activity in YOIs can — in addition to the individual differences in prisoners’ interest in sport — be largely explained by the external factors summarised in Figure 1.

In practice, analysis of inspectorate reports across the male juvenile and young adult secure estate indicates substantial variation in delivery of sport within young offender institutions. Figure 2 provides an overview of this variation, illustrating the number of establishments that, according to inspectorate reports, successfully endorse the use of sport in promoting varied aspects of health and education, resettlement and community partnerships.

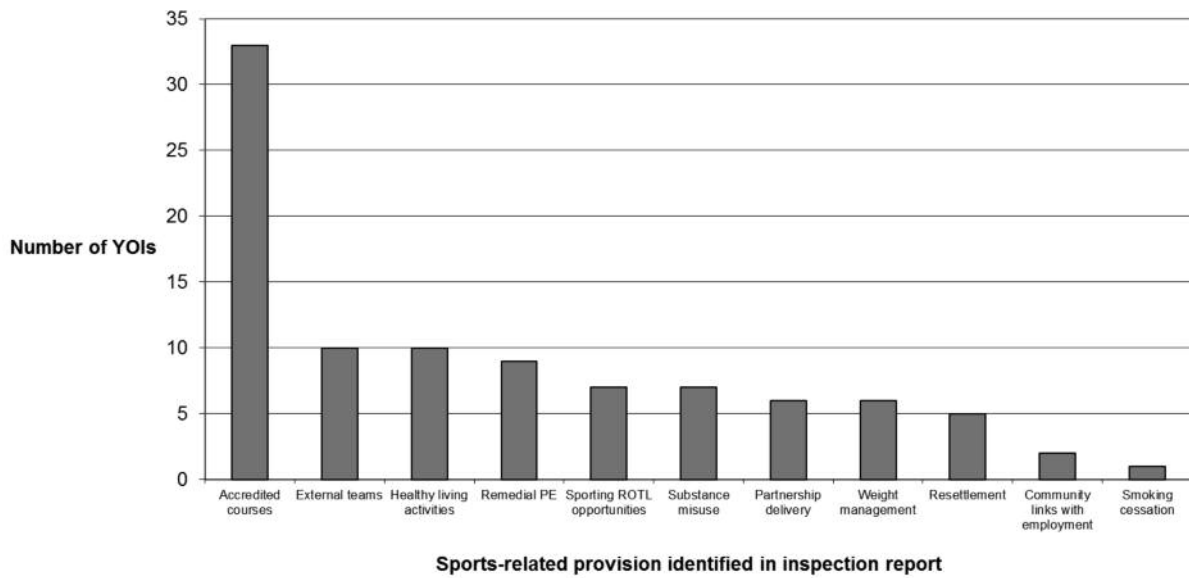
Physical and mental health

In considering the relationship between health promotion and physical education, current inspectorate reports from across the young offender estate suggest that the majority of PE departments have good working relationships with health care. Inspectorate reports for almost a third of the establishments explicitly referred to healthy living activities or exercise referral programmes incorporated into PE programmes. Remedial PE was noted as available in nine of the establishments and clear links to substance misuse programmes were identified for seven prisons. Several PE departments offered specific weight loss/gain programmes, and one PE department was explicitly linked with a smoking cessation programme. In previous research, Lewis and Heer³¹ identified an innovative scheme for

30. Harrington & Bailey (2005). *Mental Health Needs and Effectiveness of Provision for Young Offenders in Custody and in the Community*. London, UK: Youth Justice Board.

31. Lewis, E. & Heer, B. (2008). *Child Matters in Secure Settings: A practical toolkit for improving the health and well-being of young people*. London, UK: National Children’s Bureau.

Figure 2: Frequency of wider sports-related policy provision within the YOI estate



young adult offenders which aimed at improving physical and mental well-being through the use of physical activities to enhance confidence and develop social and emotional coping skills among those vulnerable to self-harm and bullying.

Nevertheless, when looking specifically at physical health, the accumulated inspectorate material and policy literature indicates that the degree to which health promotion is incorporated into PE programmes varies significantly across establishments, with some PE departments being able to make stronger links with health promotion than others. Initiatives promoting healthy living clearly have the potential to be integrated into PE delivery plans to ensure that the healthy prisons agenda¹⁵ is translated into practice within PE departments. For example, young prisoners have already been identified as being particularly resistant to healthy eating²³, so we would suggest that physical education departments are ideally situated to encourage and educate for better eating habits and work in partnership with those involved in wider health promotion remits. Moreover, introduction to physical activities through health promotion incentives and exercise on referral may also encourage prisoners to attend mainstream sporting activities with greater regularity.

Education, training and employment

Offering accredited courses represents one way in which delivery of PE can be aligned with the reducing reoffending agenda by empowering young people with the necessary skills to increase their employment options after release. However, although a key strand of the reducing reoffending agenda focuses on providing education and training to equip offenders with skills to increase the chance of employment on release²³, and despite the Prison Service Order previously stating that PE programmes must incorporate education and training as a key element, delivery of accredited programmes is no longer included as a minimum requirement of the PE Specification³². In practice however, almost all YOIs deliver PE related accredited learning courses and the Inspectorate of Prisons continues to review such provision. Inspectorate reports for thirty three of the thirty-four establishments considered explicitly referred to provision of accredited PE courses although the range and level available varied greatly across establishments. The range of accredited courses was however deemed to be limited in three young adult and one split site holding young adults and adults, while the courses available in three young adult and one mixed juvenile/young adult

32. Ministry of Justice (2011). *Physical Education (PE) for Prisoners*. PSI 58/2011.

establishment were only of a basic level. The range of accredited courses across the estate was diverse including GCSE PE, sports leader awards, certificates in diet and nutrition, awards in specific sporting activities, football coaching and junior manager awards, community sports leader awards, NVQs in sport, leisure and recreation, gym instructor and assistant qualifications. We also found evidence of qualifications offered in communication in the workplace, developing customer service and understanding personal physical fitness, Active IQ, HeartStart, first aid, Manual Handling and Duke of Edinburgh Awards, demonstrating a wide range of potential qualifications being drawn upon in this area.

Likewise, sports-based activities and placements for those eligible for Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) provide an especially valuable opportunity for physical activity to be integrated with resettlement concerns, and sports-related leave in order to facilitate participation with outside sports clubs can play a key role in preparing individuals for release³³. Inspectorate reports identified seven out of thirty-four establishments whose PE departments took advantage of the ROTL scheme to offer further opportunities for sport, physical activity and sports-based work placements in the community.

Community partnerships

In terms of utilising and developing community partnerships when delivering PE to young people in prison, although the relevant Prison Service Instruction and policy documents such as *Every Child Matters in Secure Settings*²⁷ advocate this, the actual practice is varied and patchy. Clear links with community sporting organisations and teams were noted in current inspectorate reports for fifteen out of the thirty-four establishments considered, and community links were identified as lacking at one juvenile establishment. However, dedicated Young

Offender establishments (as opposed to split sites) were more likely to be cited as having good community links: over half the inspectorate reports for dedicated sites made reference to community links, compared to only a quarter of those for establishments holding young offenders and adults. Those establishments who had developed external links utilised community partnership for varying purposes, but predominantly to facilitate matches with external teams and receive specialist coaching. For example, the inspectorate reports highlighted

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that some establishments worked in partnership with external organisations specifically to deliver sport to young offenders, for example two prisons delivered sports academies in partnership with local sports clubs while three others utilised professionals from external teams to plan and deliver coaching sessions. External partnerships in some instances also facilitated delivery of accredited courses. Given that partnership working and community links have been highlighted as a key element of best practice in the delivery of community based sports initiatives for young offenders^{31, 34} and in light of the elevated level of social isolation following incarceration, it is recommended that positive community partnerships should continue to be advocated and expanded in the delivery of sport in prisons.

Attitudes, thinking and behaviour

Existing policy clearly states that sport should also be promoted as a means to address offending attitudes and behaviours, but analysis of the YOI inspectorate reports suggests that in practice few YOIs explicitly target offending behaviour through sporting activities. Only five out of the thirty-four inspectorate reports identified sporting initiatives explicitly targeting offending behaviour. One way in which some YOIs have targeted offending behaviour and attitudes is through the delivery of team and group

33. Gras, L. (2005). Inmates on sports-related leaves: a decisive experience. *Champ Pénal*, Vol II. DOI: 10.4000/champpenal.2302.

34. Big Lottery Fund (2009). *New Opportunities for PE and Sport: Final Evaluation Summary*. Retrieved from: http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/er_eval_nopes_final_eval_summary.pdf

activities such as football, rugby, cricket, boxing and dance to encourage and develop prosocial behaviour and skills. Box 1 outlines one such intervention at HMP/YOI Portland as an example of good practice, whereby evaluation of the programme demonstrated significant improvements to critical elements such as attitudes towards offending as well as aggressive and impulsive behaviours⁸. Given that in community settings sport has effectively been used to engage young people and improve performance in activities which they don't like or are not motivated to engage in^{35,36}, and that active learning has been identified as a key element in the 'what works' reducing reoffending literature¹⁹, the limited examples of prison-based programmes suggest that sport may be particularly valuable in motivating young prisoners who are reluctant to engage in classroom-based offender behaviour programmes. In practice however, such incentives are not currently widespread in the juvenile and young adult estate, and their success is often contingent upon innovative delivery, drawing on community partnerships as well as internal expertise.

Conclusion

In sum, the practical delivery of sport to young offenders in custody in England and Wales is highly diverse and variable across establishments. Whilst the majority of establishments meet minimum policy standards in terms of access to physical education,

the degree to which the wider policy agendas of health promotion, education and training, and reducing reoffending are ingrained into the delivery of sport varies substantially, although the landscape continues to change rapidly. Clearly the distinct populations held and the availability of local resources prevents ubiquitous practice in the delivery of sport across young offender institutions. However, the examples identified demonstrate how key policy agendas can be more or less incorporated innovatively into physical education provision in order to improve the immediate and long term prospects of young prisoners. While policy makers and prison staff advocate sports potential to fulfil broader objectives, prisoners do not typically participate in sport to fulfil wider goals but rather for reasons associated with prison life itself⁵. Sport in particular then offers a unique means to address issues of health, offending behaviour and rehabilitation in a population which can be difficult to engage

and motivate through traditional means. Further work is required to identify and disseminate principles of best practice in order to inform policy, improve the evidence base, and encourage a move away from a universally uncritical acceptance of the positive value of all sports provision in current policy and practice.

This article is based on an extract from the forthcoming book by the first author, 'Sport in Prison', due to be published by Routledge in October 2013.

. . . the limited examples of prison-based programmes suggest that sport may be particularly valuable in motivating young prisoners who are reluctant to engage in classroom-based offender behaviour programmes.

35. Nichols, G. & Taylor, P. (1996). *West Yorkshire Sports Counselling: Final Evaluation Report*. Sheffield: University of Sheffield Management Unit.

36. Sharpe, C., Schagen, I. & Scott, E. (2004). *Playing for Success: The Longer Term Impact*. London, UK: Department for Education and Science/National Foundation for Educational Research.

Box 1. An example of good practice from HMP/YOI Portland's Sports Academies

Structure of the Academies

Seventy nine young men aged between 18 and 21 years participated in four sports academies delivered over 12-15 week periods from early 2010 to late 2011. The academies incorporated intensive football or rugby coaching, fitness training and matches, supplemented with group based activities. Activities were delivered by prison PE staff in collaboration with specialists from the community. Individually tailored resettlement case work was delivered during the course of the academies and continued after release by a transition worker employed by a partner community organisation, the 2ndChance Project. Case work aimed to identify and improve resettlement needs, challenge negative attitudes, and establish positive working relationships between the academy participants and a network of professionals, with the ultimate aim of preparing and supporting each individual for a successful transition from custody to the community.

Key Outcomes

Rigorous evaluation ^(See 8) revealed:

- Statistically significant improvements were identified on psychometric measures relating to beliefs about the use of aggression, impulsivity (with and without aggression) and general attitudes towards offending from prior to commencing the academies, immediately following the academies and up to 16 months after completing the academies.
- Staff and participants reported that the academies has a positive impact on quality of life with prison, promoted good behaviour, improved relationships between both prisoners and prisoners and staff, aided resettlement planning and the transition back to the community, improved offending attitudes and behaviours and promoted desistance from crime.

What Worked?

In terms of delivery, feedback from the young men involved and delivery staff highlighted the following key elements as contributing to the successful outcomes of the academies:

- High quality expert sports coaching and training.
- The opportunity to gain vocational qualifications.
- Partnership delivery and endorsement by community based sporting organisations.
- Personalised resettlement support delivered via a resettlement caseworker and that was on-going once released into the community.