



**YOUTH
SPORT
TRUST**

**WELL
SCHOOL
TRUST**

*Well Culture.
Lead Well.
Move Well.
Live Well.*

Principles in Practice

**Building a Strong Trust
Through PE, Sport and Play**





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This toolkit has been developed alongside school trusts, for trusts, and using the practice examples we have gathered from nine trusts across the country who are putting PE, sport and play at the heart of their Well School Trust approach and delivering on the strong trust principles.



Introduction

As we focus on what it means to be a strong Trust, the Well School principles can contribute much to the conversation about what makes school trusts highly effective.

This guide, on how to implement the principles of a strong Trust, brings welcome focus to how we use the power of PE, sport and play as an enabler, a unifier and source of hope. Its practical examples and self-reflection tools will support you in exploring how you might embrace the philosophy of a Well School Trust as we all strive to 'lead well' and address the increasing physical, emotional and social challenges faced by our students and staff.

The Well School movement is a community of schools committed to self-reflection, collaboration, and common moral purpose – it resonates beautifully with the principles of a strong trust. The Youth Sport Trust and Confederation of School Trusts are proud partners, and we hope you as the champions of change in education will find this toolkit both useful and inspiring.

**Steve Rollett, Deputy CEO,
Confederation of School Trusts**



Why Well School Trusts?

The evidence is overwhelming that children need to be physically active to live a healthy and happy life; multi-academy trusts have the gift of changing the narrative for 30.2% (2.2 million) of children who are already physically inactive, with evidenced, negative outcomes linked to both their education and their life.

We cannot solve all of society's challenges, but we do have the opportunity to significantly impact children's health. In doing this, we can reduce inequalities and positively impact learning, attendance, behaviour and achievement.

What is a Well School Trust?

A Well School Trust is a multi-academy trust (MAT), that explicitly prioritising the contribution of improved health and wellbeing to its strategic and improvement plans. It puts PE, sport and play at the heart of positive action across the schools it serves, as part of the improvement journey to be a strong Trust.

It understands that to deliver on the principles of a strong Trust there is a need to:

- Support and retain a **resilient workforce** that is healthy and well, in order to deliver **high quality education**, including for disadvantaged children and children with SEND, that addresses the **physical, mental, and social health and wellbeing needs** of pupils.

Why Is A Strong Trust A Well School Trust?

It acts on **working quickly to improve standards within all its schools, particularly transforming previously under performing schools** by:

- Supporting senior leaders, trustees, parents and staff to understand the connection between happy, healthy children and successful learning.
- Setting out a plan for how this will be achieved through:
 - effective central leadership teams
 - strong school leadership and teaching, and evidence-based curriculum design
 - its civic role within its communities.

As a foundation:

- It understands and can demonstrate the power of placing PE, sport and play at the heart of its strategic and improvement plans and
- It supports each of its schools to become a Well School within its individual contexts and communities.



The Evidence

The evidence shows that there is a clear link between higher levels of wellbeing, academic attainment, and other educational outcomes. There is also clear evidence of the contribution of PE, sport and play to improve:

- Health and wellbeing
- Reducing inequalities
- Behaviour and attendance
- Achievement and attainment.

The evidence shows that there is a clear link between higher levels of wellbeing, academic attainment, and other educational outcomes. There is also clear evidence of the contribution of PE, sport and play to improve:

- Health and wellbeing
- Reducing inequalities
- Behaviour and attendance
- Achievement and attainment. Multi-academy Trusts (MATs) are responsible for setting the culture and climate across multiple schools based on a clear vision and value set. Well School Trusts prioritise into their vision, values and strategic planning, the imperative for good health and wellbeing and they put PE, sport and play at the heart of positive action across the schools they serve.

Evidence¹²³ shows that happier teachers and happier children make for better learning environments. Well School Trusts are central to the ambition of the Well Schools movement in:

“Creating the happiest and healthiest schools in the world.”

Well School Trusts that put in place trust-wide approaches to promote pupil and staff health and wellbeing and create a Well Culture can show:

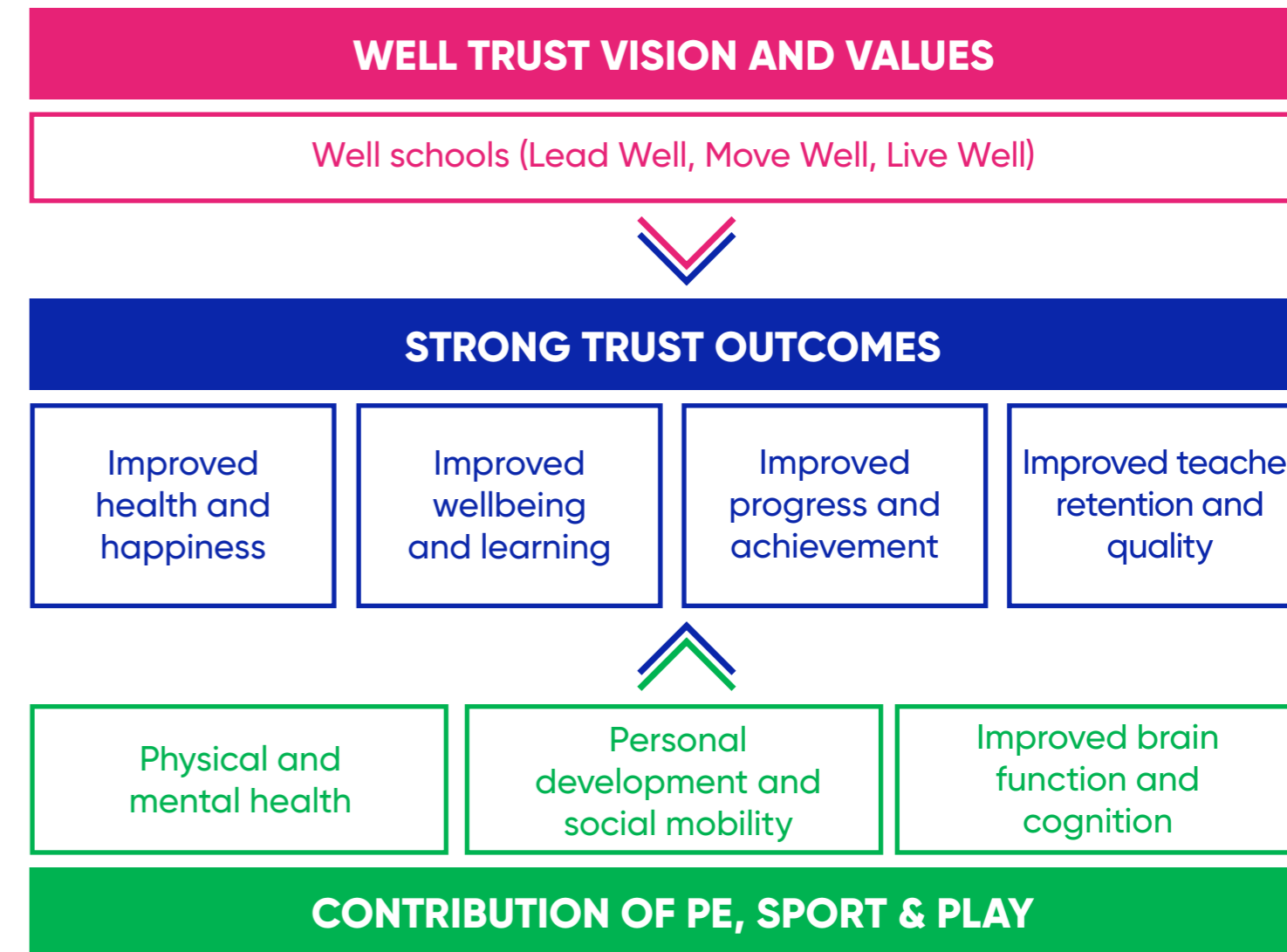
- Improved job satisfaction
- Increased staff retention
- Improvements in mental health
- Decreased probability of dropout
- Increased attendance
- Improved behaviour
- Increased motivation and engagement
- Higher self-efficacy
- Significant gains in attainment



Principles of a strong Trust

This guidance builds on the principles taken from the [DfE Trust Quality Descriptors](#), Confederation of School Trusts paper on [Building Strong Trusts](#) and [Building Strong Trusts Assurance Framework](#); it provides a diagnostic tool through which to:

- Self-reflect and prioritise areas for improvement.
- Develop plans to prioritise wellbeing and the role of PE, sport and play across the Trust and its schools.



It builds on the commitment a Well School Trust has across all their schools to support and retain a resilient workforce that is healthy and well and deliver high quality education, including for disadvantaged children and children with SEND. You can find the guidance on how to implement a whole trust approach to Well Schools [here](#).

Building on the Well Schools framework (Appendix 1) and aligning it to the Strong Trust domains as a basis for what a Trust aims to achieve across every school, the Well School Trust framework is outlined below:

<p>Well Culture Lead Well. Move Well. Live Well.</p>		<p>Wellbeing is put at the heart of school life and enables everyone to thrive and achieve their potential.</p>
<p>Well Culture Lead Well. Move Well. Live Well.</p>		<p>Staff and pupils are empowered to shape and lead their school</p>
<p>Well Culture Lead Well. Move Well. Live Well.</p>		<p>Every pupil is prepared physically and mentally for learning and for life</p>
<p>Well Culture Lead Well. Move Well. Live Well.</p>		<p>Every pupil is equipped with the essential skills to thrive in a digital world</p>



The Seven Domains of a Strong Trust

Trust Quality Descriptor / Strong Trust Domain – aligned with the Well School framework.

1. Strategic Governance – Well Culture

The trust anchors its strategy in the needs of its schools, the communities it serves and the wider educational system, putting health and wellbeing at the heart of its improvement plan to be a strong Trust, with PE, sport and play at the heart of positive action across its schools.

2. Expert Ethical Leadership – Well Culture

The Trust creates a culture of expert, ethical leadership based on the Seven Principles of Public Life. It creates a culture that values wellbeing at the heart of school life and enables everyone to thrive and achieve their potential. It acts by supporting senior leaders, trustees, and parents to understand the connection between happy, healthy children and successful learning.

3. High Quality, Inclusive Education – Move Well

The trust creates a culture embedding high quality, inclusive physical education and enrichment opportunities that is motivating and ambitious for all, especially disadvantaged children, and children with SEND, so that all pupils can achieve their potential.

4. School Improvement at Scale – Live Well

The Trust understands how the power of PE, sport and play can drive the quality and culture of continuous improvement across all schools; professional development is prioritised at the heart of school improvement planning, so all schools are able to use PE, sport and play to raise all educational outcomes, allowing children to thrive.

5. Workforce Resilience and Wellbeing – Lead Well

The Trust understands that to deliver on the principles of a strong Trust there is a need to support and retain a resilient workforce that is healthy and well, and that to deliver high quality education, including for disadvantaged children and children with SEND, that they need to address the physical and mental health needs of pupils.

6. Finance and Operations – Well Culture

The trust creates a positive working culture for all staff that promotes collaboration, aspiration, and support. Prioritising the contribution of improved health and wellbeing through collaborative improvement plans, the trust sets out how this will be achieved through effective central leadership teams, strong school leadership and teaching, evidence-based curriculum design and their civic role within their communities.

7. Public Benefit and Civic Duty – Well Culture

The Trust understands the role that sport and physical activity can play in supporting civic responsibilities and advancing education for common good, promoting the health and wellbeing of the whole community and enacts this through effective partnerships, plans and activities.

Your Self-Review

Every multi-academy trust's journey to becoming a Well School Trust will be different based on situation and context; it will take time to embed. There isn't a single approach to follow. This guide aims to help break down some of the important steps to becoming a Well School Trust and to signpost you to useful resources and helpful real-world case studies to spark your thinking.

Trust leaders who have already evolved towards and into Well School Trusts, have shared their approach, with some practical examples of how they have delivered their vision for a strong Trust, by addressing the health and wellbeing needs of their schools and through the power of PE, sport, and play.





This self-review is aimed at enabling the Trust to understand how to build a framework for health and wellbeing, including PE, sport and play, which will provide the foundation for the journey to becoming a Well School Trust. Completing this review of your current position will enable you to evaluate your current situation.

Consider whether two or three senior staff colleagues can complete this review independently and then come back to the table to discuss together?

Use your knowledge and understanding of your context to qualitatively evaluate your current situation, drawing in others to challenge your thinking. You will see how the case studies support a unique approach to your context of your Well School Trust. Keep in mind through this self-evaluation "How do your contextual strengths create opportunities for your Trust?"



 1. Strategic Governance	The trust anchors its strategy in the needs of its schools, the communities it serves and the wider educational system, putting health and wellbeing at the heart of its improvement plan to be a strong Trust, with PE, sport and play at the heart of positive action across its schools.			
	Emerging	Established	Embedded	Next Steps
Our Trust puts the health and wellbeing of staff and pupils at the heart of its improvement plan and clearly articulates its place in the trust's vision statement and curriculum of its schools.				
The Trust's vision and values align with the health and wellbeing needs of its communities.				
Our Trustees understand the meaning and importance of health and wellbeing and the value of PE, sport and play in meeting the needs of the trust and wider communities.				
Work to promote health and wellbeing is identified in the Trust strategy and there is clear strategic direction for the development of PE, sport, and play.				
Our physical school environments are safe, inviting, and inspiring spaces to learn and work in. Playground and recreation areas are inviting, and have a variety of spaces for pupils to be active in.				
Local governing boards keep health and wellbeing on the agenda (and use to inform decision making) within individual schools and support a whole school approach to wellbeing.				

 2. Expert Ethical Leadership	The Trust creates a culture of expert, ethical leadership based on the Seven Principles of Public Life. It creates a culture that values wellbeing at the heart of school life and enables everyone to thrive and achieve their potential. It acts by supporting senior leaders, trustees, and parents to understand the connection between happy, healthy children and successful learning.			
	Emerging	Established	Embedded	Next Steps
Our Trust places as much emphasis and support on staff wellbeing as they do children's wellbeing.				
A team of people have strategic responsibility for health and wellbeing across the Trust.				
The culture of the trust means that positive health and wellbeing is supported and promoted through ethos, policies, and curriculum, and it flows out into the wider trust community too.				
Our senior leaders understand how through their ethical leadership the importance of how PE, sport and play can contribute to improved physical, social, and emotional wellbeing outcomes for all pupils, and embed it as a tool for trust improvement.				
Our Trust builds capacity, expertise, and credibility into the leadership team around health and wellbeing and the contribution of PE, sport and play.				
Positive relationships around the importance of wellbeing, PE, sport and play exist between staff, pupils, and families, and engender a sense of belonging for all.				



3. High Quality And Inclusive Education

The trust creates a culture embedding high quality, inclusive physical education and enrichment opportunities that is motivating and ambitious for all, especially disadvantaged children, and children with SEND, so that all pupils can achieve their potential.

	Emerging	Established	Embedded	Next Steps
Our Trust has a shared understanding of high quality, inclusive physical education, and know what this looks like in practice.				
Our Trust knows how to improve our schools to deliver high quality, inclusive and prioritises it as part of a balanced education.				
Our Trust supports schools to ensure the design & implementation of a high quality, inclusive physical education curriculum and ensures all pupils achieve good outcomes.				
Our schools have a diverse range of clubs for pupils before, during and after school that encourage all young people to engage in physical activity.				
Our Trust enables all pupils to engage in sporting activities and leadership, that supports them to develop the life skills to move on to the next stage of education or training and be prepared as confident citizens.				
Our schools have a movement culture throughout the school day from active travel to active learning opportunities.				
Our schools provide at least 2 hours of high-quality physical education to all pupils as part of the curriculum.				
Our schools value and utilise targeted interventions for groups of pupils (e.g., SEND, faith, girls) to personalise their physical activity experience ensuring it is inclusive, accessible and meaningful.				
Outdoor learning is encouraged in all schools so pupils learn whilst being active and connect with the natural world.				



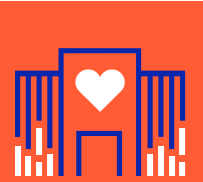
4. School Improvement at Scale

The Trust understands how the power of PE, sport and play can drive the quality and culture of continuous improvement across all schools; professional development is prioritised at the heart of school improvement planning so all schools are able to use PE, sport and play to raise all educational outcomes.

	Emerging	Established	Embedded	Next Steps
Our Trust seeks out and understands the best available PE, sport and play research and evidence, which is mobilised through the Trust leadership to ensure improved outcomes for pupils.				
Our Trust uses the available evidence to build capacity and deploy leadership to drive strategy which results in accessible sport and physical activity for all pupils.				
Our Trust knows that building strong structures for groups of schools will facilitate better professional development for the PE community enabling all to build knowledge and to draw upon experience and expertise across various contexts.				
Our Trust enables open communication and knows our situation and our context. We have the capacity and ability to develop and apply a tailored and strong model for improving health and wellbeing of pupils and staff.				
Our Trust provides a framework to connect, across all schools, all elements of physical and mental health and wellbeing to support sustainable school improvement which evolves and strengthens over time.				
Our Trust understands how specialist roles (e.g. SLE's, SGO's) can be deployed to mobilise and build knowledge, expertise and experience throughout the Trust.				
Our Trust systems and processes enable us to recognise quickly when the quality of PE, sport and play is falling, and intervention is rapid through effective deployment of expertise.				

5. Workforce Resilience and Wellbeing				
The Trust understands that in order to deliver on the principles of a strong Trust there is a need to support and retain a resilient workforce that is healthy and well, and that to deliver high quality education, including for disadvantaged children and children with SEND, that they need to address the physical and mental health needs of pupils.				
	Emerging	Established	Embedded	Next Steps
Our Trust understands that we must take care of staff wellbeing to create a culture that allows everyone to work towards achieving their potential.				
Our senior leaders model and champion efforts to support health and wellbeing, their own included, and ensure whole-school approaches to wellbeing are implemented effectively.				
Our governing bodies have a good knowledge and understanding of health and wellbeing issues and support the senior leadership team and wider trust community.				
Our Trust provides support to enable staff to reflect on and to take actions to enhance their own wellbeing. They are supported to develop behaviour change in healthy active lifestyles.				
Our Trust recognises the role of physical activity in improved physical and mental health and embeds it as part of approaches to improving staff wellbeing.				

6. Finance and Operations				
The trust creates a positive working culture for all staff that promotes collaboration, aspiration, and support. Prioritising the contribution of improved health and wellbeing through collaborative improvement plans, the trust sets out how this will be achieved through effective central leadership teams, strong school leadership and teaching, evidence-based curriculum design and their civic role within their communities.				
	Emerging	Established	Embedded	Next Steps
Our Trust collaborates on the co-ordination, management and delivery of PE, sport and play, providing clear strategic direction around the development of the subject and activities, such as curriculum development, staff CPD & sharing practice.				
Our Trust utilises resources for the co-ordination of PE, sport and play efficiently across its schools to achieve the widest benefit for all.				
We provide centrally organised trust-wide enrichment opportunities through PE, sport and play that build a sense of belonging, identity and connect staff, pupils, and families (such as competitive sport, physical activity opportunities, holiday clubs).				
Our Trust supports and challenges primary schools to effectively manage and spend the Primary PE & School Sport Premium in line with DfE guidance to support all children and young people to live healthy active lives.				



7. Civic Duty/Public Benefit

The Trust understands the role that sport and physical activity can play in supporting civic responsibilities and advancing education for common good, promoting the health and wellbeing of the whole community and enacts this through effective partnerships, plans and activities.

	Emerging	Established	Embedded	Next Steps
Our Trust understands the role that sport and physical activity can play in supporting our civic responsibilities and promoting the health and wellbeing of the whole community.				
Our trust and schools work in partnership and build relationships locally, regionally, and nationally to deliver on civic outcomes through sport and physical activity across education, health, sport and community organisations.				
Our Trust and schools seek opportunities to open school facilities for the benefit of the health and wellbeing of local communities				
Parents/carers are engaged in the importance of wellbeing and the wider value of physical activity, sport, and play.				
Our website and communications emphasise the importance of wellbeing, sport, physical activity, and play.				

Next Steps

Your journey to becoming a Well School Trust has begun. By now you will have identified the areas in which your Trust is strong, the areas that are developing and some areas that will be a brand-new venture.

Remember that all Well Schools Trusts are a continuous work in progress, responding to the ever-changing educational landscape and ever evolving community that their Trust is serving. The most important aspect of becoming a Well School Trust is taking those continuous steps towards improvement and reaching out to those that are on the same path.

We have created a platform where you can access the Steps to Success guidance, a free-to-access Well Check and a range of resources, podcasts and further support for your Well School Trust journey at the website below.

CASE STUDIES

You can access the full range of case studies that are referenced in the guide on the Well Schools website. These examples cover a range of MATs from different contexts, with different sizes and needs.

You will find all of this at:
www.youthsporttrust.org/well-schools

References

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-link-between-pupil-health-and-wellbeing-and-attainment>
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- <https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/4971bc14-d459-4e68-b6c3-e9d9f7a014e5/downloads/Executive%20Summary%20Why%20we%20need%20to%20measure%20stude.pdf?ver=1567521571970>

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Coach Evolution

Well Culture.

Wellbeing is put at the heart of school life and enables everyone to thrive and achieve their potential.



- ♥ School Leadership
- ♥ Wellbeing Measurement
- ♥ Community Engagement
- ♥ Inclusion & Diversity
- ♥ Physical Environment



Lead Well.

Staff and pupils are empowered to shape and lead their school

- Staff voice & pupil voice
- Workload support
- Professional development
- Wellbeing governors
- Staff personal development



Move Well.

Every pupil is prepared physically and mentally for learning and for life

- Physical education
- Extracurricular provision
- Unstructured active play
- Daily activity
- Competitive opportunities
- Activity delivery



Live Well.

Every pupil is equipped with the essential skills to thrive in a digital world

- Leadership opportunities
- Volunteering
- Educational visits
- Health & wellbeing curriculum
- Mental health support





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