

## Thorney Island Primary children help launch new Daily Mile track



Every morning the sounds of 200 happy and active children bounce off the walls of Thorney Island Community Primary School.

For 15 minutes outside of lesson time, each pupil takes part in the Daily Mile, a growing initiative being enjoyed nationwide and at over 50 West Sussex schools.

Beaming children (and some teachers) run, jog and walk at least a mile in their class groups with a big emphasis on fun. Now they can do so on a brand new Daily Mile running track, which officially opened on Wednesday, 26 July 2019.

Head Dean Clegg explained: "We introduced the Daily Mile for lots of reasons, we want our children to be more physically active and we really want to improve their mental wellbeing. It has also been proven to improve concentration in class.

"We have over 200 children and they all do it every single day. We've been enjoying it for quite a while but the track was installed over the Easter holidays and now it means we'll be able to do it all-year-round."

Schools don't need a dedicated track to take part and already many of West Sussex's schools are enjoying the benefits of the Daily Mile.

An active school already, Thorney Island is also benefiting from a brand new climbing wall, installed last month, which is proving just as popular with their adventurous pupils.



• Pupils on the new climbing wall

The school has close links with the island's army barracks, and Major Chaz May, Chief of Staff, was on hand to cut the ribbon. His two children Poppy, eight, and George, seven, go to the school and love taking part.

Major May said: "It's an absolutely wonderful school and it's superb that this facility has been put in for the Daily Mile.

George said: "I can normally do ten or 11 laps. I love that you can go as fast as you like."



Thorney Island pupils enjoying the new track

Poppy added: "I've been on the track lots of times. I like doing it with all my friends."

Head of Year 2 Daryl Vokes joins in the active fun. He said: "I absolutely love it, it gets you fit and healthy and I have noticed a difference. After doing it the children can focus on their work and they really love it."

The new blue Daily Mile track cost £20,000, with £8,000 coming from a Department for Education grant and £1,000 from a PE & Sports grant.

Amanda Jupp, West Sussex County Council Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, said: "It's fantastic to see a school with such an emphasis on making sport so much fun.

"We now have over 50 of our schools doing the Daily Mile every day so thousands of schoolchildren are reaping the rewards and of course you don't need a dedicated track to take part."

More information on The Daily Mile and how to sign up: [www.thedailymile.co.uk](http://www.thedailymile.co.uk)



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