



Schools on the Move

Pedometers in Schools Project

Pedometers to help pupils to tackle weight

Walsall Express and Star (8th November, 2005)

Pupils at five Wolverhampton schools have been issued with pedometers as part of a nationwide scheme to tackle childhood obesity. Nearly 9,000 pedometers have been given to pupils aged between nine and 14 at 50 schools taking part in the Schools on the Move pilot scheme. The Wolverhampton schools involved are Westcroft School and Sports College, Aldersley High, Northicote, Pendeford High and St Paul's CE primary.

Launching the scheme today, public health minister Caroline Flint said: "Childhood obesity is a serious issue which the Government is determined to tackle on a number of fronts including increasing levels of physical activity. Pedometers are effective in motivating people to become more active. Schools on the Move takes this further by incorporating the information children gain from pedometers into lessons like maths, science, art and geography, making the distance they walk and the number of steps they take relevant across the curriculum."

Steve Grainger, chief executive of the Youth Sport Trust said: "Taking the physical activity message into the classroom and day to day school life is a major step forward in encouraging all young people to be more active on a daily basis."

Schools welcome fitness incentive

Scunthorpe Evening Telegraph (9th November 2005)

Headteachers in north Lincolnshire would welcome moves to give pedometers to every child in the region in an effort to help reduce childhood obesity..

A pilot scheme has been launched, offering thousands of children across the country, aged between nine and 14, pedometers to help encourage exercise and reduce child obesity.

Funded by the Department of Health and Department for Skills and Education and managed by Youth Sport Trust, the scheme has not been extended to





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cover North Lincolnshire, although teachers are hopeful the region could be included in the future.

The introduction of pedometers was one of the actions set out in the Government's Choosing Health White paper, designed to tackle childhood obesity and increase physical activity..

Headteachers in Lincolnshire said they would welcome any tool which could be used to help encourage children to exercise and lead a healthier lifestyle.

Current figures suggest in a school class of 30 15 year olds, roughly five pupils would be obese. Figures for 2001 – the most recent available – showed 15 per cent of North Lincolnshire's 15 year olds were classified as obese.

Brumby Engineering college headteacher Dr Tom Clarke said " I would think that any scheme which encourages youngsters to keep fit has its merits and if the scheme was available in North Lincolnshire, we would certainly look at it".

Joe Sellers, headteacher at North Axholme Comprehensive School, said " We would be interested in pedometers for both staff and pupils because everyone has to move around schools a fair bit and it would be interesting to see how far everyone travelled in schools a day".

Carole Couch, headteacher at Priory Lane Junior School was very enthusiastic about the idea of introducing pedometers for school children. She said " I would like a big bag of pedometers for the children. They would find it most enjoyable and it would be a much more fun way for them to exercise".

A spokeswoman for Brumby Junior school said staff there would be interested in anything which encouraged the children to be healthy. Crosby Primary school headteacher Bob Sheard said issuing children with pedometers was a "novel and excellent idea". He said "Anything which encourages children to walk more and do more exercise should be endorsed".

But Jo Moxon, head of learning services at North Lincolnshie Council said the authority certainly had no plans to introduce pedometers in schools.

She added it would be up to individual schools if they wanted to introduce them, but they would encourage any kind of scheme which helped children exercise more.





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The science of keeping fit

Oldham Evening Chronicle (9th November, 2005)

More than 700 children in Oldham have been given pedometers to encourage them to exercise and avoid obesity. They were presented to pupils at the Radclyffe School and St Luke's Primary, both in Chadderton; Failsworth School and South Failsworth Community Primary.

The information children gain from their pedometers – such as the distance walked and the number of steps taken – will be incorporated into lessons like maths, science, art and geography.

Public Health minister Caroline Flint said: "Childhood obesity is a serious issue which the Government is determined to tackle on a number of fronts including increasing levels of physical activity.

"Pedometers are effective in motivating people to become more active. By encouraging children to become more active, we hope to make big strides in reducing childhood obesity."

Nearly 9000 pedometers are being handed to pupils at 50 primaries and comprehensives across England under the Schools on the Move scheme. Steve Grainger chief executive of the Youth Sport Trust ,said: "Taking the physical activity message into the classroom and day-to-day school life is a major step forward in encouraging all young people more active."

The Government has pledged to halt the year-on-year increase in obesity among under-11s by 2010 and to increase the amount of PE.

Pupils taking steps to clock how fit they are

Brighton Evening Argos (9th November 2005)

Hundreds of pupils at five Sussex schools have been given pedometers in a bid to tackle childhood obesity.





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The Government has dished out the devices, allowing children to keep track of how far they have walked each day, in a pilot project to encourage physical activity.

Pupils at Angmering Sports College, Oak Grove College in Worthing, Clapham and Patching Primary School in Worthing, Davison High School for Girls in Worthing and Ferring Primary School are among 9,000 to take part.

Judith Skitt at Clapham and Patching school in The Street, said pupils loved the project, called Schools on the Move, and that the pedometers had become the main topic of conversation in school.

She said "This is all about getting the children motivated to do exercise and its made a huge difference already. The kids are fascinated by how many steps they have taken and keep asking me and other teachers how we are doing". She said pupils entered their total number of steps for each day o the Schools on the Move website, www.schoolsonthemove.co.uk , so experts could analyse the results. There are a number of individual and group challenges pupils can take part in to earn themselves awards and certificates and make walking more fun.

The scheme aims to get more children exercising regularly. Health experts say girls should take about 12,000 steps a day and boys should take about 15,000 to remain fit and healthy.

Mrs Skitt, who is also wearing a pedometer, said "I was quite frightened by how many steps I took one day when I was doing lots of administration work. "I did 702 steps in the whole day, which is awful. At the weekend I did about 15,000 by walking into town and back.

"Its made me think a lot more about my work and life balance and proved I need to make my health more of a priority". She said the pedometers had provoked friendly competition among pupils and was driving them to take more steps to outdo each other. She said "We've been doing this less than a week but its been so successful already. The kids love it".

Public Health Minister Caroline Flint said: "Childhood obesity is a serious issue, which the Government is determined to tackle on a number of fronts, including increasing levels of physical activity. "Pedometers are effective in motivating people to become more active. Schools on the Move take this





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further by incorporating the information children gain from pedometers into lessons like maths, science, art and geography, making the distance they walk and the number of steps they take relevant across the school curriculum, not just in PE and school sports”.

The scheme is funded by the Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills and is run by the Youth Sport Trust. Steve Grainger, the Trust’s chief executive, said: “Taking the physical activity message into the classroom and day-to-day school life is a major step forward in encouraging all young people to be more active on a daily basis.

Schools across the country began the scheme in October and have been asked to continue the project until at least Easter. Researchers from the London Sport Institute will analyse the children’s daily step count to see whether their activity levels increase and they will carry out several case studies on individual children and their schools.

Pupils taking steps to improve fitness

Barking and Dagenham Recorder (10th November, 2005)

Its best foot forward for youngsters at five schools as they join the front line battle against childhood obesity. Public health minister Caroline Flint and Steve Grainger, chief executive of the Youth Sport Trust visited Barking Abbey, Longbridge Rd, Barking, on Monday to launch Schools on the Move, a pilot scheme to encourage children to take more exercise.

Barking and Dagenham is one of 10 local authorities in England chosen to trial the scheme, which is part of a Department of Health initiative to tackle childhood obesity. Up to 9,000 pedometers were issued to nine to 14 year olds in around 50 schools.

Students have started wearing pedometers, which measure the number of steps they take each day. They can enter results into a website which calculates whether they are walking far enough; and they are working on linked projects in mathematics, science, art and geography.

Ms Flint said one pupil at the school had told her she had already taken the number of steps required to walk to Pakistan. She said: “Its quite a fun way for them to measure for themselves how much they walk each day and how





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much more they could incorporate walking into their school day.” Mr Grainger explained that incorporating the project into different subjects made it more accessible to those who do not enjoy physical education.

The new scheme is part of the government’s Choosing Health white paper, which was launched last year with the aim of tackling childhood obesity and increasing physical activity. Nationally, 16 per cent, or one in six youngsters, suffer from the problem by the age of 15. A spokesman for Barking and Dagenham Primary Care Trust said that the trust was currently working to assess levels of obesity, as well as running a number of schemes to tackle the problem.

The Department of Health is currently devising guidelines on screening for obesity. Once these are developed it is hoped PCTs will be able to take more action to prevent obesity in children. Other schools in the borough taking part in the pilot scheme are Eastbrook, Robert Clack, Rush Green Primary and St Peter’s catholic Primary.

The Government has pledged to halt the year on year increase in obesity and among the under 11s by 2010. It also wants to increase the amount of PE and sport offered to children. Ms Flint said pedometers were effective in motivating people to become more active. She said: “Every little bit of extra physical activity we incorporate into our lives can make a huge difference in terms of health improvement.”

Walking their way to health

Barking and Dagenham Post (16th November, 2005)

Children are being encouraged to walk their way to a longer life – thanks to a new project in five schools. In an attempt to tackle child obesity, the Government have handed out 9,000 pedometers to youngsters.

The Schools on the Move pilot scheme was launched at Barking Abbey School by Public Health Minister Caroline Flint. She met with pupils and teachers at the Longbridge Road site, along with Steve Grainger, chief executive of the Youth Sport Trust.





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She said: "Pedometers are effective in motivating people to become more active. Every little bit of extra physical activity we incorporate into our lives can make a huge difference in terms of health improvement."

The pedometers which have been handed out at Barking Abbey, Robert Clack and Eastbrook secondary schools as well as Rush Green and St Peter's primary schools, count the number of steps a person takes during the day.

As well as helping them to get fitter, information from the pedometers is also being used in lessons like maths, science and geography. Schools on the Move is aimed at reducing the year on year rise in obesity among under 11s by 2010.

