



Irish Life
health



Irish Life Health
**Schools' Fitness
Challenge**
Barometer 2016

irishlifehealth.ie/fitnesschallenge

About the Irish Life Health Schools' Fitness Challenge

Since 2013, the Schools' Fitness Challenge has helped Irish students become fitter, healthier and more energetic. The 2016 Schools' Fitness Challenge invites secondary schools across the country to join us in highlighting the importance of fitness to our future health and to make increasing physical activity a national priority. At Irish Life Health, our aim is that young people will adopt a healthier and more active lifestyle, which will positively benefit their long term health.

There are three phases to the Irish Life Health Schools' Fitness Challenge.

- 1 Initial fitness test to measure fitness levels
- 2 Six week training programme to help improve cardiovascular fitness levels
- 3 Repeat fitness test to measure new fitness levels

This year's challenge was completed over 11 weeks from October to December 2016. The fitness levels of Irish secondary school students were assessed, with the aim of helping Ireland become a fitter and healthier nation.

Prizes were vouchers from Elvery's Intersport with a total value of €5000, for schools to spend on their choice of sports equipment.

This year more schools entered the challenge than ever before, which is good news for Irish children and the overall health of the nation. Irish Life Health would like to sincerely thank all of the principals and teachers for supporting this year's challenge, and making a positive contribution to the health and wellness of Irish children.



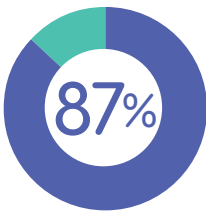
Analysis of results

The aim of the Irish Life Health Schools' Fitness Challenge is to highlight the importance of cardiovascular fitness for young people. The challenge also shows that improvements can be made with as little as 6 weeks of exercise and training.

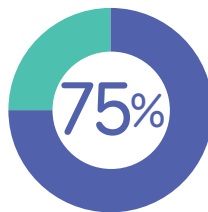
At the end of 2016, Dr Sinead Sheridan and Professor Niall Moyna, Head of the School of Health and Human Performance at Dublin City University (DCU), revealed some worrying statistics showing that unfit Irish teens have evidence of heart disease. The research was titled "Cardiorespiratory Fitness, Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour and Vascular Health in Male Adolescents". This was a clinical study of 82 boys aged 15 with data collected over 3 years.

With such alarming statistics, there's never been a more critical time to get students exercising.

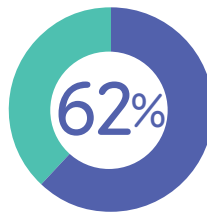
The study revealed that:



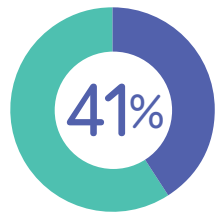
of students who have low fitness levels had the vascular (blood vessels) age of a 55-60 year old man



of 'low fit' students had high blood pressure



of 'low fit' students were at high risk of developing Type 2 diabetes



of 'low fit' students had borderline to high levels of fat in their blood

The 2016 Irish Life Health Schools' Fitness Challenge

This year, 22,764 students (10,935 girls and 11,828 boys) took part in the challenge, with a total of 11,040 (5460 girls and 5580 boys) completing all phases of the challenge.



The winners

Congratulations to all of the schools who took part in the 2016 Irish Life Health Schools' Fitness Challenge. A huge well done from everyone in Irish Life Health to all of our winners.

FIRST PLACE

IRELAND'S FITTEST SCHOOL

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Boys/Overall | St. Macartan's College, Monaghan Town |
| Girls | Mount Anville Secondary School, Dublin |
| Mixed | Presentation Secondary Schools, Miltown, Kerry |

IRELAND'S MOST IMPROVED SCHOOL

| | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| Boys/Overall | St. Macartan's College, Monaghan Town |
| Girls | Scoil Chríost Rí, Laois |
| Mixed | Coláiste Choilm, Cork |

This year, we'd also like to recognise the schools who came in second and third place. Congratulations on your results.

SECOND PLACE

FITTEST SCHOOL

| | |
|-------|---------------------------------------|
| Boys | Summerhill College, Sligo |
| Girls | Loreto Abbey Secondary School, Dublin |
| Mixed | Coláiste Choilm, Cork |

MOST IMPROVED SCHOOL

| | |
|-------|--|
| Boys | St. Tiernan's College, Mayo |
| Girls | St Brigid's College, Kilkenny |
| Mixed | Carrigallen Vocational School, Leitrim |

THIRD PLACE

FITTEST SCHOOL

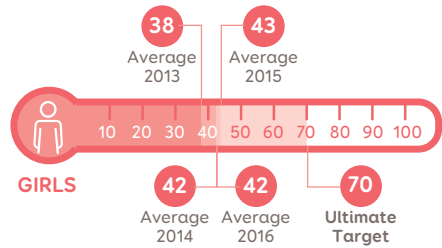
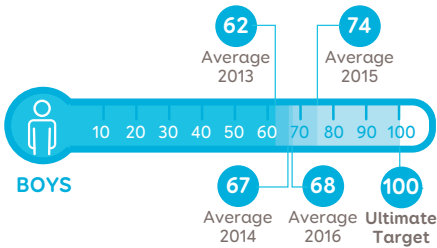
| | |
|-------|--|
| Boys | St. Tiernans College, Mayo |
| Girls | Sacred Heart Secondary School, Louth |
| Mixed | Carrigallen Vocational School, Leitrim |

MOST IMPROVED SCHOOL

| | |
|-------|-----------------------------------|
| Boys | Coláiste Éamann Rís, Kilkenny |
| Girls | St. Louis Secondary School, Louth |
| Mixed | Coláiste DeLacy, Meath |

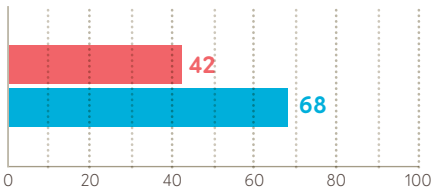
Shuttle barometers

These barometers show the average number of shuttle runs completed by Irish boys and girls during phase 2 of the Irish Life Health Schools' Fitness Challenge from 2013 to 2016. The ultimate target is recommended by the centre for Preventive Medicine, DCU.

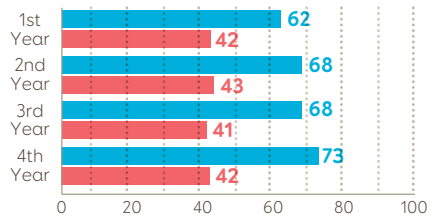


Average number of shuttle runs

Boys vs. Girls: 38% difference

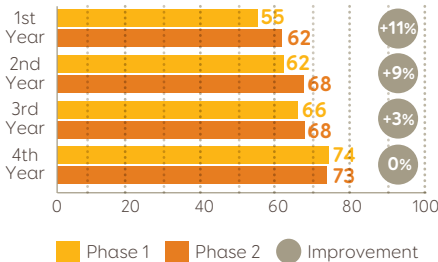


Average number of shuttle runs completed by boys and girls after 6 week training programme was completed.

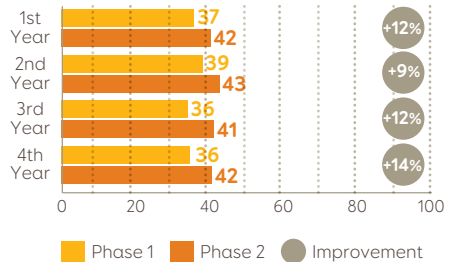


Average number of shuttle runs completed by 1st - 4th year boys and girls after 6 week training programme was completed.

Improvement levels



BOYS Percentage improvement in fitness by boys after 6 week exercise programme. The percentage difference is between the 1st and 2nd bleep tests.



GIRLS Percentage improvement in fitness by girls after 6 week exercise programme. The percentage difference is between the 1st and 2nd bleep tests.

Recommendations

- The Irish Life Health Schools' Fitness Challenge demonstrates that exercise intervention at a young age can improve fitness among school-going children and that fitness levels could be continually assessed to improve the overall health of the nation.
- Physical activity among school-going children needs to be viewed as a national priority if we are going to reduce the disease burden on our health service.
- There is a need to move away from our current disease-based model of health care to a health-based model.
- Children don't have to be overweight to be unfit. There are many boys and girls who are categorised as normal weight but who have very low cardiovascular fitness. Therefore, it's important that all children are made aware of their cardiovascular fitness levels and adapt their behaviour earlier in life.
- The cardiovascular health of young people can be improved through a series of measures including assessing their fitness levels at the start and end of each school year, including the result on the student's report card.
- We need to make Physical Education compulsory across all years in secondary school.
- To encourage children to start good fitness behaviour early, a new Health Science curriculum could be developed at both a Junior and Senior cycle that combines education on human biology, chronic diseases, home economics and lifestyle (including physical activity, diet, smoking, alcohol, stress etc.) Educating children about what physical activity actually does physiologically (e.g. to the heart, lungs etc.) will help them understand how the body responds to exercise.
- Ideally Irish girls should be completing a minimum of 70 shuttle runs in the bleep test.
- Ideally Irish boys should be completing a minimum of 100 shuttle runs in the bleep test.



Niall Moyna
Prof. Nial Moyna

Participating schools

| School | County | School | County | School | County |
|--------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|---------|
| Carlow Vocational School | Carlow | Middleton College | Cork | Loreto Secondary School | Donegal |
| St Aidans Comprehensive School | Cavan | Nagle Community College | Cork | Rosses Community School | Donegal |
| St Patricks College | Cavan | North Monastery Secondary School | Cork | St Columbas Comprehensive School | Donegal |
| Scariff Community College | Clare | Presentation Secondary School | Cork | St Eunans College | Donegal |
| Shannon Comprehensive School | Clare | Regina Mundi College | Cork | St. Catherines Vocational School | Donegal |
| St Annes Community College | Clare | Riverstown National School | Cork | Ardgillan Community College | Dublin |
| St. Josephs Secondary School | Clare | Scoil Mhuire | Cork | Ballyfermot Youthreach | Dublin |
| Ashton School | Cork | St Marys Secondary School | Cork | Cabinteely Community School | Dublin |
| Boherbue Comprehensive School | Cork | St. Angelas College | Cork | Caritas College | Dublin |
| Colaiste Treasa | Cork | Terence MacSwiney Community College | Cork | Colaiste Bride | Dublin |
| Colaiste Choilm | Cork | Carndonagh Community School | Donegal | Colaiste Chillian | Dublin |
| Deerpark C.B.S. | Cork | Errigal College | Donegal | Colaiste de hOde | Dublin |
| Gaelchoilaiste Cul | Cork | Finn Valley College | Donegal | Colaiste Eoin | Dublin |
| Glanmire Community College | Cork | Loreto Community School | Donegal | Colaiste Mhuire | Dublin |

Participating schools

| School | County | School | County | School | County |
|-------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Colaiste Mhuire | Dublin | Colaiste Naomh Mhuire | Kildare | St. Tiernans College | Mayo |
| Collinstown Park Community College | Dublin | Kildare Town Community School | Kildare | Ashbourne Community School | Meath |
| Colaiste Choilín | Dublin | Maynooth Post Primary School | Kildare | Athboy Community School | Meath |
| Colaiste Dhulaigh | Dublin | Mean Scoil Iognáid Rís | Kildare | Colaiste de Lacy | Meath |
| Colaiste Eoin | Dublin | Naas Community College | Kildare | Colaiste na hInse | Meath |
| Deansrath Community College | Dublin | Scoil Dara | Kildare | Colaiste na Mí | Meath |
| Dominican College | Dublin | Scoil Mhuire Community School | Kildare | St Patricks Classical School | Meath |
| Donabate Community College | Dublin | St Farnans Post Primary School | Kildare | St Peters College | Meath |
| Hansfield Educate Together | Dublin | Colaiste Éamann Rís | Kilkenny | St. Fintinas Post Primary School | Meath |
| Jesus and Mary College | Dublin | Colaiste Cois Siuire | Kilkenny | Colaiste Oiriall | Monaghan |
| John Scottus Secondary School | Dublin | Colaiste Mhuire | Kilkenny | Patrician High School | Monaghan |
| Killinarden Community School | Dublin | Colaiste Pobail Osraí | Kilkenny | St Louis Secondary School | Monaghan |
| Loreto Abbey Secondary School | Dublin | Grennan College | Kilkenny | St. Macartans College | Monaghan |
| Marino College | Dublin | St Kierans College | Kilkenny | Colaiste Na Sionna | Offaly |
| Mercy Secondary School | Dublin | St. Brigids College | Kilkenny | Oaklands Community College | Offaly |
| Mount Anville Secondary School | Dublin | Clonastee Vocational School | Laois | St.Brendans Community School | Offaly |
| New Cross College | Dublin | Colaiste Iosagáin | Laois | Tullamore College | Offaly |
| Newpark Comprehensive School | Dublin | Portlaoise College | Laois | C.B.S. Roscommon | Roscommon |
| Oatlands College | Dublin | Scoil Christí Rí | Laois | Scoil Mhuire | Roscommon |
| Our Lady Of Mercy Secondary School | Dublin | St Fergals College | Laois | Colaiste Mhuire | Sligo |
| Presentation College | Dublin | St. Marys C.B.S. | Laois | Colaiste Iascaigh | Sligo |
| Rosemont School | Dublin | Ballinamore Community School | Leitrim | Summerhill College | Sligo |
| St Joseph Of Cluny Secondary School | Dublin | Carrigallen Vocational School | Leitrim | Colaiste Dun Iascaigh | Tipperary |
| St Josephs Secondary School | Dublin | Ardscuil Mhuire | Limerick | Patrician Presentation | Tipperary |
| St Kevins College | Dublin | Colaiste Mhichíl | Limerick | Presentation Secondary School | Tipperary |
| St Killian's Deutsche Schule | Dublin | Colaiste Mhuire | Limerick | Scoil Mhuire | Tipperary |
| St Marys Secondary School | Dublin | Desmond College | Limerick | St. Alibes School | Tipperary |
| St Patricks Cathedral G.S | Dublin | Glenstal Abbey School | Limerick | St. Marys Secondary School | Tipperary |
| St Raphaelas Secondary School | Dublin | Presentation Secondary School | Limerick | Blackwater Community School | Waterford |
| The Donahies Community School | Dublin | Scoil Mhuire agus Ide | Limerick | De La Salle College | Waterford |
| The Kings Hospital | Dublin | St Clements College | Limerick | St Pauls Community College | Waterford |
| Colaiste Bhaile Chláir | Galway | Thomond Community College | Limerick | Loreto College | Westmeath |
| Colaiste na Coiribe | Galway | Villiers Secondary School | Limerick | Moate Community School | Westmeath |
| Dunmore Community School | Galway | Cnoc Mhuire | Longford | St Josephs Secondary School | Westmeath |
| Galway Community College | Galway | Lanesboro Community College | Longford | Wilson's Hospital School | Westmeath |
| Glenamaddy Community School | Galway | Moyne Community School | Longford | Bridgetown Vocational College | Wexford |
| Gort Community School | Galway | St. Mels College | Longford | Christian Brothers Secondary School | Wexford |
| Jesus & Mary Secondary School | Galway | Templemichael College | Longford | Colaiste Bride | Wexford |
| Mercy College | Galway | Ardee Community School | Louth | Creagh College | Wexford |
| Presentation College | Galway | Ballymakenny College | Louth | F.C.J. Secondary School | Wexford |
| St Brigids Vocational School | Galway | Drogheda Grammar School | Louth | Good Counsel College | Wexford |
| St. Brigids School | Galway | Sacred Heart Secondary School | Louth | Ramsgrange Community School | Wexford |
| Castleisland Community College | Kerry | Scoil Uí Mhuiri | Louth | Vocational College Bunclody | Wexford |
| Presentation Secondary School | Kerry | St Louis Secondary School | Louth | Arklow Community College | Wicklow |
| St. Michaels College | Kerry | St. Josephs C.B.S. | Louth | Colaiste Ráithín | Wicklow |
| Tarbert Comprehensive School | Kerry | Ballinrobe Community School | Mayo | Loreto Secondary School | Wicklow |
| Transforum Alley Youthreach | Kerry | Mount St Michael | Mayo | Presentation College | Wicklow |
| Ardscuil na Tríonoide | Kildare | St Josephs Secondary School | Mayo | St Gerards School | Wicklow |
| Athy Community College | Kildare | St Louis Community School | Mayo | St Kevins Community College | Wicklow |

