

**The Daily Mile**

Dear Parent

You will probably be aware of recent concerns around physical inactivity and childhood obesity. As they go through Primary school, many children put on weight and, across the UK, around 35% of pupils in their final year of Primary are categorised as overweight or obese.

Experts have described this as an epidemic and a crisis that must be tackled before it is too late. The World Health Organisation regards childhood obesity as one of the most serious global public health challenges for the 21st Century. So far, no approach in the western world has made any difference, with millions of pounds spent on schemes which have had no lasting impact - and the situation continues to worsen.

There is, however, an initiative called The Daily Mile which was started in February 2012 by Elaine Wyllie, who was then headteacher of a large Scottish Primary school in Stirling. She was concerned by the children’s obvious lack of fitness and went on to prove The Daily Mile to be both sustainable and effective in combatting inactivity and obesity in her school. The result was that, in November 2015, the Scottish Government wrote to every Scottish primary school to recommend that they implement the scheme too. In addition, in August 2016 the UK government’s Childhood Obesity strategy identified and supported The Daily Mile’s contribution towards the recommended hour that children should spend taking daily exercise.

The aim of The Daily Mile is to improve the physical, emotional, social and mental health and wellbeing of our children – regardless of age, ability or personal circumstances.

It is a profoundly simple but effective concept, which any primary or nursery school can implement completely free of charge and without the need for staff training.

Its impact can be transformational – improving not only the children’s fitness, but also their concentration levels, mood, behaviour and general wellbeing.

The Daily Mile is very simple to start in a school. Without wasting time to change into kit, every child in a school or nursery goes out each day in the fresh air to run, jog or walk for 15 minutes. It is not competitive: most children will average a mile in that time, with some doing more and some doing less. It is not PE, sport or cross-country but a physical activity which is aimed at improving the children's physical, social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing. It can help children to focus and concentrate in the classroom and raise their attainment.

Since 2015, The Daily Mile has been adopted by over 3,000 schools in the UK alone, proving extraordinarily popular with thousands of children, parents and teachers. The initiative is also attracting strong overseas interest, with both Belgium and the Netherlands launching nationally in 2016.

We would like to introduce The Daily Mile for all the children in **Ballylifford Primary School** and ensure its health and wellbeing benefits are available for everyone. Only the P3-P7 pupils will participate in the programme and it will take place at **12noon daily** in the school playground.

As a school we are really excited about this new initiative and we are looking forward to the benefits it will bring to your child/children. To find out more about how it all works please visit: [www.thedailymile.co.uk](http://www.thedailymile.co.uk)

The children jog or run with their classmates in the safety of their own playground. Everyone has fun taking part – it is not P.E. and it is not competitive – while building relationships, confidence and resilience. This can be summed up in our Five F’s:

1   Fitness – children become more aware of a healthy lifestyle

2   Fresh Air – children thrive on the sights, sounds and seasons

3   Friends-  children use the language of friendship to support each other, improving their social and leadership skills

4   Fun – children enjoy taking part – this is what makes The Daily Mile so successful

5   Focus – daily physical activity helps children concentrate in the classroom and is proven to raise attainment

As a parent, you can support this at home, by both encouraging their confidence in running and moving outside with them out of school hours. Parents say that The Daily Mile helps children to eat and sleep better, and that often they become young ambassadors for whole family fitness.

If you would like allow your child to participate in the Daily Mile, please sign and return consent form below. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Kind regards,





Mr Ciaran McElroy

Principal

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Parents name) give permission for my child \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Child/Children’s name) to participate in The Daily Mile