

Back ON Track

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Gordon MacLelland, Director of Sports at Aysgarth School, understands just how vital physical education is – not only for physical health, but mental wellbeing too. 'We know that when children exercise, their bodies release endorphins,' he says. 'These endorphins trigger a positive feeling, boosting productivity, enabling them to concentrate, focus and boosting their confidence to tackle their academic studies. Furthermore, regular exercise can help relieve stress and anxiety. With young people under increasing pressure, exercise is a powerful tool to combat stress.'

At Aysgarth, they offer a broad variety of sporting opportunities and activities in an effort to ensure that the boys have a chance to find sports they enjoy. 'We know that if children can find a sport that they truly love, there is a better chance of them continuing a healthy relationship with physical activity through their teenage years and into adulthood,' Gordon adds. 'Furthermore, a passion for sports is a wholesome alternative to the negative aspects of screen time.'

Participation and performance are equally valued at the school with every boy given the opportunity to represent the school on the rugby, football and cricket pitches – and some go on to play at the highest levels.

Above all, one thing is clear – all three schools are hopeful that recent events will have a positive impact their pupils' physical education and they'll continue to adapt to whatever 2021 throws at them.

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