

TaAF Middle Leaders Programme is designed to invest in aspiring headteachers, empowering them to drive meaningful change across their schools and create the conditions that make it easier for children to be more active. We do this through:

- Building skills, capabilities, and capacity across the workforce.
- Shifting culture, mindsets, and approaches within school settings to create environments where physical activity becomes the norm.

This is an applied leadership development opportunity, with physical activity at its core.

This is the learning and insight from the PE Lead at All Saints High School in Rossendale, on their journey to becoming an active secondary school.

Observation

Using the Creating Active Schools toolkit, Martin was able to gain insight into current practice and provision in relation to physical activity, achieving a score of 50%. From this

analysis, Martin was able to further explore the movement patterns of Year 8 students throughout a typical school day, which led to the creation of a 'heatmap' illustrating their activity levels. This map revealed various hotspots of movement, identified missed opportunities to integrate physical activity, and highlighted areas lacking opportunities, especially within English. In addition to this a child activity research project also allowed the school to collate more robust movement data.

Using Data

Martin discovered that, on average, only 36% of children achieved the recommended 30 minutes of physical activity per day during school. Additionally, students were

sedentary for approximately 4.3 hours of the school day. Most of their active time stemmed from transitioning between lessons and informal social interactions during breaks and lunchtime. The pupils indicated that they were most active in subjects such as Music, Design Technology, Science, and Geography. In contrast, their core subjects, Math, English, and Religious Education, saw minimal movement. Notably, Fridays were particularly inactive, with over 5 hours of inactivity recorded in a single day, and there was an increase in behavioral incidents on that day.

Small Changes

These insights were communicated to curriculum leaders throughout the school, sparking discussions on how to integrate meaningful movement into lessons for a more active approach. Consequently, the Head of English plans to review their curriculum to make it more active. By implementing small yet impactful changes into delivery and teaching practice, such as utilising extra learning spaces, embracing the outdoors, and making lesson time more dynamic and engaging, sedentary time can be significantly reduced.

Outcomes

- Martin's capacity and confidence to lead change improved through participation in the Middle Leaders programme, enabling him to influence others effectively.
- Taking time away from school to learn alongside peers inspired Martin to develop new working methods and fostered creative and innovative approaches.
- Curriculums were restructured to minimize sedentary time, prompting curriculum leaders to consider how to make their subjects more engaging.
- Students involved in the research and heat mapping became more reflective about their physical activity habits and took proactive steps to increase their movement throughout the day.

Key Takeaways

- Simple changes can be very effective. Introducing movement and physical activity doesn't have to impact lesson quality, it can improve engagement, behaviour and overall progress.
- Understand the challenges and barriers of bringing staff on board with change; go where there is energy and focus your attentions there!

For more information visit:

www.taaf.co.uk/active-schools

