

# Primary School's PE lessons a study for University



Flora Stevenson Primary School is taking a new approach to physical education which is being studied by university researchers. Over the past 2 years extra training has been provided for teachers and pupils have been given opportunities to be active daily. This approach has made a significant impact on pupils who are showing an increase in confidence, motivation and self-esteem, as well as physical ability.

Since 2011 the school has been working with Winning Scotland Foundation and The City of Edinburgh Council who have provided a variety of support and funding for the initiative.

Pupils receive P.E. lessons three days a week and an active class challenge for their 'non-P.E.' day. The week culminates with the opportunity for them to participate in an optional hour of physical activity on a Friday – incredibly nearly 80% of all pupils now choose to participate in active options which include a wide variety of activities from fencing to football and hip-hop to tae kwon do.

Edinburgh University has been so impressed with this approach it is studying the impact it is having on training teachers within their own school.



Convener of  
Education – Paul  
Godzik

Councillor Paul Godzik, Education Convener said, “This project has really had remarkable results so far. Alongside the great uptake of activities at school and the positive impact this is

having on pupils, many are now choosing to partake in sports outwith school time. This means they are more likely to be physically active regularly and continue to be so in the long-run; this is an invaluable lifestyle change for them. This is a great example of how working with other organisations can lead to positive change.”

The project has allowed Flora’s to work closely with parents and other schools within the local community, one of which is Broughton High School (one of three school based Community Sports Hubs in Edinburgh). Sport can play an extremely important role in assisting children’s transition from Primary School to Secondary school.

Angela Hutt, P.E. Specialist at the school is delighted that her initial idea was developed and came to fruition thanks to the support and commitment of Shelagh Dow, Depute Head Teacher and her fellow teachers. Angela said; “The Curriculum for Excellence had given us the flexibility to provide pupils with opportunities to be active daily. As Friday’s activities are a reward for good behaviour we are seeing a positive impact on behaviour throughout the week. This is an ambitious project and wouldn’t be possible without support. A big thanks to everyone who has worked with us on this.”

Morag Arnot of Winning Scotland Foundation said, “This project has had a remarkable affect on the children involved and believe it could act as a blueprint for getting every child in Scotland active every day. We have been pleased to be able to support the project since its inception. We look forward to seeing how the project continues to develop across other schools and the impact it can have on more children.”

Cath Morrison, Senior Health Policy Officer, NHS Lothian said, “The advantages of children being physically active are well known but what Flora’s has done is package it up in such a way that it becomes part of their everyday life and influences behaviour outwith that time also. We are proud to be able to

fund this programme and look forward to working with new schools on future projects also.”

Additional funding from Winning Scotland Foundation & the NHS has allowed the project to continue this year at Flora’s and be introduced to Stockbridge Primary. It is hoped to further extend it to the remaining 2 cluster schools in August 2013.

Photo Rob McDougall