

Pupils chipper over fish oil aid

Pupils at a Fylde school have helped pioneer a new way of ensuring GCSE exam success.

More than 200 Year 11 students at Fleetwood Sports College, Broadway in the port, have racked up the school's highest ever recorded exam results after taking Omega 3 fish oil supplements as part of a pilot study in the lead-up to their GCSEs last summer.

The experiment discovered that, by taking one Omega 3 capsule a day for 12 weeks, pupils achieved a 79 per cent improvement in reading and spelling and that the biggest improvements were amongst girls.

Deputy head teacher, Amanda Howarth, decided to introduce the trial after reading about a similar experiment which proved that Omega 3 helped improve behavior among primary school youngsters.

Ms Howarth said: "I am not saying Omega 3 is responsible for all of the success but it did play a role."

Since its discovery in the 1970s, Omega 3 - a fatty acid found in oily fish such as mackerel - has been widely believed to be instrumental in stimulating brain activity and promoting mental development as well as helping the body fight disease.

A number of studies carried out in recent years have also proved that the essential nutrient is a vital tool in improving educational skills, such as concentration and memory capacity, and tackling behavioral difficulties.

Despite this, nutritionists claim that less than half of the UK's schoolchildren regularly eat Omega 3 rich foods in their diet - a national trend mimicked by those at Fleetwood Sports College.

Now the child learning expert who helped analyze the results of the experiment - Dr Amanda Kirby, of the Discovery Centre, Cardiff - says further study is needed into the subject.

Dr Kirby said: "The results of this trial have also highlighted the need for further investigation into the role of Omega 3 in an educational context looking at academic measures."

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