

# Tai Chi For You LTD



## Tai Chi For Kidz





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## **Welcome to Tai Chi For You Ltd's Programme of Classes for Schools....**

There is considerable evidence that Tai Chi can increase pupil attainment, address poor behaviour, develop concentration and improve attitude to learning and health. As former teachers, we recognise the importance of these areas in education and the importance placed on them by OFSTED.

The sessions are accessible to all ages and levels of fitness, non-competitive, easy to learn and most importantly, fun! Tai Chi For You has proved popular as a lunch time club, as part of a school transition day, included as a PE lesson and as a full day event. The full day event gave children the opportunity to be taught in their year groups, one class after another, and at the end of the day parents and teachers joined in the fun with a whole school session.

As former teachers, we appreciate the benefits Tai Chi can bring to students and the classroom setting. We apply our understanding, experience and knowledge of teaching and OFSTED to support targeting behaviour issues, levels of attention and attitude to learning.

All Tai Chi For You instructors are fully insured and qualified, delivering Dr Paul Lam's Tai Chi for Health programmes. We are also members of Tai Chi Union of Great Britain, first aid trained, CRB/DBS checked and fully insured.

We are happy to speak to OFSTED or any other concern about the methods the school has employed and the achievement of pupils.

We aim to work with the school and their needs. We look forward to helping your school start their Tai Chi journey.

*Emma Cooke*



## Objectives of Education

The following page details how Tai Chi meets the expectations of OFSTED inspection criteria, the current Government's vision of schools, Every Child Matters and Healthy Schools. We have made reference to specific research and included the findings in this publication.



## OFSTED Inspection Criteria

### **“The achievement of pupils at the school”**

**“particular consideration is given to the progress that the lowest attaining pupils are making”**

**“When evaluating the achievement of pupils, inspectors consider how well pupils develop”**

**“When reporting, inspectors must also consider the extent to which the education provided by the school meets the needs of the range of pupils at the school, and in particular the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special education needs.”**

With reference to the above points in OFSTED's Framework for Inspection, Tai Chi has been found to increase the focus of students. It has been found to develop concentration (evident particularly in ADHD and ADD students), have a positive effect on learning difficulties, improve literacy and can assist students with dyspraxia and dyslexia.

### **“The behaviour and safety of pupils at the school”**

Research into the effects of Tai Chi on students' behaviour has shown that it has a positive effect on behaviour, calming pupils down and helping them to focus, especially those with aggressive tendencies.

When the Department for Culture, Media and Sport visited one of the schools involved in the Brookfield (Derbyshire) School Partnership, they commented on the effects of the Tai Chi programme being taught as being “... *the best value for money behavioural programme they had ever seen.*”

[Making a Difference to Young People's Lives: Brookfield (Derbyshire) School Sport Partnership  
Snapdragon Tai Chi and Behavioural Improvement]

Positive relations between teacher and staff are a must for behaviour management. Through the involvement of class teachers in the learning of Tai Chi alongside their pupils, positive relationships can be formed. In this situation, the teacher and pupil are equal, with Tai Chi

### **Benefits have included:**

- Improved pupil attainment, learning and progress, self-confidence, motivation and attendance.
- Positive impact on pupils' personal development, especially the potentially vulnerable and those at risk of underachievement.
- Re-engagement of hard to reach pupils and reduced exclusion rates.
- Improved parental engagement with the school and their child's learning.
- Family learning programmes which have an impact on the achievement of both children and adults.

**OFSTED– Inspecting Extended Schools Jan 2012**





empowering them both as they develop. This opportunity can dispel preconceived ideas students have about staff and build trust. Professor John McBeath, Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of Cambridge writes: "In a climate where learning takes precedence over teaching and pressures of discipline are replaced, the rewards of collegiality and new modes of relating to teachers and other staff are formed."

## Government's Vision for Schools

**Securing the wellbeing and health of young people** – Aside from the obvious health benefits, Tai Chi has many proven health benefits. Dr Paul Lam's Tai Chi for Health programmes cater for people with diabetes, arthritis, back pain, and osteoporosis. Tai Chi has been proven to improve asthma, combat stress and depression.

**Safeguarding the Young and vulnerable** – Tai Chi has been found to be good for mental health and self-esteem.

**Achieving World Class Standards in Education** – Tai Chi research has found improvements in attitude to learning and literacy, improving behaviour and help students with dyspraxia and dyslexia.

**Closing the gap in educational achievement for children from disadvantaged backgrounds** – Tai Chi research has shown to improve performance in examinations and has been used in the United States to engage disaffected students.

**Keeping young people on the path to success** – With the feeling of success that Tai Chi brings students can begin to realise that anything is possible.

## Healthy Schools Programme and Every Child Matters

The ethos of both of these still exist in schools today with the cross-over of both the description of the five outcomes of Every Child Matters are covered:

**Be healthy** – Healthy exercise that is particular good in relation to asthma, diabetes, joint pains (which can all be evident in childhood obesity). It is also good in dealing with stress and depression.

**Stay safe** – Developing calmness and anger management

**Enjoy and achieve** – The students are not in competition with anyone else and they can see the progress they make through the effort and focus they put in. Tai Chi has small stages of success in mastering particular moves which is motivational and can build self-esteem.

**Making a positive contribution** – The students could be encouraged to share with others what they have learnt

**Achieve economic well-being** – With improved concentration and focus comes improvement in attainment.



Department  
for Education

"Education is, for me, about freeing people from imposed constraints, liberating them from the accidents of birth, allowing them to acquire the knowledge, skills and qualifications which allow them to choose the satisfying job they have always aspired to and the rich inner life which brings true fulfilment."

Michael Gove MP,  
Secretary of State for  
Education, in a speech  
given to the National  
Conference of Directors of  
Children's and Adult  
Services.

4<sup>th</sup> November 2010



Healthy Schools



## Introduction: Why do Tai Chi with Pupils?

Tai Chi is a Chinese ancient martial art which can be used as a method for relaxation, means of improving health or simply a gentle form of exercise. It uses gentle movements that have been adapted to make it accessible for anyone regardless of fitness or age. Specifically, in a school setting; it can improve the ability of the students' attitude to learning, improve pupil development, address discipline or poor behaviour issues, help pupils to relax and become calm, help pupils develop concentration and focus. This has been linked to improving exam performance, address learning difficulties, helping students with dyspraxia, dyslexia, ADHD and ADD, and also improve literacy, self-confidence, self-esteem and health.

Different styles of Tai Chi are being taught in schools across the country with results proving the above. Not only does it have physical benefits, it also has a positive effect on a child's mental abilities. Tai Chi is a non-competitive activity with each individual aiming to meet their own target, challenging themselves to work towards and meet a goal. Professor Shona Bass, Professor of Population Health, Deakin University, Australia says: "The other aspect of Tai Chi is the intrinsic reward they get from seeing themselves progress and develop, and it is with themselves rather than in competition with other children."

Tai Chi can therefore raise a child's aspirations and belief that they can succeed if they try. This fits in with the Kent Trust Web's 5As and The Principles Behind Co-Curricular Activities. These are:

1. If you can raise a young person's **Aspirations**;
2. It will improve their **Attitude** to learning
3. Which will enhance their **Attendance**;
4. Thus improving their **Attainment** and
5. Life-long **Achievement**.

Unlike other 'teacher driven' learning activities, Tai Chi connects both teacher and pupil in a learning activity which is a mutual self-challenge where they can see their own progression. John MacBeath, Professor of Educational Leadership at Cambridge University writes: "...what pupils achieve in schools is powerfully mediated by engagement and attitude. When there are opportunities to develop new interests, to become good at something, to connect socially with peers and adults, self-efficacy, hope and aspirations are enhanced. Hope, neuroscientists tell us, fires neurons in the brain. With a renewed self-belief, we begin to realise some of our hidden potential. We become more intelligent and the myths of "not being good at" or "too hard subjects" are exposed by a sense of the possible."

**"The major benefits of extended services were the gains children, young people and adults made in their self-confidence and the development of more positive attitudes to learning and to what they might achieve."**

**OFSTED, Extended services in schools and children's centres, July 2006**

**"Study Support is accordingly an inclusive term, embracing activities with many names and guises. Its purpose is to improve young people's motivation, build their self-esteem and help them to become more effective learners. Above all its aim is to raise attainment." The Study Support Framework, DFES, 2006**

**\*Extended Services were previously known as Study Support.**





## **Evidence of Impact upon School Pupils**

### **Putting Students in the Mood to Learn**

In the Daily Mail's article "How Tai Chi can help children to concentrate", Sarah Harris writes about Broad Town School near Swindon and the improvements that Tai Chi has brought following a "damning inspection report". She writes: "Headteacher Sue Ellis backed the novel way of trying to boost the Church of England school when she was brought in after it was put under 'special measures' and ordered to improve. She said Tai Chi was one of the reasons why the school has been able to haul itself out of the Government programme two terms ahead of schedule.

Tai Chi calms the children down and gets everyone in the right frame of mind,' said Mrs Ellis. 'It is one of the reasons we have been able to come out of special measures. The first lessons of the morning are literacy and numeracy, and the pupils are completely focused on that after Tai Chi. They are learning more and our results now meet Government standards."

### **Improvements in Literacy**

Helen Ward in the TES magazine writes about how Tai Chi is being used to boost literacy among primary school children following the research by Dr Martin McPhillips of Queen's University Belfast.

Dr Martin McPhillips, a Psychology Lecturer, has observed that children don't grow out of certain primary reflexes (such as the way a baby grasps a finger placed in its palm) and these can have a detrimental effect on their development and learning. They have now devised Tai Chi like exercises to help to "switch off" the reflexes, aiding children's ability to concentrate. Dr McPhillips says that precise movements have an affect on the motor system of the brain. Reading uses part of the motor system when reading, so curing any problems with this can boost overall abilities.

Dr Martin McPhillips estimates that among the children in the bottom 10 per cent for reading, 60-70 per cent may have so-called "persistent primary reflexes".

A study authored by Dr McPhillips compared two groups of children who experienced difficulties with reading. Those who carried out the exercises made 15.3 months' progress in reading over a year, compared with six months' progress made by similar children who did not perform the routines.

"If you sit down to write, your head looks towards your hand to see what you're writing," said Dr McPhillips. "A child who has the typical response of a newborn has to make more effort to control their pencil. The mechanical control of the hand is taking up so much cognitive space that there is not much left over for thinking about what they are writing."

### **Improvement in Concentration and Behaviour**

New York's Department for Education has acknowledged the improvement in concentration and behaviour through Tai Chi. It has been documented by Dr Carole B Reiss, responsible for Health Education Curriculum Development, that following a session of Tai Chi (and other passive rather than vigorous exercise), children have gone on to show considerable improvements in their exam performance and at a basic classroom level improved their behaviour and concentration.

### **Improvement in Behaviour of ADHD Students**

A study at the University of Miami, Touch Research Institute showed that adolescents with ADHD showed improved behaviour, less daydreaming and hyperactivity after 10 sessions of Tai Chi. Tai Chi is a wonderful adjunct therapy for treating ADD because it augments many of the mood management techniques recommended for ADD sufferers. and an enhanced ability to focus, concentrate, and perform tasks.



## **Calming Aggressive Students**

Studies have shown that Tai Chi helps middle school students who exhibit violence or aggressive behaviour become calmer. Drs. Edward M. Hallowell, M.D., and John J. Ratey, M.D., experts on the management of ADD wrote: "Exercise is positively one of the best treatments for ADD. It helps work off excess energy and aggression in a positive way, it allows for noise-reduction within the mind, it stimulates the hormonal and neurochemical systems in a most therapeutic way, and it soothes and calms the body."

## **Engaging Minority Groups**

Diane McMillan in *Closing the Achievement Gap for African American Males* talks about how Jefferson County Public Schools of Kentucky established a programme that keeps African American males engaged in school, especially during the transitioning from elementary school to middle school. This uses a model that provides academic enrichment, direct instruction in reading and math, and a full component of Tai Chi. McMillan quotes Baba Serakali, a programme mentor and Tai Chi instructor in the programme: "Tai Chi teaches the students to control their body which teaches them discipline in the classroom. This translates into better academic performance, as students modify their behaviour to become more focused on their school work."

## **Benefits for Dyspraxia**

Tai Chi is an activity that develops co-ordination. The British Dyspraxia society provide advice on their website for PE lessons acknowledging Tai Chi as being an activity that is easier to manage for someone with dyspraxia: "Difficulties with motor co-ordination often affect children's participation in physical activities both at school and at home. Frequent failures mean that children may not be motivated to join in or to try new activities and their physical difficulties can make them feel isolated from their friends. If children continue to avoid physical games and activities, over time this will affect their overall level of fitness and well-being. With support and guidance however, children with dyspraxia/DCD can be encouraged to participate in physical activities which will help them to be healthy throughout their lives. Activities that don't require much hand-eye coordination may be easier to manage. They include yoga, swimming, hiking, running, cycling, skating, aerobics and Tai Chi."

## **Dyslexia and Effect on Learning Difficulties**

Tai Chi has significant effect on an individual's co-ordination. Co-ordination has been identified in research as a factor in learning difficulties and dyslexia.

Kathleen Vail's in the *American School Board Journal* (March, 2006)<sup>18</sup> discusses the research connecting physical activity and fitness to academic success. She states, "There is absolutely an association with grades and fitness levels...math in particular" (p. 31). Furthermore, she makes reference to Brain Gym International as "exercises that focus, relax, and stimulate the brain" (p. 32.) Within the article, author Carla Hannford compares Brain Gym movements with those of Tai Chi, that "twisting and crossing arms or legs...encourage the brain's right and left hemispheres to work together" (p. 32). She claims a significant change in students' behaviour as calmer and focused.

Perceptual Motor Training suggests that learning problems are the result of the inability to incorporate visual, motor, and auditory skills, and uses physical activities which require coordination of these sensory skills in order to improve cognitive functions (Hyatt, 2007)

The BBC's article "Dyslexia linked to brain abnormality" Reports that Psychologists from Sheffield University have carried out research that links Dyslexia to reduced activity in a primitive part of the brain that controls movement, co-ordination and balance.



## **Exercise and Combating Effects caused by Obesity**

Angela Youngman writes in her article Innovative teaching of PE and sport writes about childhood obesity and the resulting health issues:

“Childhood obesity is recognised as a major problem: there has been a 40% increase in childhood obesity within the UK over the past 10 years. Now over 60% of two- to 15-year-old children are overweight. Children spend a lot of their time in cars, on computers or watching television. Doctors have warned that overweight children are increasingly suffering from health problems usually associated with middle age, such as joint pains and diabetes. Not surprisingly, schools are being urged to tackle the issue by teaching nutrition and encouraging more physical exercise. The thinking is that if children develop an interest in sport and physical activity during their school years, such interests are likely to remain with them for the rest of their lives.”

Tai Chi has been shown to combat diabetes, arthritis, osteoporosis and other health complaints and its practice is supported by relevant organisations in Australia, USA, Singapore, Korea, and the United Kingdom.

## **Improvement of Asthma through Tai- Chi**

In a report conducted by the Department of Paediatrics, Hsin Chu General Hospital, Hsin Chu, Taiwan (Chang YF, Yang YH, Chen CC, Chiang BL) <sup>22</sup> they found that children with asthma improved with Tai Chi. The research showed improvements in children who participated in 40-minute Tai Chi classes, held three times a week for twelve weeks. Comparisons between asthmatic children who did and did not practice Tai Chi have found that the latter have fewer symptoms.

## **Stress and Depression**

Tai Chi has been found to reduce the effects of stress and depression in individuals.

“Tai Chi is an effective stress reducer, a viable solution for relaxation and for combating anxiety and depression (see Sandlund & Norlander, 2000, for a review). Many adolescents (like adults) experience inordinate amounts of stress due to school, family, job and personal relationships (Amen & Reglin, 1992, 1994; Anda, 2000, Greenberg, 2002). Stress not only causes psychosomatic diseases (Aro, Hanninen, & Paronen, 1989; Greenberg, 2002; Piccinelli & Simon, 1997), but also accounts for learning deficits (Jacobs & Nadel, 1985; Gazzaniga, 1988). Madders (1976) argued that school children should be taught relaxation, and Le and Khor (1982) recommended that exercises like Tai Chi be introduced into the physical education curriculum.” <sup>23</sup>

In Wall’s study he comments: “Statements the boys and girls made in the process suggested that they experienced well-being, calmness, relaxation, improved sleep, less reactivity, increased self-care, self-awareness, and a sense of interconnection or interdependence with nature....This project infers that Tai Chi and mindfulness-based stress reduction may be transformational tools that can be used in educational programmes appropriate for middle school-aged children.”



## Tai Chi for Health Organisation

The “Tai Chi for Kidz” Programme we teach has been designed by Dr Paul Lam and his Tai Chi For Health organisation. You do not need to be a child to benefit.

The Tai Chi for Health Organisation ([www.taichiforhealthinstitute.org/](http://www.taichiforhealthinstitute.org/)) has designed a series of health programmes. These have been designed by a team of Tai Chi and Medical experts with Dr Lam, and have been used by the Arthritis Foundation of USA, Singapore and Australia, Arthritis Care of UK, Diabetes Australia, and Osteoporosis Australia.

The instructors’ training workshops are well recognised around the world, and accredited by Arthritis Foundation of USA; Australian fitness industry; American Council of Exercise; American Tai Chi Association; Florida and many other physiotherapist associations, HK rehabilitation society and the Korean Rheumatology Health Professional’s Society.

## The “Tai Chi for Kidz” Programme

“Tai Chi For Kidz” ([www.taichiforhealthinstitute.org/tai\\_chi\\_for\\_kids/](http://www.taichiforhealthinstitute.org/tai_chi_for_kids/)) is not a new phenomenon but a proven form of gentle exercise which has taken and adapted Tai Chi moves to make it accessible for children. The poses of tai-chi involve movements that require thought as well as concentration. Tai Chi For Kidz has been specifically designed to develop concentration, discipline, and focus in order to improve attention levels in children.

The programme has been designed to have fun elements, to be delivered in small blocks and to be something different. Its activities have been designed to capture and keep the children’s attention, incorporating imagery and games to make it engaging.

Tai Chi also breaks down barriers and encourages pupils who may dislike PE, are culturally exempt from mainstream sports, who feel physically unable to take part in more immediately demanding sports or who shy away from team games.

This broad accessibility means that every child undertaking a course can derive great benefits in self-esteem, self-belief and self- confidence. Tai Chi and its related exercises can be very empowering to children as well as providing all the other recognised benefits.

**“Dr Lam believes this ancient art can improve the general health of our children in many areas; weight loss, co-ordination, flexibility, emotional balance and ability to focus.”**

**Taken from  
[www.motherinc.com.au](http://www.motherinc.com.au)**





## Summary of Benefits of Tai Chi For Kidz programme

### For the Pupil:

- Fun elements in small block make it engaging
- Improve ability to focus
- Helps concentration and understanding respect
- Taught “Cannot do it wrong only different”
- Own goals and achievement
- Individual activity, non-competitive
- Improve self-confidence & self-esteem because easy to learn, quick achievements
- Coping mechanisms for stress release, reduce anxiety, mood swings

### For the Teacher:

- Improve pupil attainment and attendance through self-belief can achieve
- Calm pupils return to class and a calm environment helps behaviour
- Chance to relax helps behaviour, discipline and focus
- Attitude to learning with own achievable goals, self-confidence and motivated
- Non-competitive exercise
- Mutual respect encouraged
- Techniques learnt to control their anxiety, learn to relax and focus
- Encouraging pupils who do not like PE to exercise

### For the School:

- Accessible for all standing & seated, no disability barrier, certificate of achievement & option of pre and post report with findings to be discussed at initial meeting
- Focus on enjoying exercise, health benefits: breathing, posture, muscle strength, flexibility, balance & co-ordination, control
- Improved parental engagement with school and child's learning
- Research shows developing focus and concentration helps with exam results
- Provides supporting evidence for OFSTED showing alternative method accessible for everyone, that tackles behaviour, social, emotional issues and providing pupils with confidence in physical exercise which is non-competitive.  
SEF for OFSTED including:
  - Quality of teaching and learning
  - Pupil Attainment and Achievement
  - Quality of Leadership and management
  - Behaviour and Safety
  - PE National Curriculum – “physically confident in a way which supports their health and fitness “  
“movement patterns”



## **Packages**

The price will depend upon location, length & number of sessions, participant numbers, frequency of sessions

### **For the Pupil**

- Individual Lessons (15/20/30 minutes dependent on age, to maintain focus, but negotiable)
- 4 or 5 week block – this includes the lessons, certificate of achievement
- Weekend or evening workshop – 1 or 2 hour session with certificate of achievement
- Whole or half day session as part of an event- transition day, Chinese New Year, School initiative e.g project on Asia

### **For the Teacher**

- CPD session – 1 or 2 hour sessions, focus on relaxation, improving health, balance & co-ordination or a focus on techniques to use in the classroom.

### **For the School**

- Lessons for both pupils or teachers can be booked
- Events – Transition day/Well Being Day/Chinese New Year...
- Holiday sessions or courses are negotiable on length of time and cost. We aim to work with the school and their needs.

We are happy to speak to OFSTED or any other concern about the methods the school has employed to target.



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29: Studies by David Bendall:

Study finds Tai Chi effective at reducing the impact of tension headaches.

March 19, 2009 by David Bendall .

Researchers at the University of California Los Angeles studied examined the benefits of Tai Chi for individuals suffering from tension headaches. 47 individuals were randomly assigned to 15-weeks of Tai Chi or to a wait-list control group. The Tai Chi group showed significant improvements compared to the control group in headache status, pain, energy/fatigue, social

Tai Chi improves psychological well-being

March 5, 2011 by David Bendall .

Researchers at Tufts Medical Center in Boston performed a systematic review and meta-analysis of the effects of Tai Chi on psychological well-being. They reviewed the effects of Tai Chi on stress, anxiety, depression, mood disturbance and self-esteem. Forty studies with involving 3817 subjects met the researcher's inclusion criteria.

Tai Chi improves sleep quality.

November 22, 2009 by David Bendall

A study of 118 older adults at the Oregon Research Institute found that Tai Chi improved sleep quality more than a low-impact exercise control. Participates were randomly assigned to the Tai Chi or control group.

30: [www.taichiforhealthinstitute.org/](http://www.taichiforhealthinstitute.org/)

31: [www.motherinc.com.au](http://www.motherinc.com.au)