



How can physical activity help schools **reduce the negative impacts** of lockdown for young people?

Introduction

The social restrictions brought about by COVID-19 have had a significant impact on the lives of young people who have experienced deteriorating mental health, social isolation, slowed educational development, and worsening physical health this year.

Physical activity is a tool that can help young people negate these negative impacts as they return to school.

Things have changed for everyone, but making physical activity part of the school day can help overcome some of the challenges that pupils face.

This document is a summary of how physical activity can help. Alongside this we are developing a series of e-learning modules that will provide greater detail on how physical activity can help reduce the negative impacts of lockdown for young people.

Activity levels during lockdown

During lockdown Sport England research shows that **only 1 in 5 children** were meeting the CMO guidelines of 60 minutes of physical activity per day.

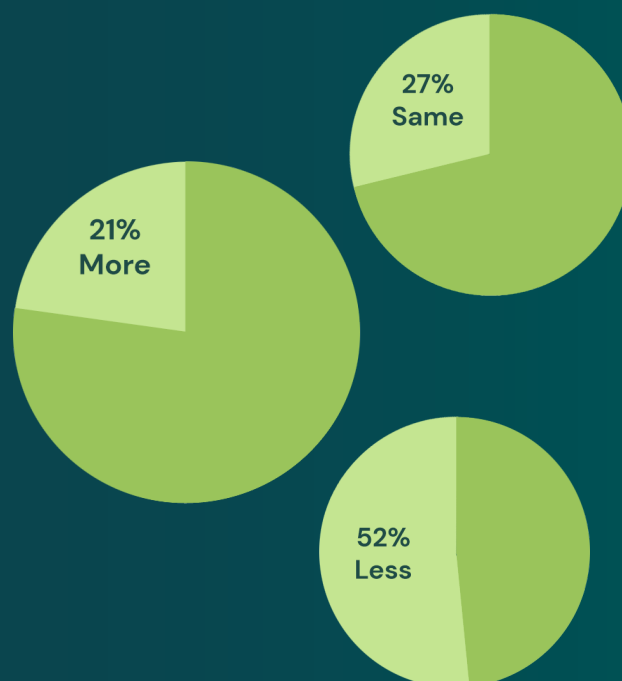
Just over half of children were less active than they would've normally been.



Only 1 in 5 children

were meeting the CMO guidelines of 60 minutes of physical activity per day

How is this different to what you usually do?



1 in 14 children

say they were doing no activity at all!

Increasing these levels of physical activity can help schools support children to begin to reverse the impact of lockdown by improving their habits and getting back on track to a healthier, more activity lifestyle.

How can physical activity help?

Physical activity plays an important role in enhancing the health, wellbeing, and achievements of young people. It is known to promote improved outcomes across many challenges related to the impacts of lockdown.

Emotional health

Self esteem	Improving sense of self-worth, confidence and sense of achievement.
Anxiety	Relieving tension and boosting energy.
Depression	Relieving symptoms by reducing brain inflammation, improving neural growth and relieving endorphins.
Mood	Improving energy levels and sleep.
Resilience	Teaching the brain how to handle stressful situations whilst in a controlled environment.

Physical health

Maintaining a healthy weight	Reducing body fat, promoting healthy growth.
Physical fitness	Improving cardiovascular fitness, strengthening muscles, improving co-ordination, flexibility and more.
Reducing risk of disease	Reducing risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease, now and later in life.

Personal and social development

Positive social behaviours	Providing opportunities to understand and practise reasoning, fairness and equality.
Social interaction and integration	Providing different opportunities to communicate, problem solve, and work as a team.
Leadership and aspirations	Building self-esteem to succeed and aspire.

Academic attainment

Memory, concentration and perception	Boosting the brain's chemicals that affect focus and attention, helping in-class performance.
Behaviour	Managing energy levels and increasing concentration.

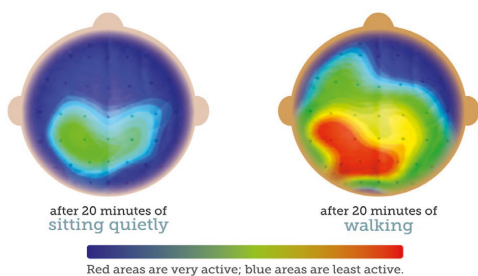


Tips for maximising the impact of physical activity

When we're active our brain gets active too, so being active throughout the day gives pupils the best chance to activate their brains and enhance learning opportunities.

Physical activity can help our pupils reach their potential. Plan in physical activity where it can benefit most:

- At challenging times of the day (e.g. before a lesson where there's often poor behaviour.)
- During priority subjects - building activity in can help ignite the brain.
- Active breaks - ensuring activity is part of break times.
- For targeted young people - proportionately prioritise your efforts towards those who can benefit most.
- At a difficult time of year, e.g. exam times.



Think of physical activity in the loosest sense. Anything that gets the heart rate and breathing rate up will bring about benefits.

Sport England research shows that:

- Role models play a significant part in how active children are. How are we role modelling active behaviours at school?
- The more active a parent is, the more active their children are. Providing messaging and resources to families can support activity at home.
- Enjoyment continues to play a key role in ensuring young people are active - let's keep it fun!
- Walking and cycling have been the only activities that have seen a rise in participation over lockdown. Active travel is a fantastic way to build activity into the day, help the environment and make the school drop off safer.

Key things to consider:

Are there any existing opportunities that can be maximised?

How can the school's current resources be redesigned to have the biggest impact?

How can funding, staff expertise, equipment and facilities be used differently to help tackle our different concerns?

Resources to **increase activity** at your school

Active Norfolk's Active at Home for Kids

A resource bank of activities that are suitable for home or school settings, with thematic activities lined up for every day of the week.

www.activenorfolk.org/public/get-active/active-at-home/kids/

Support from Active Norfolk

Active Norfolk have a funded role to support schools to help get students active. Contact Jo Thompson to discuss your circumstances.

joanne.thompson@activenorfolk.org

Norfolk School Games

The Norfolk School Games is the largest school sport event to be held in Norfolk. The Games are part of the national School Games initiative which aim to inspire young people to take part in competitive sport.

www.norfolkschoolgames.co.uk/organisers

Physically active schools

The DfE has launched videos and resources for schools, providing creative and entertaining content to help staff offer 30 active minutes. This includes videos on how to incorporate being active into lessons, breaks and travel times; inclusive activities for SEND pupils and content to encourage more girls to get involved in physical activity.

<http://bit.ly/physically-active-schools>

Youth Sport Trust

The Youth Sport Trust have created 60 second physical activity challenges; a range of activities that can be downloaded and completed at school.

www.youthsporttrust.org/60-second-physical-activity-challenges

This is PE

Yorkshire Sports Foundation has worked with physical education experts to create fun, free games and activities to keep kids busy and active linked to their PE curriculum.

www.northyorkshiresport.co.uk/this-is-pe

Inclusive activities

Iain Mills Youtube channel offers a mix of sensory circuits and PE challenges with a focus on SEND pupils.

<http://bit.ly/Iain-Mills-Send-Playlist>

Change4Life

A range of different resources including 10 minute shake ups, games and activities for kids that can be used at home or in school.

www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities/accessible-activities

Download this guide and access the E-learning modules at:

www.activenorfolk.org/organisations/youth-education/advice-guidance-training-for-schools