

Add sports to your curriculum

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A sound mind in a sound body." This famous quotation by Thales, a Greek philosopher, demonstrates the harmonious relationship between physical and mental health.

Play or sports is central to a child's health, fitness and overall development. Children are happiest when they get to play, whether it is engaging in a competitive sport or playing just for fun. Sports not only presents children with experiences that enhance their social, emotional and behavioural skills but also helps them perform better in academics. However, to develop a healthier and sports-inclined generation, children should be introduced to learning the fundamentals of various games through a structured age-appropriate curriculum. This helps them develop appropriate skills and fitness levels.

Thanks to various government programmes like Khelo India, aimed at sports development at the grassroots level, sports is now about inclusivity. Physical or sports education refers to the process of helping a child to acquire the fundamental skills and fitness levels that are developmentally appropriate and develop their overall social-emotional competencies. It also helps children learn several life skills such as sportsmanship, leadership,

CHANGING CLASSROOMS



discipline and humility.

Here are top trends in sports and physical education to watch out for:

#TREND 1

Sports and physical activity have begun to take centre stage at schools. Sports has for a long time been defined very narrowly in schools and is often limited to winning medals or trophies.

With the recent mandate released by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), embedding sports as an integral part of the academic curriculum, more and more schools are realising the importance of sports education in a child's

holistic development.

#TREND 2

Both educators and parents are showing keen interest in identifying the ways in which sports can be used as a tool for a child's overall development. As a result, structured sports programmes are being conducted in schools.

A structured sports programme is developmentally appropriate and is introduced keeping in mind the physiological and psychological needs of children. The structured play programme encapsulates various components such as a systematic curriculum, age-appropriate props and equipment, highly trained and certified resources, programme monitoring and reporting platform. Schools are seeking help from specialist sports-service providers to help improve the content of their sports-education process.

#TREND 3

Use of technology is another new aspect of sports. The usage is two-fold:

- 1) Academic institutes are expecting sports education service providers to conduct standardised assessments to track the skill and fitness levels of children. With the help of technology and analytics-driven data, the schools can derive insights about the fitness of their students and can implement changes in the sports curriculum.
- 2) The technological assessment tools are also instrumental in the process of identifying talent. For example, video analysis of teams by high-performance coaches and their feedback captured in the different frames of the video.

With the perception regarding sports education gradually changing, sports is now central to the education process in schools.

—The writer is co-founder, EduSports, and head of business development.