



No high pressure required at Fairfield Primary School

Employer: Fairfield Primary School

Area: Stockton

Theme: Blood Pressure



Fairfield Primary School signed up to the BHAWA at the end of 2017. The school employ 66 members of staff, made up of teachers, support staff, senior leadership, administration, dinner staff, cleaning staff and the caretaker. The school have approximately 445 children, with two classes for each year group.

Shortly after becoming a Head Teacher I had a health check at my GP's and was told my blood pressure was higher than it should be. I was told that I would need to have this checked again to see if I had an ongoing problem. Although I took steps towards improving my blood pressure, I did not have it checked again until we arranged the Health Bus to visit school as part of the Better Health at Work Award. On the bus, my blood pressure was 165/105, which was unusually high.

As a result of this, I booked another appointment with my GP to have my blood pressure monitored. I also increased the amount of exercise I was doing, reduced my caffeine intake, and cut the amount of alcohol I drank (this choice was supported by the information we received from our alcohol awareness session that Laura organised for our Better Health at Work Award).

Initially, my blood pressure remained high but, within a few weeks, it had come down to within the normal range. In addition, I also used what I had learnt from our Stress Awareness session, again organised for our Better Health at Work Award, to help me to deal with the stresses of my job better. I tried to increase the quantity and quality of sleep that I was getting (prior to realising I had a blood pressure problem, I was getting up early to do a couple of hours' work before school – I no longer do this).

Two months after the shock of having dangerously high blood pressure on the health bus, my blood pressure is now consistently in the normal range and frequently in the ideal range. This has been achieved through lifestyle choices rather than medication and has been supported by our involvement in the Better Health at Work Award.



