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ISLAND CHILDREN SIGN UP TO STEP OUT



Children from Notre Dame School with Head teacher Peter McGovern Kathy Stuart of the Guernsey Sports Commission and Elaine Purdy from the Praxis Group.

EVERY year five student on the island will be boosting their fitness levels this spring for the annual Stepping Out initiative.

Sponsored by the Praxis Group, Stepping Out is organised by the Culture & Leisure Department and Guernsey Sports Commission with the aim of increasing children's levels of physical activity and promoting healthy lifestyle choices.

The scheme will begin in April when each child will be bleep tested to determine their initial fitness levels and end eight weeks later in May, when they will be measured again. In the intervening period each child will be encouraged to get fitter.

They will be given Praxis pedometers to count the number of steps they take and will attend special exercise classes organised by Beau Sejour and Guernsey Sports Commission staff, with twice as many classes being held as last year.

Participants will be encouraged to keep a log of daily physical activity to help record their progress throughout the programme.

Once again Praxis will donate trophies to each school to be awarded to the child that shows the most commitment to the initiative.

Last year students from Notre Dame were particularly successful in raising their overall fitness levels with Selina de la Haye winning the trophy.

'We had to run as much as possible and at the end we were tested and I had improved by quite a lot. I enjoyed it and I have kept it up,' said 10 year old Miss de la Haye, now in year six.

Head teacher at Notre Dame, Peter McGovern said that students had found the experience a lot of fun.

'They were all excited to go to their final bleep test and have a measurable way of seeing how much fitter they had become,' said Mr McGovern.

Last year 655 children took part and more than 65% showed an improvement in their levels of fitness.

Praxis Senior Marketing Manager, Elaine Purdy said: 'Supporting this initiative complements our overall approach to healthy living. Stepping Out 2008 was a tremendous success and I hope that year five children this year will derive the same enjoyment and health benefits as their predecessors.'