

Starter pack

Join the movement





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The Daily Mile is sustainable

The Daily Mile is free, simple and the children love it. When it is implemented properly – according to our core principles – it quickly becomes embedded in a school’s culture and is sustainable for years to come.

The inconvenient truth

In February 2012, I asked a class of ten year olds to run round the school playing field.

By halfway round most children were exhausted and had to stop. Most of them were completely unfit – and they recognised this themselves. What was to be done about this inconvenient truth? **If not now, then when? If not us, then who?** I sat down with the class and their teacher to discuss the situation. The children were keen to run round the field for fifteen minutes every day, to see what level of fitness they could achieve after a month.

The results were remarkable. The children looked better, felt better and were much fitter. They were averaging five laps of the field in the fifteen minutes, which, when measured, turned out to be a mile – so The Daily Mile was born. Despite the name, however, it's never a set distance. It's always just 15 minutes a day with each child running and jogging at their own pace.

By the end of the spring term, five classes were doing The Daily Mile. By the end of the summer term, all twelve classes were taking part. The nursery children (3–5 year olds) joined in early 2013. All 420 children were now doing The Daily Mile.

The improvements in the children's physical health were obvious. Of course, we could have predicted that running daily would make them fit but what we didn't foresee were all the other equally important **benefits to their mental, emotional and social health and wellbeing**, which became apparent over time.

Six years on, The Daily Mile has seen transformational change in participating children. They are physically fit, more focused in the classroom, more confident and more resilient.

The Daily Mile is wholly simple and fully inclusive. It introduces daily physical activity into children's lives with the minimum of fuss. It takes place outside in the fresh air where all of our children are every day – in their schools and nurseries – and it has the full support of children, parents and staff. Without this it could not have been sustained for so long. On reflection, The Daily Mile succeeds because **the barriers to participation in physical activity are removed.**

Though many millions of pounds have been spent on complicated and expensive initiatives to tackle the problem of physical inactivity, not one of them has worked. No single initiative in the Western world has had any impact on childhood obesity; children continue to become overweight, younger. The Daily Mile has stood the test of time, is being adopted by schools and nurseries across the UK and beyond, and senior figures in Public Health believe that it is a powerful weapon in the fight against physical inactivity and obesity.

The Scottish Government, the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, the Welsh Government, and the CEO of the Royal Society for Public Health, have all said that **every child should have the opportunity to do The Daily Mile.** The initiative has also received support from other senior medical and educational figures, and was recommended for all primaries in the UK Government's Childhood Obesity Strategy. It is a simple, universally valuable intervention that – in this time of austerity – **costs nothing.**

I wish you all the best as you implement The Daily Mile in your setting. I'm sure that the children and staff in your schools and nurseries will have as much fun doing The Daily Mile as the children at my former school did – and will experience the same benefits.

Elaine Wyllie, former primary school headteacher and founder of The Daily Mile.

Elaine Wyllie



The Daily Mile is supported by senior representatives across health, education and sport, who all agree that every child should have the opportunity to do The Daily Mile.

“After four weeks, The Daily Mile produces transformational change in participating children. They are physically fit, more focused in the classroom, more confident and more resilient.”

Elaine Wyllie





The Daily Mile
Removes
barriers to
participation in
physical activity
 and facilitates wider
 engagement in PE and sport.

The Daily Mile is easy to implement and fun to do. Even children who are reluctant to take part in PE enjoy and participate happily in The Daily Mile. Children with mobility difficulties and SEN should be fully supported to take part as well.



No change of kit: there's no 'cool'/'uncool' kit, no time spent changing, no lost or forgotten kit.



No revealing your body, so fewer issues around body image.



No specialist input required: no equipment, set up, tidy up or warm up necessary.



No staff training required. No extra workload for staff.



Not competitive. No need to be sporty - it's health and wellbeing, not PE or cross-country. The children set their own pace.



Safety - takes place outdoors under supervision on the school premises, usually in the playground or on existing paths.



No costs - it's easy and is free to implement.



Fully inclusive - it's for every child, every day, regardless of age, ability or personal circumstances.

The Daily Mile works...

Successful implementation of The Daily Mile can be summarised as 'every child, every day', based on the 'Four Fs': fun, friendship, fresh air and freedom.

...for children aged 4+

Children become more aware of their health and the need to take responsibility for it.

Improves body composition - bone density, muscle strength and cardiovascular health.

Helps children achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

Individual medical conditions, such as Diabetes and Asthma, can be helped.

Overall balance, gross and fine motor skills are enhanced.

It's 100% inclusive and no-one is left behind - every child succeeds.

It's not a race or competition - there is no sense of failure.

Children enjoy it - having fun, in the fresh air with friends, and a sense of freedom.

Children enjoy the weather, seasons and nature.

Supports improvement in self-efficacy, satisfaction and happiness.

...for teachers and headteachers

There is no workload - no training, planning assessment or measurement is required.

The Daily Mile is simple and free to implement.

It's proven to be sustainable - happening all year round, every year.

It always takes place outdoors in a safe, risk-assessed school environment.

It helps improve focus, concentration and behaviour in class.

Physical activity is known to improve attainment.

Teachers can, if they wish, choose to link it to aspects of the curriculum.

It embeds daily physical activity into the school's approach to health and wellbeing, and promotes health awareness.

It helps schools to meet the recommendations for daily physical activity outlined by the UK Chief Medical Officer and others.

The children are much fitter and can access sport and PE more readily.

...for parents and carers

It meets the needs of childhood - freedom, fun, fresh air and friends.

It takes place in a safe and secure environment.

Children are noticeably fitter - usually only four weeks after starting to run regularly.

It helps children towards achieving a healthy weight and improved body composition.

No need to transport children to clubs or events - and it's free.

It prevents children being too sedentary and encourages physical activity out of school.

Children develop greater resilience and confidence.

Enhanced attainment is linked to increased physical activity.

It helps children feel happy.

Mental health and wellbeing can be enhanced by regular physical exercise.

Many children will sleep and eat better.

...for nursery children

Links to early nutrition - children come back in from their Daily Mile to a healthy snack/lunch and drink of water.

Read the Scottish Government's guidance for doing The Daily Mile with young children: goo.gl/ERdFWY

Aids learning about the natural world and their physical environment.

Encourages the children to 'self-care' and to take greater responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

By starting at an early age, we are able to provide all children with the opportunity to develop their 'physical literacy' and improve their body composition for the rest of their lives.



Getting started

10 core principles

Your steps to Daily Mile success



QUICK

It takes just 15 minutes. Try to do it daily – and certainly no less than three times a week – otherwise children will find it hard, and won't enjoy all the benefits that come from daily physical activity.



FUN

The Daily Mile is not a race or competition – it's a daily physical activity which is social. The whole class should understand that they can run at their own pace. The children chat with one another as they run together.



100%

It's always fully inclusive – make sure all children are out in the fresh air, getting involved. This will ensure it is sustainable as the children enjoy it so much – they'll get the opportunity to chat with current friends, plus make new ones.



WEATHER

Treat the weather as a benefit, not a barrier. Children enjoy being outside in different types of weather, connecting with nature and being aware of the seasons.



TRACK

When deciding on your route, if you can, make it about 5–12 laps long. This allows the children to enjoy running as far as they can in the 15 minutes, without anyone being in the lead. The Daily Mile can't be done in mud.



RISK

Make it safe. In order to ensure that The Daily Mile is a safe activity for all the children, carry out a risk assessment of your route. It can be good to involve the children in doing this.



JUST GO

Deciding when the class goes out is best left to each teacher – they know their class and can respond to their needs. It is best if The Daily Mile is integrated into the children's schedules in a time-flexible way.



CLOTHES

The children don't change into kit – they always run in what they are wearing. Many schools have found that it's a good idea to make black trainers part of the school uniform.



OWN IT

Encourage the children to run and jog – although they can stop and walk to catch their breath from time to time. The real benefits to most comes from running and jogging for 15 minutes. There should be little to no walking.



SIMPLE

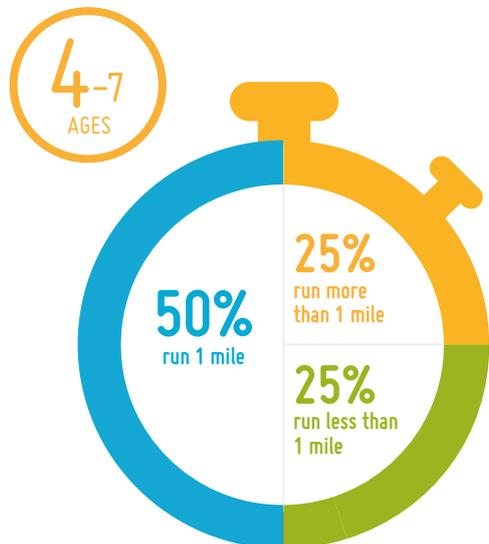
Keep it simple. Resist the temptation to overcomplicate it. It should always be social and fun. From time to time, you may wish to connect it to the curriculum or do something seasonal, for example, running laps to Lapland.



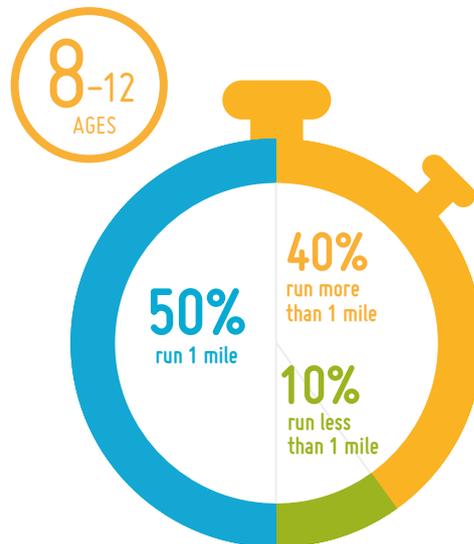
How far do the children run in 15 minutes?

Children don't all run the same number of laps in the time they're outside.

The number of laps the children will complete varies, as shown by average distances covered below. Children as young as two years old can take part in The Daily Mile at a suitable pace.



75% of younger children run a mile or more



90% of older children run a mile or more.

The impact of The Daily Mile on health & wellbeing

Reduces anxiety and stress, and children are happier.

Fitness and energy levels are improved.

Greater concentration is evident in class.

Health outcomes for life are improved with benefits to muscle, bone density, joints and cardiovascular health.

Classes experience the pleasure of being outdoors in all weather and engage with nature and the seasons.

The Daily Mile helps children towards achieving a healthy weight.

Helps to build confidence and self-esteem - all children succeed at The Daily Mile because it's non-competitive and fully inclusive.

Children with SEN or ASN feel the benefits of regular participation.

As a social activity, it can improve existing relationships and reduce isolation.

Children bring the benefits home, often eating and sleeping better and encouraging active family life.

Develops greater resilience and determination, and promotes the idea of self-care.

What they say about The Daily Mile

Don't just take our word for it! Hear what children, teachers and staff, parents and carers have to say about The Daily Mile.

Children

“ I love doing The Daily Mile because I can run with my friends and get healthier at the same time. ”

Y5 pupil, All Saints Church of England Primary School

“ I like it because it shows we can do running in any weather and any day, at any moment! ”

Y4 pupil, Hallfield Primary School

“ I really enjoy The Daily Mile because it gets us outside, a break from the classroom for 15 minutes every day. I like the chance to jog, chat with my friends and try to keep ahead of Mr Ainsworth! ”

Y3 pupil, St Andrews Catholic College

“ It's a lot of fun and keeps us fit and healthy. ”

P4 pupil, Deanburn Primary School

Teachers and staff

“ I've found The Daily Mile to be a great way to settle my class, particularly in the afternoon as it really helps their concentration. ”

P2 Class teacher, Cumbernauld Primary School

“ The Daily Mile is a very effective brain break for children and often gives me the chance to chat to individual children on our way round. ”

Class teacher, St Andrews RC Primary

“ Its beauty is its simplicity and the fact that it targets every single pupil in the school. It is worth stating this is not a PE or school sport initiative but a health and wellbeing one! Start to finish, it takes 15 minutes out of the day and for staff it is as easy as opening a door. ”

Headteacher, Westgate Community Primary School

“ Our children love The Daily Mile. It's lovely to give them time to be free! They're definitely improving their fitness as well! ”

Y2 teacher, Priory School

“ I just wanted to add how much the children in Year 5 enjoy The Daily Mile. If we don't go out for any reason, they always ask why. We feel that having this break in the fresh air helps them to maintain focus during the morning. It has been great to see some of the children, who are not keen on exercise, taking part and actually running for enjoyment. ”

Y5 leader, Priory School

Parents and carers

“ I thought it was a fabulous idea and such a simple, commonsense way to enrich children's lives in so many ways. ”

Parent, St Polycarp's Catholic Primary School

“ My daughter was not up for walking anywhere, but after she started doing The Daily Mile at nursery she wanted to walk everywhere, which was great! ”

Parent, Royal School of Dunkeld

“ I love The Daily Mile because it's a great way to get kids into a healthy habit of daily exercise. It's great for their body and mind, and I would love for it to continue each year. ”

Y3 parent, St Andrew's Catholic College





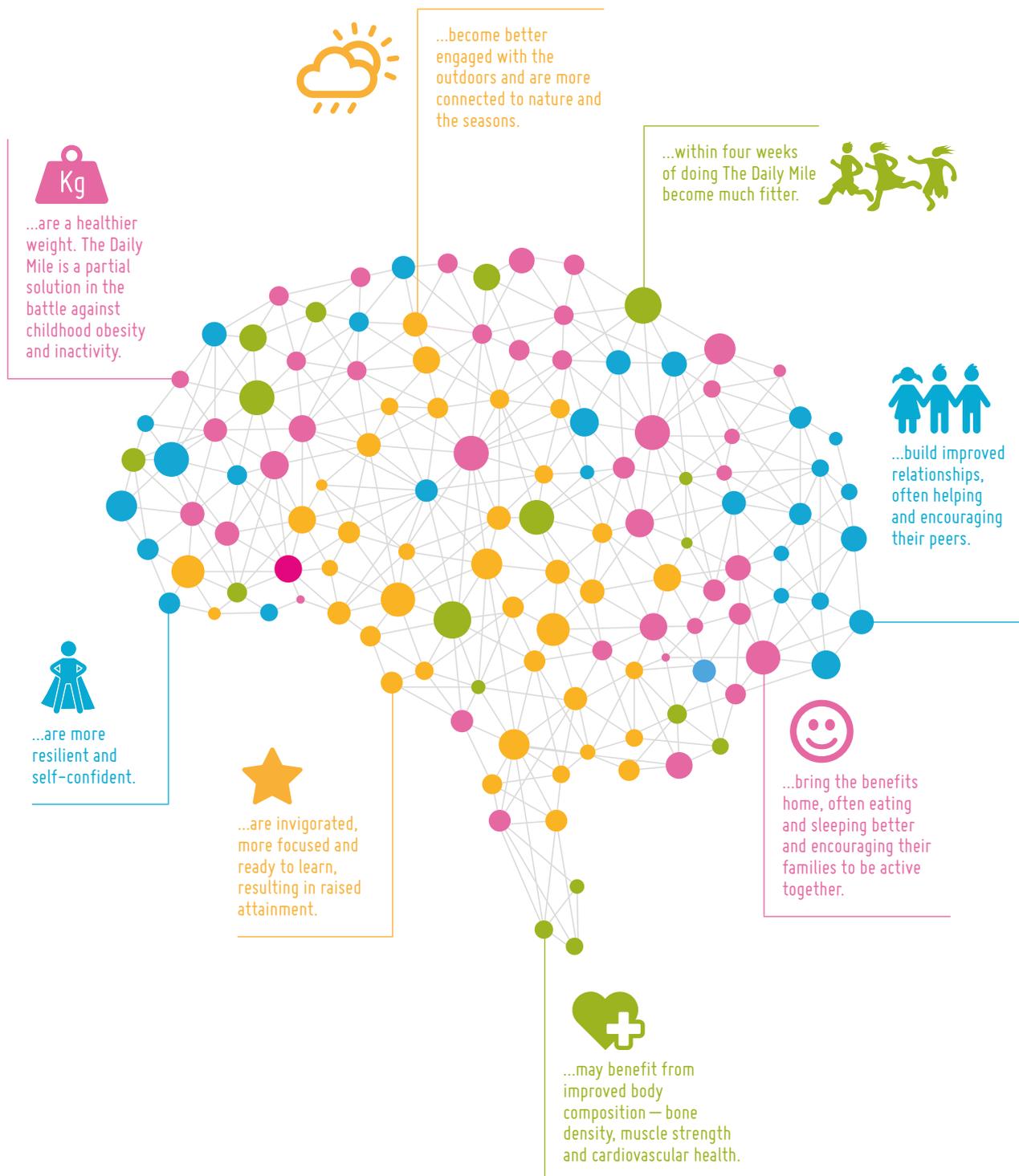
What does the science say?

How being more active improves health and wellbeing

It is widely accepted that physical inactivity and a sedentary lifestyle are bad for our health. It leaves children at risk of developing a range of adverse medical conditions during childhood and beyond into adulthood.

This contrasts with those children who are physically active - who will generally have better blood sugar regulation, improved bone density, less body fat, lower blood pressure and improved arterial development.

And evidence suggests that there are benefits beyond physical health. Regular physical activity, such as The Daily Mile, can lead to improvements in social, mental and emotional health too, resulting in children who...



FAQs

We've listened to your questions and answered the most frequent ones.

If you have a question which isn't answered here, visit our website: www.thedailymile.co.uk/faq



What is The Daily Mile?

The Daily Mile is simple and free. We want to get children fit for life and fit for learning by encouraging them to run or jog for 15 minutes every day in their schools or nurseries. It is a physical activity which promotes social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing, as well as fitness. It takes place outside in the fresh air during the school day at a time of the teacher's choosing. Children run in their school clothes and no special kit or equipment is required.

What about the children's footwear?

School footwear should be suitable for active play. The Daily Mile is 15 extra minutes of physical activity in the school day, alongside break and lunchtime. Some schools have chosen to make black trainers part of the school uniform.

Won't the weather be a problem?

The weather is a benefit not a barrier; the children respond well to the seasons and enjoy connecting with nature. Teachers choose when they'd like to take their class out and they use a common-sense approach. Children wear clothing appropriate to the weather – jackets on if it's cold or damp, sweatshirts off if it's warm. This sensible approach helps build resilience in children.

Is it fully inclusive?

Every child, no matter their age, ability or circumstances succeeds at The Daily Mile. All children take part, including those with special or complex needs. In our experience, even children initially reluctant to take part in The Daily Mile come to enjoy participating and many become more naturally inclined to engage in sport and physical activity.

Why should I take time out of a busy curriculum to do The Daily Mile?

The Daily Mile is quick. It happens in a slick 15-minute turnaround, from desk-to-desk and fits flexibly into the school curriculum. Studies have shown that The Daily Mile improves children's focus, behaviour and self-esteem, and has been shown to raise attainment.

How often should a class do The Daily Mile?

Ideally, The Daily Mile is run every single day in school. For children to be able to experience the full benefits and enjoy their Daily Mile, it needs to be done at least three times a week – preferably more.

Has your school joined The Daily Mile movement?

If your school does The Daily Mile, make sure you've signed up via our website to appear on our global participation map and receive all the latest news and updates from The Daily Mile Foundation: www.thedailymile.co.uk/school-signup

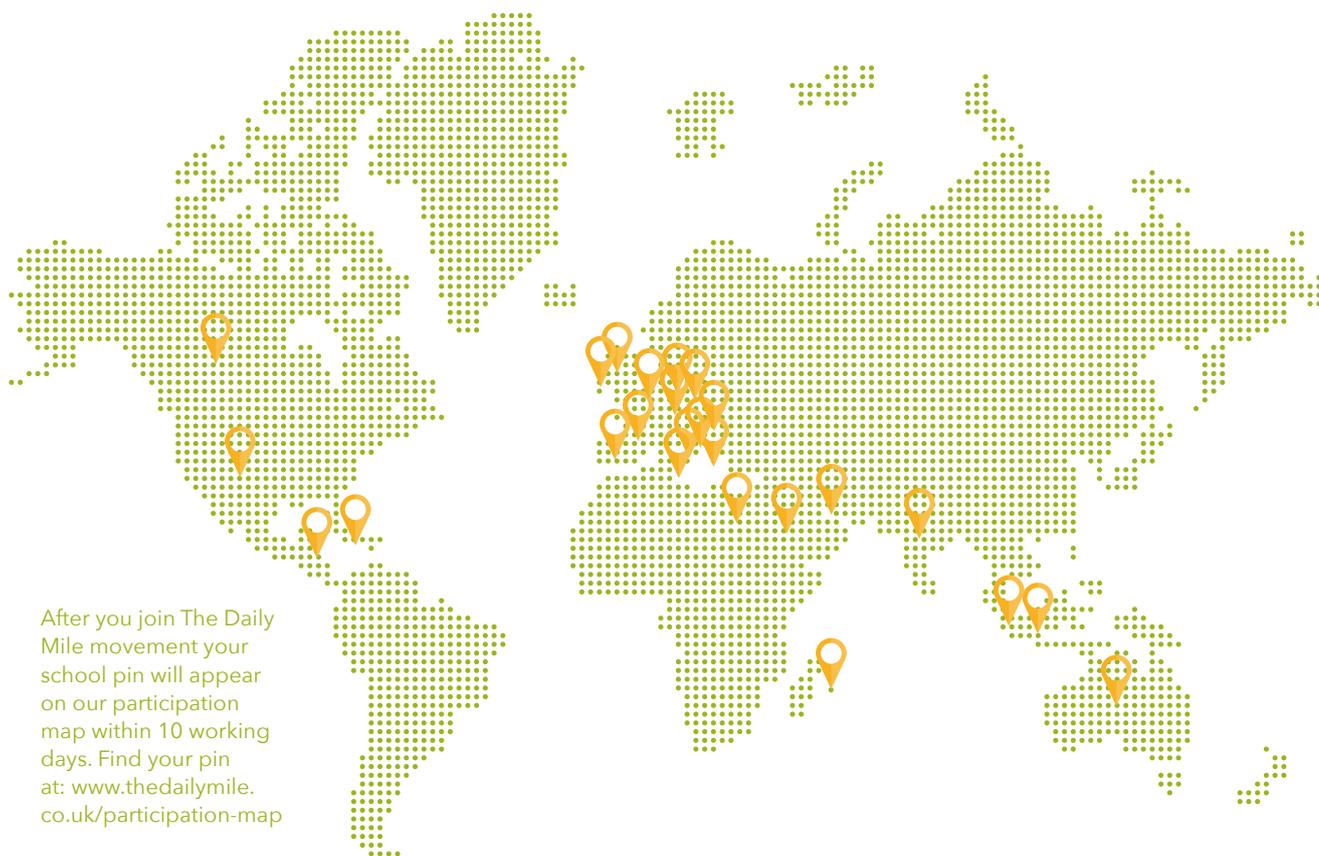




Our growing community

We're committed to support all schools who adopt The Daily Mile and help our children to become fit for learning and fit for life.

We're immensely proud of all the schools, teachers, children, parents and carers that make up our global Daily Mile community. To thank you for signing up and joining The Daily Mile movement, your school will receive the latest news and updates from The Daily Mile Foundation, plus some useful free resources and rewards.



After you join The Daily Mile movement your school pin will appear on our participation map within 10 working days. Find your pin at: www.thedailymile.co.uk/participation-map

Get started!

We've compiled a number of resources to help you start your Daily Mile, which include:

A sample risk assessment

A sample letter to parents

A presentation about The Daily Mile

A5 information flyer

Feedback from teachers, parents and children

Case studies and videos

Advice for teachers

Visit our website to download your **free** resources:
www.thedailymile.co.uk/resources



Contact The Daily Mile team

We'd love to know how you're getting on with your school's Daily Mile. Share your photos, videos and feedback with us on Twitter and Facebook - we love to hear from you!

If you run into any difficulty setting up your Daily Mile, don't worry - you can contact one of the team at thedailymile.co.uk/contact

 [@_thedailymile](https://twitter.com/_thedailymile)

 www.facebook.com/thedailymile.uk

“ Like all really good ideas, the Daily Mile is simple and easy to implement. I was blown away by the enthusiasm of parents, staff and — most importantly — pupils for the concept. If all schools adopted it, we’d have an incredibly powerful antidote to the ills resulting from physical inactivity that plague modern-day Scotland. ”

Dr. Aileen Keel CBE, Acting Chief Medical Officer for Scotland

“ Lack of physical activity is a real problem. It has crept up on us and we have to fix it, particularly for kids. The Daily Mile is simple, fun and most importantly, part of everyday life for the kids. I spend a lot of time around the country trying to find the bright spots to learn from and spread to other places...this is my new favourite. ”

Jason Leitch, National Clinical Director, Healthcare Quality, Scottish Government

“ The Daily Mile is a fantastic initiative, with teachers and parents seeing a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of those children taking part. ”

Shona Robison, Cabinet Secretary for Health, Scottish Government

“ These teachers have not only helped to make these kids fit today, they have bought them another seventy years of better health. ”

Maureen Bisognano CEO, Institute for Healthcare Improvement

“ The Daily Mile is an easy and fun way for children to improve their health and wellbeing. It is a fantastic way to support young people to get the recommended amount of physical activity each day, and will help them grow up healthier and happier. ”

Rebecca Evans, Minister for Social Services and Public Health, Welsh Government

“ The Daily Mile has been an excellent initiative and it is very encouraging that it is being taken up by an ever increasing number of schools. It has introduced physical activity into the everyday life of the school in an easy, inclusive and fun way. ”

The Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, Secretary of State for Health

“ It’s fantastic to see initiatives like The Daily Mile be established, showing real leadership from the education sector to improve children’s fitness levels, their cognitive behaviour and make a real difference to schools, teachers, parents and young people’s lives. ”

Tanni Grey Thompson, celebrated Paralympian and chair of UK Active

“ At every single school that I go into, whether as a local MP or as a Minister, I ask if The Daily Mile is being done. That has been a brilliant import from north of the border and it is excellent. I hope that every Member who goes into a school talks about the importance of The Daily Mile and encourages them to do it. ”

Steve Brine, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health

“ Physically active children and young people perform better academically than their inactive peers, and those who are most active benefit the most. ”

Dr Richard Bailey, International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education

“ Increasing opportunities to be physically active during the school day is key to ensuring our children are healthy and well. We are supporting The Daily Mile in Wales as a simple and innovate approach to help children be more active, more often. ”

Dr. Frank Atherton, Chief Medical Officer, Medical Director NHS Wales



children fit for life

supported by

INEOS

Already doing The Daily Mile?

Visit our website and join The Daily Mile movement at:

www.thedailymile.co.uk

[/thedailymile.uk](https://www.facebook.com/thedailymile.uk) [@_thedailymile](https://twitter.com/_thedailymile)

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