

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 JUNE 2011

REVIEW OF HEALTHY EATING AMONG CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN MEDWAY

UPDATE REPORT

Report from: Rose Collinson, Director of Children and Adults
Dr Alison Barnett, Director of Public Health

Author: Teri Reynolds, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator

Summary

This report requires Members to consider the update report of the Committee's in-depth review of healthy eating among children and young people in Medway, which took place last year. The review resulted in a number of recommendations, which were approved by the Cabinet on 28 September 2010.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The recommendations of the review are consistent with the Council's Children and Young People's Plan and fall within existing budgets. The recommendations also support the 'be healthy' outcome from the Every Child Matters agenda.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee have a responsibility to scrutinise services and policies relating to children and young people throughout Medway. As part of its role it receives performance data on key indicators. Two of these relate to the percentage of children in reception year and year 6 who are obese, which has been a stubborn target and was a concern for the Committee. The Committee therefore agreed to set up a task group to look at healthy eating amongst all ages of children and young people.
- 2.2 The attached document at Appendix 1 sets out the actions following the review and its recommendations, which were agreed by the Cabinet on 28 September 2010.
- 2.3 The full review document can be viewed at the following link:
<http://www.medway.gov.uk/pdf/Healthy%20eating%20among%20children%20and%20young%20people.pdf>

- 2.4 Reducing obesity among children and young people which requires multi-agency partnership work and is a key priority going forward in Medway's Children and Young People's Plan, based on the Every Child Matters needs analysis. It underpins the key wellbeing and readiness for learning priorities. The review into healthy eating made an important contribution to this area of work and detailed at Appendix 1 is the progress made against each of the review's recommendations. Since the review took place, the national context has changed and these changes are set out in the following sections of the report. Achieving a measurable impact into the health and wellbeing of children and young people through this review and other interventions will take time but this report does demonstrate progress to date and some strategic next steps.

3. Update on the Healthy Schools Programme

- 3.1 Support for the National Healthy Schools Standard is no longer available on a national basis. It has been replaced by an electronic toolkit, available on the DfE website. No dedicated support for schools and families is in place, although schools may purchase modular support from the Health for Learning team. The removal of schools' duty to promote pupil well-being has had further implications for the teaching of healthy eating and other health-related topics. The Health for Learning team is designing and co-ordinating Healthy Schools support material for schools.

4. Update on Public Health Directorate, Healthy Weight Programme

- 4.1 The Supporting Healthy Weight Team commissioned a Family Food Consultation to better understand the eating habits and food behaviours of Medway families with children up to the age of 18, particularly in relation to:
- Family interpretation of general healthy eating messages
 - Practical application of healthy eating within the family
 - Sources accessed for healthy eating advice and information
 - Future healthy eating needs
- A core set of questions was asked of all participants with additional targeted questions for families with school-aged children and children aged 0-5 years.
- 4.2 Venues used during the Consultation included local markets, high streets, shopping centres, supermarkets, leisure centres, community centres and the hospital. Further workshops and focus groups were held in schools, colleges, and children's centres with key partners promoting the Consultation to their communities.
- 4.3 The insight gained from the Consultation will be used to develop sustainable Community Food Projects that meet the needs of local communities. The consultation results will be shared through a workshop event planned for July 2011.
- 4.4 The Healthy Weight Team is leading a cross-organisational initiative to increase breastfeeding rates across Medway, which have been much lower when compared to comparator primary care trusts. Partners include Medway Foundation Trust, Medway Community Healthcare, NHS Medway, Medway Council and local third sector organisations.

- 4.5 Breastfeeding is a key indicator of child health and wellbeing, which contributes to reducing infant mortality, reducing health inequalities and obesity. The Medway breastfeeding peer support network launched in November 2010, uses local peer volunteers to support mothers wanting to breast-feed. Peers supporters are community-based volunteers who undergo an accredited training programme for 2 hours for 10 weeks. On successful completion of training, peer supporters are able to lead support groups and work on a 1-2-1 basis with mothers. By September 2011, 30 peer supporters will have completed the training programme and be working to support breastfeeding mothers across Medway. Peer supporters will also be working at Medway Maritime Hospital supporting mothers on the post-natal maternity ward from June 2011.
- 4.6 Breastfeeding rates in Medway have started to increase as a result of the cross-organisational strategy.

Breastfeeding Initiation (2010-11)

Area	Outturn 2009-10 (%)	Q1 (%)	Q2 (%)	Q3 (%)
Medway	67.3	63.1	68.5	70.4
England	72.7	73.4	73.7	73.5
PCT Comparator: New and growing town	71.6	70.2	71.0	71.5

Breastfeeding Continuation at 6-8 weeks (2010-11)

Area	Q1 (%)	Q2 (%)	Q3 (%)
Medway	34.2	35.1	40.6
England	44.4	46.2	44.9
PCT Comparator: New and growing town	Insufficient data submitted across area to enable comparison		

- 4.7 National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) results for 2009/10 were released in December 2010.

Reception Year (2009-10)

Area	Healthy Weight (%)	Overweight (%)	Obese (%)	% Measured
Medway	76.0	13.2	10.5	89.4
England	76.0	13.3	9.8	92.9
South East Coast SHA	78.0	13.0	8.4	92.9

Year 6 (2009-10)

Area	Healthy Weight (%)	Overweight (%)	Obese (%)	% Measured
Medway	65.0	13.9	20.2	89.5
England	65.4	14.6	18.7	89.9
South East Coast SHA	67.8	14.5	16.7	90.2

4.8 Parents and carers are routinely sent their child's measurement results with information on how to access services, programmes and activities to support the achievement of a healthy weight. Dedicated staff within the Healthy Weight team are also available to speak to worried parents and carers who request additional support.

4.9 'Mind, Exercise, Nutrition... Do it!' (MEND) is the prevention and treatment programme for overweight and obese children and their families. Families on the programme learn about healthy eating, how to be more active and behaviour change techniques to help them. Families are encouraged to set goals and receive rewards for achieving them. MEND 5-7 will be added to the MEND portfolio from June 2011.

5. Director's comments

Directors of Children and Adults and Public Health

5.1 Helping children and young people maintain a healthy weight is an important key to their well being, learning and life-chances. Healthy weight programmes are available to children and young people of all ages. The Healthy Eating review highlighted some good practice in and across Medway but also identified gaps and areas for development and made some important recommendations which have been followed up.

5.2 Strategically the next steps are to: -

- use the findings from the Family Food Consultation to ensure targeted support, practical help and to inform priorities for commissioning through the Children's and Young People's Plan
- ensure evidenced based practice at SureStart Children's Centres, Schools and other informal educational programmes is effectively tracked and disseminated
- ensure longitudinal tracking of the impact of the Medway breast feeding programme on outcomes for children

6. Implications for Looked After Children

6.1 The outcomes and recommendations of this review help support looked after children and all children in Medway, and their families or carers, to have access to advice and support to follow a healthy and nutritionally balanced diet.

7. Risk management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Capacity and resources of partners following funding cuts and reorganisations The new Government has stated it wishes the National Healthy Schools Standard (NHSS) to become "schools led".	<p>Many of the recommendations and actions by the healthy weight and health for learning teams require partnership working. This requires careful management within a context of reduced resourcing.</p> <p>Schools have lost their dedicated NHSS support from the Local Authority and central government, notably the Departments of Health and Education</p> <p>There is no further grant funding to allow Medway Council to offer suitable support and resources to schools.</p> <p>Schools will therefore need to determine their own policies and practice which will lead to a fragmentation of approach to all aspects of physical and emotional well-being across Medway.</p>	<p>Develop sustainable interventions and forward planning.</p> <p>The healthy weight team are using a community development approach with partners to embed healthy eating principles and interventions into community projects and existing services.</p> <p>The health for learning team are designing and co-ordinating Healthy Schools work, being arranged via a Service Level Agreement in which schools can purchase bespoke support, including classroom delivery, training for staff and parents, access to resources and administrative services.</p> <p>Survey evidence indicated that most schools will wish to carry on with their work on health and well-being. If all schools currently holding Healthy School status purchase the full Service Level Agreement the income generated will enable the health for learning team to be almost entirely self-funded.</p>

8. Financial and legal implications

- 8.1 The complementary meal campaign has been funded from the school meals grant, which has now finished. Currently no funding is available for further schemes.
- 8.2 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. The review document refers to the use of Section 106 Agreements. An agreement under s106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 can only impose requirements that are relevant to planning, necessary to make a proposed development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the proposed development, fairly and reasonably related in kind and scale to the proposed development and reasonable in all other respects. The Council has a Developer's Contribution Guide, which it has adopted as a supplementary

planning document, which sets out when contributions will be sought using s106 Agreements.

- 8.3 Current activity is funded from the Public Health directorate's 'Healthy Weight' budget, circa £200,000, of which approximately 90% is funded by the PCT and other external contributions. With effect from April 2013 the Government is proposing to transfer PCT local health improvement functions to local authorities with ring fenced funding for health improvement provided to the Director of Public Health who will be accountable to the Secretary of State for Health.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 The Committee is asked to agree to consider the progress made against the actions.

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Background papers:

- **National Child Measurement Programme 2009/10 School Year Headline Results**, NHS Information Centre (December 2010)
http://www.ic.nhs.uk/webfiles/publications/003_Health_Lifestyles/ncmp/NCMP_2009-10_report.pdf
- **Department of Health Statistical Release Breastfeeding Initiation and Prevalence at 6-8 weeks Q3 2010/11**, published online 16 February 2011 at
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Statistics/StatisticalWorkAreas/Statisticalpublichealth/DH_124340

HEALTHY EATING REVIEW – ACTION PLAN COMMENTARY

RECOMMENDATION		ACTION BY	STATUS/COMMENT
1	The Contract Manager for school catering explore further options to provide low income families with information about free school meals and ask the Benefits Team if it is possible to include leaflets with this information when mailing out to claimants and for schools (headteachers in particular) to further encourage, where possible, families who qualify to take up the free schools meals.	Sue Edmed	Information is circulated and available via the schools, libraries, Gun Wharf reception, Customer First, Direct from the benefits team. Medway Council Website. Help is offered to complete the forms.
2	School meal caterers are encouraged to promote school meals such as providing tasting opportunities to encourage children to try food without wastage, promoting school meals in Medway town centres and attending parent evenings.	Sue Edmed	<p>Promotions are encouraged at new parent afternoons and evenings. School Council meetings, practical sessions for the whole school subject to arrangements made between the school and the caterers.</p> <p>Change4Life resources have been given to the caterers (Compass) to give out to parents and carers at events.</p> <p>Chartwells the School Food Contractor in partnership with Medway Council's Contracts team have been delivering a range of food based workshops. The workshops are delivered by the companies Executive Chefs aimed at encouraging children to try a range of healthy foods and for the parents cooking workshops aimed at demonstrating key cooking skills. Each parent is given the ingredients for the workshop to take home and try the dishes presented. Each of the workshops have been well attended by parents at all of the participating schools; Wayfield, Luton Infant & Junior and Saxon Way.</p> <p>One workshop is the Funky Food Day – a celebration of international fruits. This event gives pupils and parents the chance to taste and embrace cultural diversity, using staple fruits from around the world, our customers have a chance to smell, taste, feel and peel some of the worlds most exotic fruit</p>

RECOMMENDATION		ACTION BY	STATUS/COMMENT
			<p>creating impact memories linked to the right lifestyle choices. The last of the workshops Fun, Fitness and Food are being held in July where the Chefs will again be engaging children and parents.</p> <p>The local press has been invited to all the events. Attached at Appendix 2 is a news article regarding a 'ready, steady, cook' event at Wayfield Community Primary School.</p> <p>A complementary meals pilot also took place in Luton Infant School, Luton Junior School, Saxon Way Primary School and Wayfield Primary School which provided students from these schools, which are from some of Medway's most deprived areas free school meals for one academic year (September 2010 to July 2011 inclusive). Attached at Appendix 3 is a letter from the Headteacher of Wayfield Community Primary School which demonstrates the positive impact this scheme had on students' behaviour and attitude on healthy lifestyles.</p>
3	When new schools are developed in Medway the buildings are designed and built, where possible, to include dining room facilities to provide a relaxed environment for students to enjoy their lunchtimes.	Chris McKenzie Cathy Arnold	<p>This is an ongoing action but progress to date has been as follows: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Napier Primary - project to start later this year to improve the kitchen and dining spaces and encourage more take-up ▪ Strood Academy - now on site and includes state of the art kitchen and dining facilities to promote increased take-up of healthy school meals
4	Schools are developed to include food technology facilities which can also be used for extra curricular activities after school for students and the whole community to help teach young people and families how to cook easy, healthy meals on a budget and that when new schools are built they are designed to encourage activities outside P.E. lessons and provide space for storing bicycles.	Chris McKenzie Cathy Arnold	<p>This is an ongoing action but progress to date has been as follows: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maths School - project on site to provide new food technology spaces to improve the teaching facilities for this subject ▪ Chatham Grammar Boys - project completed to provide improved food technology teaching spaces ▪ Howard School - project on site to provide new food technology spaces ▪ Woodlands School - improvements completed to Family Room to provide cooking facilities to support healthy eating courses with families ▪ Greenacre School – project completed to provide new food technology facility, including teaching area and practical cooking spaces for approx 26 students to support healthy eating courses with families. The facility is attached to the Feast Centre which delivers catering courses; NVQ and CIEH (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health).

RECOMMENDATION		ACTION BY	STATUS/COMMENT
5	The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services write to the Government to request that they maintain the national Healthy Schools programme, explaining its benefits.	Zoe Barkham Teri Reynolds	The letter was sent and the response to it is attached at Appendix 4.
6	Post completion of current school reorganisations, all schools are encouraged to obtain healthy schools status, if the initiative is continued.	Zoe Barkham	Support for the National Healthy Schools Standard is no longer available on a national basis therefore this hasn't been able to be progressed. Details of what the Council's Health for Learning Team is offering schools instead is within the main report.
7	The Youth Service explore with Medway Youth Parliament (MYP) the possibility of 'healthy eating' being the subject of a future MYP conference.	Dave Dowie	Conference theme for 2011 is young people's futures. Youth Parliament has a 'Be Healthy' sub group that is currently working with Public Health as mystery shoppers for 'C' Card and working in partnership with Tobacco control
8	The Council investigate the possibility of developing a Supplementary Planning Document restricting fast food outlets from operating near schools, parks and leisure centres or at areas that are already highly concentrated with fast food outlets.	Brian McCutcheon Dave Harris	This will be programmed for the second half of 2011/2012.
9	Schools are encouraged to enforce stay on site policies at lunchtimes to help ensure young people are only buying food in school, which is restricted to nutritional standards.	Rose Collinson Zoe Barkham	In the next termly Governor's letter there will be a section on this issue, encouraging schools to adopt a stay on site policy.
10	The Council investigate the opportunity of adding a requirement for contributions to allotment provision, where appropriate, to the Developer Contribution Guide Supplementary Planning Document.	Brian McCutcheon Dave Harris	This issue is being incorporated in current review of guide.
11	Public Health Directorate work with Health Visitors and the Family Nurse Partnership to ensure they are referring	Nicky Ling	Breastfeeding Peer Supporters network established in Nov 2010. Approximately 30 peer supporters will have been trained by June 2011.

RECOMMENDATION		ACTION BY	STATUS/COMMENT
	and signposting to the breastfeeding peer support programme and Sure Start Centres which often provide sessions and support relating to breast feeding, weaning and healthy eating for young children.		<p>Each Children's Centre has been allocated a linked peer supporter who is available to run groups and drop-ins for breastfeeding mothers. Peer supporters are also present on the post-natal ward at the hospital.</p> <p>The SHW Infant Feeding Project Officer regularly attends the team meetings of Health Visitors, the Family Nurse Partnership and Midwifery teams to update on the Peer Support Network and share information.</p> <p>The SHW Infant Feeding Coordinator runs a joint clinic with the Coordinator from the hospital for mothers experiencing problems with feeding. All health professionals and Children's Centre staff are able to refer mothers to this clinic.</p> <p>The SHW team are also currently designing a training package on 'Introducing Solid Foods' for Children's Centres and the wider Early Years workforce.</p>
12	The Public Health Directorate be encourage to develop the allotment in Gillingham using the best practice identified at the Windmill Community Allotment Project in Thanet and that it be used, along with the produce grown there, for community cookery programmes and learning to grow your own.	Nicky Ling	<p>The allotment has been operating since February 2010. It is open for use by community groups and other partner agencies. Regular sessions are run as part of the Workplace Health programme and MEND.</p> <p>The SHW team are currently investigating the possibility of working with Master Gardeners. These are volunteers who work with community groups to increase their knowledge of allotments and growing your own food.</p>
13	The Public Health Directorate work with early years providers who are delivering healthy eating related sessions to children and their families, to ensure they are delivering the correct nutritional information.	Nicky Ling Mark Holmes	<p>There is ongoing dialogue between the SHW team and the Early Years team to ensure correct nutritional information and advice is provided.</p> <p>Training on feeding under 5s was delivered by the Caroline Walker Trust to all Children's Centres and other Early Years providers in Oct/Nov 2010. All healthy eating delivery by Children's Centres complies with this training.</p> <p>The SHW team are currently designing a training package on 'Introducing Solid Foods' for Children's Centres and the wider Early Years workforce. Members of the SHW team are attending regional DH 'Train the Trainer' training to deliver such packages.</p>

RECOMMENDATION		ACTION BY	STATUS/COMMENT
			<p>The SHW team will be submitting training programmes for inclusion in Children's Centres Training Directory, which is sent to all Early Years providers.</p> <p>The SHW team led the development of a generic food policy, which was launched in Sept 2010. This enables all Children's Centres to develop their own healthy eating food policy. An audit of policies is planned for the end of 2011/12.</p> <p>The SHW team runs an 'Obesity in Pregnancy and Early Years' group attended by representatives from Children's Centres. Each month a different topic is covered to increase practitioner awareness and often includes healthy eating.</p> <p>National Child Measurement Programme data for year R is analysed by Children's Centre catchment area and shared with managers.</p>
14	The Healthy Schools Team and the Public Health Directorate develop a more co-ordinated approach to working together with schools.	Nicky Ling Zoe Barkham	<p>SHW provide Healthy Schools team with nutritional support and resources on request.</p> <p>The Head of Health Improvement has met with the Assistant Director, Commissioning and Strategy to discuss closer working across the Children and Adults and the Public Health directorates.</p>
15	The Public Health Directorate and Social Regeneration work together to help provide families with information and support on how to eat healthily, particularly on a low budget. Some of this work should focus specifically to help young people to make informed healthy choices.	Nicky Ling Clem Smith Peter Vogel	<p>The SHW team attended community workshops as part of the Community Food consultations and were able to provide residents with information and advice on healthy eating and other issues relating to healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In addition, the Social Regeneration team are preparing Community Information Centres in the following areas: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Twydall ▪ White Road Estate ▪ Brook Lines ▪ All Saints ▪ Strood South <p>These will be large information boards and the SHW team are preparing information for these.</p>

RECOMMENDATION		ACTION BY	STATUS/COMMENT
16	The Youth Service work with the Public Health Directorate and in particular, ensure youth workers access the Healthy Weight Team for their expertise in ensuring they are providing accurate, coherent advice on healthy eating and healthy lifestyles.	Dave Dowie Nicky Ling	SHW Coordinators have started a programme of visits to Youth Centres to determine facilities available and to offer support with gaps in provision. Youth Centres visited so far are Strood and Woodlands.
17	The Public Health Directorate work with GPs in particular, but also leisure centres and schools, to be more proactive in either referring or signposting to public health services, such as MEND.	Nicky Ling	New MEND Coordinator has GP visits to raise awareness of programmes included in work plan. SHW team supported Health Day at Strood Leisure Centre. All schools in Medway with eligible children in Reception and year 6 support the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). Feedback letters to parents containing results of NCMP have resulted in increased referrals into MEND.
18	All Medway's leisure centres work closely with Public Health, with particular focus on the following issues:- (a) to make better choices on the healthy options in vending machines (learning from ways in which this has been done in schools and hospitals) and in the cafes; (b) to offer and advertise free water; (c) to ensure leisure centres are able to sign-post children, young people and their families to public health services for advice on nutrition and healthy lifestyles; (d) to provide, where possible, space for Public Health to operate in leisure centres to give advice and guidance.	Gary Ingram Nicky Ling Paul Boyd	Meetings have been held with the Public Health Project Manager supporting healthy weight to review the vending machine options and café menus and following these Leisure has negotiated with our suppliers that we can use 10 slots in the snack vending machines for healthier options. The café menus have been revised to provide healthier options such as fruit bags, mash potato, salads and meal options such as lasagne (new menu attached) Leisure has volunteered to be a pilot for the new healthy eating award scheme being developed by the Public Health team Free water is available at all leisure facilities and all provide space for the public health team to operate or advertise their projects The above work demonstrates encouraging small steps towards best practice through continuous improvement although this work is ongoing. Free swimming and leisure facilities are promoted and available to all families attending MEND portfolio

RECOMMENDATION		ACTION BY	STATUS/COMMENT
19	The Public Health Directorate are invited to participate in developing relevant and appropriate pages on the mixit website (http://www.medway.gov.uk/mixitindex.htm) to provide young people with further information and sign posting about healthy eating and healthy lifestyles.	Nicky Ling Dave Dowie	The SHW team have attended Medway Youth Service Management Team meeting to discuss information provided by Youth Service related to Healthy Living and eating to ensure that messages are in synergy with colleagues in Health. The Youth Service is also working with the SHW team to explore future possibilities for development of information on healthy eating and healthy lifestyles on Mixitonline.

Abbreviations:

DH Department of Health

HS Healthy Schools

HImp Head of Health Improvement

SHW Supporting Healthy Weight Team – part of the Public Health Directorate, Health Improvement Division



er too many chefs: Chartwells' supremo Darren Tinkler with the red and green teams and their winning dishes

Red team wins school cooking competition

Mini master chefs dish up winning meals in 15 minutes

Report by Nicola Jordan

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READY, steady... COOK.

The popular TV show came to Wayfield Community Primary School in Chatham with teachers and some mini master chefs being put on the spot to dish up gourmet meals in just 15 minutes.

With the clock ticking, the red and green kitchen battled against each other in the school hall which was transformed into a studio kitchen.

The red team led by teacher Miss Cath Moon created chicken in an Italian ragu sauce with pasta to win the vote of most of the school's 164 pupils.

But Mr Gideon Sappor's green side, tasked with concocting a vegetable balti, came a close second.

Head teacher Valerie Rose said the atmosphere in the studio audience was tense as they clapped their way through the final countdown.

Mrs Rose said: "We have always encouraged healthy eating and have won a healthy schools award.

"There was a real buzz – not just among the children but staff too."

The school in Wayfield Road introduced a self-service canteen for children to help themselves to cold food.

Mrs Rose added: "Although we serve up puddings, by far the favourite option is fruit."

The cook-off was organised by Medway Council and Chartwells, the company which provides school meals throughout Medway.

A similar session was held in the afternoon for parents who were given a bag of ingredients to try out their

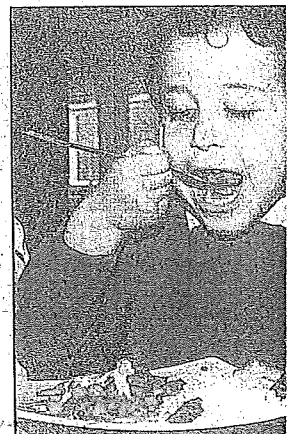
culinary skills at home. Chartwell's chef Darren Tinkler, said: "It is surprisingly easy to be a creative and healthy cook, even at a young age.

"Children love learning cookery skills and the live audience of the competition makes the whole experience more exciting.

"The children should leave with some hands-on cookery skills as well as practical knowledge about healthy eating and nutrition – as well as having had a lot of fun."

Medway Council's portfolio holder for children's services, Councillor Les Wicks added: "It's important children can learn about the importance of a good, healthy diet from a young age.

"By joining in with the cooking themselves, they can enjoy themselves and are encouraged to take an interest in what they eat."



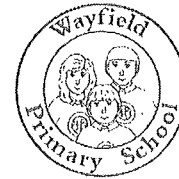
Grub's up: This lad gets stuck Wayfield Primary

AN ACCIDENT CAN

Wayfield Children's Centre

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Headteacher Mrs V. Rose



Impact of Complimentary Meals Pilot - Term 1

I have compared data with the same time last year.

We have had no afternoon exclusions this term. Last year we had a number of exclusions (approx 6) during Sept and Oct, Most of these were as a result of lunchtime incidents.

Term 1 of the 09/10 academic year had a very high number of incidents at lunchtime which resulted in teachers missing their lunch break as they were being called to deal with behaviour. We have made changes to our behaviour policy and to the ways we manage lunchtimes. However, there has been an even greater reduction in lunchtime incidents since Sept 2010. Teachers report that they have been able to have a lunchbreak and on only 1 or 2 occasions has a teacher been called to the playground.

We use a "think sheet" system when children's behaviour is unacceptable. There has been a massive reduction in the use of these sheets in the afternoon. Previously, most think sheets were given out during or after lunchtime. This year, only 4 sheets have been given out and these were all to the same child, who has a specific behavioural problem.

The most secure evidence of impact was I believe, in our recent OFSTED.

"A vital outcome has been the considerable improvement in pupils' behaviour, which is now good, and the success in helping some individual pupils to raise their rates of attendance significantly. Other good outcomes are related to pupils' feelings of safety and well-being, and their attitudes towards adopting healthy lifestyles."

Previously we received satisfactory for both behaviour and healthy lifestyles. We also received a grading of good for care, guidance and support as opposed to satisfactory in previous OFSTED reports. This was in part due to the lunchtime arrangements, including the complimentary meals.

Valerie Rose
1/11/10

Medway
Serving You

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Gun Wharf
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CHATHAM
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Our ref: 2010/0090641
18 November 2010

Dear Councillor Wicks,

Thank you for your letter, addressed to the Secretary of State, about the National Healthy Schools Programme. As I am sure you will appreciate, the Secretary of State receives a vast number of correspondence every week, which he cannot respond to personally. I have therefore, on this occasion, been asked to reply.

I am pleased to hear that the Healthy Schools Programme has had a positive impact on the schools in Medway council and it is the Government's hope that this success will continue. At the end of July, Ministers in the Department of Health and the Department for Education confirmed that the voluntary 'Healthy Schools' initiative would continue within the context of the Coalition Government's priorities and spending plans.

Over the next few months, the programme will move towards being 'school-led', and its online tools and delivery processes will be simplified and redesigned for schools to use independently.

From April 2011, participation in 'Healthy Schools' will be locally determined according to local needs and priorities to support health improvement and the adoption of healthier behaviours in children and young people. Schools will retain the flexibility to access locally-based professional support.

In the interim, I can reassure you that 'Healthy Schools' is still an active project as the Coalition Government remains strongly committed to improving children and young people's health.

I hope my response goes some way to alleviating your concerns and thank you for taking the time to write on this important matter.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Reguera
Public Communications Unit