



**Healthy Schools**  
Healthier Living & Learning

# Introduction

to the National Healthy Schools Programme

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The National Healthy Schools Programme is an exciting long-term initiative which is making a significant difference to the health and achievement of children and young people. The National Healthy Schools Programme promotes the links between health, behaviour and achievement; it is about creating healthy and happy children and young people, who do better in learning and in life.

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# Overview

Children and young people in Healthy Schools tell us that they feel healthier, happier and safer. Their parents/carers tell us that they feel more involved in their child's health and learning and often feel better themselves. Schools tell us that the National Healthy Schools Programme has brought sustained improvement in behaviour, standards of work and school management.

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The impact of our programme is based on a Whole School Approach to physical and emotional health and wellbeing focused on four core themes:

## **Personal, Social & Health Education<sup>HS</sup>**

## **Healthy Eating<sup>HS</sup>**

## **Physical Activity<sup>HS</sup>**

## **Emotional Health & WellBeing<sup>HS</sup>**

The Whole School Approach involves working with children, young people, parents/carers, staff and governors to provide a solid foundation from which developments and improvement are embedded in a systematic way. These processes contribute to the physical and emotional development of all members of the school community.

# Our vision

We want all children and young people to be healthy and achieve at school and in life. We believe that by providing opportunities at school for enhancing physical and emotional health and wellbeing, we will improve long term health, reduce health inequalities, increase social inclusion and raise achievement for all.

# Our aims

To deliver real benefits for children and young people, specifically:

- to support children and young people in developing healthy behaviours
- to help reduce health inequalities
- to help promote social inclusion
- to help raise the achievement of children and young people.

# Our targets

The Government has set a target that **all schools** will be participating in the National Healthy Schools Programme by 2009 and that 75 percent of schools will have achieved National Healthy School Status.

# Our key messages

The National Healthy Schools Programme ensures a range of outcomes in respect of improvement in health and reduced health inequalities; greater social inclusion; raised achievement of children and young people; and increased working between health promotion providers and education establishments.

**“A healthy lifestyle will help you perform better in school and in life”**

**“A healthy school is an inclusive and successful school”**

**“A healthy school has more effective liaison with parents and carers”**

**“Children and young people in healthy schools report a range of positive behaviours such as diminished fear of bullying and a reduced likelihood of using illegal drugs”**



**“A healthy school has more effective liaison between home and school, and school and external support agencies”**

**“Healthy schools are making improvements at a rate faster than schools nationally, in a number of ways, including the quality of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), management of behaviour and support of children and young people”**

**“Schools can use the NHSP Whole School Approach to bring about sustained school improvement”**

**“A healthy school is one where children and young people achieve the outcomes within the Every Child Matters framework”**

# The National Healthy Schools Programme & Every Child Matters

Every Child Matters: Change for Children is a comprehensive approach to the wellbeing of children and young people from birth to age 19. It places national outcomes for children and young people firmly at the centre of all policies and approaches involving children's services.

The five outcomes for children and young people are:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve through learning
- make a positive contribution to society
- achieve economic wellbeing.

Every Child Matters expects organisations providing services to children and young people, including schools, to work together in more integrated and effective ways. It also encourages children and young people to have more say about issues that affect them as individuals and collectively.

There are direct links between the criteria for the National Healthy School Status and the five Every Child Matters outcomes. Schools achieving National Healthy School Status can demonstrate how they are working to the five outcomes.

# The Whole School Approach

Central to the National Healthy Schools Programme is the Whole School Approach. Achieving National Healthy School Status recognises that being healthy is not just about children and young people, it is about the whole school community. It's not just what happens in the curriculum, it's about the entire school day. Through adopting this approach schools ensure full engagement with the school community and secure sustainable improvements. For more information, please see the [Whole School Approach guidance booklet](#).

## **There are 10 elements to the Whole School Approach:**

- leadership, management and managing change
- policy development
- curriculum planning and resources, including working with outside agencies
- learning and teaching
- school culture and environment
- giving children and young people a voice
- support services for children and young people
- staff professional development needs, health and welfare
- partnerships with parents/carers and local communities
- assessing, recording and reporting children and young people's achievement.

# The four core themes

The National Healthy Schools Programme has four core themes:

- Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), including SRE and drugs education
- Healthy Eating
- Physical Activity
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing, including bullying.

The four core themes relate to both the school curriculum and the emotional and physical learning environment in school. Each theme includes a number of criteria that schools need to fulfil in order to achieve National Healthy School Status. Although each theme covers a different area, they are all delivered using the Whole School Approach so the basic requirements are the same.

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# Personal, Social & Health Education<sup>HS</sup>

<p><b>1.1</b> Uses the PSHE framework to deliver a planned programme of PSHE, in line with relevant DCSF/ QCA guidance</p>	<p><b>1.5</b> Has up-to-date policies in place – developed through wide consultation, implemented, monitored and evaluated for impact - covering Sex and Relationship Education, Drug Education and Incidents, Safeguarding, and Confidentiality</p>	<p><b>1.9</b> Uses local data and information to inform activities and support important national priorities such as reducing teenage pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and drug/ alcohol misuse</p>
<p><b>1.2</b> Monitors and evaluates PSHE provision to ensure the quality of teaching and learning</p>	<p><b>1.6</b> Has an implemented Non-Smoking Policy, Summer 2007</p>	<p><b>1.10</b> Ensures provision of appropriate PSHE professional development opportunities for staff – such as the Certification Programmes for teachers and nurses offered by DH/DCSF</p>
<p><b>1.3</b> Assesses children and young people’s progress and achievement in line with QCA guidance</p>	<p><b>1.7</b> Involves professionals from appropriate external agencies to create specialist teams to support PSHE delivery and to improve skills and knowledge, such as a school nurse, sexual health outreach workers and Drug Education Advisers</p>	<p><b>1.11</b> Has mechanisms in place to ensure all children and young people’s views are reflected in curriculum planning, teaching and learning and the whole school environment, including those with special educational needs and specific health conditions, as well as disaffected children and young people, young carers and teenage parents</p>
<p><b>1.4</b> Has a named member of staff responsible for PSHE provision with status, training and appropriate Senior Management support within the school</p>	<p><b>1.8</b> Has arrangements in place to refer children and young people to specialist services who can give professional advice on matters such as contraception, sexual health and drugs</p>	

# Healthy Eating<sup>HS</sup>

**2.1** Has an identified member of the senior management team to oversee all aspects of food in schools

**2.5** Has a welcoming eating environment that encourages the positive social interaction of children and young people (see Food in Schools guidance)

**2.9** Ensures that children and young people have opportunities to learn about different types of food in the context of a balanced diet (using the Balance of Good Health), and how to plan, budget, prepare and cook meals, understanding the need to avoid the consumption of foods high in salt, sugar and fat and increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables

**2.2** Ensures provision of training in practical food education for staff, including diet, nutrition, food safety and hygiene

**2.6** Ensures that breakfast club, tuck shop, vending machine and after-school food service (where available in school) meets or exceeds current DCSF school food standards

**2.10** Has easy access to free, clean and palatable drinking water, using the Food in Schools guidance

**2.3** Has a whole school Food Policy – developed through wide consultation, implemented, monitored and evaluated for impact

**2.7** Has a school lunch service that meets or exceeds current DCSF standards for school lunches

**2.11** Consults children and young people about food choices throughout the school day using school councils, Healthy School task groups or other representative bodies of children and young people.

**2.4** Involves children, young people and parents/carers in guiding food policy and practice within the school, enables them to contribute to healthy eating and acts on their feedback

**2.8** Monitors children and young people's menus and food choices to inform policy development and provision

# Physical Activity<sup>HS</sup>

<p><b>3.1</b> Provides clear leadership and management to develop and monitor its Physical Activity Policy</p>	<p><b>3.5</b> Consults with children and young people about the Physical Activity opportunities offered by the school, identifies barriers to participation and seeks to remove them</p>	<p><b>3.9</b> Ensures that there is appropriate training provided for those involved in providing physical activities</p>
<p><b>3.2</b> Has a whole school Physical Activity Policy – developed through wide consultation, implemented, monitored and evaluated for impact</p>	<p><b>3.6</b> Involves School Sport Co-ordinators (where available) and other community resources in provision of activities</p>	<p><b>3.10</b> Encourages all staff to undertake Physical Activity</p>
<p><b>3.3</b> Ensures a minimum 2 hours of structured Physical Activity each week to all of its children and young people in or outside the school curriculum</p>	<p><b>3.7</b> Encourages children, young people, parents/carers and staff to walk or cycle to school under safer conditions, utilising the School Travel Plan</p>	
<p><b>3.4</b> Provides opportunities for all children and young people to participate in a broad range of extra-curricular activities that promote Physical Activity</p>	<p><b>3.8</b> Gives parents/carers the opportunity to be involved in the planning and delivery of Physical Activity opportunities and helps them to understand the benefits of Physical Activity for themselves and their children</p>	

# Emotional Health & WellBeing<sup>HS</sup>

**4.1** Identifies vulnerable individuals and groups and establishes appropriate strategies to support them and their families

**4.5** Has explicit values underpinning positive emotional health which are reflected in practice and work to combat stigma and discrimination

**4.9** Has a clear Confidentiality Policy

**4.2** Provides clear leadership to create and manage a positive environment which enhances emotional health and wellbeing in school – including the management of the Behaviour and Rewards Policies

**4.6** Has a clear policy on bullying, which is owned, understood and implemented by the whole school community

**4.3** Has clear, planned curriculum opportunities for children and young people to understand and explore feelings using appropriate learning and teaching styles

**4.7** Provides appropriate professional training for those in a pastoral role

**4.4** Has a confidential pastoral support system in place for children, young people and staff to access advice – especially at times of bereavement and other major life changes – and that this system actively works to combat stigma and discrimination

**4.8** Provides opportunities for children and young people to participate in school activities and responsibilities to build their confidence and self-esteem

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# Quality Assurance Framework

**National Healthy School Status is achieved within a rigorous Quality Assurance Framework. All schools achieving National Healthy School Status must have met national criteria using a Whole School Approach across the four core themes.**

**The purpose of the NHSP Quality Assurance Framework is to:**

- minimise bureaucracy
- maximise consistency
- increase participation
- maintain rigour.

All schools undergo our Quality Assurance process.

Schools identify needs and necessary actions through an audit. Local Programmes support schools as appropriate to the needs of the school. Schools Self-Validate when they are sure the criteria are met and minimum evidence is in place, with outcomes recorded.

A sample of schools is chosen to be moderated by a local Quality Assurance Group which consists of the Local Programme Co-ordinators and partners from health and education.

# How we are organised

## **The National Healthy Schools Programme is a joint Department of Health and Department for Children, Schools and Families initiative.**

Our vision for the National Healthy Schools Programme is that it is dynamic, flexible and transparent and has a role in bringing together different contributions towards educational achievement and health improvement. We support professionals working in health and education to provide better health opportunities for children and young people.

Local Programmes, grounded in local education and health partnerships, are key to supporting schools in the process of achieving National Healthy School Status. Each Local Authority in England has a Local Healthy Schools Programme. Their role is largely two-fold: that of offering professional support to schools; and carrying out its work within the Quality Assurance process.

The Local Programmes are in nine regional teams each with a Regional Co-ordinator who works closely with the Regional Government Office. The National Programme is supported by a central team which works at national level with colleagues from the Department of Health and Department for Children, Schools and Families as well as a range of partners.

### **For further information...**

please contact your Local Programme Co-ordinator. Their contact details and more information about the National Healthy Schools Programme can be found on our website [www.healthyschools.gov.uk](http://www.healthyschools.gov.uk)

For further copies of this publication please  
contact us on telephone number: 0845 601 7848



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