

12 June 2007

LA HOUGUETTE STEPS OUT FOR FITNESS

THE Praxis Group is helping year five pupils at La Houquette Primary School to step out to get fit.

As sponsor of the school's involvement in the Guernsey Sports Commission and Culture and Leisure Department's "Stepping Out" schools programme, more than 50 pupils will be taking part in a six-week fitness challenge starting on 12 June.

The initiative is aimed at increasing the children's levels of physical activity and promoting healthy lifestyle choices.

Praxis is giving more than just financial support to the scheme. Two members of its staff, Jon Hunt and Jason Lowe, will also be lining up next to the year five pupils to take part in the challenge.

On Tuesday 12 June each child will be bleep tested by Helen Mahoney, activities co-ordinator for the Culture and Leisure Department at Beau Sejour and Kathy Stuart of the Guernsey Sports Commission, at Beau Sejour to establish their initial level of fitness.

Praxis will then give each child a pedometer to help them calculate and monitor the number of steps they take for the during the six-week challenge.

In addition special exercise classes will be run at La Houquette School by Beau Sejour staff throughout the six-week period and the children are also encouraged to increase their level of daily physical activity at home and school.

Mr Hunt and Mr Lowe will also be kitted out with a pedometer and undertake their own fitness regime for the duration of the challenge.

The final bleep test will take place at the school on Thursday 19 July where all the children, plus the two members of Praxis staff, will find out just how much they have improved their fitness levels.

The initiative has the full backing of the school and La Houquette's School Travel Group. Made up of parents with a shared interest in wanting to improve the school environment, the Group is supportive of any initiatives that will help to ease traffic congestion at and around the school.

Carol-Anne Stapley, a member of the Group, said: 'We are very grateful to Praxis, Beau Sejour and the Guernsey Sports Commission for enabling the Stepping Out project to be run at La Houquette School. In encouraging children to walk more the initiative complements our recent Walk to School Week. I hope that the children will enjoy using the pedometers and that taking part will stimulate a long term increase in the amount of walking they do.'

'As an employer we are passionate about promoting healthy living,' said Simon Thornton, managing director of the Praxis Group.

'We launched our Healthy Lifestyle initiative earlier this year to help staff members with their efforts to lose weight, get fit or give up smoking and it has been very successful. Supporting La Houquette with its "Stepping Out" programme complements our overall approach to healthy living and I am delighted that we will be helping some the island's youngsters to improve their fitness levels. I wish Jon and Jason luck with trying to keep up with the nine and ten year olds.'

The first bleep test in the Praxis Group-sponsored "Stepping Out" programme will take place at 1pm on Tuesday 12 June at Beau Sejour.