

Your recipe for success Club and Community



Primary School Introduces Innovative Dance System to Shake Up Lunch Time and After School Clubs

Contact Details



The Challenge

All Saints CE Primary School in Chatham, Kent has an intake of 310 pupils aged 4-11 years. They were looking for ways to improve levels of health and fitness within their primary school and improve what could be offered out of school hours. They sought a resource that could be used by all 11 classes in the school as well as lunch time and after school clubs.

Meeting the Challenge

Medway Extended Service supported them to invest in a **Cyber Coach Dance Mat System with Virtual Dance Instructor** as part of their 'Healthy Schools' initiative. The system was installed in March 2010 and has been constantly utilised over the following 10 months.

The Cyber Coach System includes wireless dance mats that enable multiple players to participate simultaneously in games such as alien mash, soccer sevens, dance arrow games, races and quizzes. This would provide a fun way to exercise that would appeal to children who were less engaged with PE, and boys as well as girls. The Virtual Dance Instructor feature, unique to Cyber Coach, includes a vast range of dance and exercise sessions delivered by leading instructors and this broadened the ways in which the system could be used by the school.

The school developed a 'Wake up Shake Up' session using the Virtual Dance Instructor that all classes participated in for 10 minutes each morning before lessons.

In addition, each class had a timetabled 1 hour session with the Cyber Coach system each week with one discipline being targeted per class each term.

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All Saints Primary Kent

Partnership Name
Medway

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For example, year 6 was interested in Street Dance so they followed an instructor lead a 6 week programme through from 'beginner' stage upwards.

The school delivered a lunchtime club centred on the dance mat games and this was attended by both girls and boys. The Virtual Dance Instructor was used in setting up a cheerleading club and after school dance club.

The school breakfast club have found the Cyber Coach system to be particularly useful during bad weather when children were unable to play outdoors.

After school clubs providing keep fit and dance sessions such as Salsa, Step, Bollywood and Street have also helped raise funds for the school as pupils and members of staff have paid 50p a session to attend.

Impact

One teacher commented 'The overriding benefit has been seeing the children exercising and having fun all at the same time.'

A lunch time club centered on Cyber Coach Dance Mat Games proved particularly popular with the boys. Deborah Good, Business Manager at All Saints Primary School commented: 'The boys particularly like playing more games. It is this aspect that appeals to them more as they are not actually conscious they are keeping fit!'

A cheerleading club using Cyber Coach Virtual Instructor proved particularly successful, Deborah added: 'We run a lunchtime club in cheerleading and in fact they will be entering a competition very soon. The team is made up of different year groups and working together across phases has had a massive on making friends and playing together.'

In addition, an After School Dance Club has helped improve children's confidence and expression as they have 'become more confident to express their emotions through movement' – one teacher commented.

Twice a week, the school has had an 'open house' for staff and adults to participate in keep fit. The most popular being Step and Salsa. The class, running from 4.00-5.00p.m. has been very well received. One member commented: 'I have combined the keep fit with diet and have lost just over 2 stone since last September. The obvious benefit being to my health and well being'.

An all round approach involving staff and parents reinforces the message. The health benefits of combining a healthy diet with regular exercise will be shared by children across the school using the system. Importantly, the factor that keeps them engaged is, above all, fun.

Why did it work?

- The variety available on the Cyber Coach System has led to its' continuous use across the school's 11 classes and in various clubs.
- Helps encourage children in making friends and playing together
- Supports team building
- Fun
- Something for everyone
- Improves confidence and expression

"The boys particularly like playing more games. It is this aspect that appeals to them more as they are not actually conscious they are keeping fit!"

"Because it is seen as fun, the Cyber Coach has encouraged participation from all of the children, including the boys and those who would normally be less engaged."

"The dance mat games have supported team building and have provided students with encouragement but more importantly, laughter as team's race against each other - stamping on the aliens!"

Deborah Good, Business Manager All Saints Primary School



"I enjoy the dancing the best because it is fun"

Rachel, Age 6

"I like killing the aliens and jumping on the dance mat"

Aneilkan, Age 11