

## CHAPTER 3:

# Nineteenth-century public schools and their impact on the development of physical activities and young people

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this chapter you should have knowledge and understanding of:

- the characteristics of nineteenth-century public schools
- the impact of the public schools on physical activities in general and on the five case study activities in particular (this will be covered in more detail in Chapter 4)
- the relevance of the Clarendon Report
- how nineteenth-century public schools went through three stages of development
- the development of sports and games in each stage
- the impact of the three stages on physical activities, on young people and on participation both in the nineteenth century and now
- the reasons for the slower development of athleticism in girls' public schools compared with boys' public schools.

## INTRODUCTION

Certain schools were called public schools because they were not privately owned but were controlled by a group of trustees in charge of running each school. The riotous games and activities popular at these schools at the beginning of the nineteenth century were vastly different from those played there a century later.

### KEY TERM

#### Trustees

Influential people responsible for managing and promoting an organisation or asset, such as a school.



nineteenth century. Importantly, throughout your historical studies, you need to reflect forward to today. How did the past influence the present? For example, the **house system** which started in public boarding schools is central to the organisation of many schools today.

### KEY TERM

#### House system

System whereby boys lived in individual houses while away at boarding school. For example, Charterhouse had four boarding houses when it was first founded in 1611 and has eleven boarding houses today. The house became the centre of social and sporting life.



Your task is to trace and explain this development from 'boy culture' (which had many of the characteristics of pre-industrial popular recreation) to regulated rationalised games. You also need to be clear about the changing nature and aims of public school sport throughout the

### EXAM TIP

Historical exam questions will not focus solely on the past; they will also reflect forward to now.

The impact of the public schools on the five case study activities: bathing and swimming, athletics, football, cricket and tennis, will be dealt with in Chapter 4.

## Characteristics of public schools

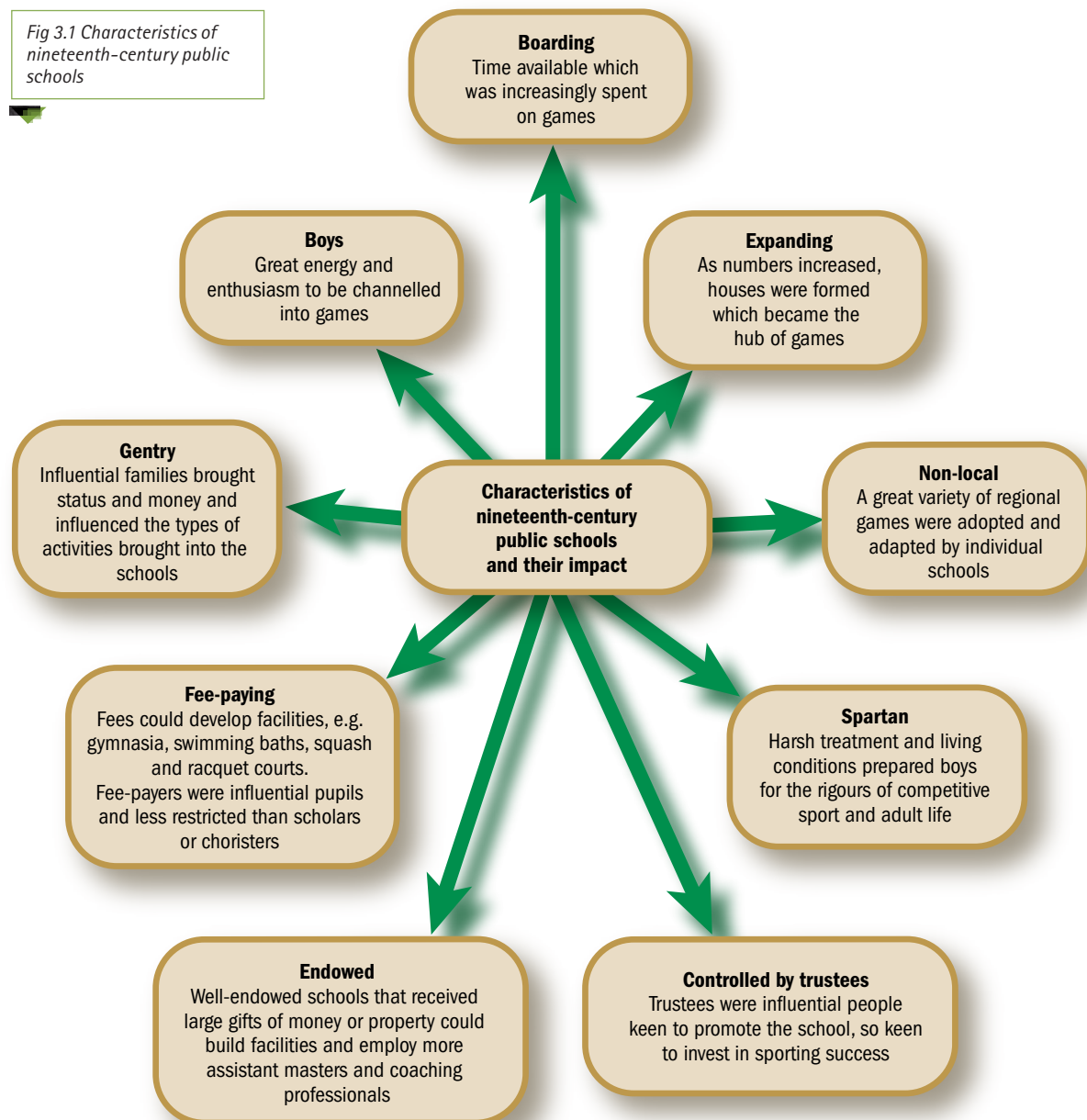
The characteristics of public schools shaped the development of team games. Figure 3.1 shows the relationship between the characteristics of

nineteenth-century public schools and their impact on team games.

### EXAM TIP

You will not be asked a straightforward question such as 'Identify four characteristics of public schools.' Rather, your knowledge must be applied, so a more realistic question might be 'How did the characteristics of the public schools impact on the development of team games?'

*Fig 3.1 Characteristics of nineteenth-century public schools*



## The Clarendon Report

Following complaints about the finances, buildings and management of Eton College, in 1861 Queen Victoria commissioned a group of officials to investigate the nine leading public schools of England. The nine schools are described in Table 1.

Public school	Year founded
Winchester	1382
Eton	1440
St Paul's	1509
Shrewsbury	1552
Westminster	1560
Merchant Taylor's	1561
Rugby	1567
Harrow	1571
Charterhouse	1611

Table 1

The Earl of Clarendon headed the Clarendon Commission. His role was:

*'...to enquire into the nature and application of the endowments, funds, and revenue belonging to or received by the colleges, schools and foundations... to enquire into the administration and management of the said colleges, schools and foundations... into the system and course of studies pursued therein... into the methods, systems and extent of the instructions given to the students.'*

(Clarendon Report)

The thorough and high quality Clarendon Report was published in 1864, in two huge volumes. It gave a detailed picture of life in the nine schools, highlighted problems, recommended improvements, and generally attempted to enrich day-to-day academic and residential life for the pupils. The report included many criticisms and both general and specific advice for each school. It was arguably the prototype Ofsted inspection report!

### KEY TERM

#### Clarendon Report

The account of public school life written by the Earl of Clarendon and his team of commissioners (officials) in 1864.



## The three developmental stages of athleticism

The century-long process of change is usefully studied in stages. The schools were institutions in their own right, often out in the countryside and with their own rules, customs and even sometimes mini languages, yet the public schools did not exist in isolation. They reflected changes that were happening in society. It could also be argued that they caused social change – certainly in terms of sport and recreation.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the RSPCA was successfully reducing cruelty against animals while the police and changing tastes and manners were reducing the number of bare-fist fights. Similar changes were afoot in the schools, as many headmasters were keen to be seen as enlightened. They wanted their schools to be more refined and cultured and less primitive and wild. This was part of what sociologists call 'the civilising process.'

### KEY TERM

#### Civilising process

Improvements relating to more refined or sophisticated behaviour and social organisation and relationships.



You need to be able to explain the evolving nature, status and organisation of games through the stages as well as the:

- technical developments
- social relationships
- values linked to sports and games in each stage.

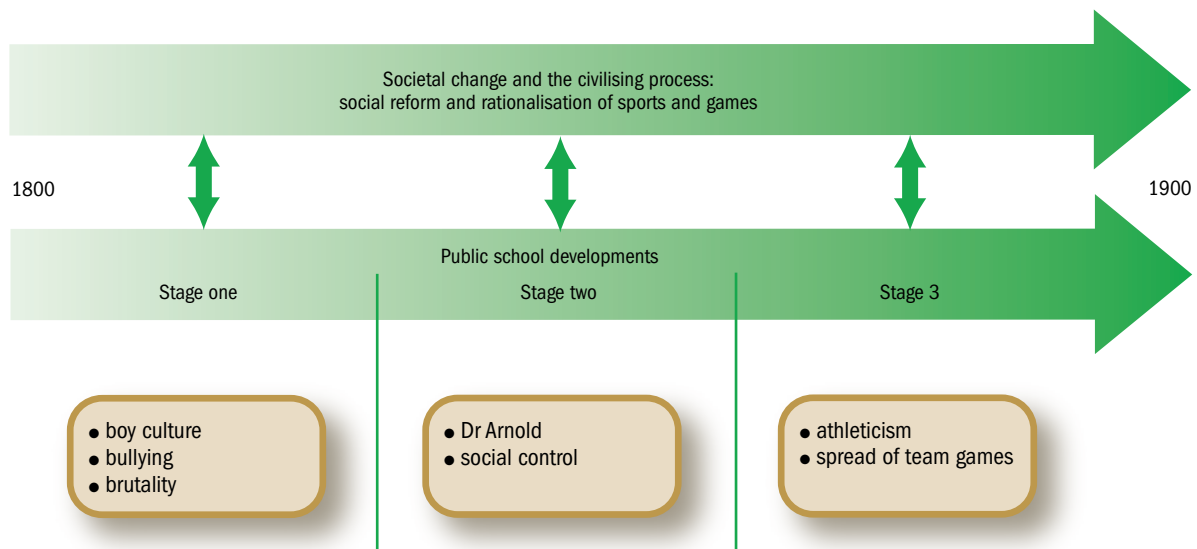


Fig 3.2 1800–1900: the stages of athleticism as a parallel process to societal change

You need to keep in mind the influence of each of the three stages on the development of physical activities and young people, both at that time and now. The development of physical activities links with technical developments. The development of young people links with both social relationships and value.

## KEY TERMS

### Technical developments

Developments related to rule structure, equipment, facilities, spectatorism, level of skilfulness and so on.

### Social relationships

Influences of societal change, for example improved transport and communications, and changing social relationships within the schools such as level of bullying, Headmasters' attitudes, interaction between boys, masters and local residents.

### Values

Benefits, ethics and morals that build character and become guidelines for living, such as teamwork, manliness, loyalty, honour and respect for opponents.

## Stage one (c.1790–1824): Boy culture, bullying and brutality

At the end of the eighteenth century, English society consisted of contrasts between the high culture of Regency period fashion with the low culture and apparent brutality of blood sports and bare-fist fighting. Both ends of this social spectrum were mirrored in the public schools. This was a time of 'boy culture', when the confrontational behaviour of the French and American revolutions was copied by public



Fig 3.3 Cricket at Harrow school, 1802

schoolboys if things didn't go their way. The absence of a police force meant such unrest had to be controlled by the army. All recreational activities were organised by the boys for pure enjoyment and to relieve the boredom of academic work, which consisted solely of the classics (Latin and Greek). Masters 'ruled with the rod' in lessons, but had no influence or interest outside of the classroom. Perhaps this is why the boys took part in all sorts of mischief including trespass, truancy, poaching and fighting. In both society at large and in individual public schools, control was lost and tyranny and chaos resulted.

Stage one was a time of public school expansion when increasing numbers of upper-class boys were enrolling from a variety of different preparatory schools and bringing with them customs and recreations from all over the country. These customs were mixed and moulded, as in a **melting pot**, into schoolboy games and what were to become future traditions. Thus the sporting culture of each school began to be established along with a need for increased housing (expansion of the house system) and social control. Games and sports would ultimately provide the medium for **social control**, but meanwhile severe, imposed discipline by masters and resentful rebellion and hooligan behaviour by boys shaped the norm at this early stage.

## KEY TERMS

### Regency Period

A time of high fashion during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, associated with the Prince Regent (the son of George III who ruled during his father's illness).

### Preparatory schools

Junior schools for younger boys, who would then advance to the public schools.

### Melting pot

To combine different things to produce a new outcome; with respect to stage one, the mixing

of games and traditions from a variety of areas or sources resulting in a standardised game or system of play.

### Social control

The establishment of order, stability and good behaviour.

This was a time of 'institutionalised popular recreation', with activities ranging from the childlike to the barbaric. Hoops, marbles and spinning tops were in the playground alongside bare-knuckle fights and mob football. The wall at Eton and the cloisters at Charterhouse were the birthplaces of unique and ferocious mob football games. Cricket, the rural game already **codified** and played by both classes, was immediately adopted by the schools, while fox hunting was adapted to **hare and hounds**. Boys would also hire boats from local boatyards, play 'fives' and other ball games against suitable walls, swim in natural bathing places such as rivers and ponds and explore the countryside.

## KEY TERMS

### Cloisters

Covered walkways or corridors with a courtyard in the middle.

### Codify

To collect together and organise rules and procedures.

### Hare and hounds

An adaptation of fox hunting whereby one boy runs ahead of the pack dropping a trail of paper as 'scent', which is then followed by the chasing crowd.

### Fives

A hand and ball or bat and ball game against a suitable wall or (later) in a purpose-built court. Similar to squash, the game was called fives because of the five digits on one hand. (See also the illustration on page 000 in Chapter 4.)





**EXAM TIP**

Whenever you come across a new historical concept or idea, think 'then and now.' How did the past influence today?

## Stage two (1828–42): Dr Thomas Arnold and social control

This was a time of change, both in society at large and in the English public schools. Parliament and criminal laws were changing (for example, laws banning cruelty to animals), transport and communications were dramatically improving (with the introduction of the penny post and the railways) and Queen Victoria was crowned in 1837. With life and society becoming more orderly, the freedom and wild escapades of stage one became more and more out of place.

**KEY TERM****Penny post**

New technology and printing machinery for producing postage stamps transformed the postal service in 1840. For the first time the person sending a letter paid the postage instead of the person receiving it! The new system was cheaper, faster and more reliable, and greatly improved communications throughout the country.

Dr Thomas Arnold (1795–1842) is widely regarded as one of the key reformers of the English public school system at a time when it was out of control. He was Headmaster of Rugby School from 1828 until his death in 1842. He attended Winchester as a boy and showed no real interest in games but a great love of the countryside, which stayed with him throughout his life. Later, along with most public school headmasters at the time, he was an ordained clergyman and a doctor of divinity (meaning he had a PhD in theology).

On joining Rugby he grew to be obsessed by what he saw as the immorality and sinfulness of boys and was determined to reform them, their attitudes and their school lives.

*'Evil was something positive that Arnold could almost see and feel. When faced with it he would rise in anger, and indeed, on occasion, completely lose his self-control.'*

T.W. Bamford, *Thomas Arnold on Education* (1970)

Arnold used games as a vehicle for establishing social control. He also made the Chapel the school's spiritual and symbolic centre, thereby establishing a new moral code, which was better suited to the increasingly civilised society to which the public schools now belonged. Arnold also established a more trusting and sympathetic relationship with the sixth form, while his masters gradually adopted roles of mentor and guide, rather than judge and executioner. He then raised the status of the sixth form, increased their powers of discipline, and in return required them to be positive role models and his 'police force' around the school. The sixth formers became the link between masters and boys. Arnold's primary objective of delivering the Christian message could then be achieved. As a by-

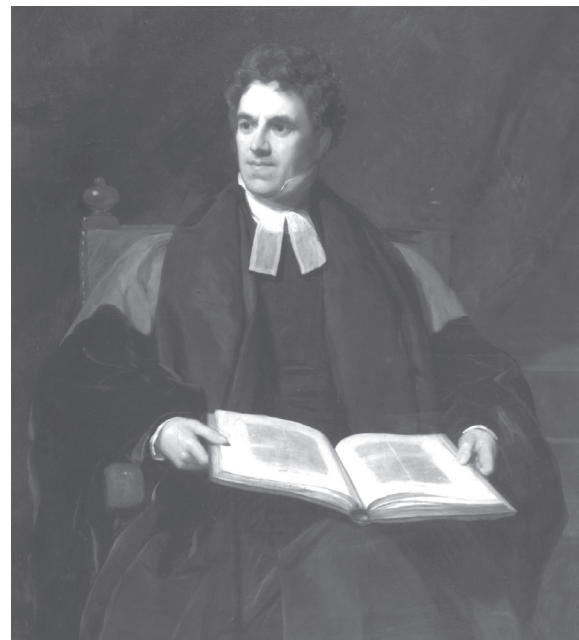


Fig 3.4 Dr Thomas Arnold (1795–1842)

product, the status, regularity and organisation of games also increased.

## REMEMBER

Dr Arnold used games as a vehicle for achieving social control in Rugby School; he did not value games as an end in themselves.

As schools continued to expand, the house system also grew. Individual houses, run initially as commercial enterprises by a housemaster and his wife, became the focus of boys' personal, social, recreational and sporting existence. Games of inter-house cricket and football kept boys out of trouble in the daytime and sent them to bed exhausted. Thus the playground became a central feature of public school life.

Arnold and other liberal headmasters of the time reformed the following aspects of public school life:

- the behaviour of boys
- the severity of punishments imposed by masters
- the role of the sixth form
- the academic curriculum.

## MUSCULAR CHRISTIANITY

Arnold's main aim, though, was to produce Christian gentlemen and to preach good moral behaviour. This was all part of muscular Christianity, or the belief in having a strong soul within a strong body. Sometimes the concept of muscular Christianity is referred to as a combination of godliness and manliness. It was fine to play sport and to play hard, but always for the glory of God – not for its own sake or for any extrinsic values that could be achieved.

## TASK 1

Try to think of contemporary sports performers who dedicate their performance in the same way that nineteenth-century muscular Christians did.

## Stage three (1842–1914): the 'cult' of athleticism

The conventional image of a late-nineteenth-century English public school is of mellow stone buildings, magnificent games fields, colours, caps and cricketers. These were all symbols of the **cult of athleticism**: the craze for team games and comparative disinterest in academic work.

Between 1850 and 1870, Britain and its Empire were 'ruling the waves' and military drill became part of public school life. The Football Association was founded and the effects of the publication of the *Clarendon Report* (1864) were felt. Meanwhile, games became compulsory at Harrow, cricket became compulsory at Clifton, and at Uppingham the gymnasium was built and the games committee was formed.

## KEY TERMS

### Cult

A craze or obsession.

### Athleticism

The combination of physical endeavour, or trying hard, with moral integrity – a mix of honour, truthfulness and sportsmanship.

### Clifton

Public school in Bristol, founded in 1862, built as a copy of Rugby.

### Uppingham

Grammar School reformed under Edward Thring (1853–87), where games became central to school life. Thring played in the school teams.



Consider what some academics have said about the emergence of athleticism in this third stage.

- Money, in *Manly and Muscular Diversions* (2001), argues that by the 1850s headmasters had accepted team games as voluntary free-time activities, with cricket, football, rowing

and various racquet games well established recreationally though not yet as part of the curriculum.

- Holt, in *Sport and the British* (1990), refers to the 1850s as 'the crucial decade in public school sport.'
- Mangan, in *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School* (2000), adds:

*'...from 1850 onwards, games were purposefully and deliberately assimilated into the formal curriculum of the public schools: suitable facilities were constructed, headmasters insisted on pupil involvement (and) staff participation was increasingly expected...'*

- Newsome, in *Godliness and Good Learning* (1961), goes further, arguing that:

*'Between 1860 and 1880, games became compulsory, organised and eulogised at all the leading public schools.'*

The ex-public school boy was expected to have a well-rounded character, impeccable manners

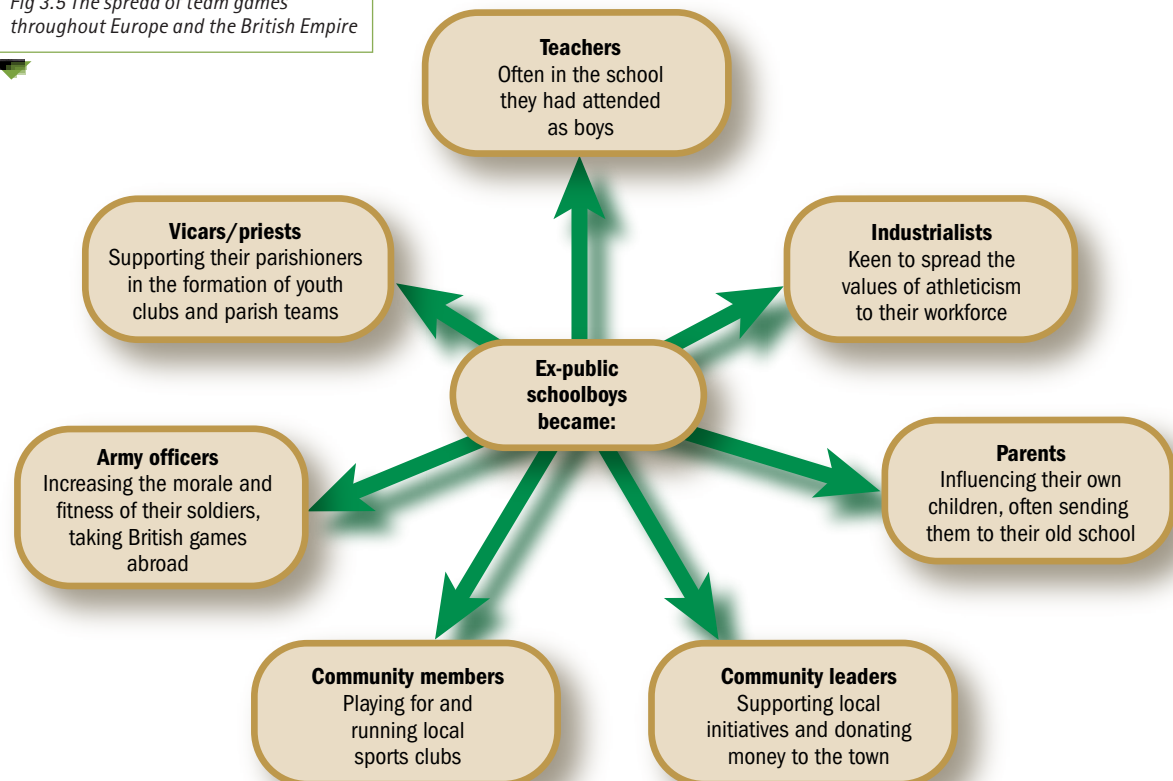
and enviable personal qualities. Further, having led a team on the games field it was assumed that he could lead a regiment on the battlefield. According to one observer, public schools created men who would be 'acceptable at a dance and invaluable in a shipwreck!' So, in the space of 60 years, what had been an embarrassment to public school headmasters became their pride – games and athletic pursuits.

### INFLUENCE OF EX-PUBLIC SCHOOL BOYS

Many public school boys went on to study at Oxford or Cambridge (Oxbridge). Here, sporting prowess was reflected in an Oxbridge 'blue', achieved when a student or graduate represented their university in a Varsity match against the opposing university. Old boys with a 'blue' became sought after assistant masters in public schools.

You will remember from your AS socio-cultural studies that on leaving university these young men would go into adult life taking the games ethic with them. For example, in 1938 in Kuala

Fig 3.5 The spread of team games throughout Europe and the British Empire





Lumpur (now Malaysia), a group of expatriates associated with the rubber plantations started a modified paper chase in order to work up a thirst before retiring to the Selangor Club. There the restaurant was known locally as the 'Hash House', so the name was adopted by the harriers and is still used to this day.

## KEY TERMS

### Assistant master

Junior master without the responsibility of a house who taught an academic subject and was fully involved in the games programme.

### Games ethic

A belief in the value of team games for the development of character. Clifton, Malvern and Cheltenham are examples of middle-class copies of Clarendon schools that took on the games ethic and had outstanding facilities.



## ATHLETICISM IN GIRLS' PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

While athleticism was reaching cult proportions in boys' public schools, there was a delay in the development of opportunities for upper- and middle-class girls. The reasons for this were:

- the traditional role of women – education of females was regarded as a threat to the behavioural norms of society
- anxiety over the wearing of revealing clothing for physical exercise
- the status of women in society – girls' schools that did exist concentrated mainly on music, dancing and posture; it was not considered necessary to give girls the same opportunities as their brothers
- it was thought inappropriate (unladylike) for women to be competitive or exuberant
- medical concerns – it was believed that strenuous physical activity was medically dangerous and could complicate or even prevent child-bearing

- perceived physical inferiority – there were concerns that girls would not be able to cope with strenuous physical activity
- girls' schools already concentrated on other activities such as music and dancing.

Also, there were fewer prominent personalities to match boys' school heads such as Arnold of Rugby or Thring of Uppingham. Three women who should be mentioned, however, are:

- Frances Mary Buss
- Dorothea Beale
- Madame Bergman Osterberg.

These women were all great pioneers of female physical education in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. They had to overcome prejudice and sometimes ridicule, but they successfully made a difference. In the 1860s, Frances Buss founded the North London Collegiate School and Camden School for Girls, while Beale transformed Cheltenham Ladies College into an esteemed school for upper- and middle-class girls. The Swedish Madame Bergman Osterberg became Lady Superintendent of Physical Education in London in 1881 and soon founded the first full-time specialist PE college for women – Dartford.

## APPLY IT!

Note the influence of public schools on:

- other schools (which copied the Clarendon 'nine')
- universities (as a 'melting pot' for the standardisation of rules)
- organisations (formations of governing bodies)
- regularity of play (which increased standards of performance)
- building of specialist facilities (for example, swimming baths and gymnasias)
- festival days (for example, sports day which rivalled speech day in the school calendar)
- fields (extensive playing fields created and proudly maintained).

Impact of Stage 1 on:	Then	Now	Impact of Stage 2 on:	Then	Now
Physical activity (technical development)	The impact was informal and unofficial rather than structured or planned. Many activities became institutionalised and took place both in school grounds and surrounding countryside, in free time outside of lesson time. Activities usually casual and/or spontaneous and both adopted (such as cricket, football and fighting) and adapted (such as hare and hounds and steeplechase). Also invented to suit natural facilities in schools.	Limited direct impact of Stage 1 today. Examples include maintenance of traditional football games such as the Wall Game at Eton College.	Physical activity (technical development)	As part of the process of social control, sports and pastimes became more controlled and less violent and /or spontaneous. Played more regularly and in school grounds with trespass reduced. A growing programme of games and individual activities played on an inter-house basis.	The house system still central to organisation in many schools today particularly independent boarding schools many of which are modelled on the nineteenth century format.
	Young people (social relationships and values)	On the positive side, young people had opportunities to develop independence and self-sufficiency. On the negative side there was institutionalised bullying linked with hooligan behaviour and the prefect/fagging system, poor relationships and severe punishments.		Limited direct impact – more indirect impact as stage on route to athleticism.	Games were used to establish social control in Rugby School. Dr Arnold required Christian attitudes and better behaviour especially from the Sixth form to whom he gave responsibility. Arnold also keen to change the behaviour of the boys, the severity of punishments imposed by masters, the role of the sixth form, the academic curriculum, the relationships of boys and masters from mutual antagonism to mutual trust and respect.
<div>Impact of public schools</div>					
Impact of Stage 3 on:	Then	Now	Now		
Physical activities	Organisation – codification and regular fixtures including establishment of inter-school fixtures, leagues, cups and competitions such as public school championships. Formation of NGBs by Old Boys. Encouraged by headmaster. Time, space and expertise available. Impact of university melting pot on standardisation of rules.		Some of the old established competitions still exist. Participation in physical activities considered important for healthy balanced lifestyles.		
Young people	Character development (PIES): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Physical – daily participation increased health and skill levels.</li><li>Intellectual – development of organisational, administrative and management skills.</li><li>Emotional – need for both independence and teamwork.</li><li>Social – loyalty to house, school and ultimately to country. Fixtures with local clubs and other schools giving opportunities for friendships.</li></ul> Fair play. Appreciation of value of healthy exercise and fresh air. Participation helped to develop 'all rounders' who were socially acceptable and respected. The competitive experience useful in an increasingly competitive society. Old Boys' societies established – financial generosity.		PE in National Curriculum still focuses on development of whole child (see Chapter 5 – PE in state schools, page 000). Life similarly competitive today as competitive sport making a come-back in state schools. Old Boys' and girls' societies still in existence.		
Participation	Massive impact – daily participation compulsory in many public schools. Full staff involvement.		Similar in some independent schools today. KS3 focuses on participation and healthy balanced lifestyles		

Fig 3.6 Impact of the three stages of public school development of physical activity, young people and (stage three) participation



Fig 3.7 The Eton Wall game – an example of a stage one activity with direct links to today. This is not an exhaustive list – you are probably able to think of more examples.

## EXAM TIP

Exam questions could ask you to focus on one phase or to assess change over the three phases. Remember to read the question carefully to determine exactly what you need to do.

## STRETCH AND CHALLENGE

Read and reflect on the following items written when athleticism was in full swing. What values are being promoted or encouraged?

*'As on the one hand it should be remembered that we are boys, and boys at school... so on the other hand we must bear in mind that we form a complete social body... a society, in which... we must not only learn, but act and live, and act and live, not only as boys, but as boys who will be men.'*

Rugby School Magazine

*'For when the One Great Scorer comes  
To write against your name  
He marks – not that you won or lost –  
But how you played the game.'*

Alumnus Football, Grantland Rice (1880–1954)

*There's a breathless hush in the Close to-night –  
Ten to make and the match to win –  
A bumping pitch and a blinding light,  
An hour to play and the last man in.*

*And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,  
Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,  
But his Captain's hand on his shoulder smote  
"Play up! play up! and play the game!"  
The sand of the desert is sodden red,  
Red with the wreck of a square that broke;  
The Gatling's jammed and the colonel dead,  
And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.  
The river of death has brimmed his banks,  
And England's far, and Honour a name,  
But the voice of schoolboy rallies the ranks,  
"Play up! play up! and play the game!"  
This is the word that year by year  
While in her place the School is set  
Every one of her sons must hear,  
And none that hears it dare forget.  
This they all with a joyful mind  
Bear through life like a torch in flame,  
And falling fling to the host behind –  
"Play up! play up! and play the game!"*

Sir Henry Newbolt (1862–1938). He was educated at Clifton School and Oxford University, after which he became a barrister. He was also a novelist, playwright, magazine editor and poet who supported the virtues of chivalry, loyalty, good manners and sportsmanship combined in the service of the British Empire.

## TASK 2

- 1 Try to think of 8–10 things that increased or decreased in the public schools from stage one to stage three, for example coaching increased and mob games decreased.
- 2 Create an acrostic for the word 'ATHLETICISM' by thinking of a character-building value that was thought to be achievable through playing team games for each letter. For example, in stage three, 'H' for honour or 'M' for manliness. Learn your acrostic to use in your examination.
- 3 Why do you think that most sports organisations and national governing bodies (NGBs) were formed between

1863 and 1888? (Clue: think about the impact of public schools, the values associated with games, the impact of improved transport and communications and the needs of a modern industrial society.)

### CASE STUDY ACTIVITIES

Table 2 below gives a brief review of the technical development throughout the nineteenth century in public boarding schools. A more detailed analysis can be found in Chapter 4 (page 000).

	Stage one: Bullying and brutality	Stage two: Social control	Stage three: Athleticism
Bathing and swimming	Informal bathing in natural facilities during summer months (mainly for recreation)	More regular and regulated bathing (for hygiene, safety and recreation); increasingly thought to be beneficial as part of a healthy lifestyle	Increased technical development with changing huts, diving boards, purpose-built facilities and competitions; swimming masters (attendants) for teaching and to oversee safety
Athletics	Informal running and exploring the countryside; paper chase (hare and hounds) linked to trespass	Trespass restricted or banned (gave school bad name, irritated neighbouring landowners; against Christian ethics; need to keep boys on site). Hare and hounds and steeple chase continued in more formal style	Steeple chase and cross-country running; annual sports day as major sporting and social occasion
Football	Mob games and the first melting pot of activities from 'home'	More formalised football rules for individual schools (see page 000). Inter-house competitions	Formal Football Association (FA) or Rugby Football Union (RFU) rules along with traditional games at individual schools. 'Colours', caps, inter-school fixtures
Cricket	Cricket – transferred directly into the public schools due to its non-violent nature, rule structure and upper-class involvement in society	Cricket encouraged with massive inter-house participation	Continued technical development such as professional coaching, 'colours', caps and inter-school fixtures (for example, annually against MCC)
Tennis	Informal hand and ball games against suitable available walls and buildings. Referred to as 'fives' or 'tennis' (referring to real tennis not lawn tennis, which had not been invented yet)	Some fives courts built though fives still an informal activity; game of racquets developing as more formal alternative; also squash racquets	Fives continued as recreational game; racquets a more formal game of higher status. Lawn tennis comparatively low status in boys' schools; very popular as summer game in girls' public schools

Table 2 Technical development of the five case study sports in public boarding schools through stages one to three

### TASK 3

In which of the three stages of development would you place the following (some fit into more than one stage):

- melting pot
- inter-house
- muscular Christianity
- hooligans
- values
- mob activities
- social control
- character development
- Dr Thomas Arnold
- recreation
- professional coaches.

### EXAM TIP

The mnemonic PIES might help you to remember which aspects to consider when asked about the development of young people or the benefits and values associated with participation.

Physical  
Intellectual  
Emotional  
Social

### STRETCH AND CHALLENGE

Read the following extracts about the development of athleticism at Charterhouse School. To what extent do you feel that Charterhouse mirrored the developmental stages outlined in this chapter?

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF ATHLETICISM AT CHARTERHOUSE SCHOOL

##### BACKGROUND

Charterhouse was founded in 1611 as a combined almshouse for 80 paupers and a school for 40 clever but poor scholars. While Eton bordered the Thames and Windsor Castle, Winchester had its grassy hill and beautiful cathedral, Harrow had its picturesque hill and church, and Westminster had its grand old Abbey and was adjacent to the Houses of Parliament, Charterhouse was founded in the grim neighbourhood of a prison on the site of an old plague pit! Significantly, however, in 1872 after 258 years in London, Charterhouse moved to leafy Godalming in Surrey – and that's when athleticism took off!

##### STAGE ONE AT CHARTERHOUSE

Low-key activities ranged from playing with hoops, running races and skipping. Dice and card games were forbidden, however, for fear of boys gambling. In terms of facilities, the

cloisters were central (see Fig 4.16 on page 000). The Charterhouse cloisters became the venue for a unique game of mob football and also for brutal fights which were officially discouraged but which happened anyway. They were good entertainment and, with few alternatives, were a symbol of courage and justice. There was very little space or grass, but cricket and 'open' football were attempted in spontaneous rather than pre-planned matches. Limited transport and problems of excessive drinking by boys meant that the Charterhouse Headmaster was against inter-school matches.

##### STAGE TWO AT CHARTERHOUSE

There was still evidence of informal popular reaction-style activities, for example the annual Shrove Tuesday Lemon Peel Fight, which was finally abolished in 1877 after boys were blinded and other severe injuries caused by lemons being loaded with stones. But cloister football was the most prestigious game. Twenty 'fags' for each team had to guard their goal (a door at each end), while up



to fifty other boys spread out waiting for the ball to be introduced halfway up on the open quadrangle side. Then massive scrums lasting up to 45 minutes would result in broken teeth, bloody noses, bruised shins and trampled fags!

## KEY TERM

### Fags

Younger boys were expected to carry out tasks for the older boys in the school. 'Fagging' was common throughout the English public schools, although the system was subject to much abuse.



Inter-house matches and games clubs had not yet been established at Charterhouse, so different teams such as 'A to K' versus 'Rest of alphabet' or 'Tall' versus 'Short' were concocted. The boys needed a channel for their energy and aggression, and with rebellion almost over and fighting on the wane, cloister football became the natural successor, with cricket as its nationally codified and socially acceptable summer alternative.

## STAGE THREE AT CHARTERHOUSE

Athleticism grew out of all proportion in the 25 years after the move to Godalming. Both cloister and open football were played regularly, with cloister football gradually becoming less about brutality and more about character development. In terms of the open game, every public school had their own rules and refused to give them up or to join with others, so when matches were arranged against each other it was chaotic. So, with no hope

of agreeing and writing a standardised set of rules directly through the schools, Old Boys were left to set up the Football Association, which they did in 1863.

During the 1850s and 60s, cricket grew as a result of improved transport and communications. William Clarke's All England XI toured the country and the first England team visited Australia in 1861. There was a parallel development at Charterhouse, with more regular fixtures against schools, local clubs and, of course, the annual match against MCC. Still, it was the cricket captain rather than employed ground staff who organised groups of fags to prepare the pitches. Idiosyncratic school matches still took place occasionally, with 'the First XI with broomsticks' versus 'the Second XI with bats' being a favourite.

Although never officially compulsory at Charterhouse, everyone was expected to play some game every day or nearly every day. Each house interpreted this differently, with one house (Gownboys) requiring all boys in Lower School to score 18 points a week. If they didn't they were beaten with a toasting fork which was apparently worse than being beaten with a cane! A game of football or cricket counted for four points; fives counted as three points; squash racquets two and swimming one. Curiously, merely changing also earned one point, so it seems that merely getting changed 18 times a week avoided contact with the toasting fork. For many, however, such threats were unnecessary and games became their obsession; an obsession that was provided for, systematically administered and still, just about, in check.

# ExamCafé

Relax, refresh, result!



## Refresh your memory

You should now be able to describe and explain:

- ▶ the characteristics of nineteenth-century public schools
- ▶ the impact of the public schools on physical activities in general and on the five case study activities in particular (this will be covered in more detail in Chapter 4)
- ▶ the relevance of the Clarendon Report
- ▶ how nineteenth-century public schools went through three stages of development:
  - ▶ stage one was associated with bullying and brutality
  - ▶ stage two was a time when Dr Thomas Arnold established social control
  - ▶ stage three was the 'cult' of athleticism when team games were played obsessively by some and for the development of character
- ▶ the development of sports and games in each stage
- ▶ the impact of the three stages on physical activities, on young people and on participation both in the nineteenth century and now
- ▶ the reasons for the slower development of athleticism in girls' public schools compared with boys' public schools
- ▶ the meaning of the following terms: athleticism, muscular Christianity, melting pot, Oxbridge.



## REVISE AS YOU GO!

1. Identify four characteristics of early-nineteenth-century public schools and explain how each characteristic influenced the development of team games.
2. What is meant by the following terms: melting pot; muscular Christianity, athleticism, Oxbridge; cult?
3. Who was Dr Thomas Arnold and what did he want to reform?
4. Identify three key features of stage one of development.
5. Identify three key features of stage two of development.
6. What was the role of the sixth form during stage two of development when Dr Thomas Arnold was headmaster of Rugby School?
7. Identify three key features of stage three of development.
8. What is meant by the following terms: technical developments; social relationships; values?
9. How did ex-public school boys influence the spread of team games?
10. Give reasons for the slow development of athleticism and regular participation in sports and games in girls' public schools, as compared with boys' public schools.

## Get the result!

### Examination question

Evaluate the impact of public school athleticism on participation in sports and games in the late-nineteenth century. Outline the extent to which the impact of athleticism is still felt in schools today. (6 marks)

### Examiner's tips

First, as always, you need to check exactly what you are being asked to do. There are two commands here: *evaluate* and *outline the extent to which*. You must do both to score maximum marks. *Evaluate* is similar to weigh up or calculate, so you will 'weigh up' the impact of public school athleticism on participation. As always in historical studies, you will then need to consider the past in the context of the present; here you are being asked to *outline* (summarise quite briefly) *the extent to which* (how great was) *the impact of athleticism is still felt in schools today* (the effect of then on schools now).

- These commands require high-order thinking skills, so this would probably be a part C question. (Remember, your questions will progress in difficulty from A, B and C up to 20-mark D.)
- Remember that athleticism was stage three – so don't waste time or effort going into details of stage one or two.
- How many marks are available? – 6.
- A brief plan to structure your thoughts should help you produce a high quality answer.



**Examiner says:**

Great plan – I like your mnemonic TOP VICC to help you remember that ex-university men went on to be Teachers, Officers in the army, Parents or Politicians, Vicars, Industrialists, Community members and Community leaders – and that in each of these roles they spread their passion for team games. This is only a 6-mark question, though – you won't need (or have time to) evaluate each one.

**Examiner says:**

This is all true and provides useful context. However, it may be slightly away from the precise question set, so be careful to stay within your timings.

**Student answer**

Impact	Massive
At the time	Athleticism involved or led to:
– in the	
schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilities</li> <li>• coaches – professional or assistant masters</li> <li>• inter-house and inter-school fixtures</li> <li>• compulsory/daily participation</li> <li>• Master involvement</li> <li>• but societal change too (e.g. railways).</li> </ul>
After they	TOP VICC
left school	
– in society	
Impact on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• House system</li> </ul>
schools today	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports day</li> <li>• Extra-curricular</li> <li>• Independent schools versus State schools</li> <li>• Coaches then versus SSCOs now</li> </ul>

The impact of late-nineteenth-century athleticism on participation in sports and games was phenomenal, both in the schools at the time and in society at large. The impact is still felt in schools today.

Athleticism (linked to both physical endeavour and moral integrity) involved a passion for team sports by both boys and masters. By now, Headmasters believed participation in team games was crucial to the development of character. This adult support and involvement helped to drive the success of

**Examiner says:**

Great introduction – you have basically answered the question in your opening paragraph... now you can pick it apart and do the evaluation.

athleticism – especially after the boys left school and took their games to university.

These schools had great provision which helped participation. Because they had money (mirrored by most independent schools today), they had enough land for several pitches and could build specialist facilities such as swimming baths. Moreover, they could employ professional coaches in, for example, cricket, who would become role models and inspire both participation and high quality performance. Other coaching was done by young graduates from Oxbridge who had a teaching role but were fully involved in games (again, as in many independent schools today). Other graduates spread athleticism as vicars or wealthy generous industrialists who set up parish or works teams thereby increasing participation in the community.

In most schools participation was compulsory every day, which obviously had a positive impact on participation. All boys played for their house while the best played for their school. By now, improved transport and communications contributed too, which really helped athleticism to make its mark and for participation to grow.

Many schools today still have a house system, often have athletics sports days (as in the 1880s) and independent schools particularly have the provision for regular participation with high quality coaching and facilities. State schools may have less good provision but even they have school sports co-ordinators, who you could argue have a similar role to play to the visiting coaches in the late-nineteenth century.

**Examiner says:**

It is interesting that your plan suggests that you expected to refer to today in a final paragraph tagged on to the end. To refer to today at relevant points throughout your answer like this is more effective – even though a bit harder. Well done.

**Examiner says:**

Your comment about the railways shows good contextual understanding and analysis, and again you have drawn your point back to participation.

**Examiner says:**

I'm glad you drew your key point back to the question set with the words 'so increasing participation'. Good.

**Examiner says:**

You have linked 'then' to 'now' very well.

- Your quality of written communication is very good.
- Your plan definitely helped bring structure and clarity to your answer.
- A short concluding sentence or two would have been great.
- Take care with your time keeping – remember, you have approximately 50 minutes for your historical studies question, which includes the long 20-mark part D.

Overall, this is an excellent answer – well done!