



Healthy Schools

National Healthy School Status

A Guide for Schools



department for
education and skills

 **Department
of Health**



National Healthy School Status

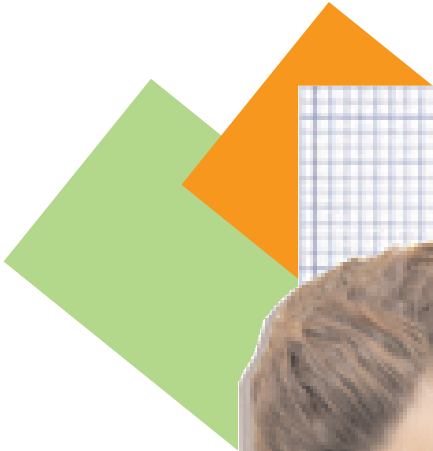
A Guide for Schools





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Introduction

This guidance on the National Healthy Schools Programme (NHSP) is issued at a time when the health of young people has never attracted so much attention – unfortunately most of this focusing on negative aspects like obesity and instances of poor sexual health. The new Programme reflects the Government's commitment to turn things round and put much more emphasis on measures to achieve a healthy population of young people. The awarding of the Olympic Games to London in 2012 provides the ideal opportunity to harness an enhanced level of interest in sport and relate this to the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Schools will be at the forefront of this most ambitious change programme, and will be the first to see the successful outcomes.

This guidance is for all schools. It outlines the NHSP, introduces the concept of national Healthy School status and describes the benefits of becoming a 'Healthy School'. It describes what schools need to do to gain national Healthy School status.

New guidance has been issued because, from 1 September 2005, there will be a more rigorous approach to the Programme. From that date, schools will have to meet the criteria in **all** four core themes to satisfy the requirements of national Healthy School status.

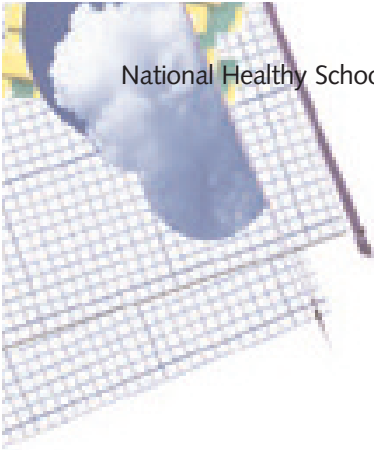
The aims of the National Healthy Schools Programme

The aims of the NHSP are:

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

The benefits of being a 'Healthy School'

A Healthy School promotes the health and well-being of its pupils and staff through a well-planned, taught curriculum in a physical and emotional environment that promotes learning and healthy lifestyle choices.



Evidence available at www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk/evidenceofimpact demonstrates that pupils who are healthy achieve well at school:

- Schools can use the NHSP whole-school approach to bring about sustained school improvement.
- Schools with Healthy School status have better results for all Key Stage 1 assessments and Key Stage 2 science compared with other schools.
- Schools involved in the NHSP are more inclusive.
- Pupils in Healthy Schools report a range of positive behaviours such as diminished fear of bullying and a reduced likelihood of using illegal drugs.
- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) provision is enhanced.
- There is more effective liaison between home and school, and school and external support agencies.

Healthy Schools and reporting achievement

From September 2005, Ofsted will expect schools to demonstrate how they are contributing to the five national outcomes for children stipulated by *Every Child Matters* and the Children Act 2004 – being healthy; staying safe; enjoying and achieving; making a positive contribution; and economic well-being. Gaining national Healthy School status provides rigorous evidence of this, and will assist you in evidencing your self-evaluation and completing your new school profile.

The NHSP builds on what schools have been doing for several years. The criteria referred to in this guidance complement existing and increasingly mainstreamed efforts to promote PSHE, physical activity, healthy eating, and emotional health and well-being in the school setting. Schools that are already participating in such work may not need to devote any extra resources but will be able to consolidate existing good practice.

Schools already involved with the NHSP

Thousands of schools are already involved with their local Healthy Schools Programme, and many have already been accredited by them. However, the Public Health White Paper of November 2004 outlined the Government's intention to introduce more rigorous and nationally consistent criteria through the introduction of national Healthy School status. This guidance will enable schools to see how their current work is already contributing to the new

Healthy School status. Schools that already have Healthy School status will be able to retain this until summer 2007 while working towards the new criteria.

Government commitment

The NHSP is funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Department of Health (DH) with a regional and local network. By 2009, the Government wants **every** school to be working towards achieving national Healthy School status. The Government has ensured that every local education authority (LEA) already has a local Healthy Schools Programme to support schools in reaching this target. From this year (2005), additional resources will be allocated to local programmes to support their work with schools. Each school will have access to a local Healthy Schools co-ordinator to support schools through the improvement process.

Links to other policies and programmes

Achieving national Healthy School status enables your school to demonstrate its contribution to the five national outcomes for children and supports the targets within the following national priorities:

- improving behaviour and attendance (the NHSP is working closely with the Secondary Strategy, Social, Emotional and Behavioural Skills (SEBS) and Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL));
- improving performance in national Standard Attainment Tests;
- reducing and halting the increase in childhood obesity;
- promoting positive sexual health and reducing teenage pregnancy; and
- reducing young people's drug, alcohol and tobacco use.



Section one – What is a Healthy School?

What is a 'Healthy School'?

National Healthy School status requires schools to meet criteria in four core themes. These criteria relate not only to the taught curriculum but also to the emotional, physical and learning environment that the school provides. There are a number of specific actions that schools need to take if they are to be recognised as Healthy Schools. Many schools are already engaged in these activities and achieving recognition need not be onerous.

Schools are asked to demonstrate evidence in the core themes **using a whole-school approach involving the whole school community:**

- **personal, social and health education** including sex and relationship education and drug education (including alcohol, tobacco and volatile substance abuse);
- **healthy eating;**
- **physical activity;** and
- **emotional health and well-being** (including bullying).

These core themes are separated here for the sake of clarity, but many schools will address them all at the same time, as they are interrelated and interdependent. Your local Healthy Schools Programme may prioritise these themes to reflect local needs. Details of the criteria underpinning each theme are given in Section two.



The whole-school approach

The whole-school approach:

- aims to develop an ethos and environment that supports learning and promotes the health and well-being of all;
- consults and encourages participation of all within the school community; and
- is an extremely effective, evidence-based school improvement mechanism which brings about and embeds cultural change in schools.

Details of the whole-school approach are available from your local Healthy Schools Programme and on Wired for Health (www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk).

Getting started

You can find contact details for your local Healthy Schools Programme by visiting www.lhsp.org. Your local programme will help your school to review and improve its practice, and this in turn will affect pupils' learning and health by providing support on:

- assessing where your school is now;
- agreeing priorities and an action plan; and
- ways of involving governors, staff, pupils and parents/carers, and other professionals (eg health) and the local community.



Section two – What are the criteria for national Healthy School status?

The criteria for national Healthy School status

To become a Healthy School, you need to evidence how you have met criteria in the following **four core themes** that make up national Healthy School status. Across the four core themes, **there will need to be evidence of how the whole-school approach has been used in the process**. Schools **must** demonstrate they have met the criteria in each of the following:

1. **Personal, social and health education, including sex and relationship education and drug education (including alcohol, tobacco and volatile substance abuse)**

PSHE provides pupils with the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to make informed decisions about their lives.

A Healthy School:

1. uses the PSHE framework to deliver a planned programme of PSHE, in line with DfES/Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidance;
2. monitors and evaluates PSHE provision to ensure the quality of teaching and learning;
3. assesses pupils' progress and achievement in line with QCA guidance;
4. has a named member of staff responsible for PSHE provision with status, training and appropriate senior management support within the school;
5. has up-to-date policies in place – developed through wide consultation, implemented, and monitored and evaluated for impact – covering sex and relationship education, drug education and incidents, child protection, and confidentiality;
6. has an implemented non-smoking policy, or is working towards being smoke-free by September 2007;
7. 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;

8. has arrangements in place to refer pupils to specialist services who can give professional advice on matters such as contraception, sexual health and drugs;
9. 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;
10. ensures provision of appropriate PSHE professional development opportunities for staff – such as the Certification Programmes for teachers and nurses offered by DH/DfES; and
11. has mechanisms in place to ensure all pupils' 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 pupils, young carers and teenage parents.

2. Healthy eating

Pupils have the confidence, skills and understanding to make healthy food choices. Healthy and nutritious food and drink is available across the school day.

A Healthy School:

1. has identified a member of the senior management team to oversee all aspects of food in the school;
2. ensures provision of training in practical food education for staff, including diet, nutrition, food safety and hygiene;
3. has a whole-school food policy – developed through wide consultation, implemented, monitored and evaluated for impact;
4. involves pupils and parents in guiding food policy and practice within the school, enables them to contribute to healthy eating and acts on their feedback;
5. has a welcoming eating environment that encourages the positive social interaction of pupils (see Food in Schools guidance);
6. ensures healthier food and drink options are available and promoted breakfast clubs, at break (if established or planned) and at lunchtime as outlined by Food in Schools guidance;

7. has meals, vending machines and tuck shop facilities that are nutritious and healthy (see Food in Schools guidance), and meet or exceed national standards, and is working towards the latest DfES guidance on improving school meals services;
8. monitors pupils' menus and food choices to inform policy development and provision;
9. ensures that pupils 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;
10. has easy access to free, clean and palatable drinking water, using the Food in Schools guidance; and
11. consults pupils about food choices throughout the school day using school councils, Healthy School task groups or other representative pupil bodies.

3. Physical activity

Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to be physically active. They understand how physical activity can help them to be more healthy, and how physical activity can improve and be a part of their everyday life.

A Healthy School:

1. provides clear leadership and management to develop and monitor its physical activity policy;
2. has a whole-school physical activity policy – developed through wide consultation, implemented, monitored and evaluated for impact;
3. ensures a minimum two hours of structured physical activity each week to all of its pupils in or outside the school curriculum;
4. provides opportunities for all pupils to participate in a broad range of extracurricular activities that promote physical activity;
5. consults with pupils about the physical activity opportunities offered by the school, identifies barriers to participation and seeks to remove them;
6. involves schools sports co-ordinators (where available) and other community resources in provision of activities;

7. encourages pupils, parents/carers and staff to walk or cycle to school under safe conditions, utilising the school travel plan;
8. 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;
9. ensures that there is appropriate training provided for those involved in providing physical activities; and
10. encourages all staff to undertake physical activity.

4. Emotional health and well-being

Promoting positive emotional health and well-being to help pupils understand and express their feelings, and build their confidence and emotional resilience and therefore their capacity to learn.

A Healthy School:

1. identifies vulnerable individuals and groups and establishes appropriate strategies to support them and their families;
2. provides clear leadership to create and manage a positive environment which enhances emotional health and well-being in school – including the management of the behaviour and rewards policies;
3. has clear, planned curriculum opportunities for pupils to understand and explore feelings using appropriate learning and teaching styles;
4. has a confidential pastoral support system in place for pupils and staff to access advice – especially at times of bereavement and other major life changes – and this system actively works to combat stigma and discrimination;
5. has explicit values underpinning positive emotional health which are reflected in practice and work to combat stigma and discrimination;
6. has a clear policy on bullying, which is owned, understood and implemented by the whole school community;
7. provides appropriate professional training for those in a pastoral role;
8. provides opportunities for pupils to participate in school activities and responsibilities to build their confidence and self-esteem; and
9. has a clear confidentiality policy.

Section three – What does my school need to do to become a Healthy School?

What schools need to do to become Healthy Schools

Achieving national Healthy School status

Local Healthy Schools Programmes will advise your school on what needs to be done to achieve national Healthy School status.

Your school will need to provide evidence that it has met the criteria in each of the core themes. In many cases, the evidence is something which your school will have already.

You should use evidence sources that are easily available and appropriate to meeting the core themes. The process of gathering evidence should:

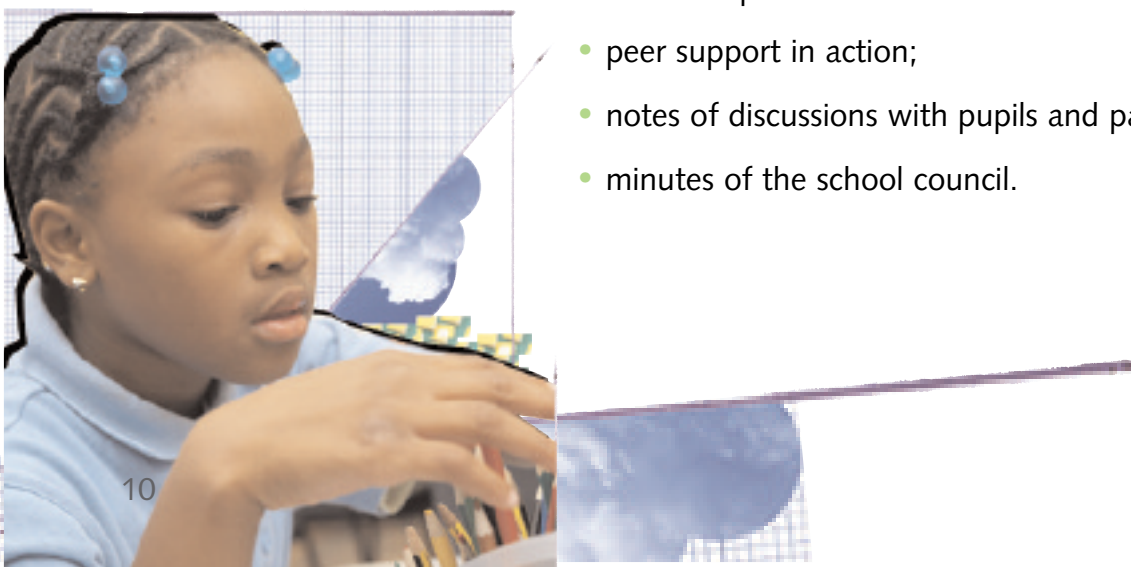
- involve as light a touch as possible; and
- be as participative as possible – involving pupils, parents, teachers and others in the wider school community.

In some cases, you may find it easier to combine different policies to have an overarching healthy school policy, one that combines all the elements of the different policies that are required. You will not be required to gather large amounts of extra written material.

Evidence might fall into the following three categories:

1. That which arises from participation and involvement, such as:

- how the views of staff, governors, pupils and parents/carers influence plans and the mechanisms used;
- peer support in action;
- notes of discussions with pupils and parents/carers; and
- minutes of the school council.





2. Written documentation based on school policy and practice, such as:

- school development/improvement and management plans;
- prospectuses, staff and parent handbooks;
- tools and methods used in auditing and target setting;
- school targets, action plans and self-evaluation tools;
- work outputs: for example, healthy school policies and schemes of work;
- lesson observation notes, pupils' work and assessment records;
- methods of recognising and celebrating success;
- job descriptions and service agreements; and
- evidence of recent staff professional development to ensure confidence and competence in promoting health and well-being.

3. Conversations with pupils, teachers, parents/carers and professionals about how Healthy Schools work has had an effect, such as:

- focus groups or discussions with the school council, or within PSHE lessons, as to whether and how the school is meeting the criteria within the four themes;
- discussions with staff as to whether and how the school is meeting the criteria within the four themes;
- discussions with parents/carers and governors as to whether and how the school is meeting the criteria within the four themes; and
- discussions with external agencies, such as local health services, on priorities.

Celebrating success

When you have successfully gained national Healthy School status, a number of things will happen:

- a) You will have tangible and authoritative evidence to support school self-evaluation and an inspection by Ofsted.
- b) Your achievements will be recorded on the NHSP national schools database by your local programme – to profile your success with Ofsted and other government agencies.

Section four – Where can I find out more?

Where to find out more

www.lhsp.org

The website that will quickly show you how to contact your local Healthy Schools Programme.

www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk

The website for the NHSP. On this site you will find evaluation evidence, guidance material and other contacts. The site also contains information and exercises for pupils, as well as information for parents and teachers and links to other sites organised in the following way:

www.welltown.gov.uk for Key Stage 1 (5–7 year olds)

www.galaxy-h.gov.uk for Key Stage 2 (7–11 year olds)

www.lifebytes.gov.uk for Key Stage 3 (11–14 year olds)

www.mindbodysoul.gov.uk for Key Stage 4 (14–16 year olds)

Other useful sites

www.teachernet.gov.uk/healthyliving

The supporting website for the Healthy Living Blueprint – it provides a one-stop shop for a range of national and local initiatives to support schools in promoting healthy living.

www.ofsted.gov.uk

This site provides information about the nature of school inspection, inspection reports focusing on schools and LEAs, as well as explaining the new inspection regimes for children's services – including details of Joint Area Review and Annual Performance Assessments.



PSHE

www.teachernet.gov.uk/pshe

The comprehensive teachernet site has information about PSHE and related issues.

www.qca.org.uk/pshe

The site for QCA has useful information about the subjects of the National Curriculum and the non-statutory framework for PSHE, supported by end of Key Stage statements and schemes of work.

Healthy eating

www.foodinschools.org.uk

This site supports the work of Healthy Schools in relation to all aspects of eating at school – including breakfast clubs, vending machines, tuck shops, lunch boxes, water, dining room environment, school lunches (pending), growing clubs, cooking clubs and the Food Partnership Scheme in which secondary and primary schools work together.

www.5aday.nhs.uk

This site supports the Government's drive to encourage more people, including young people, to eat five or more portions of fruit and vegetables each day.

Physical activity

www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe

The comprehensive teachernet site has information about PE and school sport.

www.sportengland.org

Has a wealth of information about sport and physical activity, including the location of 15,000 local sporting facilities (www.activeplaces.com) and details of the Everyday Sport campaign.

Emotional health and well-being

www.youngminds.org.uk/publications

YoungMinds has developed a range of publications that address the mental health problems affecting young people. They are based upon concerns heard via their telephone helpline (YoungMinds Parents' Information Service) or through their research projects.

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/healthyliving/behaviours/mentalhealth

Topical information and links to other useful sites and ideas can be found here.

Annex

Checklist

1. **Make contact with your local Healthy Schools Programme co-ordinator** (details can be found at www.lhsp.org).

Address label

2. **Gain commitment for Healthy Schools from your school community and senior management team** (your local Healthy Schools co-ordinator can help you with this).
3. **Get support from others in the school, perhaps setting up a Healthy Schools task group or using a group already in existence.**
4. **Invite input to the task group from a range of the following:**
 - senior management;
 - staff;
 - pupils;
 - governors;
 - parents/carers;
 - school nurse or community nurse;
 - catering staff; and
 - Connexions (secondary).



5. **Be clear about the criteria for national Healthy School status and how you intend to audit the themes to identify a baseline and set targets** (your local Healthy Schools Programme co-ordinator can help).
6. **Discuss local health priorities and data with your school nurse to inform your audit and action plan.**
7. **Identify whom you need to help write and deliver your school's action plan.**
8. **Check that, in putting together your action plan, you have ensured that all elements of the whole-school approach have been addressed.**
9. **Be clear about what the current practice is in your school with regard to the four themes.**
10. **Set targets that are realistic, achievable and measurable.**
11. **Identify the potential links with existing priorities and curriculum areas.**
12. **Decide who is leading on the four core themes and if there is a need to identify appropriate staff.**
13. **Identify staff professional development needs as part of the wider school continuous professional development of the workforce strategy.**
14. **Decide the support you need from your local programme to implement your plans in the four themes.**
15. **Be clear about how you will evidence achievement, what kind of evidence is appropriate and where it may be located.**








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