YOUTH SPORT TRUST | WELL SCHOOL COMMUNITY







Introducing an Active Uniform

Move Well.

Brief Summary for School Leaders

Dame Dorothy Primary School in Sunderland introduced an "Always Active Uniform" as part of a wider commitment to health, wellbeing and inclusion. Rather than changing into PE kit only for designated lessons, pupils wear an activity-friendly uniform every day, enabling movement, play and physical activity to become a natural part of school life.

This resource has been designed based on the Well Schools Move Well pillar.

Key Messages

For many schools, uniform policies unintentionally create barriers to movement and participation.

Dame Dorothy identified several common challenges:

- pupils sitting out of PE lessons
- unsuitable footwear restricting activity
- lower engagement from some groups, particularly girls
- children being less willing to go outdoors in colder or wetter weather
- uniform complaints from families
- financial pressures linked to traditional school uniforms

The Impact:

The school reports a wide range of positive outcomes since introducing the Always Active Uniform.

Increased Physical Activity

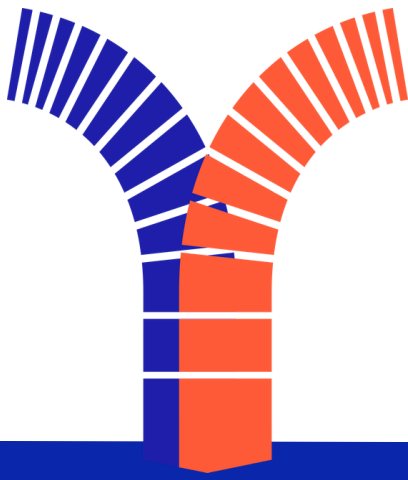
- Children are always ready to move and be active
- Playground activity levels have increased
- More girls are accessing outdoor equipment
- Daily running and physical activity have become embedded habits
- There is no time lost changing for PE

Improved Inclusion

- No pupils sit out of PE lessons
- SEND pupils experience fewer sensory issues
- Activity becomes an entitlement for all children
- Uniform-related inequalities are reduced

Positive Behaviour & Attendance

- excellent behaviour
- improving attendance
- increased engagement in lessons and wider school life
- fewer uniform disputes with pupils and families



The Bigger Picture

Culture Matters

The uniform change was not introduced in isolation.

Dame Dorothy had already spent years building a strong culture of:

- wellbeing
- physical activity
- inclusion
- staff role-modelling
- visible school values

Their approach highlights an important lesson for leaders:

Successful change happens when policies align with school culture and values.

The school kept its focus simple:

- daily movement
- consistency
- celebrating participation
- making activity part of everyday school life

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