



# The benefits of physical activity

## How The Daily Mile can help

Taking part in regular physical activity has lots of benefits for children's physical health, mental health and wellbeing, and their learning.<sup>1</sup>



It improves **bone health** and **muscle strength** in children.<sup>2</sup>



It **enhances fitness** and improves **heart health**.<sup>3, 4</sup>



It reduces **body fat** and promotes **healthy body composition**.<sup>4, 5</sup>



It supports **self-esteem** and **happiness**.<sup>6, 7, 8</sup>



It helps **reduce anxiety** and **increases confidence**.<sup>9, 10</sup>



It improves **focus and concentration**<sup>11</sup> and can help improve classroom behaviour.<sup>12</sup>



It improves **memory** function,<sup>3</sup> **maths**, **problem solving** and performance.<sup>13, 14</sup>



It supports improved **academic attainment**<sup>15</sup> and **cognitive performance**.<sup>16, 17, 18</sup>

The benefits of being active are clear but we know that one third of children are active for less than 30 minutes a day.<sup>19</sup> Global recommendations from the World Health Organisation outline that children should be doing 60 minutes of physical activity every day.<sup>20</sup>

**The Daily Mile is a simple and free initiative for schools and nurseries. Children run or jog at their own pace, for just 15 minutes every day, outside with their friends. There's no extra workload for teachers, and no need for kit or special equipment - children take part in whatever they're wearing.**

**More than 11,000 schools are already registered for The Daily Mile in 78 countries.**

A growing network of researchers around the world are studying the benefits of The Daily Mile. The emerging research has been published in many academic journals and online too. Schools and teachers like The Daily Mile because it's simple to implement, flexible and works in a variety of settings.<sup>21</sup> We also know that The Daily Mile has lots of benefits for children's physical health and wellbeing, mental health and wellbeing, and their learning:

### ... physical health and wellbeing

The Daily Mile helps children be **more active** and **less sedentary**<sup>22, 23</sup> and significantly **increases their fitness levels**.<sup>22, 24, 25, 26, 27</sup>

The Daily Mile improves children's body composition by reducing **body fat**<sup>22</sup>, and has a positive impact on **body mass index** in girls.<sup>28</sup>

### ... mental health and wellbeing

Children report feeling **happier, more awake and calmer** after doing The Daily Mile<sup>27, 29, 30</sup> and **improves attitudes towards physical activity**.<sup>27</sup>

Teachers report that The Daily Mile **improves teacher-child and peer-to-peer relationships**.<sup>27, 31, 32</sup>

### ... learning

The Daily Mile increases children's **alertness** and can help **increase verbal memory** - these skills enhance children's ability to learn.<sup>30</sup>

Teachers report that The Daily Mile helps children's **attention, focus and concentration in class**<sup>31, 32, 33, 34</sup> and its social nature supports children to work better together.<sup>27, 35</sup>

## Find out more

To find out more about The Daily Mile, the research for the initiative, or to register your setting, head to our website: [www.thedailymile.co.uk](http://www.thedailymile.co.uk)