

Coaching Children Curriculum

A Guide for Governing Bodies of Sport



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Contributing authors: David Haskins, Sue Jolly and Sergio Lara-Bercial

Technical editor: Rod Thorpe

Project lead officer: Sergio Lara-Bercial

Coachwise editorial and design team: Abi Masha and Carl Heath.

sports coach UK would like to thank the following group of experts, led by Graham Ross and Steve McQuaid, who, back in 2008, produced the background documents that form the basis of the *Coaching Children Curriculum*: Professor Richard Bailey; Istvan Balyi; Clive Brewer; Dave Collins; Jean Côté, Pat Duffy; and Rod Thorpe.

Carol Hawman wrote the original content for the Developing and Sustaining Participation sections of the Participant Development Model. This has been edited and adapted by David Haskins.

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sports coach UK
Chelsea Close
Off Amberley Road
Armley
Leeds LS12 4HP
Tel: 0113-274 4802 Fax: 0113-231 9606
Email: coaching@sportscoachuk.org
Website: www.sportscoachuk.org



Coachwise Limited
Chelsea Close
Off Amberley Road
Armley
Leeds LS12 4HP
Tel: 0113-231 1310 Fax: 0113-231 9606
Email: enquiries@coachwise.ltd.uk
Website: www.coachwise.ltd.uk

Throughout this resource, the pronouns he, she, him, her and so on are interchangeable and intended to be inclusive of both males and females.

sports coach UK will ensure that it has professional and ethical values and that all its practices are inclusive and equitable.

FOREWORD

I was delighted to be asked to write the foreword for sports coach UK's *Coaching Children Curriculum*. The *Curriculum* takes us a major step nearer to shaping the form of development that may be required if we are to produce quality coaches of children. The sporting world has always acknowledged the importance of the children's coach, but it is only over the last three years that coordinated attempts have been made to design a generic curriculum that would provide guidelines for the progressive development of the coach.

While governing bodies of sport will determine the specific curriculum for their sports, it is hoped that this generic *Coaching Children Curriculum* will be helpful in ensuring that those aspects recognised as important when coaching children of different ages are embraced. It remains important to understand the tactical and technical aspects of an activity, but it is hoped that, by encouraging coaches to address the broader physical and mental aspects together with the personal and social aspects (encapsulated in the '5Cs'), we will be better able to prepare children for a future in physical activity and sport.

I am also pleased to see that this is an ongoing process; a danger with setting in print is that it can become 'set in stone'. There is still much to be done if we are to identify and synthesise those 'soft' skills that allow us to say: 'there is a great coach of children'; but a start has been made.

One final point is that now the importance of children's coaches is 'formally' recognised and there is a pathway to become a high-level coach of children, we, and society in general, have to recognise and applaud them.



Rod Thorpe

Rod is a central figure in developments in sports leadership, TOP Play and TOP Sport, Teaching Games for Understanding, Games Sense, and many other resources. Rod has spent over 40 years encouraging us all to think about the way we lead, teach and coach children.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2008, sports coach UK published its vision for the UK Coaching System: *The UK Coaching Framework*, which laid out plans for the development of a cohesive, ethical, inclusive and valued coaching system where skilled coaches support participants at each stage of their development.

A fundamental premise of The Framework rests on the centrality of the participant within the coaching system. In other words, there are coaches because there are people that take part in sport and physical activity. It is the specific needs and wants of each participant that coaches must fulfil as part of their day-to-day coaching practice.

It is clear then that a 'one size fits all' approach to coaching and coach development will not meet the needs of all participants.

Over the past few years, sports coach UK has developed generic Participant (PDM) and Coach Development (CDM) Models. The models offer a visual representation of the broad populations involved in sport and the different types of coaches needed to serve them. They also provide an opportunity to look into the future to see what the landscape could look like and the coaches that would be needed to make it work.

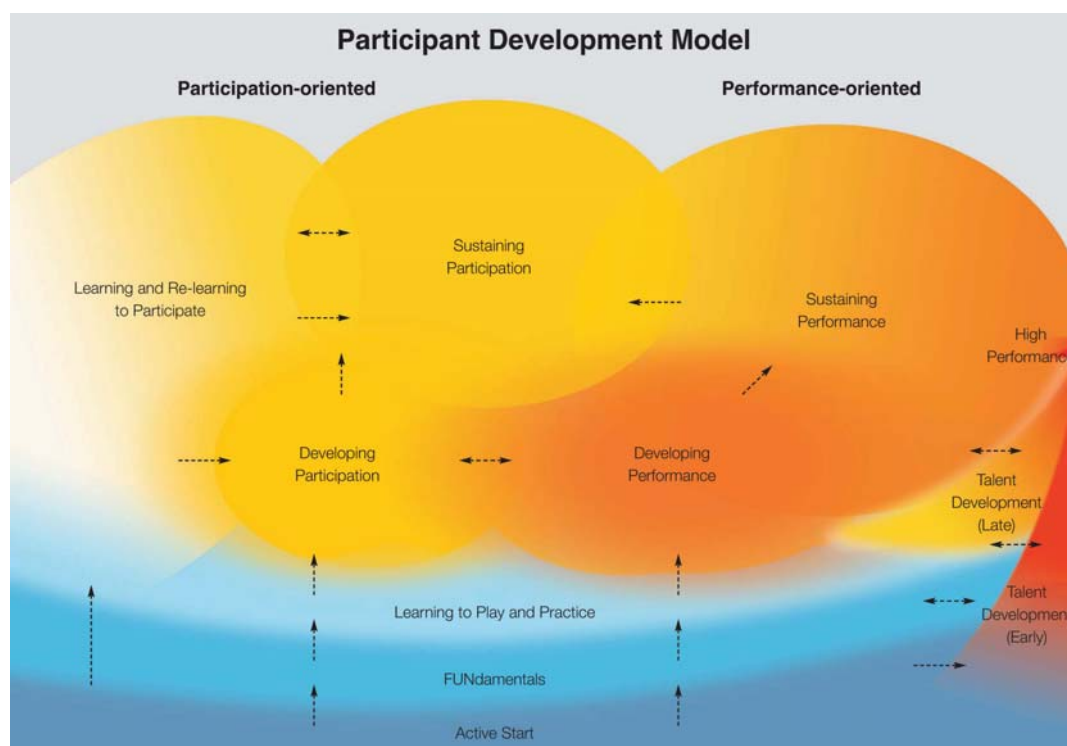
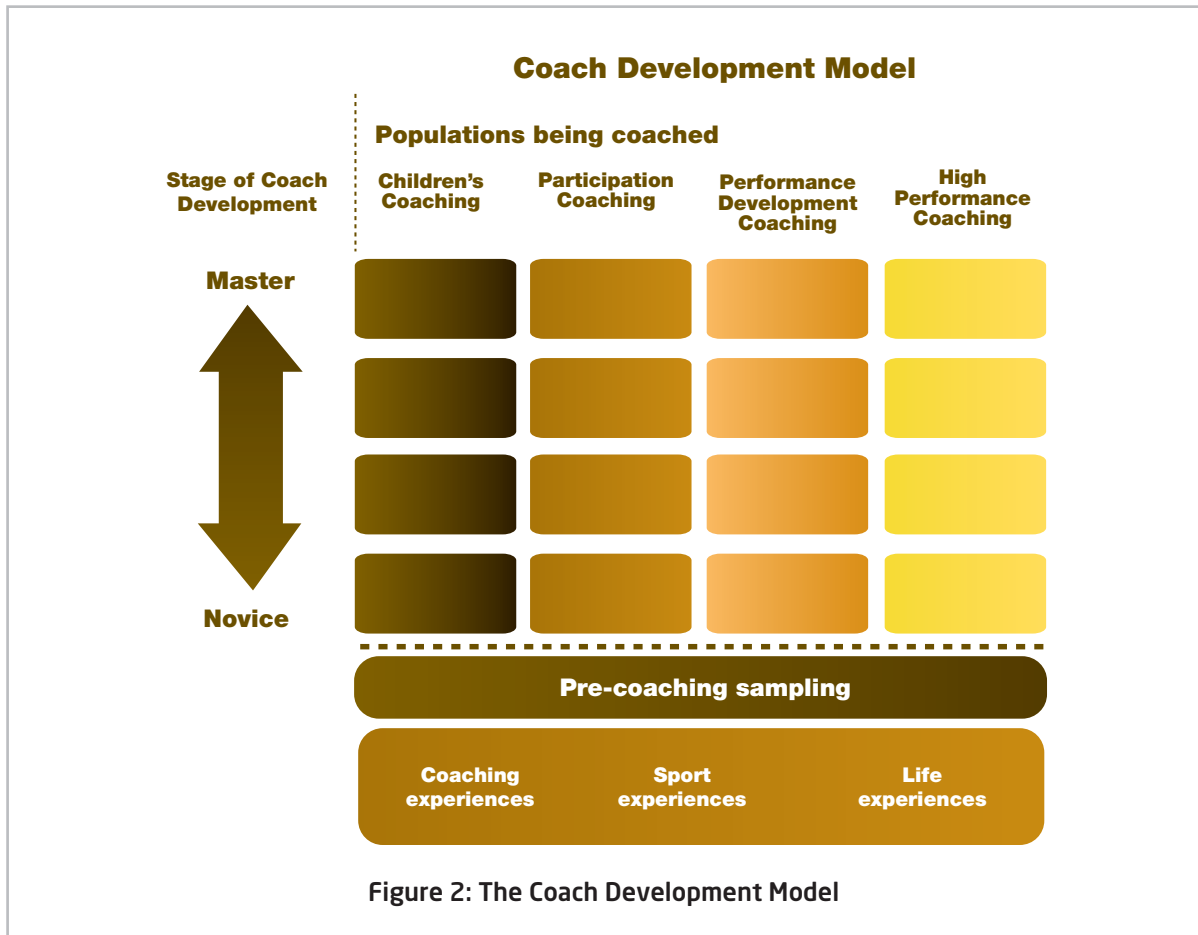


Figure 1: The Participant Development Model



As stated previously, different populations have different needs and wants; therefore, coaches have to be equipped with different knowledge, skills and attributes to be able to fulfil the needs of the specific populations they work with and the individual participants within such groups. Sports have also been working very hard to understand their current landscape and develop their own specific models.

The Framework identified the children's segment of the PDM as a priority within the overall development of the UK coaching system. Reasons for this include:

- early experiences of sport have been shown to greatly influence an individual's future involvement and engagement
- the development of fundamental movement skills early in childhood has a significant effect in the level and quality of physical competence attained in maturity
- sport has been identified as a very important vehicle

for the development of skills in children that go beyond the track, pitch or gym (ie social, personal and interpersonal skills, self-confidence, self-worth, community cohesion, healthy lifestyles etc)

- nearly 80% of coaches in the UK coach children.

In order to address the needs of this participant population, sports coach UK, in consultation with industry partners such as the Youth Sport Trust, the Association for Physical Education, the Child Protection in Sport Unit, Home Country Sports Councils and a wide array of coach deployers and employers, has developed the *Coaching Children Action Plan 2010–2013*. One of the key priorities identified in the plan was the creation of a curriculum for children's coaches.

The *Coaching Children Curriculum* is envisaged as a live document that will continue to evolve in light of new research and following consolidation of best practice in the field. It provides governing bodies of sport with the most up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the generic needs of children in and through sport.

In turn, this supports the creation of appropriate, generic and/or sport- and environment-specific training opportunities for children's coaches, leading to the development of a specialist workforce to ensure children across the UK follow their dreams, have fun and realise their potential in and through sport.

It is our view that the enhanced awareness gained from the contextualisation and application of this curriculum to specific sports could also highlight the need for certain systemic and cultural changes (eg competition formats).

With less than 18 months to go until the eyes of the world are firmly set on the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the *Coaching Children Curriculum* sets the direction of travel to ensure the promise of an Olympic legacy is realised for generations to come.



1 What is a Curriculum for Children's Coaches?

1 What is a Curriculum for Children's Coaches?



A curriculum for children's coaches could help you achieve all of this.

1.1 Aim of the Curriculum

Children's needs in sport are totally different to those of other groups like young adults, adults or the elderly. The generic participant capabilities for children described here offer a clear understanding of what these needs are and the associated skills, knowledge and attributes required of coaches to fulfil them. This understanding is paramount to ensure that governing bodies of sport, coaching system builders and coach education and development professionals can plan the delivery and creation of a quality, participant-centred and appropriately trained children's coaching workforce.

It is important to understand two key points:

- 1 The set of statements used in this document to describe children's and coach capabilities is not a formal curriculum, but can be used to support the development of formal curricula where appropriate.
- 2 Embedding the curriculum into your coaching system will not happen overnight and you will not be able to take action on all the issues raised by it straightaway. It does, however, provide a road map that will make the process more efficient and effective.

1.2 Who is the Curriculum for?

The *Coaching Children Curriculum* is for anyone who is involved in developing coaches; ie coaching system builders, governing body of sport coaching leads, tutors and trainers, mentors and assessors, coach managers, coach education designers and, ultimately, coaches themselves as a tool to aid self-reflection and needs-analysis.

1.3 Who is Behind it?

The *Coaching Children Curriculum* has been written by Sergio Lara-Bercial (Coaching Children Development Lead at sports coach UK), Sue Jolly (former Head of Innovation and Product Development at sports coach UK) and David Haskins (visiting Fellow in Sport Development at Sheffield Hallam University and independent consultant for various sports organisations).

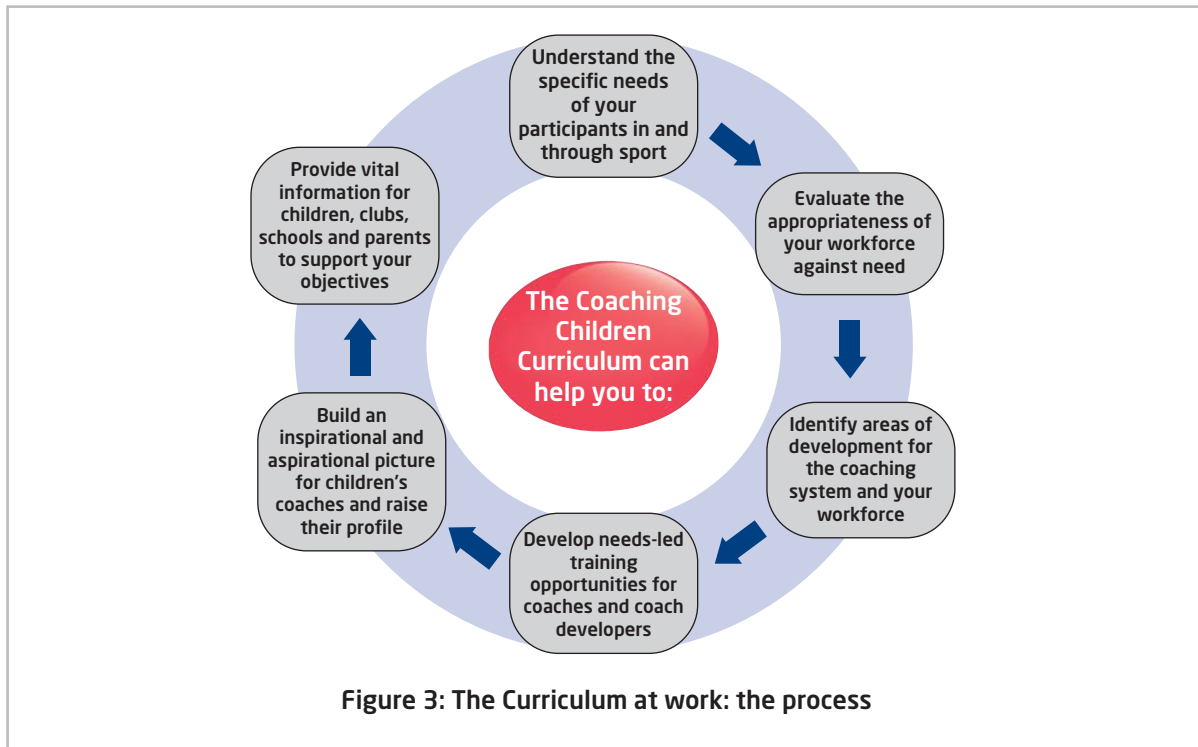
This document draws heavily on the work of the initial Children's Curriculum group formed in 2008. This group was formed by Jean Côté, Rod Thorpe, Istvan Balyi, Dave Collins, Clive Brewer, Richard Bailey, Graham Ross, Pat Duffy and Andy Gair.

In light of recent research, the content developed by this group has been revisited, contextualised and shaped into parts of this document, alongside brand new content developed by the authors.



2 How Could Having a Children's Curriculum Help You?

2 How Could Having a Children's Curriculum Help You?



As shown in Figure 3 above, the generic *Coaching Children Curriculum* allows you to:

- understand the specific needs of the children that take part in your sport
- evaluate the appropriateness of your current children's coaching workforce against current and future needs
- identify key areas of development for your coaching system and coaching workforce
- develop needs-led training opportunities for coaches and coach developers to strengthen and/or address key areas of development
- provide children's coaches with a clear and inspirational picture of the ideal children's coach and kick-start a culture of continuous improvement, leading to a raised profile for children's coaches
- support clubs, schools, parents, carers and others in the children's circle of influence to understand:
 - the wider benefits of sport for their children
 - how coaches are trying to enhance the quality and outputs of their children's involvement in sport.



3 How is it Structured and Why?

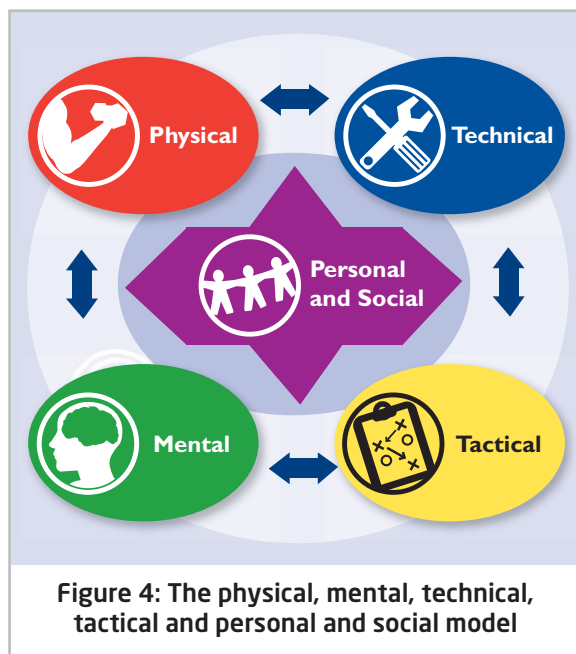
3.1 Underpinning Philosophy: Coaching the Whole Child

The capabilities proposed for children by sports coach UK in this document have been developed from a coaching philosophy that is deeply rooted in the belief that sport, particularly at a younger age, has a much bigger role to play than just improving people's physical, technical, tactical and mental skills. This is not to say that such skills are not important or that they should be put to one side to benefit the less tangible 'personal and social' development of the participants.

On the contrary, the Coaching the Whole Child philosophy seeks to maximise the gains from developing those areas traditionally linked to sports coaching and use them as a vehicle to drive the personal and social development of the participants. The two areas are inextricably linked as opposed to mutually exclusive.

In a nutshell, the Coaching the Whole Child philosophy offers a holistic solution to the widely accepted view, held by the broader coaching community, that has tended to prioritise coaching outcomes directly related to sport (physical and technical improvement) and look at other areas, such as personal and social development, as peripheral to sport participation. Any gains in the latter would be achieved as a consequence of good coaching, but would never be an explicit outcome for coaching or something coaches would have to plan for. We believe this limited understanding of coaching is selling sport extremely short. It is like saying that children only go to school to learn about maths and biology, not to become all-round better people and fully contributing members of society in the future.

When the conditions are right, taking part in sport can support the development of the whole person; when they are not, it can lead to higher dropout rates and negative behaviours.



In light of the above, sports coach UK would like to offer a new definition of effective coaching based on the work of Jean Côté and Wade Gilbert (2009):

Effective coaching is the integrated application of different knowledge bases (professional, interpersonal and intrapersonal) to fulfil the multiple outcomes and varying needs of all participants within a specific context.

Within this definition, it is then necessary to understand both sides of the equation; for example:

- the 'multiple outcomes and varying needs of all participants within a specific context' would be the participant capabilities; in this particular case, the 'children's capabilities'
- 'professional, interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge' refers to the coach's knowledge domains and associated Coach Capabilities that, when applied in an integrated manner, allow coaches to fulfil their role.

In line with the Coaching the Whole Child philosophy's participant-centred approach, let us look first at children's capabilities.

3 How is it Structured and Why?

3.2 Children's Capabilities

Within the Coaching the Whole Child philosophy, children are able to develop a wide number of capabilities through their participation in sport; ie physical, technical, tactical and mental (PTTM) capabilities, as well as personal and social development.

3.2.1 PTTM capabilities

Traditionally, it has been fairly straightforward to identify children's competencies and capabilities that sit within the PTTM structure, as outlined in the table below.

Table 1: Definitions of PTTM capabilities

Physical 	Capabilities directly related to the development of the child and his or her bodily dimensions (eg fundamental movement skills, core strength and development of the different energy systems).
Technical 	Techniques and skills required as a foundation or core competence for the game/event. Particularly at a younger age, the development of these techniques is inextricably linked to, and underpinned by, the physical development of the child. Inevitably, fundamental movement skills must be seen as the precursor to sport-specific skills and paid special attention (eg a tennis serve combines the fundamental movement skills of throwing and striking).
Tactical 	Knowing 'how to' play the game by being able to solve tactical challenges in live situations through skilful application of core techniques in order to maximise the chances of individual and/or group success (eg a player deciding to make a run into space in football or bat towards a particular area in cricket, applying the correct technique in a competent way to be able to perform the action).
Mental 	Having the appropriate cognitive skills to support the learning and performing of physical, technical and tactical challenges (eg the ability to focus, a longer concentration span, decision-making skills, planning, organising, self-management).

3.2.2 Personal and social capabilities

Pinpointing the discrete areas of development that form the personal and social domain has been challenging. In an attempt to solve this dilemma, sports coach UK has drawn from current research into Positive Youth Development (Lerner et al, 2005) to provide a framework that clearly outlines the distinct outcomes and underpinning capabilities that form the core of personal and social development.

Positive Youth Development researchers state that children and young people who score higher in the areas of competence, confidence, connection, character and caring thrive in comparison to their peers and make a more successful transition from childhood to adolescence and adulthood on their way to becoming fully contributing members of society.

sports coach UK has adapted this research to sport and developed what is commonly known as the '5Cs for Coaching'.

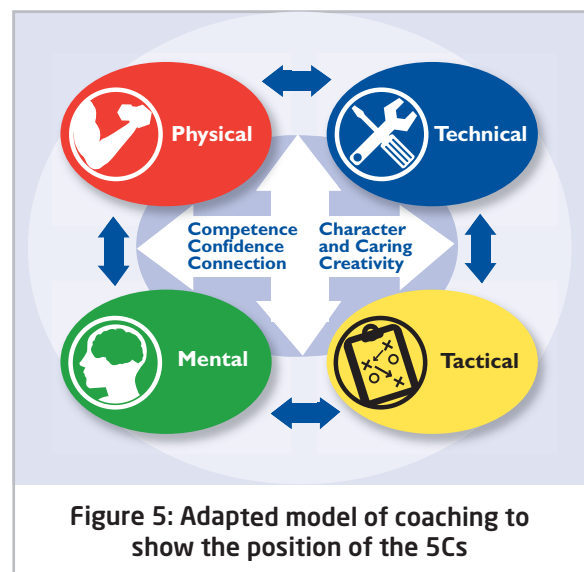


Figure 5: Adapted model of coaching to show the position of the 5Cs

The following table defines each of the 5Cs and how they can be applied to sports coaching.

Table 2: Definitions of the 5Cs for Coaching

Competence 	This is about developing a positive view of one's actions with matching appropriate capability (being able to do things). In sport, competence is achieved through the provision of carefully planned, developmentally appropriate activities. It includes PTTM plus personal and social competence.
Confidence 	This hinges on having an internal sense of overall self-worth ('I am ok') and self-efficacy ('I can do things'). Confidence is promoted in sport through exposure to success (internally referenced) and realistic individual and/or group challenges that build resilience, coping with failure and learning strategies. All this takes place in an environment that stresses personal improvement and values effort and persistence over outcomes and results.
Connection 	This is related to the ability to build positive bonds with people and institutions (ie clubs and schools), resulting in effective and mutually beneficial relationships between the individual, others and the environment. In sport, connection is achieved through the chance to work with and help others, being part of a group and understanding the intrinsic benefits of sport participation.
Character and caring 	This is based on exercising respect for societal and cultural rules, possessing standards for correct behaviours, a sense of right and wrong and a sense of sympathy and empathy for others. Sport participation supports these developments when it takes place in an environment that respects participants, coaches, officials, parents and the rules of the sport.
Creativity 	This is about being able to find your own solutions to problems. Sport is ideally placed to promote this outcome by putting children in situations where they have to think for themselves and understand things in order to learn, rather than copying and repeating.

3 How is it Structured and Why?

3.2.3 Fitting it all together

In sport, the development of the 5Cs and their underpinning capabilities is linked to the development of the PTM areas in a mutually inclusive way (see Figure 5).

Moreover, these capabilities are not developed in isolation and Table 3 shows examples of how the various

areas interact and support each other's growth. It also helps bring the 5Cs concept to life and shows how coaches can contribute to the achievement of multiple outcomes for participants. For example, a coach can increase children's physical capabilities and, at the same time, develop their creativity by running physical challenges in a problem-solving environment (see area highlighted in yellow).

Table 3: How the PTM and the 5Cs interrelate

	Competence 	Confidence 	Connection 	Character and Caring 	Creativity 
The coach may:					
Physical 	use developmentally appropriate content for the sessions	show how participants are developing physically	allow participants to work with others	ensure participants learn why and how to respect their own bodies	run physical challenges in a problem-solving environment
Technical 	use coaching skills appropriate to the development stage of the child	provide good explanations and high percentage of success	encourage participants to give feedback to each other	develop participants to be able to practise for extended periods and understand why	allow room for individual approaches to technical skill development
Tactical 	develop tactical awareness alongside technical skills	ensure tactical demands are understood and the necessary skill level is established	support participant understanding of roles and importance of others	help participants to appreciate how different positions/activities contribute to the overall outcome and accept their role	support young people as they create their own tactical solutions to problems
Mental 	promote a strong focus on the task at hand	provide good evaluative feedback and an understanding of failure and learning	work in an appropriate format and numbers for ability and social capacity	allow participants to explain and accept codes and rules	set appropriate open tasks that support cognitive development

3.2.4 Children's stages of development

Children's needs vary as they grow and mature. What is good for a six-year-old will do nothing for a 12-year-old child who is on the verge of puberty. The *Coaching Children Curriculum* addresses this by using the first three stages of the Long-term Athlete Development approach as reference points:

- **Active Start:** up to 6 years of age
- **FUNDamentals:** 6–8 years for girls and 6–9 for boys
- **Learning to Play and Practise:** 8–11 years for girls and 9–12 for boys.

To facilitate understanding and promote the use of the *Curriculum*, we have provided a generic summary of Children's Capabilities spanning from birth to about 12 years of age. In the appendices you can find specific sections covering each of the three stages in greater detail to use as reference points for more age-specific work. This offers a much clearer picture as to how coaches need to adapt their practices to meet the demands of the growing child.

Table 4: Generic Children's Capabilities (approximately 0–12 years old)

 Personal and Social: The 5Cs for Coaching (Coaching the Whole Child)		
Over the course of their involvement in sport, children should be:		
Competence		• developing PTM skills by being involved in a variety of free play, semi-structured and structured activities
Confidence		• developing mentally by showing optimistic perceptions of their own physical ability in a mastery/effort-orientated environment • learning to take responsibility for their achievements and improvement over time • experiencing a high level of success through the careful provision of differentiated activities • consistently coping with failure in a positive way (and learning from it); the focus should be on effort and personal improvement
Connection		• learning to feel and demonstrate empathy, sensitivity and friendship skills • regularly engaging in physical play with different social groups of different sizes • participating in school clubs or going with parents to outside clubs and eventually choosing independently to join out-of-school-hours clubs • starting to explain the benefits of regular exercise and how it can be undertaken safely
Character and caring		• understanding simple rules for specific activities and developing their own criteria for judging performance • beginning to understand fair play and why cheating harms activity
Creativity		• developing their problem-solving ability by being allowed to experiment in all practical situations, play freely as often as possible and feeling supported and reassured when asked to make decisions.

3 How is it Structured and Why?

Table 4: Generic Children's Capabilities (approximately 0-12 years old) (continued)

 Physical	 Technical	 Tactical	 Mental
Over the course of their involvement in sport, children should be:			
• confident and competent with basic and complex agility, balance and coordination activities	• able to modify basic skills developed over time to meet specific needs (eg tactical challenges in games or specific sports) and broaden the skill base	• performing in modified sports with modified rules and scoring systems (eg games that resemble the adult version like mini-basketball)	• confident when active and showing a positive commitment to quality control
• learning about speed and its uses and practising how to gain speed in different ways	• aiming to show quality with specific techniques/skills, even when excited or competing, as they grow and mature	• showing a basic understanding of force, space and time to develop more sophisticated tactics	• setting simple goals and also beginning to use positive self-talk
• able to demonstrate a wide range of movement and mobility in different directions (backwards, sideways) and different ways (hopping, skipping, running, sliding etc)	• getting into a routine of practising as frequently as appropriate and necessary to fulfil their needs and wants	• using tactical challenges to shape technical work and developing skills to service the game • making tactical choices based on their own and other's attributes	• able to combine basic skills efficiently • scanning and making decisions based on the information available • mastering object control in different environments
• beginning to 'build the engine' through basic development and use of strength, power and endurance	• introduced to appropriate levels of competition where techniques can be tested	• refining attention to sensory input (eg auditory, visual and/or proprioceptive cues appearing at faster rates)	• showing mastery-orientation and differentiating between ability and effort • recognising and gainfully using others' strengths and weaknesses
Physical and technical capabilities are inextricably linked in children. At an early age, technique is the manifestation of basic physical capabilities. As children grow and mature, more complex techniques can be learned and, in turn, sport-specific skills can be developed and refined (eg a simple batting action in cricket requires the child to have good balance and coordination before the actual technique can be considered).		Mental and tactical capabilities are similarly linked in children as basic tactical awareness arises from the development of mental capabilities. Children progress from being self-focused to a social state, through an understanding of cause and effect and making distinctions between the present and possible futures based on the decisions they make (eg attacking space in a team sport requires the child to have an awareness of others and the ability to anticipate what others may do).	
	Technical and tactical capabilities are also linked. At a certain point, the complexity of the skill necessary to solve more advanced tactical challenges can be a limiting factor and will need to be taken into account. Tactical development then becomes the drive for technical development and skills become techniques in context (eg a child tennis player might understand that causing his or her opponent to move from one side of the court to the other will result in success, but she may not have the technical proficiency required to do this).		

3.2.5 Developing and sustaining participation

The appendices to this document include a smaller section on what we have termed **Developing and Sustaining Participation**. This covers a wider group of children and young people (11–19 years of age) who, having been through the Active Start, FUNdamentals and Learning to Play and Practice stages, have not moved onto the performance development pathway for now, but still wish to enjoy and benefit from taking part in sport.

This participant population, with its associated needs, offers a new challenge for governing bodies of sport and other sport providers attempting to maximise their involvement. Likewise, it will require different capabilities from coaches; for example, this section now includes an additional element within the personal and social capabilities of the participant: lifestyle. During childhood, it is widely accepted that children's lifestyles tend to be imposed on them by their parents and carers. While coaches can have an impact in shaping the future lifestyle choices of the child, the impact is limited with younger children for the reason given above.

As children move into adolescence and early adulthood they start making their own choices with regards to lifestyle. These choices are influenced by a variety of factors other than parents; ie peer group, fashion trends, role models and so on. At this point it is believed that coaches have a bigger role to play in supporting children and young people to make good lifestyle decisions; hence this area's inclusion in this section. We acknowledge that 11–19 years old is a very wide age range and this in itself is a limitation. sport coach UK will strive to develop this segment and its constituent parts fully in future publications.

3.3 Coach Capabilities

In order for coaches to support the wider development of children in and through sport, they will need to be in possession of certain knowledge, skills and attributes that will render them fit for purpose and able to do the job. These are known as coach capabilities.

Coach capabilities:

- develop along a continuum of status from emerging through to established and embedded (expert)
- develop independently and at different rates based on the prior knowledge and experiences of the coach (eg a coach may be an expert in one area, but only of emerging status in another)
- are generic, broad statements and, while useful, will need to be contextualised to specific environments and sports to achieve their full meaning
- need to be applied in an integrated, blended way in order to lead to successful coaching that meets participants' needs. This ability to integrate different coaching capabilities is a capability in itself.

3.3.1 Coach capability classification

The *Coach Development Model User Guide* (sports coach UK, 2009) offered an initial classification of coach capabilities. Below is a progression of this classification contextualised to the children population that will be used throughout this document. It has been adapted to reflect the new definition of coaching proposed earlier, and simplified to enhance its intrinsic value as a diagnostic tool for an individual or coaching system.

It is probably worth reminding ourselves of the proposed definition of effective coaching adopted for the purposes of this curriculum:

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3 How is it Structured and Why?

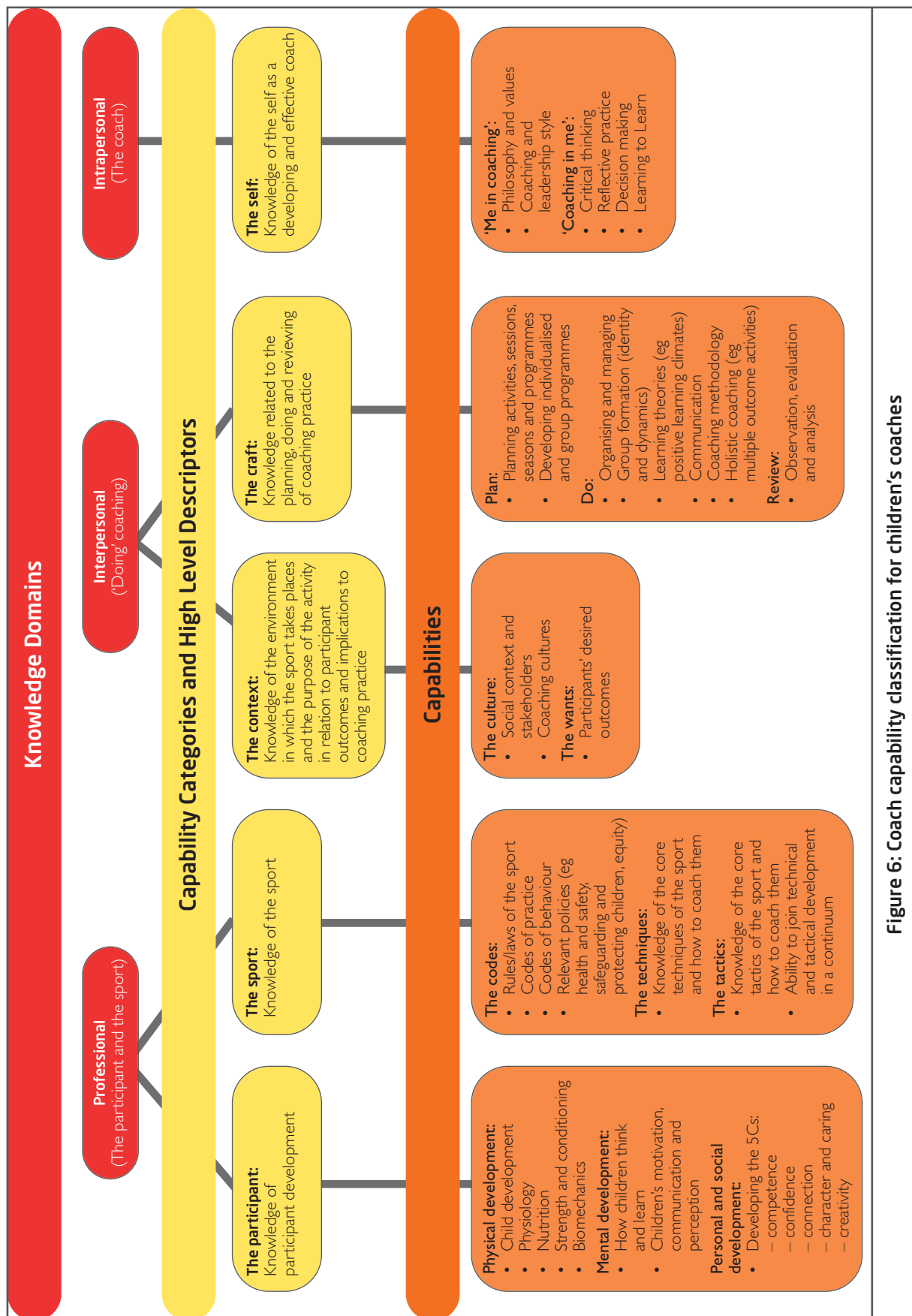
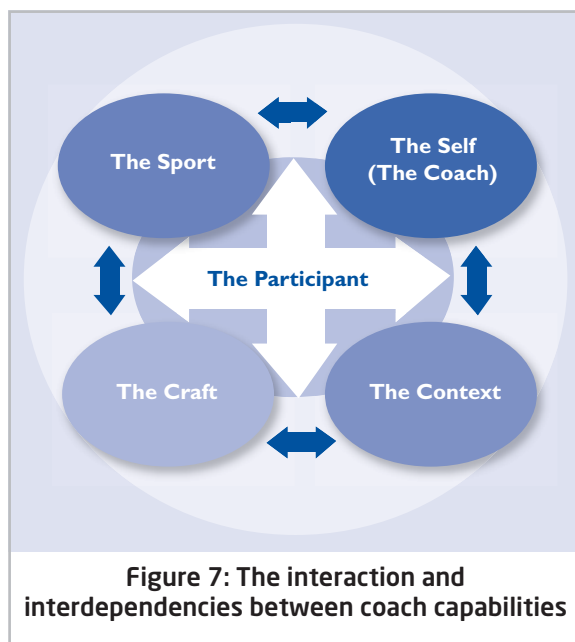


Figure 6: Coach capability classification for children's coaches

Figure 7 below illustrates the interaction and interdependencies of knowledge domains and associated capabilities.



3.4 The Interface between Participant and Coach Capabilities

This generic curriculum for children's coaches aims to, wherever possible, establish the link between a particular children's capability, the associated coach capability required to fulfil that particular need, and the manifest behaviour that would allow the coach to meet the need. This is particularly useful and easy to do with those coach capabilities that are required as a direct result of a children's capability, known as 'what to coach'. Table 5 (below) provides an example.

Table 5: Example of interface between children's and coach capabilities

Physical		
Children's Capability Statement	Coach Capability Statement	Coach Behaviour
Children should be:	The coach is able to:	The coach should:
developing key elements of balance and stability	- identify, create and set up a wide range of activities and games that promote the development of basic balance and stability - identify and isolate the key principles of balance and stability in action and develop tailored interventions to meet the needs of individual participants	use simple gymnastics, dance and other movement activities and games in a playful environment

3 How is it Structured and Why?

The coach capabilities related to the craft of coaching (known as 'how to coach' skills) and the integration of knowledge bases, the knowledge of the context or of oneself as a developing coach are shown on a separate table to ease understanding of the process of 'doing coaching' (see Table 6 for an example and Appendix 5.1 for a more detailed description).

Table 6: Example of suggested coach behaviours and areas of development that underpin the inter- and intrapersonal coach capabilities and knowledge domains at the Emerging status stage

Emerging Status		
	The coach may:	Area of Development
Coach behaviours – 'doing' skills	• carry out a skill based on prior learning and experience, using intuitive methods and strategies • be inconsistent in displaying effective performance • exhibit coaching methods that are more likely to work in familiar situations • focus primarily on the development of technical abilities • intermittently use planned activities or over-rely on plans with no adaptation • be less participant-focused, more performance (result) orientated.	Planning • Techniques to meet goals and participant needs; choosing activities and sessions to suit the participants • Techniques to find out about participants; for example: – gathering feedback before the sessions – questioning and listening for key triggers for adaptations.

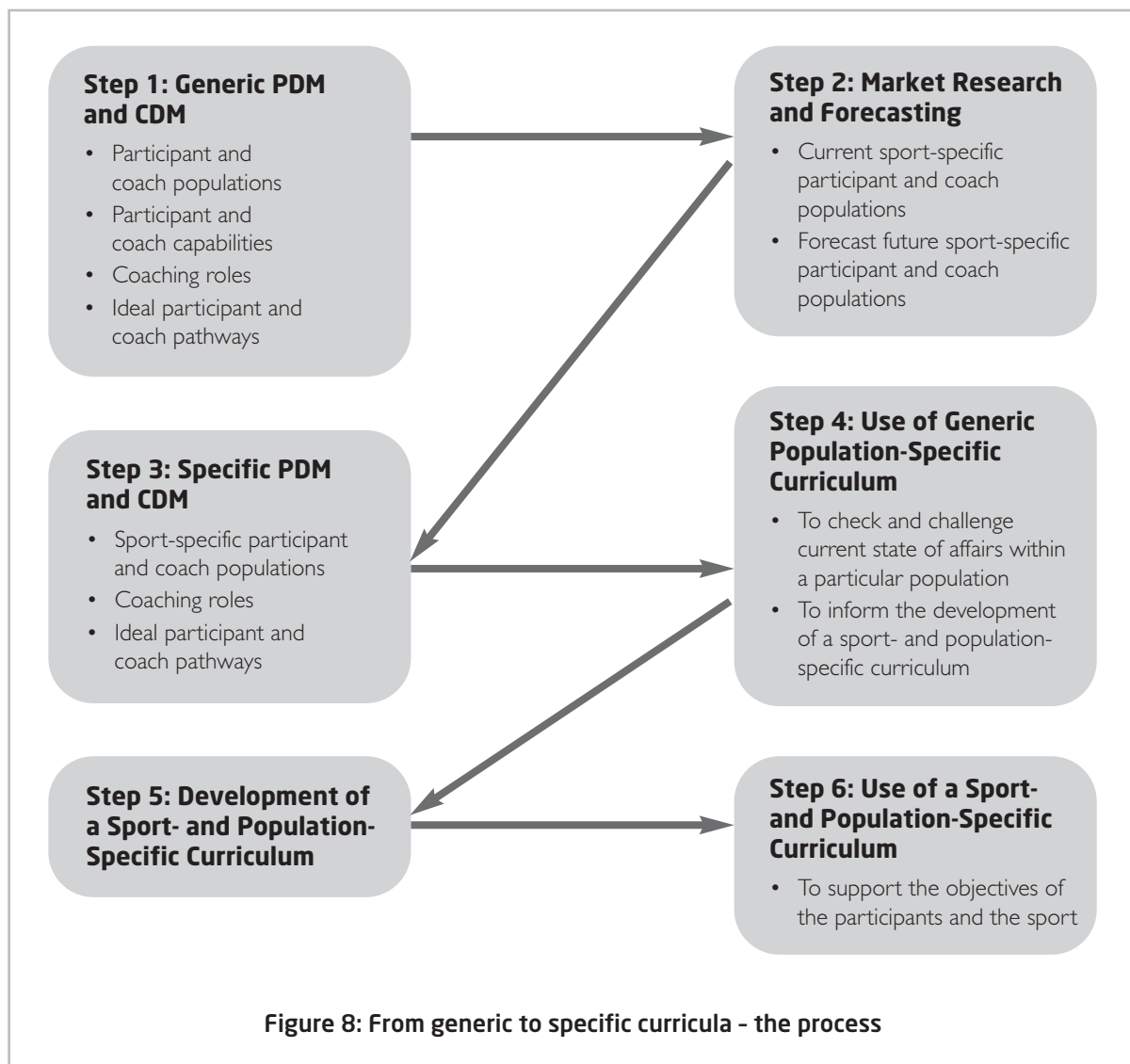
As shown in Table 5, on the previous page, the 'what to coach' element is practically applied in conjunction with the 'how to coach' skills to produce a specific coach capability statement.

3.5 So, How Will it Work for You?

It is for you, the specific governing body of sport, to:

- 1 Contextualise the generic capabilities to your sport
- 2 Combine these with capabilities derived from, and related to, the knowledge of your specific sport.

As shown in Figure 8 below, by going through this process, your sport and your coaches will be in a position to deliver participant-centred programmes and activities with all the associated benefits for participants, coaches and the sport alike.



4 Bringing it to Life: The Curriculum at Work

At sports coach UK, we are committed to supporting our partners recruit, develop and retain children's coaches to achieve their participation and performance goals. In order to support those with responsibility over the practical application of this *Curriculum* and coaches themselves, we have developed a number of tools to aid the understanding of what the *Curriculum* means for day-to-day coaching.

4.1 The Curriculum at Work: The Process

First of all, it is important to remember what the *Curriculum* could do for you and the steps you will have to go through to maximise its use, as shown in Figure 3.

It is also important that you try to pin down what the problem is that you are trying to resolve.

Are you trying to:

- i increase the number of children taking part in your sport
- ii improve the quality of the players coming through the system
- iii reduce dropout rates
- iv increase the number of professional children's coaches
- v raise the profile of children's coaches?

Once you know, the *Curriculum* can help you do a number of things. Here are some key questions to ask at each stage of the process.



vi Provide vital information for children, clubs, schools and parents to support your objectives

- Do children understand what your sport can offer them and how to make the most of it?
- Do your clubs, schools and parents understand your objectives for children in your sport?
- Do you need to get 'buy-in' from them?
- Are parents onboard with your philosophy?
- What could clubs, schools and parents help you with the most?
- How could you get the message across to them?



v Build an inspirational and aspirational picture for children's coaches and raise their profile

- Are your children's coaches recognised by the wider community of your sport?
- Are there any good role models for your children's coaches?
- How are your children's coaches acknowledged and rewarded?
- Do your children's coaches, clubs and parents know what an excellent children's coach looks like?
- What's in it for your children's coaches?

i Understand the specific needs of your participants in and through sport

- Can you put the *Curriculum* into context for your own sport?
- Which areas do you think your sport focuses on at the moment?
- Which areas do you think your sport could do with understanding better?
- Which areas are priorities for your participants?
- What would make the biggest difference in your sport?
- Is it generic or sport-specific knowledge that you need?

ii Evaluate the appropriateness of your coaching workforce against need

- Can your coaches deliver holistic, fun, fit-for-purpose sessions to meet children's needs?
- Are there any particular gaps in your children's coaches' knowledge?
- Are your coaches able to engage and cater for all the children they coach?
- Are children and parents happy with your coaches? If not, why not?
- Are your coaches nurturing talent? If not, why not?
- Are your coaches nurturing people? If not, why not?
- What could you do to make a difference?

iii Identify areas of development for the coaching system and your workforce

- Do you have a philosophy around the coaching of children?
- Is the structure of your sport, clubs and competitions in line with the needs of children?
- What are the required changes to make it work for your coaches and the children they coach? Is it a cultural or structural change, or both?
- What are the key knowledge gaps in your coaches?
- What could you do to address those gaps?

iv Develop needs-led training opportunities for coaches and coach developers

- Do you know what training opportunities are already available for children's coaches?
- Is it about developing tailored continuous professional development opportunities for children's coaches?
- Is it about specialist qualifications?
- Is it about making existing opportunities more available?
- Is it about creating a community of practice for children's coaches? If so, would this community be physical or virtual?
- Is it about training the trainers?

The Coaching Children Curriculum can help you to:

4.2 Final Thoughts

This *Coaching Children Curriculum* aims to support all those involved in the development of coaches and, specifically, those involved in the development of children's coaches. In doing so, it challenges the wider coaching community to rethink their approach to coaching children and look at it from a new and, in our opinion, very rewarding perspective, more so for the millions of children and their families who take part in sport every day throughout the UK.

The appendices that follow have been designed to support you in understanding the key principles underpinning this *Curriculum* and, hopefully, help you with the honourable task of translating and applying them to the specific needs and constraints of your sport.

As a live document, we certainly envisage a need to constantly review its contents in light of new research and emerging best practice. In that sense, we very much encourage you to offer your views and feedback as you try to apply the *Curriculum* to your sport.

We wish you all the best.

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