Youth Sport Trust Research Reveals Parents and Teachers Support an Always Active Uniform Policy

Thursday 8 May, 2025

The Youth Sport Trust has today revealed the results of new research which shows three-quarters of parents would support schools adopting an Always Active Uniform policy to encourage more active and healthier lifestyles for children. With **National School Sports Week 2025** fast approaching (16–22 June), this year's theme is 'Always Active', and the Youth Sport Trust is urging schools across the UK to sign up and take part in a campaign designed to get children moving throughout the day.

The concept behind the Always Active Uniform is simple but transformative: a flexible, comfortable, and durable uniform designed to encourage daily physical activity. Unlike traditional school uniforms, which can be restrictive and inhibit movement, the Always Active Uniform supports children in embedding movement throughout the day, from PE lessons to break time to active learning.

Key research findings:

- **74% of parents** who have children aged 4 to 11 would support their child's school to have an Always Active Uniform policy.
- **67% of primary school teachers** would support their school adopting an Always Active Uniform policy.
- **63% of parents** who have children aged 4 to 11 agree that an Always Active Uniform policy would be beneficial for their child's education and development.[1]

The findings highlight an opportunity to rethink traditional school policies and make daily movement a normal, accessible part of every child's education. Read the full report here.

Dame Dorothy Primary School Leads the Way with Always Active Uniforms

One school already successfully trialling this approach is Dame Dorothy Primary School in Sunderland. Since introducing an Always Active Uniform, the school has experienced a significant rise in participation in sports, and girls especially now feel more comfortable and able to use all of the equipment.

Headteacher, Iain Williamson, said, "I think sometimes people mistakenly see it as a lessening of standards or lowering of expectations, but we see it as quite the opposite. Our standards for our children are at the highest account. We want them to be healthy, well-equipped children who are going to go adulthood with positive attitudes towards food and exercise that they will carry for the rest of their lives."

With regards to parent outlook on the uniform change, he added, "Feedback we have received from parents has been very favourable and it's been something which has been well received by the whole school community. For some of our children with sensory needs parents have commented that the feel of the uniform is actually more favourable than the previous one."

Watch the full case study **here**

The Youth Sport Trust is encouraging schools to trial this forward-thinking policy as part of **National School Sports Week 2025**, powered by Sports Direct x Under Armour, to support children in reaching the UK Chief Medical Officers' recommendation of 60 active minutes a day. Schools, families and organisations who sign up will gain access to free resources, exclusive activity packs, and the chance to win exciting prizes.

Sign up today here.

The Case for an Always Active Uniform

With children today facing numerous challenges when it comes to staying active—such as an increase in sedentary activities, restrictions on outdoor play, and a reduction in PE hours—an active uniform could play a crucial role in addressing these issues. A 2024 report from the University of Cambridge found that school uniform policies could be restricting young people from being active, particularly primary school-aged girls.

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- **Movement Throughout the Day**: Comfortable and flexible design that allows children to engage in spontaneous activity between lessons.
- **Brain Development and Learning**: Physical activity enhances cognitive function, mood regulation, and overall wellbeing, improving focus and behaviour in the classroom
- **Supporting SEND Students**: A more flexible, comfortable uniform that removes the need to change outfits helps reduce barriers for SEND students, who often face greater challenges accessing physical activity.
- **Cost Considerations**: Integrating activewear elements into standard uniforms allows children to stay active without needing a separate PE kit, reducing costs for families.[2]

Youth Sport Trust National School Sport Champion and four-time Olympic Champion Sir Mo Farah said, "Helping children be active is something I'm really passionate about. Through Mo's Mission, we're encouraging young people to get their 60 active minutes every day, and the idea of an Always Active Uniform is a brilliant way to make that easier and more natural. A simple change like this could have a huge impact on children's health, confidence, and happiness. I'd encourage all schools to sign-up for National School Sports Week and rethink how we can build more movement into every child's day."

Ali Oliver MBE, CEO of Youth Sport Trust, commented:

"We are at a crossroads in terms of the health and wellbeing of today's children. With physical activity playing such a crucial role in their overall health, development and education, it's vital we explore every avenue to make it easier for children to be active while at school, where they spend a significant part of their day. While weekly physical education remains a key component, alone it will not deliver the daily physical activity children need for normal growth, health and development. By finding ways to integrate movement throughout the entire school day we have a chance to shift and improve young people's wellbeing and achievement. Our research shows parents actively support the idea of an Always Active Uniform and it feels like the right moment to be challenging what we have always done, and experiment with new ways of thinking. Let's used National School Sports Week to explore the potential benefits of giving young people more freedom to move, learn, and thrive in the modern era."

The Youth Sport Trust looks forward to building on this momentum and aligning with organisations including Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL), who share our belief that through always active uniforms we can improve children's wellbeing, development and learning at schools.

Join the Movement

National School Sports Week 2025 is the perfect opportunity for schools to trial the Always Active approach. Sign up today and get everything you need to get started. **Register now at the Youth Sport Trust website.**

[1] All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. For the parents' survey, the total sample size was 1081 parents. Fieldwork was undertaken between 20th - 24th February 2025. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

For the teachers' survey, the total sample size was 1016 teachers. Fieldwork was undertaken between 13th February - 2nd March 2025. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of UK teachers.

[2] According to the Department for Education Cost of School Uniform Survey 2023, the average total expenditure on school uniform and PE kit combined based on the items required in 2023 was £381.92.

About Youth Sport Trust

The Youth Sport Trust is the leading UK children's charity for improving young people's health and wellbeing through sport and play. We empower young people and equip educators to build brighter futures through the power of physical activity. Founded in 1995, we work with around 20,000 schools and provides opportunities for over two million children every year. Our vision is to create a future where every child enjoys the life-changing benefits of play and sport.

National School Sports Week Powered by Sports Direct x Under Armour

About Sports Direct

Sports Direct is a leading retailer of sports and fitness footwear, clothing, and equipment. A brand driven by purpose; our mission is to use the powers of sport to champion the legend in everybody. Whatever your sport, whatever your style, and whatever your ambition, we offer the quality and choice to make everyone feel like a winner. Whether it’s football, running, training, boxing, walking, dance, cycling or swimming, we aim to serve, support, and inspire with products that bring out the best in everyone.

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