

# Tower Hamlets

## Child Healthy Weight Action Plan 2023-2024



# Summary



- Child healthy weight continues to be an important area of focus for the council.
- In Tower Hamlets, 1 in 5 children in Reception are overweight or very overweight. This more than doubles in Year 6, where over 2 in 5 children are overweight/very overweight.
- Children who are above a healthy weight are at greater risk of poor health, both during childhood and as adults, compared to those who are a healthy weight.
- Some groups of children are more likely to be an unhealthy weight than others. These inequalities are unfair and we are working to change this.
- There are many reasons for children being an unhealthy weight: the environment where children grow up plays a big role.
- To support children to be a healthy weight, we have worked with others to develop a Child Healthy Weight Action Plan, which sets out the borough-wide actions we will take.





TOWER HAMLETS

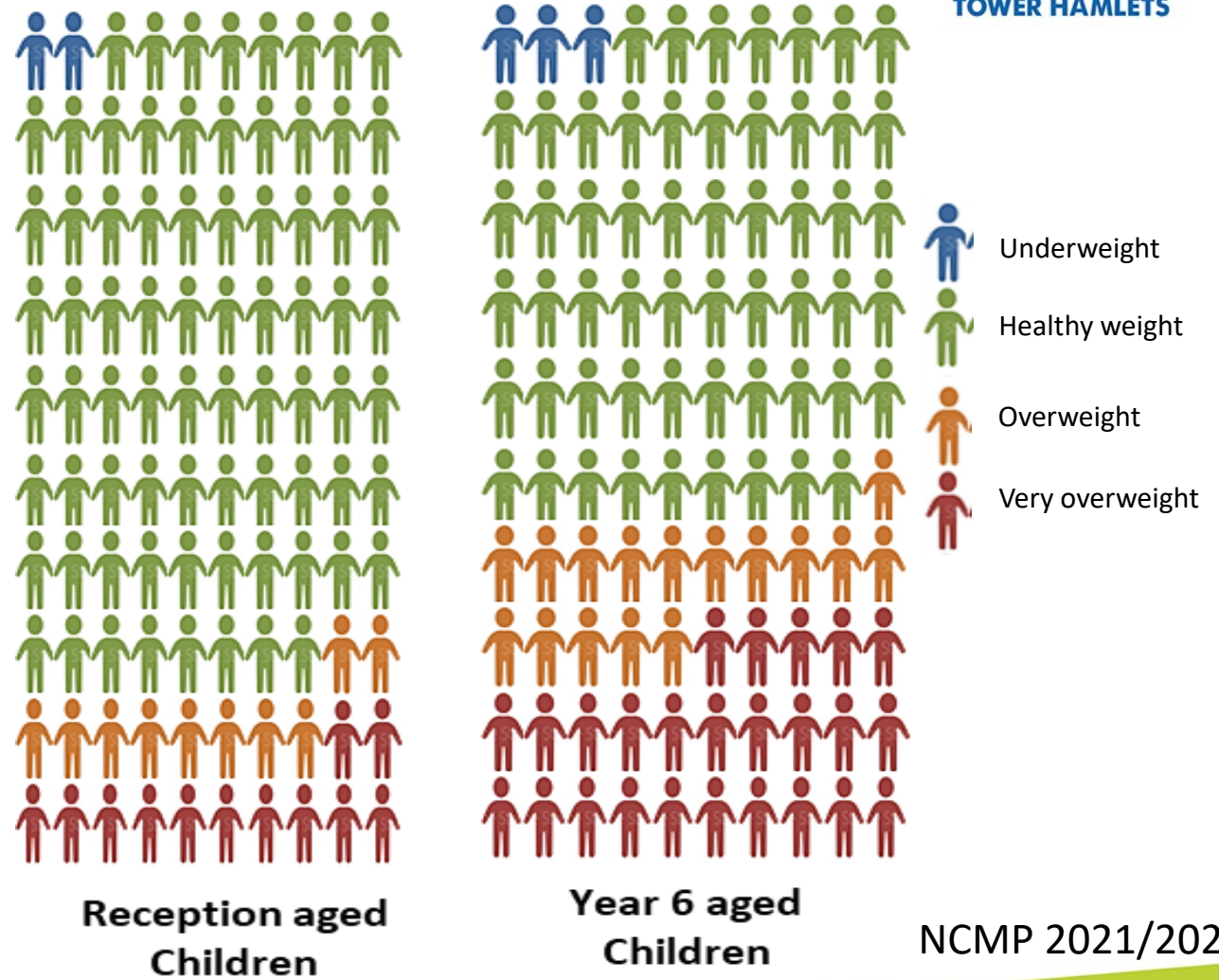
# Background: Child healthy weight levels in Tower Hamlets



# Child healthy weight levels in Tower Hamlets

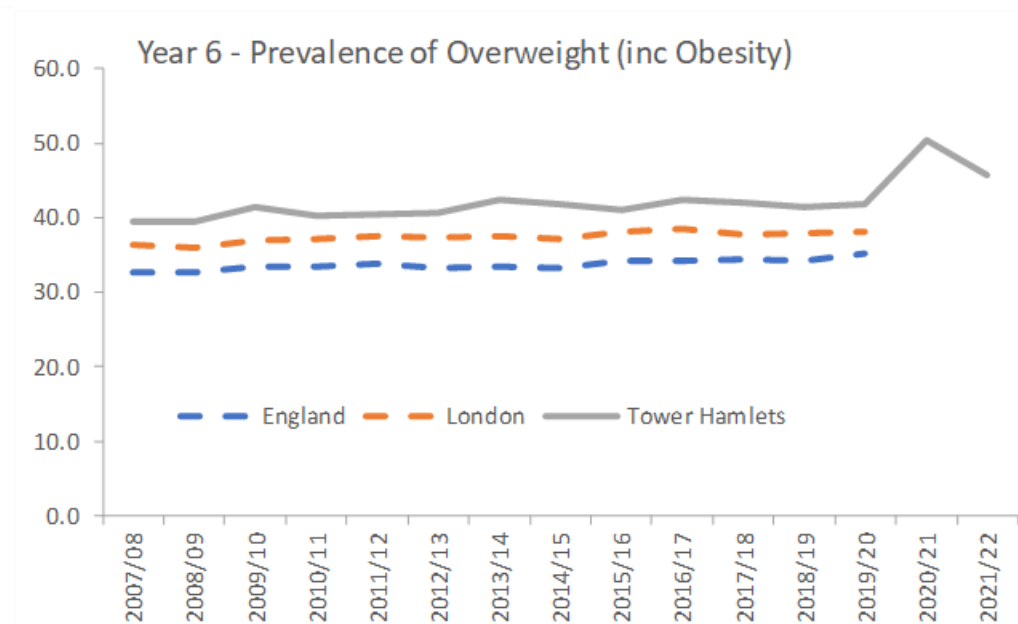
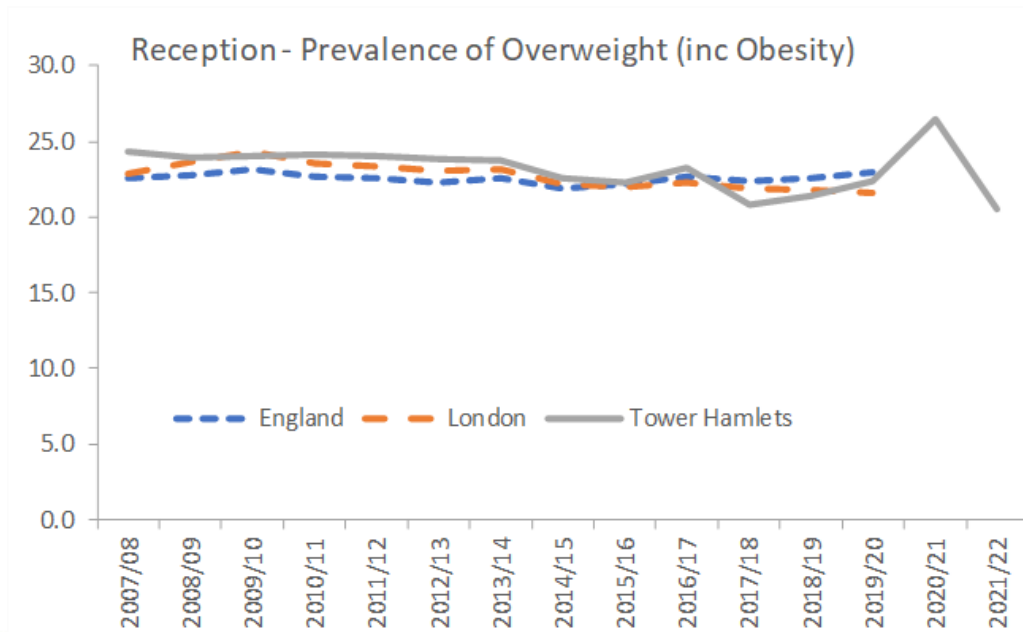


- 1 in 5 children in Reception have excess weight, meaning they are overweight or very overweight.
- This more than doubles by Year 6, where over 2 in 5 children have excess weight.



# Overweight pattern over time

- In Reception, the percentage of children with excess weight had been slowly decreasing up to 2017/18. This sharply increased during the Covid-19 pandemic but has now fallen again.
- In Year 6, the percentage of children with excess weight had been fairly stable over time. This also sharply increased during the pandemic. Although numbers have fallen, they are still higher than before the pandemic.



NCMP 2021/2022





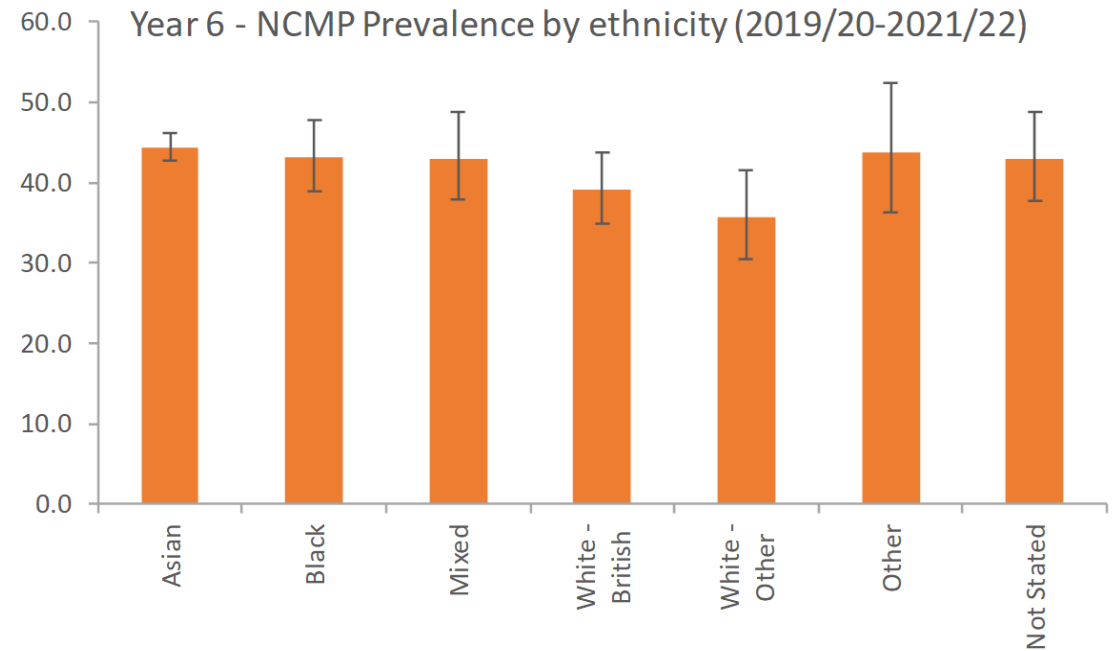
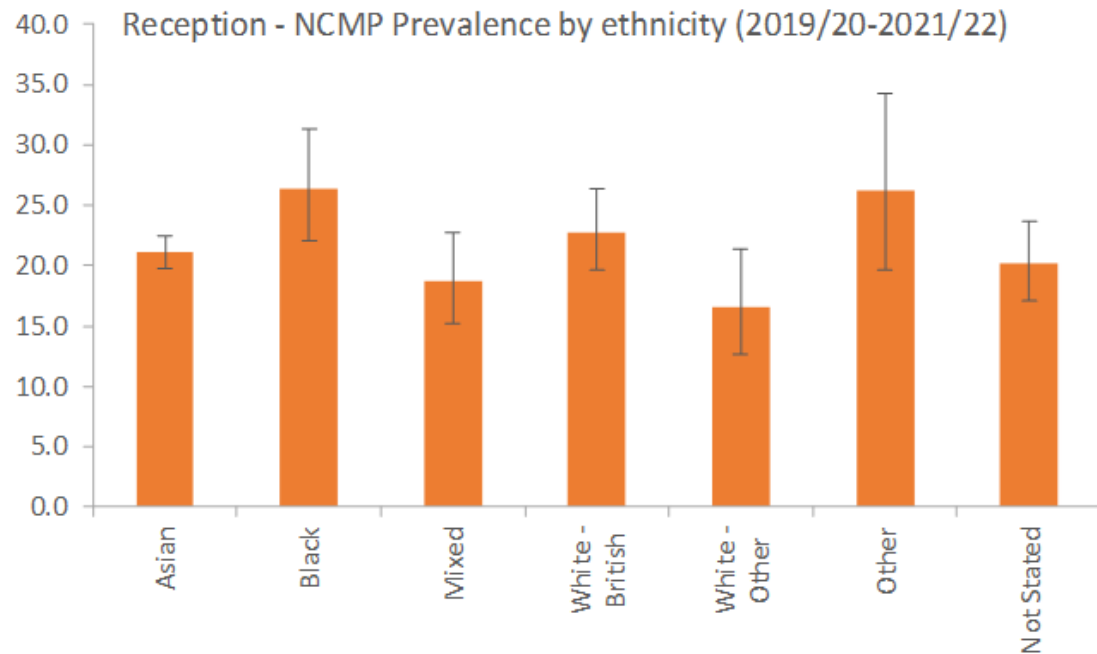
# Child healthy weight ethnicity inequalities 2019/20 – 2021/22



In Reception, excess weight levels were highest among children from a Black ethnic background (26.4%) and those recorded as 'Other' (26.2%). Excess weight levels were lowest in children from a White Other (16.1%) ethnic background.

In Year 6, children from Asian (44.3%), Black (43.2%) and Other ethnic backgrounds (43.8%) had the highest levels of excess weight. Children from a White Other background had the lowest (39.8%).

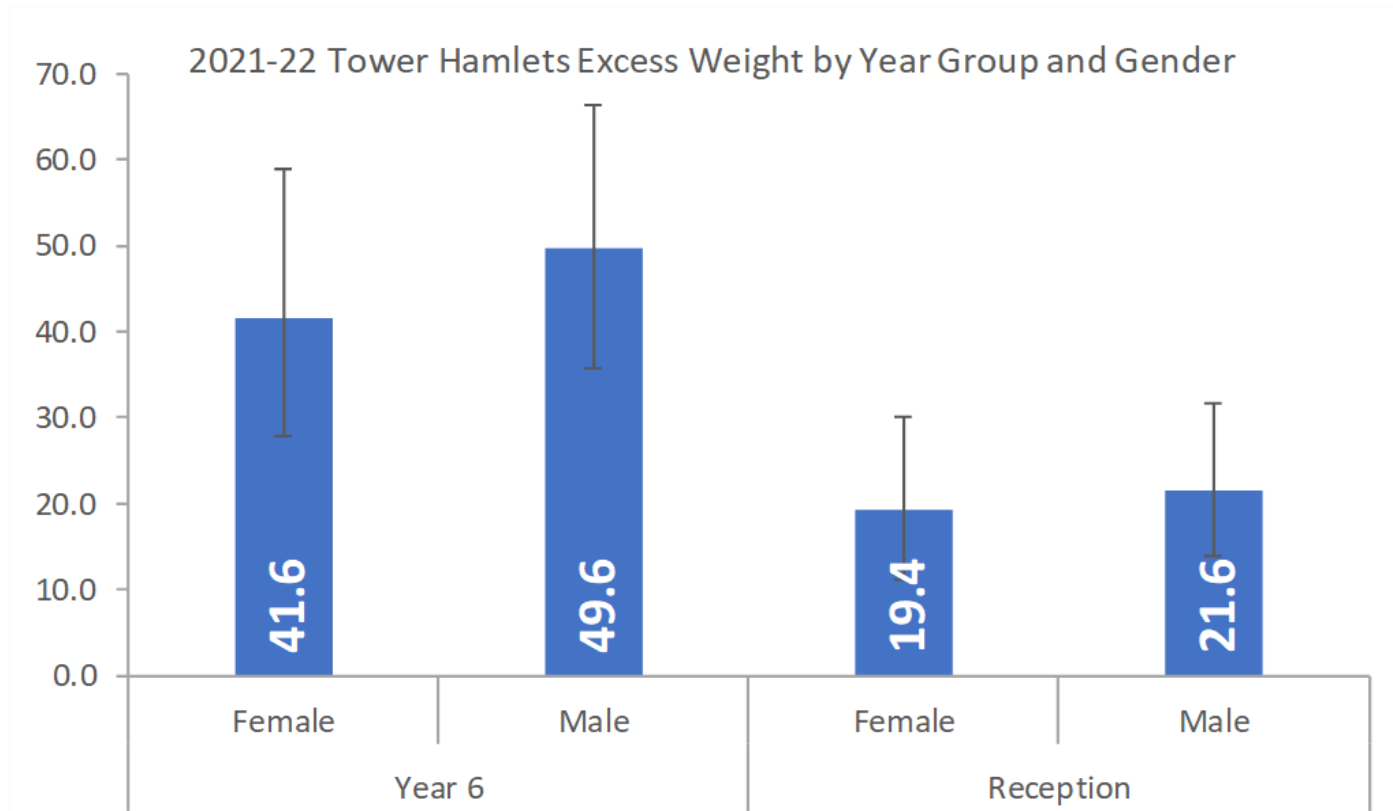
Children from an Asian background experience a sharp rise in rate of overweight from Reception to Year 6.



# Child healthy weight and gender, 2021/22



For both boys and girls, excess weight increases by more than double between reception and Year 6. Rates are higher in males than females, which is more marked in Year 6.



NCMP 2021/2022



# The importance of being a healthy weight



- Being an unhealthy weight doubles the risk of dying early and increases a child's risk of developing a number of health conditions, including type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease and some cancers.
- Children who have excess weight are more likely to have high cholesterol, high blood pressure, pre-diabetes, bone and joint problems and breathing difficulties.
- It also increases the risk of depression and low self-esteem.
- In addition to health impacts, being an unhealthy weight is also associated with school absence in children.





# Factors that influence weight



There are a lot of factors that influence weight that are out of children's control. These include:

- **The environment where a child lives, learns and plays**

Tower Hamlets is an urban environment with limited access to green space and high numbers of fast food takeaways. Environmental factors like these increase the risk of being an unhealthy weight. Places where children spend a lot of time, like schools, are also key in supporting children to be active and eat healthily.

- **Economic status**

Limited resources can make it difficult to afford and access healthy food and some leisure activities; with the high cost of living making this particularly challenging.

- **Access to quality services and resources**

Having access to high quality services and resources that support families to be a healthy weight is also important.

Given the many things that influence healthy weight, we need to work with lots of different partners, and take many different actions, to support children and young people to be a healthy weight. This approach is known as a **whole-system approach**.





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# Developing our Child Healthy Weight Action Plan



# Developing our Child Healthy Weight Action Plan



## Step one:

We conducted a Child Healthy Weight Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to help us understand the issue, its impact on children and what we can do to help.

- We reviewed the evidence for best practice and what works
- We reviewed national and local policy guidance
- We looked at what we are currently doing in Tower Hamlets and compared it to best practice
- We explored and understood the data on child healthy weight

## Step two:

We hosted four thematic meetings with system leaders, led by Tower Hamlet's Chief Executive.

### Meeting themes:

- Physical activity environment
- Healthy eating environment
- Social, media and cultural environment
- Support for children and families with excess weight



# Developing our Child Healthy Weight Action Plan (continued)



## Step three:

We engaged over 40 people working across the borough, including systems leaders.

### Partners included:

- Tower Hamlets Council
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Health partners
- Voluntary and community sector
- Local businesses

## Step four:

We listened to children, young people and families.

### We heard from:

- Children and young people
- Families
- Community groups



# Prioritising proposed actions

## The process:

1. In collaboration with borough-wide stakeholders, we collated a master list of potential actions for healthy weight which stemmed from three themed Healthy Weight logic models (see appendix 1).
2. Next, we used a prioritisation framework to systematically review, assess and prioritise the potential actions based on the agreed criteria.
3. These activities helped us to establish our work plan for this year; The Child Healthy Weight Action Plan.

### Prioritisation criteria:

-  Sufficient evidence on its impact
-  Opportunity to address health inequalities
-  Achievable with available resources
-  Within our control or influence





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# Tower Hamlets Child Healthy Weight Action Plan 2023-24





# Actions



There's so much we can do to help support families to be a healthy weight in the borough.





The most effective and sustainable approaches involve collective efforts and alignment of actions across the borough.

Following our consultation and review of evidence, we agreed to focus on three main areas; **healthy places**, **settings** and **services** to help support children and young people to be a healthy weight.

Our 2023/24 plan includes actions to begin in this financial year; some of which will be achieved within the year and some of which are longer term programmes. These are detailed over the next few slides.



# Healthy Places (1/3)

 Outputs	 Milestones	 Lead and Partners	 Target completion dates
Agree and deliver programme of work on play.	We will have completed an evidence review on play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Environments Team</li> <li>• Play Charter Working Group</li> </ul>	30-Jun-2023
	We will have agreed a work plan and logic model for the re-established Play Charter Working Group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Environments Team</li> <li>• Play Charter Working Group</li> </ul>	31-Aug-2023
	We will have delivered the play estates programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Environments Team</li> <li>• Play Charter Working Group</li> </ul>	31-Mar-2024
	We will have delivered a project on inclusive play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Environments Team</li> <li>• Play Charter Working Group</li> </ul>	31-Mar-2024



# Healthy Places (2/3)

 Outputs	 Milestones	 Lead and Partners	 Target completion dates
<p>Maximise health opportunities through the local plan redraft.</p>	<p>We will develop an evidence base to inform local plan policy aimed at supporting children and young people to be active and eat healthily.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Environments</li> <li>• Planning</li> </ul>	<p>30-May-2023</p>
<p>Deliver and evaluate Food for Health scheme.</p>	<p>We will continue to work with food businesses to improve their food offer, signing up new fast-food outlets to Food for Health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Environments</li> <li>• Planning</li> </ul>	<p>31-Mar-2024</p>
	<p>We will have delivered an evaluation of the Food for Health scheme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Environments</li> <li>• Planning</li> </ul>	<p>31-Mar-2024</p>



# Healthy Places (3/3)

 Outputs	 Milestones	 Lead and Partners	 Target completion dates
<p>Develop a borough-wide movement for healthier food procurement and food provision.</p>	<p>We will have performed a scoping activity to understand opportunities to influence food environment under our control/ the control of our partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Environments</li> <li>• Council colleagues</li> <li>• NHS partners</li> <li>• Family Hubs</li> <li>• Youth Centres</li> <li>• VCS</li> </ul>	<p>31-Mar-2024</p>
<p>Continue to provide and support free opportunities for physical activity and play for children.</p>	<p>We will have maintained 64 council-owned playgrounds for children to play.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parks</li> </ul>	<p>31-Mar-2024</p>



# Healthy Settings (1/2)

 Outputs	 Milestones	 Lead and Partners	 Target completion dates
<p>Improve healthy eating in primary schools through delivering a school food improvement programme, 'Fantastic Food in Schools' (FFS).</p>	<p>We will have delivered FFS in 10 primary schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FFS working group</li> <li>• Schools</li> </ul>	<p>30-Sept-2023</p>
	<p>We will have introduced conditions of grant around school food provision in primary schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FFS working group</li> <li>• Schools</li> </ul>	<p>31-Dec-2023</p>
<p>Improve healthy eating in secondary schools by rolling out healthy free school meals.</p>	<p>We will have rolled out universal free school meals across secondary schools, with contracts negotiated to ensure the provision of healthy meals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School meals working group</li> <li>• Schools</li> </ul>	<p>31-Mar-2024</p>



# Healthy Settings (2/2)

 Outputs	 Milestones	 Lead and Partners	 Target completion dates
<p>Unlock schools for use by their local communities when not in use.</p>	<p>We will have supported 9 schools to open their gates after hours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Children and Families</li> <li>• LBTH Sport and Physical Activity team</li> <li>• London Sport</li> <li>• DfE</li> </ul>	<p>31-Mar-2024</p>
<p>Support schools to deliver physical activity and healthy eating initiatives linked to the Healthy Schools Awards programme.</p>	<p>We will have supported new primary and secondary schools to achieve Gold, Silver and Bronze awards for physical activity and healthy eating.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Children and Families</li> <li>• Healthy Lives</li> <li>• Schools</li> </ul>	<p>31-Mar-2024</p>









# Healthy Services (1/4)

 Outputs	 Milestones	 Lead and Partners	 Target completion dates
<p>Deliver and evaluate fruit and vegetable voucher scheme.</p>	<p>We will have supported over 200 new residents/families with fruit and vegetable vouchers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Environments</li> <li>• Provider (Alexander Rose Foundation)</li> <li>• Children’s Centres</li> <li>• GP Practices</li> </ul>	<p>31-Mar-2024</p>
<p>Improve National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) offer to families.</p>	<p>We will have piloted the enhanced offer of support for 5-11’s (as part of the NCMP quality improvement project).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GP Care Group</li> <li>• Schools</li> </ul>	<p>30-Sept-2023</p>
<p>Implement a healthy advertising policy.</p>	<p>We will launch our new healthy advertising policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Environments</li> </ul>	<p>31-Dec-2023</p>



# Healthy Services (2/4)

 Outputs	 Milestones	 Lead and Partners	 Target completion dates
Deliver healthy weight training for professionals.	We will digitalise the Healthy Weight Healthy Nutrition course and the Children and Young People's Nutrition Health course for the Health Visiting, the School Health and 5 -19's workforces, making courses more accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GP Care Group</li> <li>• Health Visiting</li> <li>• 5-19 workforce</li> </ul>	31-Dec-2023
	We will have piloted the delivery of the Healthy Weight Healthy Nutrition Ambassador training for 0-5 non-health partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GP Care Group</li> <li>• Health partners</li> <li>• Council</li> </ul>	31-Dec-2023



# Healthy Services (3/4)

 Outputs	 Milestones	 Lead and Partners	 Target completion dates
Deliver healthy weight training for professionals (continued)	We will have developed weighing and measuring training for GPs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GP Care Group</li> <li>• Primary care</li> </ul>	30-Sept-2023
	We will have developed and delivered a training offer for non-health partners working with children aged 0-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GP Care Group</li> <li>• Non-health partners</li> </ul>	31-Nov-2023
	We will have developed a child healthy weight pathway that offers sustainable, family-focused and holistic support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GP Care Group</li> <li>• Health partners</li> <li>• Council</li> </ul>	31-Dec-2023



# Healthy Services (4/4)

 Outputs	 Milestones	 Lead and Partners	 Target completion dates
Establish a directory of child healthy weight support services.	We will have developed a directory to support families identify support on healthy weight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GP Care Group</li> <li>• Health partners</li> <li>• Council</li> </ul>	31-Mar-2024
Explore options for a communications campaign to the public	We will research how best to communicate healthy weight messages to residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Children and Families team</li> <li>• Comms</li> <li>• GP Care Group</li> </ul>	30-Jun-2023
	We will explore developing culturally appropriate, acceptable and accessible healthy weight comms that consider the cost-of-living crisis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Children and Families team</li> <li>• Comms</li> <li>• GP Care Group</li> </ul>	31-Mar-2024



# Infant feeding

## Deliver improvements in infant feeding

- All 0-19 services to achieve Stage 3 BFI re-accreditation.

## Lead the coordination of infant feeding activity

- This includes conducting research, establishing the infant feeding strategy, setting up infant feeding steering group, breastfeeding welcome scheme, partnership working between agencies.

## Share knowledge and skills relating to infant feeding

- Engage with regional and national partners to facilitate sharing.
- Support regional and national training, webinars and presentations at conferences and various events.



# Tower Hamlets council-wide priorities



Wider corporate priorities that will positively impact on healthy weight include:

- Tackling the cost of living crisis: will help tackle food poverty, supporting people to afford healthy food.
- Homes for the future: tackling overcrowding will make it easier for people to cook at home
- Accelerating education: free school meals and breakfast clubs will provide healthy food for children. Investing in youth centres can support young people to develop life skills like cooking and participate in leisure activities.
- Boost culture, business, jobs and leisure: opening up sporting opportunities, ensuring parks and other council facilities meet people's sporting needs will help people to be more active
- Invest in public services: insourcing the leisure contract brings new opportunities to support physical activity, with the overall plan of implementing a borough-wide healthy child weight programme bringing all the actions together.
- Empower communities and fight crime: families will feel safer to walk and cycle and use public spaces.
- A clean and green future: improving air quality standards will encourage residents to be more active outside, including using sustainable travel modes.
- A council that listens and works for everyone: using our insight and research capabilities will inform decisions on how best to support residents to be a healthy weight.





# Wider council-led work - Sport



- Tower Hamlets has [20 Better Leisure Centres](#) that offer a broad range of activities.
  - Including women only sporting options – GLL Better [here](#).
- We also run weekly activities, click here for our [schedule](#).
- There is a wide selection of [sport clubs](#) to suit any activity and lifestyle across the borough.
- We support major sporting events e.g. International Womens week, Get Your Skates on. In addition, we host seasonal events such as Tower Hamlets' [Summer of Fun](#) where we have even more activities to keep kids and teens busy throughout the summer months.
- Our [Outdoor Education Team](#) offer young people an opportunity to broaden their horizons and develop key skills such as leadership, teamwork and self-motivation.



# Wider council-led work - Parks



- Tower Hamlets has many [diverse parks, gardens and open spaces](#) and LBTH runs [64 Playground sites](#).
- Tower Hamlets provides sports facilities – [outdoor gyms](#), fenced kickabout areas, [pitches and tennis courts](#) across the borough.
- Run adventurous play sessions 3 days a week at [Whitehorse Adventure Playground](#).
- [Stay and Play sessions](#) held in the Children's Pavilion in Mile End Park.
- Run a range of school holiday activities (programme for summer of 2023 TBC but will be available on [Tower Hamlets Parks Facebook page](#)), including:
  - Adventurous Play at Bartlett Park
  - Adventurous Play with Glamis and Weaver's Adventure Playgrounds
  - Gardening activity at Mile End Park
  - Ecology activity (pond dipping, nature walks) for families



# Wider council-led work – Active travel



We make it easier for children and young people to embed physical activity throughout their day through supporting active travel:

- School Travel Plans – we monitor how children and staff travel to school and identify measures to decrease car usage whilst increasing share of walking, scooting, cycling and public transport e.g. cycle/scooter training, cycle parking
- Bikeability school cycle training
- BikeIT plus targeted interventions in the following schools:
  - Old Ford Primary
  - Marner
  - Kobi Nazrul
  - Osmani
  - Cubitt Town
- Family cycle training during school summer holidays at Victoria Park
- School street parties – we have run to support the schools participating in Bike It schools. These events involve road closure facilitating play activities in the street outside the school – e.g. hopscotch, skipping, smoothie bike, craft-making, etc.



# Wider council-led work - Schools



Healthy Lives support Tower Hamlets schools to promote behaviours that can positively impact healthy weight in children

- Support healthy breakfast clubs
- Deliver parent workshops in schools on healthy eating and oral health
- Promote and support schools to implement the Daily Mile
- Promoting gardening in schools, including delivering training
- Advisory work with PE teachers on best practice delivery
- Signpost and share resources with schools with encourage physical activity and healthy eating
- Active movement pilot programme running in schools
- Work closely with London Marathon to publicise and encourage the uptake of The Daily Mile and other physical activity initiatives
- Run large scale healthy eating and physical activity events
- Healthy Schools Awards – offer support and advice to all schools in the borough around healthy eating and physical activity
- Healthy Schools Silver and Gold Awards – targeted projects on healthy eating and physical activity to meet the needs of the school.



# Some examples of how we're working with residents

- Insight work: focus groups with young people and interviews with parents
- Healthy advertising: consulted through events, meetings and surveys
- Fantastic Food in Schools programme: taste sessions, focus groups and surveys
- NCMP programme: focus groups and surveys



# Measuring impact



- We use a number of indicators to measure the impact of this work, including:
  - Reception and Year 6 excess weight levels
  - Healthy eating levels: fruit and vegetable intake
  - Dental decay in children
  - Physical activity levels
  - Breastfeeding prevalence





# Appendix 1: Child Healthy Weight Logic Models

The following slides highlight the logic models that were created after exploring with stakeholders what we could do to support children and young people to be a healthy weight. These logic models informed the action plan that is detailed in this slide set.



# HEALTHY PLACES (environmental interventions at borough level)

INTERVENTIONS (OUTPUTS)		SHORT TERM OUTCOMES		MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES		LONG TERM OUTCOMES	
1	Address <b>advertising and promotion</b> of unhealthy foods and drink through policy and contracts	1	No advertising or promotion of unhealthy food and drink through council channels	1	A downward trajectory in overweight and obesity levels in the borough for Reception and Year 6 children, meeting at least the London average	1	Every child in Tower Hamlets is a healthy weight
2	Restrict the opening of <b>new fast food outlets</b> near schools	2	No new fast food outlets within 200m of a school	2	Children and young people's healthy eating levels increase	2	All children and young people do the Chief Medical Officer's recommended amount of physical activity
3	Ensure sufficient and good quality <b>play spaces</b> in areas with high rates of childhood obesity	3	More of the borough's streets meet TFL's 'healthy street' criteria and respond to the needs of children and young people	3	Children & young people's physical activity levels increase and inactivity levels reduce	3	All children and young people eat a healthy diet (in line with PHE's Eatwell Guide)
4	Make public realm improvements to support play, walking and cycling	4	Families feel safe when actively travelling around the borough				
5	Ensure new developments provide sufficient play spaces, and meet principles of liveable streets	5	Children have safe and welcoming open places to be physically active close to home				
6	Take action to make <b>parks</b> feel safe and welcoming	6	Relevant council policies, strategies and contracts support childhood obesity agenda				
7	Ensure all <b>council policies, strategies and contracts</b> support addressing childhood obesity.	7	Catering outlets use less and 'healthier' fats, and less sugar in their produce				
8	Implement Food for Health programme	8	More businesses receive a Food for Health award				
9	Improve the <b>food and drink</b> controlled by the council and support partners to do the same	9	More children actively travel to school				
10	Ensure the <b>voice of children and young people</b> plays an active role in shaping the built environment and public space	10	Healthy food is accessible and affordable for all				



# HEALTHY SETTINGS (interventions at “settings” level, such as public facilities)

INTERVENTIONS (OUTPUTS)		SHORT TERM OUTCOMES		MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES		LONG TERM OUTCOMES	
1	Reduce sugar and fat in <b>school meals</b>	1	There is less sugar and fat in school meals, and high take-up	1	A downward trajectory in overweight and obesity levels in the borough for Reception and Year 6 children, meeting at least the London average	1	Every child in Tower Hamlets is a healthy weight
2	Increase <b>physical activity opportunities at schools</b>	2	There are more opportunities to be physically active at school, that meet different needs and enables children to meet recommended physical activity levels	2	Children and young people’s healthy eating levels increase	2	All children and young people do the Chief Medical Officer’s recommended amount of physical activity
3	Continue to implement <b>Healthy Early Years London</b>	3	Healthy Early Years and Healthy Schools London is widely implemented	3	Children & young people’s physical activity levels increase and inactivity levels reduce	3	All children and young people eat a healthy diet (in line with PHE’s Eatwell Guide)
4	Improve <b>food offer</b> in borough’s vending machines, including leisure centres	4	Vending machines in the borough are healthier				
5	Adopt Government Buying Standards for <b>Food and Catering Services</b> across all contracts and encourage public sector partners to do the same	5	All council services that provide food follow the Government Buying Standards				
6	Work with other London boroughs to improve <b>food supply chain</b> (work with wholesalers)	6	Early years settings only provide healthy food				
7	Work with partners (e.g. health, youth, sport and leisure settings) to improve <b>healthy eating offer</b>	7	Affordable healthy food is available in all community settings, including hospitals, youth clubs and leisure centres, and high fat-high sugar food is reduced.				



INTERVENTIONS (OUTPUTS)		SHORT TERM OUTCOMES		MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES		LONG TERM OUTCOMES	
1	Provide healthy <b>eating and physical activity sessions</b> for families, linked to NCMP results	1	Families and those working in the community understand the importance of being a healthy weight, and know the physical activity and eating recommendations	1	A downward trajectory in overweight and obesity levels in the borough	1	Every child in Tower Hamlets is a healthy weight
2	Provide <b>cycling training</b> for families	2	More families cycle	2	Children and young people's healthy eating levels increase	2	All children and young people do the Chief Medical Officer's recommended amount of physical activity
3	Clarify and simplify messages about food, physical activity and 'healthy weight' (including importance of healthy sleep); disseminate widely	3	Families and those working in the community recognise what a healthy weight looks like and the importance of healthy sleep	3	Children & young people's physical activity levels increase and inactivity levels reduce	3	All children and young people eat a healthy diet (in line with PHE's Eatwell Guide)
4	Implement <b>communications strategy</b> that addresses barriers to healthy weight, tackles stigma and reframes childhood obesity to emphasise importance of environmental factors/wider determinants	4	Families know how to cook nutritional food easily and cheaply				
5	Ensure <b>services</b> are joined up and promoted, adopt a whole family approach and reach those most in need	5	Services are better connected, well known and well used by those in need				
6	Establish a <b>healthy weight pathway</b> for professionals who identify overweight patients, including ensuring that children with additional needs are being appropriately supported	6	Healthy weight pathway established, taking a whole family approach				
7	Equip relevant <b>professionals</b> with skills and knowledge to inform parents about healthy weight	7	Services are effective at delivering healthy weight outcomes, including for those with additional needs.				
8	Continue to provide <b>infant feeding and wellbeing service</b>	8	Those working in the community have the necessary skills and knowledge to discuss healthy weight with families				
9	Promote <b>healthy start</b> scheme	9	High uptake of healthy start vouchers				
10	Ensure the basic needs of families are met to help them feel empowered to be active and eat healthily	10	High breast feeding rates				
		11	Families feel empowered and their aspirations align with a healthy lifestyle.				
		12	Overweight children are supported to achieve a healthy weight including those with additional needs.				

# HEALTHY SERVICES

(interventions targeted at the individual)