



Implementing the Golden Mile at Gatcombe Park Primary School....

HEADTEACHER IAN BAKER TALKS ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCES....

WHY DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN THE GOLDEN MILE?

I took some of our children to an athletics event and was really shocked by their fitness levels. They were out of breath after a minute or so. I then saw the same thing at our sports day shortly afterwards. This wasn't just in overweight children either but even those that appeared 'healthy' on the face of it struggled with low levels of physical activity.

I'd seen some information about running schemes in the Schools Bulletin and had received emails from Energise Me, who provide the Golden Mile in Hampshire. They can provide things like class charts and wristbands, which I knew would help to get the kids engaged.

I also visited another school in Portsmouth doing the Golden Mile and saw how enthusiastic they were about it.

HOW DOES IT WORK IN YOUR SCHOOL?

We've kept it really flexible and don't insist on it being daily, although generally classes do it at least 4 times a week. Teachers can do it whenever fits best within their day and sometimes they end up doing it twice in a day.

Pupils go out in their uniform and spend ten minutes running as many laps as they can. They're back at their desk within 15 minutes so it really doesn't interrupt the day.

We have a number of Golden Mile run leaders in Year 6 who record the miles that each child and class does, which they log on the Golden Mile website. In the younger years they collect a token on each lap to help them keep track of what they've done.



We give out certificates each week, which the Golden Mile provide. Ten miles is bronze, 25 miles is silver and 50 miles is gold. We're aiming to have gold runners by the end of the academic year.

We also have a big Golden Mile display board in the hall where we record the number of miles done and plot this on a map so the children can see how far they've run collectively. This goes down really well

HOW HAS IT BEEN RECEIVED?

The kids love it. We do it across the whole school from Year R to Year 6 and they're all really enthusiastic about it. This includes students who aren't keen on PE or team sports.

Teachers have embraced it, taking part alongside the students and have started to get quite competitive themselves! Parents have also been supportive and no-one has raised any concerns.

WHAT BENEFITS HAVE YOU SEEN?

We've certainly seen improved fitness levels and whilst I can't categorically prove the correlation, since we've been doing the Golden Mile there has been an increase in students taking up other sports - both that we offer and outside of school. There's been positive behaviour change in terms of concentration levels too, particularly with some of our boys who can struggle to stay focused in class.

HAVE YOU HAD ANY ISSUES WITH IMPLEMENTING IT?

In the drier months we can include our field in the track but in winter this isn't possible so we have to do more laps of our smaller playground but this isn't that prohibitive. If we have more than one class out at once it's pretty manic but the kids seem to enjoy this even more!



WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE OTHER SCHOOLS INTERESTED IN TAKING UP THE GOLDEN MILE?

- » Be flexible, let teachers do it when it works best for them each day
- » Involve the students in running it which means they're more engaged and that you're not putting more work on your teachers
- » Link it with other curriculum e.g. geography, maths
- » Make it part of your normal daily activity like registration

I'm happy to talk to other schools considering it and they can come and watch it in action here

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND IT TO OTHER SCHOOLS?

Absolutely. We've had nothing but positive experiences with it. It's inclusive for all and we have children with asthma and some with walking frames taking part. It's great for those children who aren't in to team sports and whilst it's non-competitive the children want to improve on how many laps they can do over time. What I've also loved seeing is how supportive the students are of each other, there's a real sense of camaraderie.

Visit www.energiseme.org/schools-colleges/the-golden-mile/

For more information or support to start the Golden Mile in your school contact alannah.stephenson@energiseme.org 01962 676382

