Essendine Primary School

Working together, growing together.

Impact of Sports Grant 2024-2025

At Essendine, we recognise how vital physical exercise is for our pupils' well-being and personal growth. We see every day how high-quality, enjoyable PE can boost our children's development—helping them lead happier, healthier lives.

We believe that sport, health, and fitness are essential for a fulfilling life. This belief is reinforced by the positive changes we notice in our pupils when they are physically active. Our PE curriculum is designed to help children build spatial awareness, teamwork, sport-specific skills, and a growth mindset.

Through a wide range of activities—including games, athletics, swimming, dance, gymnastics, and outdoor adventurous challenges—we encourage pupils to develop both physically and mentally. We also give children the chance to try less well-known sports, take part in cycling proficiency, and stay active throughout the school day, including at playtime.

Competition and sportsmanship are central to our approach. We nurture enthusiasm and engagement, while promoting values such as fairness and respect. Our goal is to tackle rising obesity rates by making physical activity part of daily life for all pupils.

By constantly reviewing and improving our PE provision, we aim to create a supportive, enriching environment where every child at Essendine can thrive—physically, mentally, and socially.

ey indicator 1: The engagement of all pupils in regular physical activity – Chief Medical Officers guidelines recommend that primary school pupils undertake at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day in school

Our PE subject lead works closely with staff throughout the year, sharing expertise and supporting the development of all learners across our sports offer. This includes modelling activities, supplying resources and equipment, and demonstrating engaging teaching strategies for sports such as cricket, basketball, football, gymnastics, and tennis.

Teachers consistently deliver two hours of PE each week, either in blocks or split sessions. In addition, playground staff coordinate the use of play equipment every day at break and lunchtime, further increasing opportunities for physical activity and skill development.

This whole-school approach is having a clear impact. Pupils are more engaged in practising skills and participating in team games. One pupil commented, "Every day we get to improve our football skills, and I know that I am improving." Senior leaders have observed more children actively engaged in skill-based activities or team games during playtimes.

To maximise focus and participation, PE lessons are structured using 'chunking', with activities lasting no longer than 15 minutes before a brain break or a change in task. This approach supports children's attention spans and ensures high levels of engagement.

Additionally, regular mindfulness practice after break times helps maintain calm and focused classrooms, which has been reflected in excellent behaviour for learning during learning walks.

The positive impact of sports leadership is evident across the school. Teachers are confidently guiding and engaging pupils, leading to improved focus, task completion, and enthusiasm for physical activity—a sentiment echoed by both children and senior leaders.

“We have started the daily mile in year 5. It started off hard but has got easier.”

-Year 5 child.

“Children at Essendine are provided with a tailored, broad and outstanding curriculum offer. We emphasise personal development, regular opportunities for practice and a range of extra-curricular events. A very large majority of our children report that they look forward to PE each week, and we will continue to build on this enthusiasm and engagement.”

-**Jason Clarridge, Assistant Headteacher**

I learnt how to ride a bike this year; I’m definitely going to get a bike now.”

-Year 6 child.

Our carefully planned and well-delivered weekly PE sessions have led to strong progress across all pupils, with the majority achieving good or better outcomes, as evidenced by end-of-unit assessment data. The positive impact of these sessions is reflected in pupil voice, with 98% of pupils expressing enjoyment and enthusiasm for PE. This enthusiasm has translated into increased motivation, confidence and subject knowledge, fostering a more active and engaged learning environment.

To ensure these skills are transferable beyond PE lessons, we have provided a variety of enrichment opportunities. These include inter-school competitions such as a football tournament hosted at Essendine in partnership with Queens Park Primary and notable achievements such as winning 1st place in the Westminster Year 5/6 Tag Rugby competition. This was followed up with a 3rd place finish in the Westminster Year 5/6 Boys Football event.





We have also established valuable links with external organisations to broaden participation and inclusivity. One such initiative is *Girls Allowed*, which aims to increase sports participation among girls and young women through inclusive and engaging activities. This has further supported our goal of creating equal access to sport for all students.

In promoting the holistic benefits of sport, we organised an inspirational visit from a Paralympian, who spoke in assembly about his journey, resilience and the role sport played in overcoming adversity—helping to build awareness and foster determination across our school community.

We also welcomed a visit from the Lord Mayor of Westminster, who reinforced the importance of daily exercise and promoted the Daily Mile initiative during an assembly.





Additionally, we participated in the Mini-Marathon, with 100% attendance from all 20 places offered, highlighting a strong school-wide commitment to active participation.



To sustain this momentum, we collaborated with Sports Inspired to deliver leadership training to Year 5 pupils, developing them into Playground Ambassadors. These pupils now help facilitate active, inclusive and fair play during breaktimes, promoting positive behaviour and peer engagement in physical activity.

These efforts collectively demonstrate that sport at our school is not limited to curriculum time—it is becoming embedded in the culture and daily life of our students. Through consistent opportunities and a focus on enjoyment, equity and leadership, we are helping to instil lifelong habits of physical activity and wellbeing.



Key indicator 2: The profile of PESSPA being raised across the school as a tool for whole school improvement

The profile of PESSPA (Physical Education, School Sport and Physical Activity) continues to rise across the school, making a significant contribution to whole-school improvement. Daily monitoring of playtimes and lunchtimes has revealed a notable increase in pupil engagement with structured activities. These sessions support the development of both general and specific gross and fine motor skills, helping to build coordination, balance and physical confidence across all age groups.

Our ongoing partnership with Lord's Cricket Ground has provided pupils with opportunities to develop their cricket skills under the expert guidance of highly qualified coaches. This specialist input has led to improved technical ability while raising aspirations among our pupils. The collaboration with the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) has further enhanced their understanding and appreciation of cricket as a sport. These experiences have not only supported physical development but enriched the overall learning journey through planned cross-curricular visits to Lords throughout the academic year. As a result of this high-quality provision, many children have joined cricket clubs outside of school.

One Year 6 pupil shared, *"I joined a cricket club at Lords where I've been going for over a year. I enjoyed cricket in school and the visits from the coaches. I go every Friday and take part in mixed sessions."*





Sport plays a central role in our after-school provision. A wide variety of disciplines are offered, allowing pupils to discover and participate in sports that suit their interests and abilities. Sessions are delivered by a mix of external professional coaches and enthusiastic teaching staff. This year, a specialist dance teacher joined the team, delivering fully booked and highly praised sessions. Additionally, a member of staff with a passion for tag rugby has led a successful upper Key Stage 2 club, resulting in our team's victory at the Westminster Tag Rugby Tournament. Our football club, led by the PE lead, focuses not only on skill development but also on promoting sportsmanship and teaching pupils how to win and lose respectfully. These values are embedded in every session and are central to our school's ethos.

Our PSHE curriculum closely supports and aligns with our sporting provision, helping pupils understand the physical and mental benefits of regular activity. We teach that exercise can improve concentration, energy levels and sleep—factors that support academic performance. Sport also plays a vital role in supporting mental health by helping to reduce stress and anxiety. Pupils develop essential life skills such as discipline, respect and self-regulation through structured sports activities.

As noted by our Assistant Head for Standards, "A reduction in low-level behaviour incidents is evident over the year," demonstrating the positive influence of sport on overall behaviour.

Through team activities and competition, children learn to persevere, manage success and disappointment, and build resilience.

One Year 4 pupil said, "I was proud competing for Essendine in the Year 3/4 girls football tournament," highlighting how these experiences contribute to a strong sense of school identity and belonging.

Exposure to elite athletes, including Paralympians, and access to competitive opportunities have further raised pupils' aspirations and encouraged goal-setting. For example, one Year 6 pupil is now playing for Reading Football Club, a journey that began with school sport.

These opportunities not only inspire but show pupils what is possible with commitment and passion. Celebrating sporting achievements in weekly assemblies reinforces a positive school culture, giving pupils a sense of pride and recognition.

Crucially, our approach to sport is inclusive. All pupils, including those with SEND and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are supported in accessing high-quality, meaningful sporting opportunities. This commitment to inclusion has resulted in proud moments, such as our SEND team finishing second at the Moberly SEND Sports Competition.

Sport at Essendine is not only improving physical literacy but is also a powerful tool for supporting personal development, wellbeing, and lifelong skills, helping to drive sustained and meaningful improvement across the whole school.

Key indicator 3: Increased confidence, knowledge and skills of all staff in teaching PE and sport

Assessments conducted at the conclusion of each unit of work consistently demonstrate pupil progress and achievement in line with expected curriculum outcomes. These assessments provide a reliable measure of students' development in physical education (PE), ensuring that all children make at least expected progress from their initial baselines. A key priority remains to maintain and monitor this trajectory of improvement across all year groups.

Staff have reported that the use of assessment materials from a structured scheme has introduced greater rigour to evaluating key skills and knowledge areas. This has significantly enhanced teacher confidence in making accurate and informed judgments. The detailed breakdown of skills within our PE curriculum has enabled teachers to clearly articulate learning objectives and effectively address misconceptions, particularly in sports where they have less prior experience.

The PE lead's ongoing professional development through the PE and School Sports Network has strengthened the quality of provision across the school. Training focused on the holistic benefits of sport, promoting active participation, and reducing downtime has been shared with staff, resulting in more dynamic, inclusive, and engaging PE lessons. Informal monitoring and tracking of pupil activity levels by the PE lead and sports coach have ensured these practices are consistently and effectively embedded.

In addition, the PE lead and sports coach have provided tailored support to new teachers and HLTAs, ensuring they feel confident and capable in delivering high-quality PE lessons. This has included planning support, one-to-one mentoring and in-class modelling of effective teaching strategies.

"I had never previously taught PE at my last school; therefore, the PE lead was instrumental in helping me with planning, mentoring, and modelling effective sessions with my class."
— Anna Cousins, Year 3 Teacher

Teachers now deliver PE with increased confidence, supported by the Rising Stars scheme, which offers structured, adaptable planning. The scheme breaks down each skill into clear, progressive steps, enabling staff to deliver engaging, high-quality lessons across all year groups. The PE lead plays a pivotal role in developing staff expertise by modelling techniques, clarifying rules and strategies, and differentiating tasks to meet diverse learner needs.

Key indicator 4: Broader experience of a range of sports and activities offered to all pupils

To enhance student engagement and skill development, we prioritise broadening access to a wide variety of extracurricular sports and activities. We believe that offering diverse physical opportunities is vital in developing lifelong interest in sport and physical activity. This year, we have significantly expanded our extracurricular provision. Teachers and external coaches have led a wide range of after-school clubs, including parkour, multi-sports, dance, fitness, tag rugby and football. Our partnership with Sport England has been instrumental in enabling this wider offer.

A standout highlight was the participation of our Year 3 and Year 4 pupils in the Sports Inspired Festival at Moberly Sports Centre. This all-day event gave students the chance to try new activities such as judo, boxing and dance, helping to broaden their sporting horizons and spark new interests. Due to the success of this event, we are confirmed to take part in the Summer Sports Festival at the same venue in July.

Professional development for staff has supported this broadened offer. The PE Lead has delivered CPD through team teaching, mentoring and modelling high-quality PE practice—particularly supporting new teachers in developing confidence and competence in delivering PE lessons.

Through CPD with the NFL Flag Football programme, we introduced this new sport to the school, receiving £650 worth of equipment. The skills taught in NFL Flag Football complement those in tag rugby, enriching our PE curriculum with transferable skills.

We continue to embed fundamental movement skills (FMS) across the school—focusing on locomotor (e.g. running, jumping), stability (e.g. twisting, balancing), and manipulative (e.g. throwing, catching) competencies. These skills form the bedrock of our PE curriculum and ensure pupils are physically prepared for a wide variety of activities.

Our PE curriculum offers well-rounded coverage, including dance, gymnastics, invasion games, striking and fielding, cricket, tennis, and dodgeball. This breadth ensures our pupils experience a comprehensive and inclusive physical education, supporting both physical development and overall well-being.

Key indicator 5: Increased participation in competitive sport

To enhance participation in competitive sport, we have introduced a range of initiatives tailored to the needs and interests of our school community. These initiatives have aimed to provide accessible, inclusive and meaningful competitive opportunities for all pupils.

One of our key strategies has been to organise and participate in inter-school competitions. Friendly fixtures with local schools, including Queens Park Primary, have enabled pupils to represent Essendine and experience the value of competition. During one such fixture, a Year 5 pupil shared:

“I enjoyed competing against another school because we got to meet and play with people of different abilities and make friends.”
– Year 5 pupil

In addition to inter-school sport, we have prioritised intra-school competitions, ensuring that every child in Years 3–6 has taken part in competitive sporting activities within school. These have included events in football, tag rugby, netball, basketball and more. These experiences have fostered teamwork, resilience and a strong sense of sportsmanship among pupils.

Our annual Sports Day continues to be a highlight of the school year. Scheduled for early July, it is designed to celebrate effort and progress, not just winning. Pre-event briefings and the use of rewards linked to values such as perseverance, encouragement and growth mindset have reinforced positive attitudes toward competition across the school.





This year, Essendine has participated in the highest number of competitive events in recent years, spanning a wide range of sports and involving pupils from all year groups. Equal representation of boys and girls has been a priority, with efforts made to ensure inclusive participation across the board. Pupils have enjoyed the opportunity to compete in sports they've learned in PE and practised during playtimes.

Looking ahead, the PE Lead is actively planning to expand our competitive sport offer even further in the next academic year. This includes establishing more inter-school links, hosting additional tournaments, and embedding sport more deeply into the school's extracurricular and enrichment programme.

The sports grant has played a transformative role at Essendine, enhancing cultural capital, improving pupil wellbeing, and embedding a vibrant, school-wide culture of physical activity. As a result of our targeted initiatives, we have seen increased pupil engagement in regular physical activity, a raised profile of PE, school sport, and physical activity (PESSPA), and greater staff confidence and competence in delivering high-quality PE lessons. The grant has also enabled us to offer a broader and more inclusive range of sports and activities, alongside a significant rise in pupil participation in competitive sport. We are proud of the progress made and remain committed to building on this positive momentum in the years ahead.