Hillcrest Primary School

Playground and Fitness Track.

An *eat well be active* -Primary Schools project school

[http://youtu.be/7KtTVOJvBr8](http://youtu.be/7KtTVOJvBr8)

In late 2006, we decided to apply for the “Investing in Schools grant” from the Federal government to upgrade our playground.

Hillcrest Primary School was built in 1953 and the existing playground equipment on the oval was a bit boring, unsafe and had not been replaced since the early 1960’s. As well as replacing the playground, we thought that a running track around the oval with fitness stations placed alongside would help our students (and our staff and parents and carers!) become fitter and healthier.

Lissa Hutter, our school counsellor wrote the grant application in August 2006 and we found out we were successful in April of 2007. Then the hard work began. Lots of different playground companies were asked to provide us with quotes and diagrams which were submitted with the grant application.

Students, parents, community members and the school's Governing Council were also consulted to find out what they would like however it was students who had the final say as they were going to use the equipment most of all. By early June, we selected Pately Moor to supply and install the playground and fitness equipment and Safety Surfacing to lay the rubber track.

**What we got for our money?**

We applied for and won $149,000 which funded:

- a half kilometre running track that meanders around our lovely oval
- 16 fitness stations that can be used for stretching, endurance, warm ups and muscle strength
- A Web climbing net
- And a massive playground with lots of fun activities.

The track went down first. Unfortunately there were some delays with the equipment and we did not have this installed until the last day of the 2007 school year – but at least our Year 7’s of that year (who had played such a large part in selecting the equipment) got one day's play on it!

**The benefits**

The equipment had helped us to get extra exercise and to enjoy problem based play. This has meant that lunch and recess times are less boring and there has been a big drop (nearly 75%) in the number of behaviour incidents in the yard and an increase in the student’s overall wellbeing.

The equipment we selected for the fitness track includes a variety of stations that cover flexibility, balance, coordination, endurance and strength.

This has proven to be very helpful for a number of students who have some difficulty with coordination and also for the hearing impaired students in the Oral-Aural Unit who sometimes experience issues with balance.
Look in the Case studies video section to view the children in action
http://youtu.be/7KtTVOJvBr8

We have also found that there have not only been health benefits for our students but also for our school and local community. Soccer clubs, local families, the elderly, people from the Community Hall, children in Out of School Hours care, are all regular visitors to our track of an evening and many families use it on the weekend. We are glad to share our facilities with our community and are pleased that they help us look after it.

For more information contact:
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eat well be active - Primary Schools Project, a joint SA Health and Department for Education and Child Development project from 2008-2013.