The Value of 60 Active Minutes!

Billy, a pupil in Year 5, enjoys the idea of PE but because of his special educational needs, struggles to cope with winning and losing. With a couple of close friends who weren't always the best influence, in challenging situations Billy was unable to cope, and rather than confront a difficult decision, he often ran away. This was a regular occurrence when participating in lunchtime football, arguing over decisions, and often finding himself at the centre of conflict. These situations often led to Billy running away through open gates and over fences, affecting his safety in addition to affecting his studies.

Nowadays however, lunchtimes have changed for Billy. Since this School Games project has started, Billy is now a Mental Health Ambassador, supporting his peers who need support and a friend on the playground.

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Objectives

- Educate teachers on the importance of children receiving 60 active minutes of physical activity a day, both in and outside of lessons
- Consider strategies which can be adopted by the school to contribute towards this physical activity target.

Who was the target audience and how were they engaged?

With 30% of children and young people currently taking part in less than 30 minutes of physical activity a day, it was crucial that all influencing stakeholders (including teachers) understood the importance of physical activity.

The School Games Organiser (SGO) supported teachers via a '60 active minutes' workshop, which highlighted the importance of promoting physical activity throughout the day.

This workshop led to the development of multiple opportunities that schools could then implement to support all young people to become more active.

Why was the activity unique?

Through a multi-faceted approach, Errington Primary School implemented methods both in and outside of the classroom to increase their pupil's daily movement. This included:

- Increasing the school day by 15 minutes to provide an afternoon playtime for pupils to wake up and shake up
- Active breaks embedded into lessons to increase focus, including learning walks
- Trained lunchtime supervisors to deliver playground games
- Playground zoning for pupils to choose from a range of activities, including balance bikes, skipping ropes, scooters, and traditional sports games.
- Training playground leaders to support the delivery of activity zones
- Quick PE, a 40 minute session focused on play and physical literacy.

What was the impact felt in schools and by CYP?

Staff noticed a significant difference in pupil behaviour during lessons and at breaktime. Children socialised with new friendship groups, were more willing to engage in lessons, and were more active throughout the day, which positively impacted their learning. For Billy in particular, he is no longer a runaway but instead a proud leader in the playground. Billy is the only Year 5 to join the Year 6 Playground Leader Team and has taken on the role of a Mental Health Ambassador.

Billy has the confidence to choose his own activities without dependence on others and looks out for children on their own who need support and a friend on the playground. As a result of this, Billy is more focused in class and even attended his first school trip to Edinburgh!

Why is this an example of School Games best practice?

The SGO created a project that educated and engaged key stakeholders within children and young people's lives to increase their physical activity levels.

By considering multiple avenues to increase physical activity, the SGO created a project that made a positive difference to the lives of young people, by increased play opportunities and developed leadership whilst supporting academic studies.

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