

For more information about the National Healthy Schools Programme, please contact your local programme co-ordinator for your area, through your local education authority or primary care trust. www.lhsp.org

ISBN1-84279-457-4



National Healthy Schools Programme
A guide for teachers



What is the National Healthy Schools Programme?

It is a joint Department for Education and Skills and Department of Health programme presently working with over half of the 23,000 state schools in England. Under the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme, children and young people will get increasingly high standards of care from health services in line with the standards and expectations of the *National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (NSF)*.

Its three overall aims are to:

- help raise pupils achievement
- help promote social inclusion
- help reduce health inequalities

The National Healthy Schools Programme provides a model of partnership working between the health service, external agencies and schools, with the aim of promoting a coherent and holistic message about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. It provides a framework that brings together schools and their local communities so that children, young people and their families work together to target identified need as part of the government's drive to reduce health inequalities, promote social inclusion and raise educational standards.

The programme has the following key themes: Personal, Social and Health Education; drug education (including alcohol and tobacco); emotional health (including bullying); healthy eating; physical activity; safety; and sex and relationship education. Every area has a local programme co-ordinator who works closely with schools to ensure they receive the necessary support required to identify and address need while focusing on health



priorities central to the government targets of encouraging healthy eating, reducing childhood obesity and teenage pregnancy. Local healthy schools programmes are jointly managed by health (primary care trusts) and education (local authorities) and also draw on the support and expertise of a range of other local agencies. A nationally managed infrastructure ensures that programmes meet rigorous quality standards.

The National Healthy Schools Programme will ensure that half of all schools are healthy schools by 2006, with the rest working towards healthy school status by 2009.




The five outcomes of *Every Child Matters* (a shared programme of change to improve the outcomes of all children and young people) are key to wellbeing in childhood and in later life:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic wellbeing

Some examples of activities in the programme are:

1. Drug education: learning the difference between medicines and harmful drugs and smoking cessation
2. Healthy eating: pupils will learn about what kind of food is good for them and are encouraged to bring healthy lunchboxes to school
3. Physical activity: pupils are encouraged to walk or cycle to school where safe and participate in physical activity
4. Emotional health and wellbeing: learn how to resist bullying, taking part in a school council
5. Sex and relationship education: learning how to make and keep friendships. Learning about making informed choices
6. PSHE: learning about living in a multi-cultural society and better personal skills such as assertiveness.



The five key objectives as set out in the Healthy Living Blueprint relate to our key themes. These are:

1. To promote a school ethos and environment that encourages a healthy lifestyle
2. To use the full capacity and flexibility of the curriculum to achieve a healthy lifestyle
3. To ensure the food and drink available across the school day reinforces the healthy lifestyle message
4. To provide high quality Physical Education and school sport and promote Physical Activity as part of a lifelong healthy lifestyle
5. To promote an understanding of the full range of issues and behaviours which impact upon lifelong health.

What is a healthy school?

A healthy school promotes the health and wellbeing of its pupils and staff both by what is taught in the school and through the wider school environment.

A healthy school improves pupils' life-choices, achievement and opportunities by providing a comprehensive programme of: Personal, Social and Health Education, drug education, emotional health, healthy eating, physical activity and sex and relationship education all within an emotionally supportive environment that enables pupils to learn.

A healthy school achieves national standards that demonstrate a key contribution to the education and health priorities found in the outcomes of *Every Child Matters*.



What are the advantages of participation for pupils, schools and communities in being involved in Healthy Schools?

Pupils

Pupils will be more confident, motivated and will have the skills and information to make important life and health choices. They will be more likely to achieve good academic results within a setting that supports their health and wellbeing. Pupils will gain access to a range of support services and have their personal and social development valued. Healthy Schools work hard to ensure that they effectively address key pupil concerns such as bullying.

Schools

Schools improve their performance in academic and non-academic areas and get involvement from the whole school community, strengthening links within the school 'family' (parents, governors, staff, pupils and community partners).

They develop stronger external partnerships, including sharing good practice with other schools and receive greater support and professional development for staff.

They gain maximum support from external agencies and assistance in achieving coherence between national initiatives. Schools are able to shape their own programme by setting local targets, action planning and adapting to their own changing needs.

Opportunities exist to positively promote the school on a local, regional and national level and improve the reputation and status by achieving recognition under the NHSP. It also creates opportunities to link with and complement other school-based programmes.



Communities

School communities involved in the NHSP can have fewer problems with truancy, juvenile crime, unwanted teenage pregnancies and drugs.

By engaging the interest and contribution of young people in being good citizens, they benefit from closer ties and greater understanding between schools and health authorities, social services, the police and other agencies.

There is also the chance for communities to influence and contribute to what goes on in schools and work alongside schools in reducing social exclusion, disadvantage and disaffection.

Continuing Professional Development for teachers and school nurses.

These two programmes are managed and are delivered through local networks established by the NHSP. The standards framework offered by each programme aims to promote and improve the knowledge and skills that both teachers and school nurses bring to the teaching of sex and relationship education (SRE) and drug education, within the context of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), which is an essential part of a young person's development and experience. School nurses support PSHE in a unique way as they have knowledge, expertise, skills and links between school, home, communities and local health services.

The NHSP highlights the important contribution that school nurses make in reducing inequalities and raising achievement in schools.