

# HAVE YOU EVER TRIED WALKING TO SCHOOL?

Oasis Academy Ryelands is committed to encouraging our pupils to be active so that they can take advantage of the many benefits that activity can offer

## It's fun!

Being active is a great way to let off steam and meet up with friends.



## It's healthy!

Physical activity can help build a healthy heart, develop strong muscles and bones, reduce body fat and may help reduce the risk of some chronic diseases prevalent in later life.



## It makes you feel good!

Physical activity can help reduce anxiety and stress and can help you feel good.



## Other benefits of walking to school

As well as helping to improve your child's health (and your own!), walking to school has many other benefits:

- It provides a good chance to teach your child road safety skills
- It gives you and your child a chance to talk to each other - you'd be surprised how much you might learn!
- It can help reduce pollution and improve the environment, making it more pleasant for pedestrians
- It is less stressful than driving - there are no traffic queues or parking problems
- It helps make your child familiar with their local environment and those who live there
- It helps save money - just think of all that petrol money you could save!
- It helps wake you up and get you ready for the day



## What's stopping you?

### I don't have time



Walking short journeys can be just as quick - there's no need to unlock the car and do up safety belts and no traffic queues or parking problems. Arrange a rota with other parents.

### It's too far



How about driving part of the way and walking the rest - you'll benefit from the exercise and will also avoid the stress of trying to park outside the school!

### The roads are too busy



Many of these cars are taking children to school - help reduce this problem by leaving yours at home. Chat to your child and friends to work out the route to school with the quietest roads and safest crossing points. Let us know your opinions and together we can campaign for improvements.

### Some days it's too wet and cold



Just wrap up, wear wellies and walk briskly! Children love walking in the rain - we'll make sure there's somewhere to put their coat and wellies! It's far nicer having a brisk walk in the cold than sitting in a car waiting for the heater to warm up!

# SO WHY NOT GIVE IT A TRY?

## How much activity does my child need?

Recent guidelines from the Health Education Authority recommend that young people aged 5-18 years should:

Participate in physical activity of at least moderate intensity for one hour per day.

This activity does not all need to be performed in one session, it can be accumulated throughout the day. Young people who currently do little or no activity should build up to this level gradually but should participate in physical activity of at least moderate intensity for at least half an hour per day.

Examples of moderate intensity activities are:

- Brisk walking
- Cycling
- Swimming
- Dance



As a school we try to provide as many opportunities as possible for your child to be active, but there are obviously limits to how much we can do.

**This is where you can help!!**

One important contribution to help your child reach their target of 60 minutes daily activity, is for them to walk to and from school - the diagram below shows the valuable role this can play.

An example of the daily 60 minutes activity:

- Walk to and from school - 20 mins
- Play with friends - 15 mins
- After school club - 25 mins



## Stride out and walk with your child

You'll both soon appreciate how great walking to school can be. Walking at any speed will be beneficial but to gain the greatest health benefits try walking a little quicker some days.

Things you could do with your child on the walk to school:

- Talk about the benefits of exercise and how nice it is to start the day with a walk
- See how many cars in traffic queues you can overtake before they start moving
- Time how long it takes to get to different points along the route - see if you can get to these points more quickly on some days
- Work out the safest route with your child - draw a simple map, walk the route together, discuss each crossing point
- Talk about safe places to cross and other road safety principles
- As your child gets older, encourage them to lead you on the walk to school and make decisions about where and when to cross in preparation for them going it alone (keep going with them until you are sure they can cope alone)
- Look and talk about things in the local environment and how they change



## Drivers can help too...

If you have to drive your child to school, there are still things you can do to help support our Walk to School campaign:

- Try parking a little distance away from the school and walking the last part of the journey
- Reduce your speed to a maximum of 20mph in the vicinity of the school
- Turn off your engine whilst waiting outside the school



The school will be doing all we can to support your child walking to school. Watch out for notices and letters telling you what's going on!

**PLEASE LET US KNOW OF ANY IDEAS OR CONCERNS YOU HAVE, WE ARE ALWAYS KEEN TO LISTEN!**