



Brent Childhood Obesity Programme 2010/2011

Menu of services available to Brent schools
to support children to be a healthy weight



Childhood obesity



Tackling childhood obesity is a priority in Brent. 24.1 per cent of reception pupils and 37.2 per cent of Year 6 pupils were identified as being overweight or obese through the National Child Measurement Programme 2008/2009. This is higher than both the London and national averages.

A borough-wide obesity strategy is currently being written in Brent which aims to address the rising levels of obesity in both children and adults. NHS Brent and Brent Council are also committed to the national Healthy Schools programme. This requires schools to work with their partners towards achieving agreed local priorities for children's health and wellbeing.

This leaflet has been developed to outline the support and expertise available to schools from the Brent Childhood Obesity Programme team.

We can support a 'whole school' approach to healthy eating by:

- providing guidance documents to help with the writing of whole school food policies, including packed lunches
- reviewing existing food policies to ensure they accurately reflect your school's food vision and promote healthy weight
- auditing current food provision, including lunches, breakfast, after-school food and vending machines, to inform your school's policy
- making sure issues around school food are addressed through a School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG). We can assist you to set up a SNAG and will attend meetings where possible
- putting schools in touch with organisations that may offer funding to encourage healthy eating.

Food in schools support

Providing healthy food across the school day is important in preventing childhood obesity. We can support schools to:

Increase school meal uptake

It is both a national and a Brent target to increase the number of pupils eating a healthy school meal at lunch time. We can provide you with suggestions and guidance on how to increase your school's paid and free meal uptake.

Improve packed lunches

Recent research into packed lunches has shown only one per cent met the nutritional standards required for school meals, while many are high in fat, sugar and salt. We can work with your school to improve the nutritional content of packed lunches brought in by pupils through a variety of initiatives.

Improve school kitchens and dining rooms

Pupil surveys have shown that shorter queuing times, reduced noise levels and an attractive dining room are important if pupils are to choose to have a school meal. We can suggest changes, small or large, to help improve the dining experience at your school.

If you are purchasing any equipment, heavy or light, or are having your kitchen refurbished, the School Meals Support Officer may be able to assist with this, offering guidance and support.

Shorter queues, reduced noise levels and an attractive dining room are important





Training for staff

Provide nutritious meals that comply with legislation

We can offer:

INSET training

These are delivered by childhood nutrition and obesity experts and focus on:

- raising awareness of childhood obesity levels in Brent
- identifying children who are overweight or obese and putting them in touch with the appropriate help
- sharing resources available to schools for use in the curriculum to improve food education.

Training for lunchtime staff

A School Midday Supervisory Assistant (SMSA) training workshop is delivered each term at the Centre for Staff Development. We are happy to deliver this training at your school, or to a group of neighbouring schools if there are ten or more staff attending. The training covers:

- basic nutrition and healthy eating for children
- food safety and good hygiene practice in the dining room
- how to encourage pupils to choose and eat a balanced meal at lunchtime
- resources for promoting healthy eating at school.

Brent Chef's Forum

This was established in 2007 for school chefs, particularly those from schools who run their catering in-house. It provides:

- support to provide nutritious meals that comply with legislation
- advice on purchasing ingredients and equipment
- information on training opportunities and emerging trends
- a networking opportunity for Brent's school chefs.

Your school chef can also receive recognition for their good work through the Brent School Chef of the Year competition





Healthy cooking in all Brent schools

Cooking is an important skill that enables people to choose and eat a healthy, balanced diet. We can support schools by:

- making food education curriculum links, suggesting lesson plans, worksheets and practical activity ideas through INSET training or a meeting with relevant staff members
- offering guidance on setting up school cooking clubs and ideas on food preparation using limited equipment and resources
- putting existing cooking clubs in touch with available resources and training opportunities.

Secondary schools

Food technology is due become a compulsory part of the curriculum in all secondary schools in September 2011 (this may change with the recent changes in Government). Support currently available to Brent secondary schools includes:

- Licence to Cook training is available to all secondary schools nationally, to ensure teachers have the knowledge and skills to offer all pupils the chance to cook
- Brent Food Tech Forum is open to food technology staff from all Brent secondary schools. The forum provides a network for teachers to share information with other schools, and keeps staff informed about resources and training opportunities.

Enabling pupils to choose a healthy, balanced diet





Working with parents

Parents are key to helping children to be healthy. Research shows that only 11 per cent of parents with children who are overweight or obese recognise the problem. We are working on raising awareness with parents about healthy weight.

Parent coffee mornings and parent evenings

We are happy to run parent coffee mornings and attend parent evenings to advise and provide information on topics such as:

- healthy eating and childhood nutrition
- healthy packed lunches and drinks for children
- promoting healthy weight, through Change4Life
- how to identify if your child is overweight and where to get help
- fussy eating.

Cooking workshops for parents

We are offering families, in partnership with the Kids Cookery School, healthy, practical cookery workshops where children and parents cook together. These one-hour workshops:

- focus on nutritious, fun, cost-effective recipes
- are free for families to attend
- are suitable for children of all ages, accompanied by a parent or carer
- are being run on selected Saturdays at community venues and children's centres across the borough.

Parents are
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Mind, Exercise, Nutrition, Do It!



The Mind, Exercise, Nutrition, Do It (MEND) programme is a ten-week healthy lifestyle programme for overweight and obese children aged seven to ten and their families. It aims to get children fit and healthy through practical nutrition sessions, fun exercise and positive behaviour change. Parents must attend all sessions with the children.

Two MEND programmes are delivered each school term and one over the summer holiday. Programmes are run in the evening at schools or community venues. Children can be referred by school staff, the school nurse or their GP. Families can also join by contacting:

The local MEND team

email: mend@brent.gov.uk

phone: 020 8937 3055

The national MEND team

website: www.mendprogramme.org

call for free: 0800 230 0263

Additional targeted support

Schools can refer families to the following people if they are concerned about a child's weight:

- the school nurse
- the family GP
- paediatric dietitian (referral through the school nurse or GP).

Nutrition,
fun exercise
and positive
behaviour change



To enquire about any of the services outlined in this booklet, please use the contact details below.



Marimba Cameron, Child Health Support Officer
020 8937 3055 or marimba.cameron@brent.gov.uk



Karen Wood, School Meals Support Officer
020 8937 3418 or karen.wood@brent.gov.uk



Kate Crane, Healthy Schools Co-ordinator
020 8937 3351 or kate.crane@brent.gov.uk

Please note: The services and support offered by the Brent Childhood Obesity Programme will be delivered on a first-come first-served basis. We aim to respond to all requests in a timely manner.

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