

Draft Recommendations for Scrutiny Committee on Childhood Obesity

04.01.2011

A. Early Years / prevention

Evidence of need - the most recent Childhood Measurement Programme shows that Southwark has the highest levels of Reception Year obesity nationally. In Reception year pupils 14.8% were obese and a similar proportion (15.0%) were overweight. In year 6, one in four children (25.7%) was obese and 14.5% overweight. Locally maternal obesity is also of concern and is a factor in poorer maternity outcomes and higher infant mortality.

1 Implement NICE guidance (2010) for maternal obesity “Weight management for before and after pregnancy”. Local authority leisure and community services should offer women with babies and children the opportunity to take part in a range of physical or recreational activities. This could include swimming, organised walks, cycling or dancing. Activities need to be affordable and available at times that are suitable for women with older children as well as those with babies. Where possible, affordable childcare (for example, a crèche) should be provided and provision made for women who wish to breastfeed.

2 Develop and implement consistent healthy eating and physical activity policies across Southwark Children’s Centres that promote breastfeeding and ensure compatibility with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and Caroline Walker Trust nutrition guidelines.

3 Active encouragement for all nursery staff to attend under 5’s healthy weight training to support implementation of policies. Extend also to anyone caring for a child under 5 (there may be a high proportion of children being looked after by unregistered childminders e.g. family members).

B Population level change

Evidence of need - Creating healthier environments (activity- and food-related) and integrating healthier behaviours into our everyday living have been demonstrated as a necessary part of any response to support change of behaviour patterns associated with obesity. Solutions include changes in transport infrastructure and urban design as they are more likely to affect multiple factors influencing obesity than individual changes and support a healthier, sustainable environment.

3 Promoting active travel - ensuring every school has a healthy transport plan that encourages active travel i.e. walking and cycling to school.

4 Ensure a whole school approach to implementing the universal free school meals programme by involving all staff, children, parents, governors and the wider school community. A whole school food policy should promote the uptake of school meals, nutrition based standards, healthy behaviours and environments and sustainability issues (could include PSHE lessons, farm trips, breakfast clubs, grow cook and eat clubs, stay on site lunchtime policy etc).

5 Ensuring there is delivery of high quality physical activity and school sports throughout the borough and that schools are asked to report on levels of engagement in physical activity and sports as a measures of health and wellbeing. The SCG Superstars Challenge programme is directly linked to Healthy Schools programme and is incorporated into the obesity challenges throughout the borough. In addition Southwark Community Games wider programme is additionally targeted at very precise areas of population in local neighbourhoods and the link with sport and physical activity as part of the London 2012 brand. This should be linked into the LBS Olympic Delivery Board, and the Health Factor Steering Group

6 Create a healthier environment for our children and young people by restricting the licensing of new hot food takeaways e.g. within 400m boundary or 10min walking distance of schools, children centres, youth-centred facilities. High concentrations of fast food outlets are currently in Peckham Town centre, Queens Rd Peckham, Walworth Rd. Other London boroughs have been very effective in their planning restrictions (e.g. www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/2-press-release/press-release-menu.cfm?item_code=3761), supporting more healthy eating opportunities, greater diversity of local outlets as well as reducing litter and anti social behaviour.

C. Working with populations at greater risk

Evidence of need – There appears to be a higher risk of obesity for people from some groups in Southwark including lower socioeconomic groups, some ethnic minority groups (the Black or Black British population have a higher prevalence of obesity) and people with other needs such as learning disabilities and mental ill-health can find it more difficult to maintain a healthy weight.

7 Enhancing healthier eating knowledge and behaviours amongst at risk populations, working with relevant geographic and ethnic communities.

8 Supporting people with learning disabilities and mental ill-health, as well as the carers and staff that work with them to encourage healthy eating and physical activity behaviours.