

Active Movement in Berkshire



From January 2016, two schools undertook the first active movement pilot to involve a number of schools in a single town. In partnership with West Berkshire Council and Get Berkshire Active, Park House School (the first national secondary school ever to take part) and The Winchcombe Reception and Primary school were introduced to the active movement for the Spring and Summer term.

A comprehensive programme of active movements (from reducing sitting time in class to active movement projects, home work and even special events like active debating and active nutritional events) was supplied. Teachers were briefed to introduce the programme into the classroom. Communication campaigns were placed around the schools plus special walks within the school for children to complete. House points and other rewards were offered creating competition and fun. Animal characters were used to engage the youngest age groups.

Active movement supported the school with ideas, advice and support plus evaluation processes including focus groups, behavioural questionnaires, teacher and pupil forums and regular visits – backed by Dr Mike Loosemore, a pioneering figure in Exercise in Medicine, the lead on physical activity at Head of the Institute of Sports, Exercise and Health - and co-designer of active movement.

The results have been outstanding.

In Park House, quantitative analysis saw a reduction in car and public transport journeys yet increases in cycling and walking. Activity levels across hard and moderate exercise showed a statistically significant increase. Year 7 children integrated regular group walking into weekly routine as a bonding event. A behavioural science class project showed the power of standing up when memorising text which led to the active revision reference card for all exam-takers (and perhaps helped contribute to the school's best ever GCSE and A level results!) One parent wrote to express their delight that their once computer-fixated son now goes on regular walks with his grandparents.

At The Winchcombe School, data clearly demonstrated that over 7 day periods there had been increases in activity across the 2, 3 and 4 days times a week bands. In break times, more children walked and ran around. There was a general increase in sporting activity. Maths trails added to the learning experience whilst a challenging child in assembly stated in front of the school "I really like active movement because I find it difficult to concentrate and sit still in class so it helps me to focus when I am on the carpet and with my learning". Active classes were held showing them to be more dynamic, energetic yet perfectly supervised.

Excitingly for a programme that is designed to be transitional between different settings, the April Active Debating event saw The Winchcombe visit Park House and join enthusiastically in a speed debate contest involving movement and argument!. The active movement programme is now so much part of the Park House ethos that the school has appointed an Active Well Being Co-ordinator promoting the relationship between more movement, physical activity and emotional well-being. At the

same time, The Winchcombe is maintaining the programme with a view to a second training session in the next few weeks. Teachers continue to integrate the programme as they become increasingly comfortable and innovative. Parents have expressed their hope that the programme will continue as they see the benefits at home.



The Newbury pilot has seen a major shift in the understanding, effectiveness and development of the programme along with the first indications of behavioural shifts in the young towards their long-term well-being.

One might describe it as a real active movement.

What is Active Learning?

"Active learning is experiential, mindful, and engaging.

Through it you can explore a set of learning experiences that can be more effective and interesting, and you can take more responsibility for your education. This is especially critical in an online environment where you may not even meet your teacher or fellow students." Toby Wright.

Active Movement – a pupil's perspective

Toby Wright, Year 7 pupil of Park House

Active Movement: How it has helped me

Active Movement has supported me with all of my subjects and urges me to persevere and be more determined with life. It persuades me that life isn't all about watching television and playing computer games but to build my confidence with others and change my lifestyle, for example to have a balanced and healthy diet and to get outside of the house more. My favourite quote linked quite closely with Active Movement is: When life gives you lemons; make lemonade...

Which parts of Active Movement have I benefited from?

Since Active Movement has been triggered into our school by the many posters and signs for better learning health that have been put up around the school building. Whenever I pass one I really try and examine what it means so I get the full purpose of its true presence. For example: 'Stand up. Glucose and insulin level down.' I believe it means that you need to stand up to not let sugar and other junk food take over your body and make you become obese and unhealthy. I also think standing up in class while the teacher or administrator is doing the register and sit down when your name is called out is also extremely significant and important. From what I have heard standing up daily burns calories like you are running ten marathons a year.

Has Active Movement made me revise more for my Examinations?

In one word yes, although in detail it's influenced to not just simply rush it, then look up on the Internet and to copy it down, but to actually focus on the matter in hand. When you research facts on the human body for science homework, read and look in a non-fiction book so you actually do something instead of staring at a screen. Overall, Active Movement has supported and aided me to do well in my tests and exams and I hope it has with others not just me.

What parents said about the Newbury pilot

'A really good initiative for the school to take; a lot of children today would benefit from this sort of programme'

'A fantastic concept'

'It helps them set good habits for the future'

'A brilliant idea for those children who are turned off by PE'

What teachers said about the Newbury pilot

'My class love it: they stand to answer questions or read - it helps the children be more active in class - because kids can lose focus.'

'It helps with attitude change for some who are less keen on exercise'

'The kids love the animals and seem to take on the idea. Some of them do choose to stand - because I now always give them that choice - and they like the Max and Tiggy area.'

What children said about the Newbury pilot

'It has affected me more out of school than in school. If I'm feeling a bit low or in need of motivation in the evenings, for homework or just in general, I've started going for a quick run.'

A video of the children from The Winchcombe is available at www.activemovement.co.uk

Active Movement – a headteacher's perspective

Derek Peale, Headteacher of Park House

"A values-centred ambition for students inspired by the headteacher drives the school's effective improvement and its planning."

These were the generous words from our recent Ofsted Inspection. They mean a lot to me. They mean a lot because they recognise our creation of, and commitment to, a set of school values that have genuinely begun to shape the everyday quality of learning and wider inspiration my students and their parents deserve.

When I first met Active Movement and understood their pioneering take on improving well-being through behaviour change, I was immediately reassured that their concept dovetailed with my own views on the power of activity to positively improve student health and performance.

More importantly, I was excited by the unique Active Movement approach.

It is designed to enhance school life and be part of its ethos rather than act as an extra-curricular bolt-on or quirky exercise regime. It seamlessly integrates into daily routine to enrich the curriculum, reinforce the educational experience and empower students to perform more effectively. Its comprehensive evaluation processes do not simply create useful data, but add to our knowledge and understanding of how we can shape school culture. And in Dr Mike Loosemore, we have access to extraordinary expertise and passion!

Above all, active movement has helped drive the spirit of togetherness and mutual support that is vital in protecting the emotional well-being of students as they face today's increasing pressures in their real and virtual worlds. Ask any headteacher, and this is at the very top of their priorities for the needs of the young people they serve.

I am delighted to have been the first secondary school to undertake the active movement programme and look forward to continue working with them alongside my newly-appointed Active Well-being Co-ordinator to build a genuine legacy and long-term behaviour change.

Active Movement in Haringey

The borough of Haringey represents a new challenge for active movement with one of the most diverse populations across ethnicity, deprivation and educational ability. So when active movement had the chance to work with Debbie Arrigon from Haringey public health to introduce the concept to a local primary school, it was too good an opportunity to miss. From the beginning of the Autumn term, St Ignatius RC School became an active movement school.

The pilot in Newbury gave us clear guidance as to how the programme could be enhanced. Teacher training was re-designed to create a more collegiate involvement and greater integration of the programme into daily routine. Children took part in a launch event in which each school year had an opportunity to creatively contribute to its introduction. Quantitative evaluation prior to the campaign beginning was more comprehensive than ever to gain the maximum data to judge its effectiveness. A nearby school was selected to act as a control. Our thanks go to Stamford Hall Primary School for their outstanding support.

It is too early to determine the behavioural effects on the children but the first indications are encouraging. Teachers are already being inventive and innovative in integrating non-sedentary and low-level activity into class routine. Children are standing up during registration, answering questions and other school movements without disruption or disorganisation. The launch week has thrown up new characters, posters, stories, unique movements, special walks and even a radio commercial!

A full schedule of active opportunities is planned for the next few months ranging from homework to nutrition, challenges to active reading with the full support of teachers and parents

St Ignatius is on the move!

Active Movement in Essex

Active movement was lucky enough to pioneer its project in 2014 at the newly-awarded Independent Nursery of the Year, the Old School House Day Nursery near Newmarket. Its pioneering managing director and educational activist Linda Baston-Pitt invited us to evolve the programme at her excellent nursery.

In turn, we were introduced to June O'Sullivan MBE, another outspoken champion for improving the health and well-being of pre-school children who saw the superb results we gained from OSHDN from our staff questionnaire, quantitative focus groups and specially-commissioned Mosaic report conducted by the University of East Anglia.

Active Movement was delighted to be invited by June to introduce the programme at one of her LEYF nurseries near Newbury Park in Essex. The programme begins as of November with staff training taking place a few days before.

The requirement of the active movement programme at this early stage is not about inspiring activity – at this age, the issue is more about getting them to sit still for a moment! Active movement recognises that children move not out of behaviour but out of an instinct that changes as they get older and become strait-jacketed by the structured nature of the classroom compounded by the more sedentary lifestyle of the teen years. The active movement programme is changing this scenario but until children reach this stage in their mobility, understanding and communication, they need to be educated about the power of being active and avoiding sedentary behaviour.

This is what the active movement programme will be doing at Marks Gate LEYF Nursery in East London over the next few months through communication, characters and special activities. Just as important, the staff will be involved in an active movement programme of their own to empower their support, improve their well-being and act as role models in educating the children.

The results will be available towards Easter next year when we will see that when it comes to educating and inspiring children to be active, the only way is Essex (LEYF)!

Active Movement in Suffolk

Active Movement is excited to be working with Suffolk County Council across three schools in the county as a precursor to a wider remit. Planning and preparation have just begun with a view to starting training in December with a launch in the New Year.

Active Movement in Reading

Our thanks go to West Berkshire Council and Get Berkshire Active in creating funds for a test in Calcot in West Reading. This challenging area will once again put demands on the active movement concept that it must respond to for the programme to have the universal benefits we believe it can have.

Active Movement by numbers

When designing the programme Dr Mike Loosemore was very clear about the evaluation processes behind it. As both medical innovator and scientist, he recognised that without substantial evidence as support, the programme could not have the wide appeal it merits.

As a behavioural change programme, it is imperative that data helps identify if it has had the necessary effect. At the same time, behaviour change requires considerable time, so data recording must allow this. The online behaviour questionnaire has not only given us a detailed perspective, but its simplicity and accessibility has seen highly robust sample sizes.

A new technique involving sedentary behaviour as research tool has led us to gain insights into key areas such as children's behaviour around breakfasting, bedtime habits, school travel and weekend activity.

We have introduced active assessments such as hand grips and jump plates to review physical change along with weight, height and circumference measurements. All are taken pre- and post-programme.

Staff and parents questionnaires rating current views about activity in the classroom are taken at the beginning and the end. Challenges within the programme are recorded and compared. SIMS and EYFS data are to be reviewed to examine effects on attainment, behaviour and absenteeism. Selected control schools supply similar behavioural and physical data for comparison.

"We are in a unique position," says Dr Loosemore. "Because we are so integrated into the daily routine of the school, we can delve much more deeply into the effects we have. This is important in a programme around behaviour change as improvements will be subtler, albeit more embedded. Our extensive evaluate process offers far greater insight than most other programmes."



Active Movement by Dr Mike Loosemore



I was at a conference in the USA a few years ago discussing dementia in the elderly and the effect of physical activity in countering it. The problem is that so many had lived an inactive lifestyle. If only we could change their behaviour, the audience agreed. Better still, of course, would be to get the middle-aged more active. Even better, so the conversation went, would be to change behaviour in young adults, or indeed teenagers or...the inevitable conclusion was reached that if we could set a more active lifestyle for young children, then we could create a lifetime of well-being.

The active movement programme was created recognising the difficulties of this challenge if we were to affect as many children as possible and create a long-term effect. The programme must be empathetic with children as they mature. It should be accessible to everyone, achievable by all, integrated seamlessly into daily routine, involve a child's community of parents and teachers and aim to inspire every child to add some activity into their lives even if only to reduce the dangerous time we spend nowadays sitting down.

I am pleased to report that the initial results from a series of pilots across settings of all ages have seen the programme become even more effective, diverse and far-reaching.

Thanks to the commitment by headteachers, the support of staff, the involvement of parents and the enthusiasm of the children, the active movement programme is beginning to fulfil the wish posed years ago.



Active Movement in conference

Owing to late unavailability of speakers, and with so much more happening at active movement, we decided to delay the second of our annual conferences to March 15th 2017. Details of venue and speakers for 'Innovations in combatting children's obesity and inactivity' will be issued soon.

ACTIVE MOVEMENT NEWS

- * St Ignatius using Active Movement as entry for Healthy Schools (London) Silver Award,
- * Active Movement working with Wexham School Slough on GCSE PE programme
- * Active Movement talking to Tottenham Hotspur FC about joint activity
- * Active Movement nominated for primary and secondary school health programmes in Berkshire

Contacting Active Movement

If you want to know more about the programme or have any questions about articles in this newsletter, call Peter Savage on 01189 442924 or email peter@activemovement.co.uk

