





CONTENTS

- 4 The inconvenient truth
- 6 The journey so far
- 7 The Daily Mile works ... for children, teachers & headteachers, and parents
- 8 How to implement The Daily Mile successfully: the 10 core principles
- 8 How far do the children run in 15 minutes?
- 9 The impact of The Daily Mile on health & wellbeing
- 10 Testimonials
- 10 The Daily Mile removes the barriers to physical activity
- 11 The science

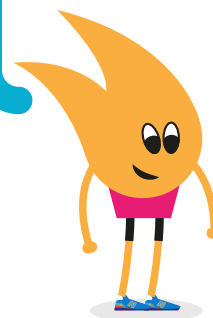






ELAINE WYLLIE, FORMER PRIMARY
SCHOOL HEADTEACHER AND FOUNDER
OF THE DAILY MILE

The inconvenient truth



In February 2012, I asked a class of eleven 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 and 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. The children were averaging five laps of the field in the fifteen minutes which, when a lap was measured, turned out to be roughly a mile - so The Daily Mile was born.

By the end of the spring term, five classes were doing The Daily Mile and by the end of the summer term all twelve classes were taking part. The nursery children (3-5 year olds) joined in early 2013. Since then all 420 children have done The Daily Mile.

The improvements in the children's physical health were obvious and we could have predicted that running daily would make them fit. What we didn't see coming were the other equally important benefits to their mental, emotional and social health and wellbeing, which have become apparent over time.

Nearly four years later, The Daily Mile has produced transformational change in our children.

They are physically fit, more focused in the classroom, more confident and more resilient.

The Daily Mile is completely 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 all barriers to participation in physical activity are removed.

Many millions of pounds have been spent on complicated and expensive initiatives to tackle the problem of physical inactivity and none of them have worked. Not one single initiative in the Western world has had any impact on childhood obesity - children continue to get fatter, 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 and other politicians, the Acting Chief Medical Officer for Scotland and the CEO of the Royal Society for Public Health, and other senior medical figures and educational organisations, have all said that every child should have the opportunity to do The Daily Mile. And, in this time of austerity, it 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 other schools and nurseries will have as much fun doing The Daily Mile as the children at my former school have had, and experience the same benefits.







THE JOURNEY SO FAR

The Daily Mile has been embedded in the culture of the original school for four successful years — and is now spreading around the UK and beyond.

2012



FEBRUARY: 'The inconvenient truth' – Elaine Wyllie, Headteacher of a large Scottish primary school, realised that her pupils, like many others, were unfit.

MARCH: Elaine encouraged a P5 class to run around the field for 15 minutes every day in order to improve their fitness. On measuring the circumference of the school path, 5 laps was 1 mile. Thus The Daily Mile was born!

JUNE: By now, every class in the school was doing The Daily Mile. Parents, children and staff all love it.

2013/14



SEPTEMBER 2013: The nursery class began doing The Daily Mile!

SEPTEMBER 2014: Scotland's Chief Medical Officer visited the school and loved The Daily Mile.

2015

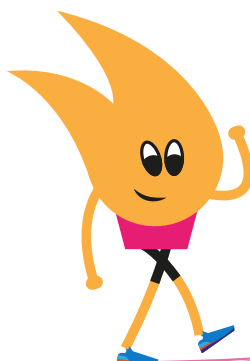


APRIL: Elaine presented The Daily Mile at a Raising Attainment for All conference in Glasgow.

JUNE: The Daily Mile began to be featured across the UK's media and other schools began to implement it.

JULY: Elaine spoke at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park for GO Run For Fun's flagship London fun run - and supported over 6,000 primary school runners.

OCTOBER: Elaine Wyllie won a Pride of Britain award for her efforts growing The Daily Mile. The Universities of Stirling and Edinburgh began scientific studies on the effects of The Daily Mile.





THE DAILY MILE WORKS... FOR CHILDREN

.....
It improves physical, social,
emotional and mental health and
wellbeing.
.....

It is fun, friendly and social - this is
vital and ensures sustainability.
.....

All children are included and all
children succeed.
.....

Children with SEN or ASN benefit
greatly from taking part in The Daily
Mile.
.....

It's not a race or a competition - this
is not cross-country or sport.
.....

It is a mixed activity across the
Primary age range - nursery to 11.
.....

Children enjoy a sense of freedom
outside in the fresh air.
.....

Different age groups and classes can
do The Daily Mile together.
.....

It reduces anxiety and stress.
.....

It helps to build relationships.
.....

Children know they are healthier
and are proud of their fitness.
.....

THE DAILY MILE WORKS... FOR TEACHERS & HEADTEACHERS

.....
It's health and wellbeing, not PE.
.....

It takes only 15 minutes from leaving
the classroom until returning.
.....

The class runs every day, ideally at
a time when the teacher decides it
is suitable.
.....

There is no equipment, training or
staff development needed.
.....

Children run in their school clothes
- no time is lost waiting while they
change into kit.
.....

Focus, concentration and behaviour
are improved.
.....

Children are fitter so can access and
succeed at PE more readily.
.....

Children return to class refreshed,
energised and settle quickly to work.
.....

It is sustainable over the entire
session and for years to come.
.....

Aspects of the curriculum can
be incorporated in simple and
interesting ways.
.....

THE DAILY MILE WORKS... FOR PARENTS

.....
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 4 weeks after starting to
run regularly.
.....

It helps to reduce obesity and
improves general health outcomes.
.....

No need to transport children to
clubs or events and it is 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 to make children feel happy.
.....

Many children will sleep and eat
better.
.....

2016



NOVEMBER: The Scottish Government
officially endorsed The Daily Mile for
all primary schools. Schools in Belgium
began The Daily Mile, mentored by
former Olympian and GO Run For Fun
ambassador Tia Hellebaut.

DECEMBER: Preliminary scientific studies
show that childhood obesity levels at the
original Daily Mile school are lower than
the national average, and some figures
are almost halved.

JANUARY: Some local authorities in
England have begun to develop strategic
partnerships in order to introduce The
Daily Mile into their schools.

MARCH: The UK national launch of The
Daily Mile took place at Hallfield School in
Westminster, London- supported by The
BBC, The Sun, and other national media

SINCE MARCH 2016: Hundreds more
schools are picking up The Daily Mile,
either independently or supported by
local authorities and health partnerships.

The Scottish Government has committed
to making the country the first 'Daily Mile
Nation'.

The Daily Mile is flourishing in Belgium,
and being picked up in Holland, the US,
and beyond.

Exciting partnerships are developing...

It's growing fast - check our website for
further exciting updates!



HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE DAILY MILE SUCCESSFULLY: THE 10 CORE PRINCIPLES

FUN

The children have the freedom to run in the fresh air with their friends. They should know that it's not a competition - many will mix running and walking, particularly at the start.

100%

It's fully inclusive - all the children are out together and children with SEN or ASN benefit greatly.

WEATHER

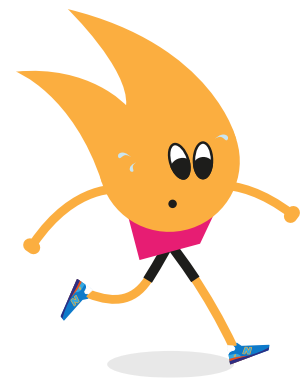
Treat the weather as a benefit not a barrier - children respond to the seasons. Jackets on in the cold and damp; ditch the sweatshirt if it's warm.

TRACK

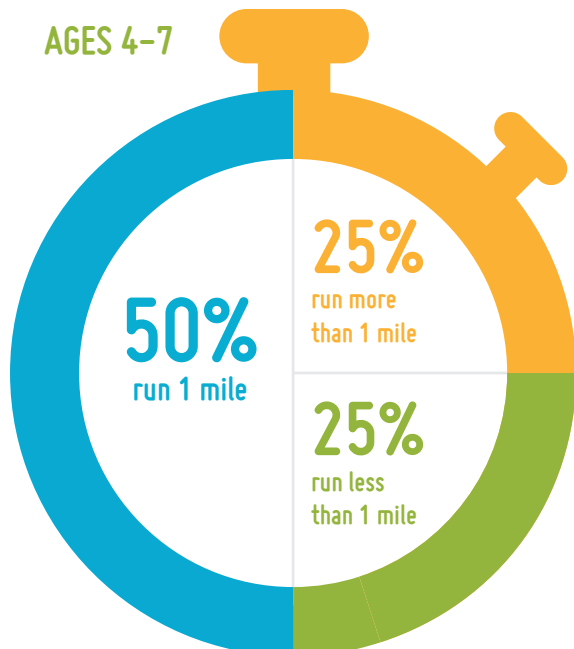
Most schools will use their playground and a track or path with a minimum of 5-10 laps works well. It's okay to have more laps depending on your setting.

HOW FAR DO THE CHILDREN RUN IN 15 MINUTES?

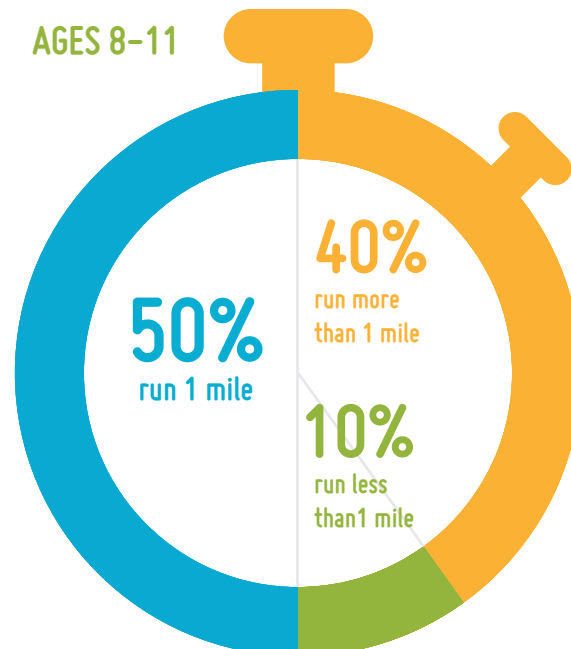
The Daily Mile is differentiated by the children's level of ability and they do not all run the same number of laps in the time they are outside. The number of laps the children walk/jog/run varies as shown in the diagram below. In the nursery, most of the children do just under a mile with a few doing only 2 laps and a few doing 6 or 7 laps.



AGES 4-7



AGES 8-11





QUICK

Takes place in a 15-minute turnaround from leaving the classroom until returning. Try to go out every day - it's easier for the children and they get the full benefits.

RISK

Do a risk assessment for your path or playground - there is a sample risk assessment on The Daily Mile website (www.thedailymile.co.uk).

JUST GO

No need to warm up - straight outside and off they go. They return to class refreshed and energised.

CLOTHES

No kit required. The children go out in their school clothes. No time is wasted changing.

OWN IT

Allow the children to own their Daily Mile. They can choose to run, walk or jog - or mix all three - but should be encouraged to do some running.

KISS

(Keep it simple, stupid!) Resist the temptation to make it too complicated as its simplicity makes it both successful and sustainable.

THE IMPACT OF THE DAILY MILE ON HEALTH & WELLBEING

Reduces anxiety and stress.

Fitness and energy levels are improved.

Greater concentration is evident in class.

Health outcomes for life are improved.

Classes experience the pleasure of being outdoors, in all seasons.

Obesity and weight reduction is addressed for all age groups.

Helps to build confidence - all children succeed at The Daily Mile.

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

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

Children have a sense of achievement in their own fitness and pride in their own Daily Mile.

Develops greater resilience and determination.

TESTIMONIALS

WHAT CHILDREN SAY ABOUT

THE DAILY MILE

.....
It's good fun and you can go at
your own speed.
.....

I like The Daily Mile because it
gives me some fresh air and a
break from my work, I come back
in feeling refreshed.
.....

I like running with my friends. It
makes me feel healthy.
.....

I used to only be able to run one
lap, now I can run all three!
.....

I really enjoy The Daily Mile. It
helps me run faster when I play
football but it also gives me
confidence to do other things in
school. I think everyone should
have a go at doing The Daily Mile.
.....

I really enjoy running lots of
times. I even manage more than
a mile sometimes.
.....

WHAT STAFF SAY ABOUT

THE DAILY MILE

.....
The children love being outside.
.....

There are significant benefits
for interdisciplinary learning,
especially in numeracy and topic
work.
.....

It supports the rhythm of the
classroom and the school and
nursery day.
.....

The children's confidence has
increased.
.....

Children are focussed and ready
to learn when they come back
into the classroom.
.....

Relationships benefit from the
informality of The Daily Mile -
children engage with staff in a
way which is more relaxed than
in the classroom.
.....

WHAT PARENTS SAY ABOUT

THE DAILY MILE

.....
Parental evaluations are
consistently and overwhelmingly
positive.
.....

Children are sleeping better -
they are 'tired in a good way'.
.....

Children are eating better.
.....

Children are fitter.
.....

They are less fractious.
.....

Children are talking about their
health at home.
.....

Families report that they are
doing more exercise together at
weekends.
.....

It's fully inclusive and works
well for children with Additional
Support Needs.
.....

See more on www.thedailymile.co.uk!

THE DAILY MILE

REMOVES THE BARRIERS

TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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 should be fully supported to take part as well.

1

.....
No kit, no 'cool' kit, no
time wasted changing, no
forgetting or losing kit.

2

.....
No body image issues, no
revealing your body.

3

.....
No equipment, no set up,
no tidy up and no time
wasted.

4

.....
No staff training required.

THE SCIENCE

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 - they will generally have better blood sugar regulation, improved bone density, less body fat, lower blood pressure and improved arterial development.

And evidence suggests that benefits go far 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...

Are of a healthy weight - early figures show that children who had done The Daily Mile for three years were significantly less obese or overweight than the Scottish average.

May be able to control their emotions better.

Feel they are part of the group and not as isolated.

Feel less anxious.

Can build new relationships and develop existing friendships.

Have a greater sense of self worth.

Can improve their attainment in class.

Show improvements to their mood.

5

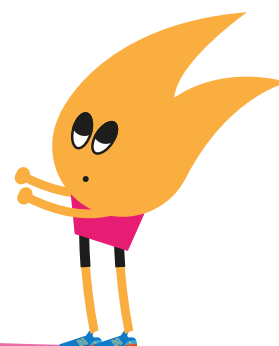
No need to be sporty - it's health and wellbeing, not PE or cross-country.

6

Safety - takes place under supervision in the playground.

7

No costs - it's easy and cheap to implement.



“

The children were unfit.
What should be done? ”

Elaine Wyllie, Headteacher

“

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

“

I think this mile a day will make a difference. Children must be given every chance to live healthily. ”

Sebastian Coe (Baron Coe, CH KBE)

“

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

“

Every child, no matter their circumstances, age or ability, can succeed at The Daily Mile. ”

Thomas Dowens, Education Scotland

“

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 and their cognitive behaviour, and make a real difference to schools, teachers, parents and young people's lives. We know sitting still kills; not sitting still helps children build skills that will stay with them for life. ”

Tanni Grey-Thompson
(Baroness Grey-Thompson, DBE, DL)



Already doing The Daily Mile? Just about to start? Please register your school on our website: www.thedailymile.co.uk/register

www.thedailymile.co.uk

🐦 @_thedailymile

f www.facebook.com/thedailymileforschools

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