Introduction

Physical education has been a regular feature of the school curriculum in many countries around the world for at least a century (Puhse and Gerber, 2005). Even in school systems where it has been described as a 'non-cognitive activity', as it was by the Munn Report in 1970s Scotland (Scottish education Department, 1977), it nevertheless managed to establish itself within the core curriculum, albeit with less curriculum time than the more lauded subjects of English, Maths and Science. There have been some individuals, such as philosopher of education John White (1973), who have vociferously disputed that physical education is in any sense a 'school subject', and indeed argued that its place in the school curriculum has most often been supported by disreputable claims about character development and brain functioning. Richard Peters' (1966) apparently knock-down arguments, though directed at 'games' rather than physical education, should have seen an end to any pretensions physical educators may have had to argue that their field's existence in schools could not only be supported by reputable arguments but could also be of educational value. But still physical education persisted in schools and in many respects has actually thrived since the 1960s. As Hendry (1976) noted somewhat prophetically, while the physical education teacher may occupy a 'marginal role' in schools, she was nevertheless a survivor.

Whatever else we might say about physical education's situation in the school curriculum, we can be in no doubt that the existence and persistence of this 'school subject' has been a problem for the philosophy of education or, at least, for the analytical philosophy popular in the UK from the middle of the twentieth century. While analytical philosophy of education may no longer be the force it once was, the questions it raised about physical education's educational status have never been conclusively resolved to the extent that it has parity of esteem with other curriculum topics. In part this is due to the fact that 1960s analytical philosophy of education tapped into an already existing 'common sense consensus' (Kirk, 1988) about physical education, that it was a practical activity involving limited 'cognitive content'. In school systems where an Enlightenment view of education has dominated, where cognition is a defining feature of legitimate school subjects, the philosophising of individuals like Peters merely seemed to confirm what everyone already knew - whatever else it may offer, physical education was of limited educational value.

34 This is not to deny that many philosophers offered excellent and persuasive defence of

35 physical education (Morgan, 2006). My view is that notwithstanding the excellence of this

36 scholarly work, it travelled little beyond the pages of the journals and books in which it was

37 recorded. Meanwhile, despite the fact that its stocks have been rising in educational systems

38 since the 1970s, the sport-based form of physical education that was a source of much

39 optimism among physical educators in the 1950s and 1960s had degenerated into an

40 institutionalised form shaped to meet the requirements of the school rather than realise the

41 rich potential of the subject and the benefits it could provide to young people (Kirk, 2010).

42 There is considerable irony in this, but also some tragedy. Perhaps physical educators have

43 been so seduced by their subject's success that they have failed to fully acknowledge that

44 they have never achieved their most cherished aspiration, that young people would as a result

45 of their physical education experience engage in lifelong physical activity.

46

47 My purpose in this paper is to revisit the enduring conundrum of physical education's

48 situation in the school curriculum and to offer a different way of thinking about educational

49 value from what I will call a models-based approach. The crux of my argument is that

50 physical education is such a large, rich and complex field of practice that it can legitimately

51 aspire to achieve a wide range of educational outcomes for school-age children and youth. In

52 order to do this, however, it needs to take particular and different forms in contrast to its

53 current and traditional 'one-size-fits-all', sport technique-based, multi-activity form.

54 Moreover, I will provide two examples of pedagogical models for physical education that

55 require different justificatory arguments for their educational value, an argument based in

56 ethics for Sport Education (Siedentop, 1994) and in phenomenology and existentialism for

57 Physical Literacy (Whitehead, 2010). There are a range of pedagogical models from which to

58 choose in addition to the two already mentioned, including Teaching Games for

59 Understanding (Oslin and Mitchell, 2006), Cooperative Learning (Dyson and Casey, 2012),

60 Personal and Social Responsibility (Hellison, 2011) and Health-based Physical Education

61 (Haerens et al, 2011). The first example, Sport Education, is chosen because it is without a

62 doubt the most researched of all available pedagogical models, and because it is in my view

63 currently the most soundly justified philosophically. The second example of Physical

64 Literacy is chosen because it demonstrates a well-argued philosophical position on physical

65 education that is in my view ripe for development as a pedagogical model.

66

67   I begin with a discussion of the problem of physical education for the philosophy of

68   education and highlight two enduring issues, the first a view that only one justificatory

69   argument for the educational value of physical education is possible, and the second that most

70   philosophers of physical educations' work has been completely uniformed by the products of

71   empirical research. I then present a short exposition of a models-based approach to physical

72   education informed in the main by the work of Jewett, Bain and Ennis (1995) and Metzler

73   (2005) and argue for my preferred conceptualisation of pedagogical models. In this section I

74   then provide two examples to illustrate my arguments. The first is of the pedagogical model

75   of Sport Education and its underpinning justificatory argument in the virtue ethics of Alasdair

76   MacIntyre (1985). While, as I have noted, this first example is in my view the most mature

77   development of this models-based approach currently available to us, the second is very

78   much a work in progress. This latter is an approach to physical education informed by

79   Whitehead's (2010) work on Physical Literacy, which I argue is a justificatory argument

80   seeking a pedagogical model. Before I provide these examples, we must confront the problem

81   of physical education for the philosophy of education.

82

83   **The Problem of Physical Education for the Philosophy of Education**

84

85   Morgan (2006) argued that the philosophy of physical education had already been eclipsed by

86   the rising star of the philosophy of sport by the 1960s in the USA and the 1970s in the UK.

87   As a sub-discipline of the philosophy of education, the philosophy of physical education in

88   the UK had, unlike its eclectic North American counterpart, been strongly influenced by an

89   approach to analytical philosophy of education championed by Richard Peters and others,

90   which tended to focus scholars on epistemological questions of the educational value of

91   physical education. Morgan argued that as the philosophy of sport gained parity with other

92   branches of philosophy from the late 1960s its concerns tended to centre on issues of value

93   surrounding sport, and particularly ethical value. In his estimation, the spirited responses of

94   philosophers of physical education successfully challenged the unfavourable outcomes for

95   their field of Peters' and others' rather sweeping and uncompromising conceptual analyses of

96   education. But, as Morgan implied and I will argue here explicitly, the critiques of the

97   Petersian approach by, for example, Carlisle (1969), Best (1978), Carr (1979) and Meakin

98   (1982) were, at best, Pyrrhic victories.

99

100 The damage to physical education's credibility as an educational activity had already been

101 done. This was in large part because the Petersian view on educationally worthwhile

102 activities merely reinforced what Green (2008) has called the 'standard view' of education

103 and what I had named earlier the 'commonsense consensus' (Kirk, 1988). As a 'practical'

104 curriculum activity, physical education self-evidently lacked the 'cognitive content' of

105 science, literature and, of course, without even a blush of self-consciousness on Peters' part,

106 philosophy. A close reading of chapter 5 of Peters' *Ethics and Education* (1966) today, with

107 the benefit of considerable analytical distance created by social and cultural change, reveals a

108 range of assumptions made by Peters that were clearly the product of a particular, socially

109 elite form of education (McNamee, 2009). This elitist view of culture is evident in his put-

110 downs of 'Bingo' and 'Billiards' and his insistence on using a public school notion of

111 'games' as his anti-thesis of an educationally worthwhile activity, while at the same time

112 ignoring an already 80 year old tradition of physical training in women's education and the

113 education of the working classes.

114

115 As Morgan (2006) noted, by the mid 1980s this ideologically-loaded language analysis

116 approach began to be exposed through the application to physical education of various

117 approaches to 'new directions' sociology of education. Introduced to Anglophone physical

118 education scholars by Evans and Davies' (1986), this sociological challenge to analytical

119 philosophy of education had its origins in the work of Young (1971) and colleagues

120 concerned with the social construction and reproduction of knowledge. Parry (1988) had

121 already noted the ideological nature of Petersian philosophers' educational theorising. It took

122 detailed empirical studies of the historical and contemporary policy and practice of physical

123 education, however, to show that what physical education is and any educational value it

124 might possess can be found in the practices undertaken in its name (Kirk, 1992).

125

126 This point was summarised succinctly by McNamee, who observed that "those who look for

127 *conceptual* unity are simply wasting their time. There is no meaningful essence to the concept

128 (of physical education)" (McNamee, 2009, p.24). At the same time, McNamee is not entirely

129 dismissive of Petersian thinking, urging a less radical critique, and favouring a re-

130 interpretation of Peters' concept of education as "initiation into a range of cultural practices

131 that have the capacity to open up the possibilities of living a full and worthwhile life"

132 (McNamee, 2009, p.23). A similar position is endorsed by Green (2008), who has noted that

133   while physical education is socially constructed, if it is justified as a curriculum topic at all, it

134   is as a medium for transmitting valued cultural practices in the formation of persons.

135   McNamee (2009, p.24) has, in turn, offered a key insight into the situation of physical

136   education within the philosophy of education. He has noted that "historically, there have been

137   two strands in what is called physical education: sport and health (or in older times hygiene,

138   posture, and so forth). It seems clear that a different type of justificatory argument is required

139   to support each."

140

141   As Williams (1985) had pointed out, there were in fact, historically, from the 1950s in the

142   UK, at least three major 'legitimating publics' for school physical education, sport, health and

143   physical recreation, but at least McNamee is on the right lines with this insightful comment.

144   Throughout the period of influence of analytical philosophy of education, most philosophers

145   of physical education seemed to believe that only one 'type of justificatory argument' was

146   possible. This outcome may, in part, have been due to most of these philosophers holding a

147   mainly *a*historical understanding of physical education. Or, at least, some of the justificatory

148   arguments for physical education may have reflected a particular moment in the history of

149   physical education, such as, for example, the various arguments for physical education as an

150   *aesthetic* activity following the (relatively briefly) influential trend towards child-centred

151   educational gymnastics and movement education (Kirk, 1984).

152

153   This is not, however, the full extent of McNamee's insight. Following the end of World War

154   Two, and building on 'New Directions' sociology-inspired curriculum history and mainly

155   qualitative contemporary studies, the emergence of a new configuration of physical education

156   in British schools was recorded. As I have argued elsewhere (Kirk, 2010), the 1950s marked

157   a fundamental and far-reaching re-alignment of the 'discourses' - the public categories of

158   knowledge through which we could make sense of a school curriculum topic - from physical

159   education-as-gymnastics to physical education-as-sport techniques. The everyday practice of

160   physical education consolidated in schools over time was the teaching and learning of

161   (mostly) de-contextualised sport techniques in short lessons of 40 to 80 minutes duration,

162   often up to as recently as the 1990s in indoor facilities such as the 60'x30' gymnasium built

163   to suit the practices of the earlier gymnastics era. Notwithstanding the 'breadth and depth' the

164   new National Curriculum appeared to provide physical education from the early 1990s in

165   England and Wales, the actual everyday 'classroom' practice of physical education remained

166 the same, mostly irrespective of the category of activity (be it gymnastics, dance, games,

167 aquatics, OAA or athletics). Children practiced the techniques of these 'sports', seldom

168 engaging in anything like the authentic sport itself, in short lessons within short units,

169 repeating (in Siedentop's words) 'the same introductory unit again and again and again

170 (Siedentop, 2002a). Indeed, in the USA to which Siedentop's observations primarily refer,

171 the term to describe this form of physical education is the 'multi-activity curriculum model'.

172

173 So physical education presented two problems to this dominant, language analysis, approach

174 to the philosophy of education, which have yet to be satisfactorily resolved, despite the

175 various clever critiques of Peters' original formulation in *Ethics and Education*. The first was

176 not simply the dominance of Petersian thinking, and the fact that it confirmed the

177 commonsense consensus among individuals, many of whom were influential politicians, civil

178 servants, and other 'movers and shakers' who enjoyed a similar education and shared Peters'

179 social class position, tastes and world-view. As Morgan (2006) argued, the collective

180 responses by Peters' critics contradicted the commonsense consensus, often on all three bases

181 outlined by McNamee (2009). Taken together, these spirited rejoinders suggested that

182 physical education *could* be of educational value on the basis of a number of justificatory

183 arguments. But this is a benefit of hindsight, I suggest, and was not at the time how the

184 philosophers involved actually saw the challenge. The first problem, in summary, was their

185 apparent view that each justificatory argument competed with others and only one could be

186 right; there was, in short, only one 'essence' of physical education.

187

188 Meanwhile, away from the heat of the debate itself, and taking the philosophers' justificatory

189 arguments together, others appeared to be coming round to a more eclectic view, that

190 physical education produces multiple educational benefits across a range of domains (see, eg.

191 Randall, 1972; Morgan, 1973; Qualifications Curriculum Authority (1999). The second

192 problem was then that, lacking any empirical basis to their philosophical speculations beyond

193 their own lived experiences, most philosophers could have had little sense of the extremely

194 limited form of physical education-as-sport techniques that had taken root in schools during

195 the post-WW2 period. While *in theory* it was possible to show that there were

196 epistemological, or aesthetic, or ethical (etc.) bases to justificatory arguments for the

197 educational value of physical education, and a range of educational benefits that might then

198 accrue, the actual, everyday practice of the subject in schools could provide little or no

199   evidence to support such theories. This was not the same thing as supporting the Petersian

200   position, since Peters had himself only a limited and personal and class-specific experience of

201   the practice of physical education on which to draw.

202

203   Scrutinising these claims, Bailey (2009) noted that "in each of the domains discussed -

204   physical, lifestyle, affective, social, and cognitive - there is evidence that PES (physical

205   education and sport) can have a positive and profound effect. In some respects, such an effect

206   is unique, owing to the distinctive contexts in which PES take place … (however) … the

207   scientific evidence does not support the claim that these effects will occur automatically"

208   (Bailey, 2009, p.399). The scientific evidence was lacking, I suggest, because physical

209   education-as-sports techniques, or multi-activity physical education as the Americans prefer,

210   is effectively a one-size-fits-all approach, in practice, to a field that has the potential to

211   produce a range of different educational benefits for young people. To put this analogy

212   slightly differently, it is a mono-linguistic response to a multi-linguistic problem. This is a

213   problem for an approach to the philosophy of education that had no empirical referents

214   beyond the life experience of the philosophers.

215

216   **A Models-Based Approach to Physical Education**

217

218   A models-based approach to physical education offers a potential solution to the two

219   problems physical education poses for the philosophy of education. It does so by first of all

220   affirming the notion that physical education as a field of practice has the potential to

221   contribute to the achievement of a range of educationally beneficial outcomes for students,

222   across a range of domains (Bailey et al, 2009), a potential that can be confirmed empirically.

223   In order to do this, however, it must go beyond the entrenched practice of physical education-

224   as-sport techniques, the one-size-fits-all form of the subject. A models-based approach

225   suggests the need for a number of forms of physical education. In so doing, it also proposes

226   that each of these forms might require, as foreseen by McNamee (2009), different types of

227   justificatory argument.

228

229   The notion of a models-based approach builds on the foundational work of Jewett, Bain and

230   Ennis (1995), Metzler (2005), and Lund and Tannehill (2005). While each of these authors

231   offers different models and different ways of thinking about such an approach, a unifying

232 element of their work is the notion that physical education has the potential to contribute to

233 the achievement of a range of educationally beneficial outcomes and that in order to do this

234 we need new and multiple versions or 'models' of physical education. My preference is to

235 speak of pedagogical models of physical education which rest on a concept of pedagogy that

236 consists of the interdependent elements of curriculum, learning and teaching (Armour, 2011).

237 A pedagogical model identifies distinctive learning outcomes and shows how these might be

238 best achieved through their tight alignment with teaching strategies and curriculum or subject

239 matter. Moreover, each pedagogical model is a *design specification* that can be used by

240 teachers or curriculum writers to create programs that are suited to the specific circumstances

241 of their local contexts. Each model, thus, prescribes some specific 'non-negotiable' features

242 that make it distinctive, a term I prefer to Metzler's (2005) 'teacher and student benchmarks'

243 but which perform the same function. Without these non-negotiable features the achievement

244 of the stated learning outcomes are, I propose, less likely to be achieved. At the same time, as

245 a design specification each model leaves enough space for local adaptation, a feature Bailey

246 et al (2009) among many others have noted is vital to successful sustainable innovative

247 practice in schools.

248

249 A models-based approach to physical education would make use of a range of pedagogical

250 models, each with its unique and distinctive learning outcomes and its alignment of learning

251 outcomes with teaching strategies and subject matter, and each with its non-negotiable

252 features in terms of what teaches and learners must do in order to faithfully implement the

253 model. The actual models used in any one program of physical education is a matter of

254 choice at either school, local district or national level, depending on how educational systems

255 are organised. Considerations that would influence the selection of specific pedagogical

256 models will include the appropriateness of the model to the age and stage of the learners, the

257 sequencing of the models so that there is some cumulative and mutually reinforcing effect

258 and, behind these factors, the broader educational values schools, local districts or national

259 systems seek to celebrate, reproduce, reconstruct and sustain.

260

261 One major advantage possessed by this proposal for a models-based approach to physical

262 education is that several, well-researched and well-developed pedagogical models already

263 exist. Indeed they existed in advance of the case I am making here for such an approach.

264 Thankfully, then, we do not need to linger for long contemplating abstract descriptions. In the

265   section that follows, I provide two examples to make my case that physical education as a

266   field of practice has the potential to achieve a range of educational outcomes and that

267   different justificatory arguments are required to support their selection and implementation.

268   My first example is Sport Education (Siedentop, 1994), a pedagogical model that is arguably

269   the best developed to date, the most often researched and the most strongly supported by a

270   philosophical justification grounded in virtue ethics. My second example is the notion of

271   Physical Literacy (Whitehead, 2010) which rests on a distinctive philosophical position on

272   physical education grounded in existentialism and phenomenology, which is currently a

273   justification that is ripe for pedagogical development; it is, it could be argued, a philosophy in

274   search of a pedagogical model.

275

276   *Sport Education*

277   Sport education emerged from the work of Daryl Siedentop (1994) and his dissatisfaction

278   with the way sport is typically represented in traditional physical education programs.

279   'Traditional' here refers to sport-technique based, multi-activity approach I have already

280   discussed above. Siedentop argued that sport is an important part of physical education but,

281   ironically, it is not taught well. In his view, sport is misrepresented and distorted in the

282   traditional, multi-activity approach, and the main educational value of sport is missing. As a

283   consequence, students' experiences lack authenticity, and within schools sport is often

284   viewed as something trivial, merely an opportunity for 'letting off steam'. He is careful to

285   argue, at the same time, that the Sport Education model he developed remains only one part

286   of physical education, and does not displace other activity forms such as dance, exercise,

287   outdoor adventure activities nor, as I would prefer and consistent with a models-based

288   approach, other learning outcomes for physical education.

289

290   The three distinctive learning outcomes for Sport Education are that learners become

291   competent, literate and enthusiastic sports people. A *competent* sports person is someone who

292   has developed skills and strategies to the extent that he or she can participate successfully in a

293   game. A *literate* sports person is someone who understands and is knowledgeable about the

294   rules, traditions, and values associated with a specific sport, and one who can also distinguish

295   between good and bad sport practices. An *enthusiastic* sports person is someone who plays

296   and behaves in ways that preserve, protect and enhance the sport culture.

297

298 The subject matter of Sport Education is not a range of different sports, but sport itself.

299 Siedentop identified the key characteristics of sport as seasons, affiliation, formal

300 competition, a culminating event such as a gala or finals, record keeping and festivity. In

301 contrast to regular, multi-activity physical education where units of work may be as short as

302 four or six lessons, in Sport Education units became seasons of twelve lessons or more. A key

303 feature of Sport Educations' subject matter and a non-negotiable feature is that students

304 experience a number of roles in addition to player, such as umpire, coach, journalist,

305 timekeeper, equipment officer, and so on. A further key feature of Sport Education is that

306 students remain in the same team - a 'persisting group' - for the course of the season.

307

308 Finally, in terms of teaching strategies, these can range across Mosston's Spectrum (Mosston

309 and Ashworth, 1994), from the traditional teacher-centred Command Style to more student-

310 centred Guided-Discovery and Problem-solving, depending on the specific context of Sport

311 Education season. For example, it is typical to see Command Style used more frequently

312 early in a season as students become familiar with the model and its implementation, and for

313 student-centred strategies such as peer-learning to feature as a season gets underway in

314 earnest, with increasing opportunities made available for students to make decisions and take

315 responsibility for their learning.

316

317 The justificatory argument for the place of Sport Education in the school curriculum rests for

318 Siedentop primarily on the virtue ethics of MacIntyre (1985) and his concept of social

319 practices. MacIntyre argues that social practices, including games and sports, are defined by

320 three main characteristics, standards of excellence, 'goods' that are derived from the pursuit

321 of excellence, and virtues such as honesty, justice and courage that are necessary to achieve

322 these goods. Internal goods such as mastery of skills, understanding etiquette, respect for

323 traditions, are unique to the practice itself and cannot be gained in any other way than

324 through wholehearted participation. External goods such as money or fame are not unique to

325 sport and are a by-product. When the pursuit of external goods dominates sport, Siedentop

326 (2002b) argues that it is susceptible to corruption. Sport is only sustainable when internal

327 goods are prominent and players immerse themselves in the pursuit of these goods (Kirk,

328 2002).

329

330 How are these ideas and values expressed in the model? Siedentop (1994) argued and
331 increasingly research (Hastie et al, 2011) is demonstrating that Sport Education promotes fair
332 play and knowledge of etiquette, respect for opponents, respect for rules, knowledge of
333 traditions, and accountability and responsibility through taking on roles such as team captain,
334 referee, and so on. At the same time, as a radical behaviourist, Siedentop also saw the need
335 for external rewards that reinforce the internal goods of sport such as the pursuit of
336 excellence, and encouraged the use of team points, best and fairest awards, most improved
337 player and team.
338
339 In summary, Siedentop (1994) argued that sport derives its meaning from play, and a society
340 in which higher forms of ludic activity are pursued vigorously by all people is a more mature
341 society. Morgan (2006) put this argument even more explicitly. He claimed that we do what
342 we have to do (i.e. activities such as work) in order to do what we want to do (play)
343 Siedentop argues then that it is a sign of an advanced level of civilisation that a population
344 plays sport seriously As a serious cultural pursuit, all children should therefore have
345 opportunities through schooling to become literate, competent and enthusiastic sportspeople.
346

347 *Physical Literacy*
348 Physical Literacy is a particular and distinctive philosophical position on physical education
349 derived primarily from the work of Whitehead (2010) and her program of study in
350 existentialism and phenomenology. Whitehead's enduring concerns have been the dominance
351 of mind-body dualism in thinking about physical education and, in particular, the
352 objectification of the body as an 'instrument' for work, health maintenance and elite sport.
353 She has argued consistently that the dominance of dualist thinking has meant that lived
354 embodiment has been overlooked by physical educators. She claims, as a counterpoint, that
355 every human is an indivisible whole and that embodiment and personhood are inseparable. At
356 the same time, she accepts the notion of 'body-as-lived' includes both the lived experience of
357 embodiment and instrumental uses of the body. In her critique of dualist thinking, her starting
358 point is that the body-as-lived is 'the ongoing axis of thought and knowing' (Whitehead,
359 2010, p.26). She argues that since individuals create themselves through interaction with their
360 environment, motility (the ability to move) is an essential aspect of being and becoming.
361

362   On the basis of this position, Whitehead proposes that Physical Literacy "can be described as

363   the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to maintain

364   physical activity throughout the lifecourse", adding the qualification "appropriate to each

365   individual's endowment" (Whitehead, 2010, pp. 11-12). Consistent with this definition, she

366   argues Physical Literacy is a disposition characterised by the motivation to capitalise on

367   innate movement potential to make a significant contribution to the quality of life. Individuals

368   who are physically literate will, according to Whitehead, move with poise, economy and

369   confidence in a wide variety of physically challenging situations. Furthermore, physically

370   literate individuals will be perceptive in 'reading' all aspects of the physical environment.

371   Whitehead argues they will have a well-established sense of self-as-embodied-in-the-world

372   and sensitivity to and awareness of embodied capability that leads to fluent self-expression

373   and empathetic interaction.

374

375   While this account of Physical Literacy has clear implications for the pedagogy (teaching,

376   learning and curriculum) of physical education, it is not in itself a pedagogical model in the

377   sense in which the term is used here. Whitehead and colleagues (in Whitehead, 2010) have

378   begun to explore these pedagogical implications for physical education, both within and

379   beyond the school, for both children and adults, emphasising in the process the importance of

380   Physical Literacy 'throughout the lifecourse'. In an earlier work, Killingbeck et al. (2007)

381   sought to identify how the attributes of Physical Literacy, in particular 'physical

382   competencies', 'reading the environment', 'interaction', 'expression/ communication' and

383   'health', could be identified within the (at the time current) National Curriculum Physical

384   Education categories of athletics, dance, games and Outdoor and Adventurous Activities.

385

386   More recently, Whitehead (2011) has begun the task of outlining a pedagogical model for

387   Physical Literacy drawing on the work of Metzler (2005) in particular. In so doing, she has

388   pointed out that the key learning outcomes of a pedagogical model for Physical Literacy are

389   captured in her definition in terms of 'motivation, confidence, physical competence,

390   knowledge and understanding'. In pursuit of these outcomes, she provides some detailed

391   analysis of the teacher and student behaviours that form the basis of the 'benchmarks' (in

392   Metzler's terms) or as I prefer 'non-negotiable' features that provide the model with its

393   distinctive identity. She proposes that teachers will show respect for the individual and

394   recognise effort, progress and achievement, utilise assessment for learning, and act to

395 empower learners to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers will effectively

396 model ways of being for students, and thus these four aspects of teacher behaviour will,

397 Whitehead argues, be reflected in student behaviour. For example, students will demonstrate

398 respect for persons in all of their interactions with their peers, before, during and after

399 lessons.

400

401 In terms of the alignment of curriculum with teacher and student behaviours, Whitehead

402 considers teachers' content knowledge expertise, developmentally appropriate and sequenced

403 learning activities and task structures that are unique to Physical Literacy. While she

404 considers a range of what she calls 'Movement Forms' such as Adventure, Aesthetic and

405 Expressive, Athletic, Competitive and so on, and knowledge of the effects of movement on

406 the body and its systems, it is clear that she considers teachers' knowledge of basic

407 movement competence to be of considerable – perhaps primary – importance. She draws an

408 analogy between learning to move and language acquisition, noting the importance of

409 learning 'words, sentences and paragraphs' before reading poetry or experiencing a

410 Shakespeare play. She goes on to argue, with respect to curriculum and content knowledge,

411 teachers

412

413 " need to know of the nature of movement patterns – seen to be the building blocks of

414 movement activity. Movement patterns emerge as part of the maturation process and

415 are developed in the early years through a variety of play situations, both free and semi-

416 structured. It is suggested that patterns can be located in categories such as locomotion,

417 flight, manipulation and projection. As the learner develops, these patterns have the

418 potential to be well established, refined and made more specific." (Whitehead, 2011, p.

419 5)

420

421 Whitehead is quite clear that Physical Literacy applies not just to the whole of a student's

422 school career but also to the whole of the lifecourse. She argues, for instance, that throughout

423 an individual's school physical education career, an equal amount of time should be

424 prescribed for each Movement Form. Nevertheless, it seems to me, on the basis of her

425 analogy to language acquisition and the statement just quoted, that there is a 'developmental

426 imperative' within Physical Literacy that gives a special emphasis to the importance of early

427 years physical education. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine any kind of worthwhile physical

428 literacy journey through the lifecourse that is not rooted in positive formative movement

429 experiences in early childhood. In other words, a good quality experience of physical

430 education in the early years would appear to be a necessary condition for the continuing

431 development of physical literacy through the lifecourse.

432

433 For this reason, on the basis of this developmental imperative, it seems to me that a first

434 priority for the development of a pedagogical model for Physical Literacy ought to be for the

435 early years, where the fundamental aspects of learning to move and moving to learn can be

436 addressed explicitly. Recent research (eg. Goodway et al, 2010) in the field of motor

437 development of pre-school children suggests that developmental delay of physical

438 competence can have devastating consequences for children later in their school careers since

439 they lack the skill and disposition to benefit from physical education programs. Only with

440 highly specialised remedial programs is it possible for children who have missed the

441 opportunity for quality motor development in the early years to recover some of the basic

442 reflexes and fundamental movement skills essential to becoming physically literate

443 (Goddard-Blythe, 2005).

444

445 **Conclusion**

446 I have sought to revisit in this paper the enduring conundrum of physical education's

447 situation in the school curriculum and to offer a different way of thinking about educational

448 value from a models-based approach. At root, my argument is that physical education can

449 legitimately aspire to achieve a wide range of educational outcomes for school-age children

450 and youth but to do this it needs to take particular and different forms in contrast to its current

451 and traditional form. I have provided only two examples to illustrate my argument here, and a

452 future task for educational theorists in physical education is to elaborate the justificatory

453 arguments to support other pedagogical models. It is possible that a models-based form of

454 physical education could thrive without justificatory arguments from philosophers of

455 education. After all, as I have argued here, previous arguments no matter how persuasive

456 appear to have had limited success in terms of challenging the common sense consensus

457 about physical education's educational status.

458

459 However, this does not seem to me to be a good reason not to provide justificatory arguments

460 specific to particular pedagogical models where they are appropriate. To be sure, theoretical

461 arguments for physical education need to feature more centrally in physical education teacher

462 education courses and to be made more widely available and understandable among the

463 general public. If this can be done with complex scientific theories it can also be done with

464 philosophy and educational theory more generally. We need these arguments in order to think

465 through the issues surrounding proposed forms of practice in physical education, particularly

466 where these are in the process of development. Not only can this thinking through provide

467 greater clarity of ideas, but it can also counter the tendency to simplify, dumb down or

468 otherwise trivialise the sophisticated forms of educational practice that are pedagogical

469 models for physical education. And we need, at last, to mount a sustained counter-offence

470 against the common sense consensus itself, the demise of which would appear to me to be a

471 necessary condition for the future survival of physical education in the school curriculum.

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