

It needs more than a positive attitude: physical education subject matter content knowledge of pre-service primary teachers

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Teacher confidence and competence are often cited as reasons for the inconsistent delivery of physical education in Irish primary schools. There have been calls for a review of physical education pre-service programmes. This study examined the school physical education experiences of pre-service teachers (n=176) and explored how these experiences have influenced their attitudes towards teaching physical education. Although participants' positive attitudes towards physical education are encouraging, a lack of content knowledge creates significant challenges for pre-service teacher education programmes. This paper argues for a reconceptualisation of teacher education so that pre-service teachers can develop sufficient expertise to deliver physical education effectively.