

Sportz Village Foundation is India's largest sports education organization and is supporting disadvantaged children, youth & communities. We use play/ physical activity to improve health, education & development related outcomes in children. Our programs run in 21+ states across the country, and we are also on the panel of NSDC, CII, NITI Aayog, and several state governments as a strategic partner and advisor.



National Education Policy (NEP) 2020:

# Playing to Win

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Using PLAY as a pedagogical tool to achieve all the key outcomes of NEP



## National Education Policy 2020

Ministry of Human  
Resource Development

Government of India

# Background:

The National Education Policy 2020 which was approved by the Union Cabinet in July seeks to restructure the education system of India and looks to address the structural issues in the Indian Education System today.

# Purpose of this Study:

While NEP has included sport and physical activity as an integral part of their education continuum across the early, primary and secondary years of children – this document helps clarify further how PLAY\* can be used by educators and administrators as a pedagogical tool to accomplish all the key principles and outcomes envisioned in NEP. Educators can use the guidelines outlined in this document as a part of the creation of curriculum and pedagogy, teacher education as well as administration of schools.

*\*PLAY: We have used the word PLAY interchangeably with the word Sport in the document. UNICEF defines Sport as “any physical activity – participative, casual, organized or competitive, either rule-bound or unstructured – that includes a form of active play, active recreation, or game.”*



# NEP 2020 – Fundamental Principles

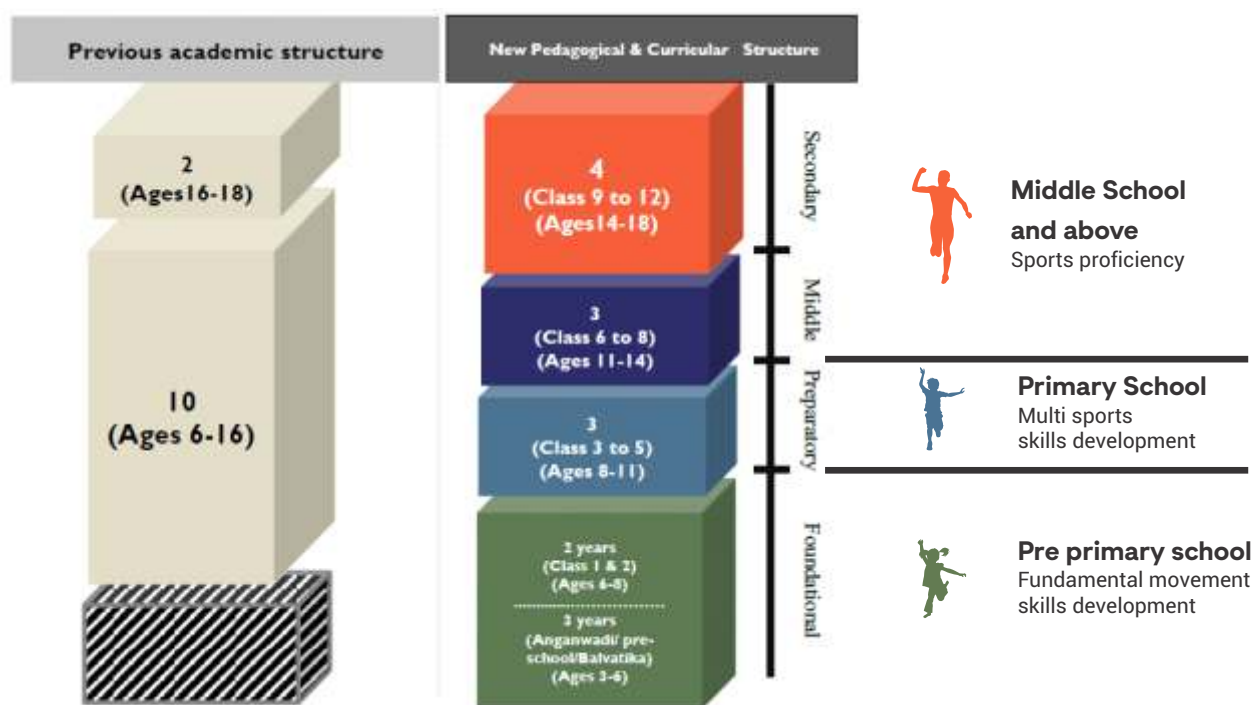
1. *Education is a public service*
2. *Life skills*
3. *Recognizing, identifying, and fostering the unique capabilities of each student*
4. *Foundational Literacy and Numeracy*
5. *Multidisciplinary and a holistic education*
6. *A rootedness and pride in India*
7. 'Light but tight' regulatory framework to ensure integrity, transparency and resource efficiency
8. *Creativity and critical thinking*
9. *Continuous review*
10. *No hard separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams*
11. *Promoting multilingualism and the power of language*
12. *full equity and inclusion*
13. *Synergy in curriculum across all levels of education*
14. Substantial investment in a strong, vibrant public education system
15. *Emphasis on conceptual understanding*
16. *Flexibility, so that learners can choose their learning trajectories*
17. *Focus on regular formative assessment for learning*
18. Extensive use of technology
19. Teachers and faculty as the heart of the learning process
20. *Ethics and human & Constitutional values*
21. Outstanding research



PLAY directly impacts the highlighted NEP principles by helping educators achieve the envisioned educational outcomes as well as the policy makers and administrators create the enabling processes.

# NEP 2020 – Educational Journey of a Child

*The NEP seeks to restructure the educational system based on the age and learning stages of a child.*



Learning Stages of a Child:

**Foundational** (Ages 3 – 8) : Multilevel, play/activity-based learning

**Preparatory** (Ages 8 – 11): Building on the play, discovery and activity-based pedagogical and curricular style of the Foundational Stage. This stage will also begin aspects of formal but interactive classroom learning.

**Middle school** (Ages 11 – 14): Building on the pedagogical and curricular style of the Preparatory Stage, with an introduction of subject teachers for learning and discussion of the more abstract concepts in each subject along with experiential learning within each subject.

**Secondary school** (Ages 14 – 18): Building on the subject-oriented pedagogical and curricular style of the Middle School Stage, with greater depth and greater critical thinking.





## NEP 2020 – Key Envisioned Outcomes

*In the drive to restructure the education system, the NEP seeks to bring about changes in the following focus areas:*

1. Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE): The Foundation of Learning
2. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy: An Urgent and Necessary Prerequisite to Learning
3. Curtailing Dropout Rates and Ensuring Universal Access to Education at all Levels
4. Curriculum and Pedagogy in Schools: Learning should be Holistic, Integrated, Enjoyable and Engaging
5. Teachers
6. Equitable and Inclusive Education: Learning for All
7. Efficient Resourcing and Effective Governance through School Complexes/Clusters
8. Standard-setting and Accreditation for School Education

*This study offers guidelines, existing learnings and evidences to help educators and administrators for integrating PLAY directly as a pedagogical tool, or indirectly as a part of the enabling processes – within these focus areas.*



# 1 Early Childhood Care and Education

*“The overall aim of ECCE will be to attain optimal outcomes in the domains of physical and motor development, cognitive development, socio-emotional-ethical development, cultural/artistic development, and the development of communication and early language, literacy, and numeracy.” – NEP 2020*

Play directly impacts the cognitive, motor competence and social emotional skills of children – skills that are critical for the development of children in this age group. Participation in sports at this age not only helps in the overall development but also inculcates a habit of regular physical activity among children.



Studies examining the effects of physical activity on preschool children’s motor skill outcomes have reported significant improvements in motor development (e.g., fundamental motor skills and motor abilities) following activity-based interventions - <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/bmri/2017/2760716>

**Further Reading :** [http://www.beactivekids.org/assets/pdf/NASPE\\_Appropriate-Movement-Practices-3-5.pdf](http://www.beactivekids.org/assets/pdf/NASPE_Appropriate-Movement-Practices-3-5.pdf)

## 2. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

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*“Mathematics and computational thinking will be given increased emphasis throughout the school years, starting with the foundational stage, through a variety of innovative methods, including the regular use of puzzles and games that make mathematical thinking more enjoyable and engaging.” - NEP 2020.*

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It has been observed that Structured physical activity or play improves the cognitive competence of children. It also directly improves the emotional commitment to learning which is necessary to engage meaningfully with any learning content. Multiple studies have shown that the amount of time spent on physical activity is directly correlated with academic performance.



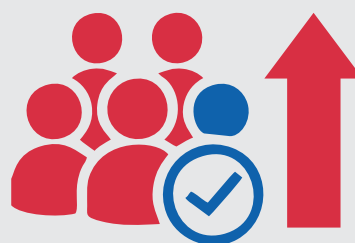
A study conducted with 5000 students by the universities of Strathclyde and Dundee showed the direct correlation between exercise and success in English, Maths and Science- <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-24608813>

# 3. Curtailing Dropout Rates and Ensuring Universal Access to Education at All Levels

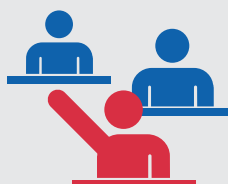
*“One of the primary goals of the schooling system must be to ensure that children are enrolled in and are attending school.”-NEP 2020*

Sports Programs have been successfully used to improve academic outcomes in public schools. Sport has been used to engage meaningfully with children and hence improve their classroom behavior. There has been an improvement in the attendance, discipline, attention span and peer relationships as a result of these programs. Sport or structured physical activity has been able to help Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Groups to engage in the education process.

**The overall attendance increased by 5% after the implementation of a sports curriculum.**



**Behavioral impact of the sports program**



Behavior



Attention span



Peer relationship

Improvement of attendance and classroom behavior was seen in public schools in Bangalore after the implementation of a Structured Sports Program.

**Further Reading :** [https://www.sportzville.com/schools/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Sportz\\_Village\\_Foundation.UTC\\_CSR\\_Case\\_Study.pdf](https://www.sportzville.com/schools/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Sportz_Village_Foundation.UTC_CSR_Case_Study.pdf)



# 4.

## Curriculum and Pedagogy in Schools:

Learning should be Holistic, Integrated, Enjoyable and Engaging

### 1. Holistic Development

When integrated in the learning process, PLAY can help build the 21st century skills - cognitive and non-cognitive, and help reduce the need for educators to emphasize rote learning.

### 2. Reducing Curriculum Content to Enhance Essential Learning

Integrating PLAY in the core curriculum will bring the focus of the educator on the child, and how she or he learns.

### 3. Experiential Learning

PLAY, as a learning tool lends very well to 'active' or experiential learning. Sports integrated learning in pedagogical practices (and core subjects) can help develop the thinking (cognitive), feeling (affective) and doing (psychomotor) faculties of children effectively.



### Further Reading :

<https://www.legofoundation.com/media/1687/learning-through-play-school.pdf>

# Curriculum and Pedagogy in Schools:

Learning should be Holistic,  
Integrated, Enjoyable and Engaging

## 4. Flexibility in Course Choices

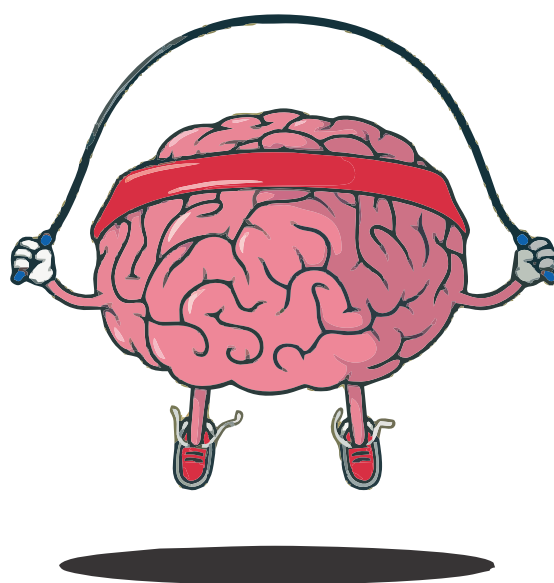
PLAY can be the central tool in blurring the line between curricular and extra-curricular activities - keenly emphasized in NEP - it can provide children the confidence and flexibility to choose the right pathways for their learning journey - across sciences, arts, and vocational programs.

## 5. Multilingualism in Learning

PLAY is language neutral, and when integrated in the learning environments it can help a child straddle across her/his mother-tongue to other languages with ease.

## 6. Curriculum Integration for Fundamental Skills and Capacity Building

PLAY helps develop all the 3 Cs of learning - Critical thinking, Collaboration and Creativity in children. While collaboration and creativity development through PLAY has already been well-chronicled, as of late PLAY has been increasingly used to build the critical and computational thinking skills in children.



Studies have shown that regular exercise changes the brain to improve memory, and thinking skills - <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/regular-exercise-changes-brain-improve-memory-thinking-skills-201404097110>



# Curriculum and Pedagogy in Schools:

Learning should be Holistic,  
Integrated, Enjoyable and Engaging

## 7. Curriculum Creation and Content Development

Integrating PLAY in the new curriculum creation by policy-makers - will strongly help in fostering multi-disciplinary thinking among educators and personalizing learning for children.

## 8. Transforming Assessments

PLAY, can be a powerful tool to help educators shift from a primarily summative (and rote memorization) based assessment to formative assessments - which is competency based and is focused on the 360 degree development of children across cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

Further Reading- Social Emotional Learning assessment template:

[https://www.sportzville.com/schools/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/DLSAS\\_latest-version.pdf](https://www.sportzville.com/schools/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/DLSAS_latest-version.pdf)



**Sportz Village's Structured Sports Curriculum:**

<https://www.sportzville.com/schools/for-schools/>



## 5. Teacher Education

*“Teachers will be given more autonomy in choosing aspects of pedagogy, so that they may teach in the manner they find most effective for the students in their classrooms. Teachers will also focus on socio-emotional learning - a critical aspect of any student’s holistic development. Teachers will be recognized for novel approaches to teaching that improve learning outcomes in their classrooms.” - NEP 2020*

PLAY can be a central tool in teacher education. PLAY can be used to build critical new capacities in children which is emphasized by the NEP such as - multi-disciplinary thinking and flexible pathways of learning for children. PLAY can also be effectively integrated as a tool for experiential learning within the teacher education discourse. The use of sports especially in the case of experiential learning is a great way to teach academic concepts to students.

**Further Reading:**

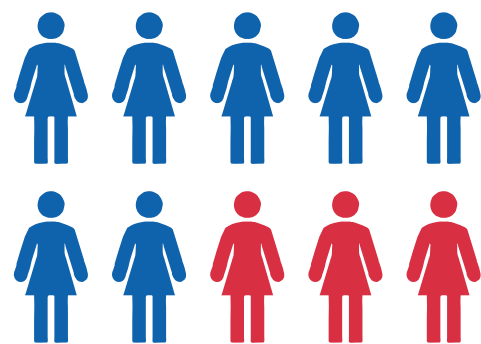
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/bff1/dfa604eca6cca994f024b47a73d554032bec.pdf>



# 6. Equitable and Inclusive Education: Learning for All

*“The education system must aim to benefit India ’s children so that no child loses any opportunity to learn and excel because of circumstances of birth or background” - NEP 2020*

PLAY and Sport across the globe has been used as a powerful tool to reduce barriers for inclusion in education for different Socio-Economically disadvantaged groups - this includes gender, social-cultural, geographic and socio-economical identities. PLAY or sport also provides children an opportunity to interact with peers from various backgrounds . PLAY has also been successfully used as an incentive for learning, development and employability among disadvantaged groups.



## **Improves social-emotional skills**

After adopting sports in their regular routine **7 out of 10** girls have shown improvement in their social-emotional skills.



**Further Reading:** [https://www.sportzville.com/schools/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Women\\_Empowerment\\_through\\_Sport-Govt.\\_of\\_Gujarat\\_Sportz\\_Village\\_Foundation-Case\\_Study.pdf](https://www.sportzville.com/schools/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Women_Empowerment_through_Sport-Govt._of_Gujarat_Sportz_Village_Foundation-Case_Study.pdf)



## 7. Efficient Resourcing and Effective Governance

*“The isolation of small schools also has a negative effect on education and the teaching-learning process. Teachers function best in communities and teams, and so do students. The geographical dispersion, challenging access conditions, and the very large numbers of schools make it difficult to reach all schools equally.” NEP 2020*

Policy makers could effectively leverage PLAY or sport in imparting learning to children in different settings - as part of their optimizing efforts. PLAY can be integrated in communities (where access to schools is an issue), at aanganwadis, in primary schools - as well as in the secondary schools - based on the availability of an existing teacher.

**Further Reading :** [https://www.sportzvillage.com/schools/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Getting-Kids-Active-During-the-Outbreak-II\\_-Ensuring-better-health-hygiene-and-safety-through-sports-education-\\_-SportzVillage-Position-Paper.pdf](https://www.sportzvillage.com/schools/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Getting-Kids-Active-During-the-Outbreak-II_-Ensuring-better-health-hygiene-and-safety-through-sports-education-_-SportzVillage-Position-Paper.pdf)



# 8. Standard-Setting and Accreditation for School Education

Access to play-grounds, age-appropriate equipment and trained teacher are essential requirement for policy-makers to integrate PLAY into the education process. These elements could be an integral part of the regulation process both in private and public education). The proposed National Assessment Survey could also specifically start measuring improvement in learning levels - after introducing PLAY and other tools into the learning process.

## NEP 2020: 'Playing to Win'

PLAY addresses lot of the challenges that come up in children's education and overall development . Adoption of PLAY in the educational system not only results in the primary benefit of improved health for children but also directly results in improved academic outcomes. PLAY can be used by educators and administrators a pedagogical tool to accomplish all the key principles and outcomes that are outlined in the National Education Policy.

# SPORTZ VILLAGE Foundation

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