

## Your big play experiment



Welcome to LTL's ninth National School Grounds Week (NSGW). Every year around 8,000 schools and early years settings get involved and for many it is a regular event in the school calendar.

If this is the first time you are taking part, we're especially pleased to have you on board. The fact that you are reading this is an indication of your interest in the value of outdoor learning and play and we hope that you'll be inspired to join the growing band of like-minded people who are turning their support into positive action.

By getting involved you'll not only be benefiting your pupils, you'll also be inspiring the wider school community and helping to bring about long-term change in children's health and wellbeing.

This year we have taken 'getting active' as our theme to link in with the high profile public health campaign Change4Life. Although this is an England-only campaign (visit [www.nhs.uk/change4life](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life)) separate campaigns – Take Life On, One Step at a Time in Scotland, and Health Challenge Wales – are seeking the same outcomes: to bring about behavioural change and get every child active for at least 60 minutes a day.

The government's health adviser, NICE, states that 'the recommended 60 minutes may be achieved through several short bursts of activity of 10 minutes or more'. This means that helping children to get active at playtimes can make a major contribution to ensuring they take their recommended daily exercise.

### What's it all about?

We believe that if you want to bring about behavioural change, then children need to be inspired by games that not only increase activity levels but are genuinely fun and they'd love to play again and again – even without your supervision!

So what activities do children really enjoy? *The big play experiment!* is designed to help you find out, with an inspiring range of activities on offer that will get children on the move every day of National School Grounds Week. In addition, our photocopiable chart (over page) offers children the opportunity to assess how much they enjoyed each activity and also get them thinking about the relationship between activity and health.



### Getting organised

In the *Having fun, getting fit!* Groundnotes (May 2009), we have suggested five different types of activity for the children to try on each day of the week – a running, skipping, playground marking and ball game, plus an activity of the children's own choice (for inspiration see [www.playgroundfun.org.uk](http://www.playgroundfun.org.uk)).

You can involve a single class, year group or the whole school – the choice is yours. Whichever you choose, encourage the children to keep a record of which activities they like – and which they don't – using the photocopiable chart (over page). Not only is this designed to help get children thinking about what motivates them, and making the link between activity and health, but it will also help you gain useful insight into planning physical activity within your school (for help in using and /or adapting the chart, see the last page).

Older children may be able to run the experiment themselves, or responsibilities can be handed out for individual tasks, such as organising each of the different activities or scoring.








### And finally ...

We'd love to know which of the activities you tried in *The big play experiment!* worked best for your children so that we can collate a national picture of what really gets children motivated and on the move.

Let us know by logging on at [www.ltl.org.uk/nsgw](http://www.ltl.org.uk/nsgw).

# Our big play experiment!

Day	Activity tested
 <p data-bbox="229 568 501 636"><b>Monday</b></p>	
 <p data-bbox="229 904 501 972"><b>Tuesday</b></p>	
 <p data-bbox="172 1240 549 1308"><b>Wednesday</b></p>	
 <p data-bbox="213 1576 517 1644"><b>Thursday</b></p>	
 <p data-bbox="261 1912 469 1980"><b>Friday</b></p>	



On a scale of one to 10, how much did you enjoy this activity?

On a scale of one to 10, how fit do you think it might make you?

**Total score**

**Ranking**

On a scale of one to 10, how much did you enjoy this activity?	On a scale of one to 10, how fit do you think it might make you?	<b>Total score</b>	<b>Ranking</b>

## Using and adapting the chart

Each activity should be scored in two ways. Firstly, on a scale of one to 10, how fit do the children think it might make them? And secondly, on a scale of one to 10, how much did they enjoy the activity? One is low, and 10 is high.

When answering the question 'how fit do you think it might make you?', in order to encourage children to think about activity levels and the connection with their health, they could devise their own scoring criteria. For example, they could take their breathing/pulse rate before and after the activity – and see how long it takes to return to normal (the quicker this happens, the fitter they are) and/or how hot and sweaty they are!

When answering the question 'How much did you enjoy this activity?' children could again be asked to devise their own scoring criteria. For example, how likely is it that they would play it again? How good do they think they were at it?

Depending upon maths skills, the total score could be arrived at by either adding or multiplying the separate scores for activity level and enjoyment. Either way, total scores should then be ordered to give a ranking to find the best activity in the children's opinion for motivating them to get more active at playtimes.

## About us

Learning through Landscapes (known in Scotland as Grounds for Learning) helps schools and early years settings make the most of their outdoor spaces for play and learning. We believe all children have the right to enjoy and benefit from well-designed, well-managed and well-used school grounds.

Since our launch in 1990, LTL has worked directly with over 10,000 schools and settings, raised over £21 million for ground improvements and contributed substantially to school grounds research and to new legislation and good practice. Individual schools and early years



### Home links

Help encourage behavioural changes at home as well as in the playground by:

- putting this poster up on the wall where parents will be able to see it
- inviting parents in to help with running *The big play experiment!*
- encouraging siblings to teach their younger brothers and sisters new activities they try out during NSGW
- displaying the results of *The big play experiment!* at the entrance to your school so parents can see what their children love to do too.

settings can benefit from our unrivalled experience through the membership schemes *Schoolgrounds-UK* and *Early Years Outdoors*. Members receive six mailings a year full of information and inspiration, illustrated with real images and examples, demonstrating good practice and sharing the learning from members nationally and internationally. Back issues are available from the member-only section of our website, which also includes a searchable library of resources and our unique online Directory of School Grounds Professionals. Members also receive discounts on training events, conferences and LTL publications. Find out more at [www.ltl.org.uk](http://www.ltl.org.uk) or by calling 01962 845811.

## Further information

You can download a list of useful organisations from [www.ltl.org.uk/nsgw](http://www.ltl.org.uk/nsgw).



© This resource was originally created as part of the Schoolgrounds-UK membership scheme from the national school grounds charity **Learning through Landscapes** operating in Scotland as **Grounds for Learning**

(registered charity no. in England and Wales 803270 and in Scotland SCO38890).

To find out more about membership call 01962 845811 or visit [www.ltl.org.uk](http://www.ltl.org.uk)

