

Tower Hamlets

Child Healthy Weight Action Plan 2022-23 and beyond



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.



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.



Reception aged Children



Year 6 aged Children

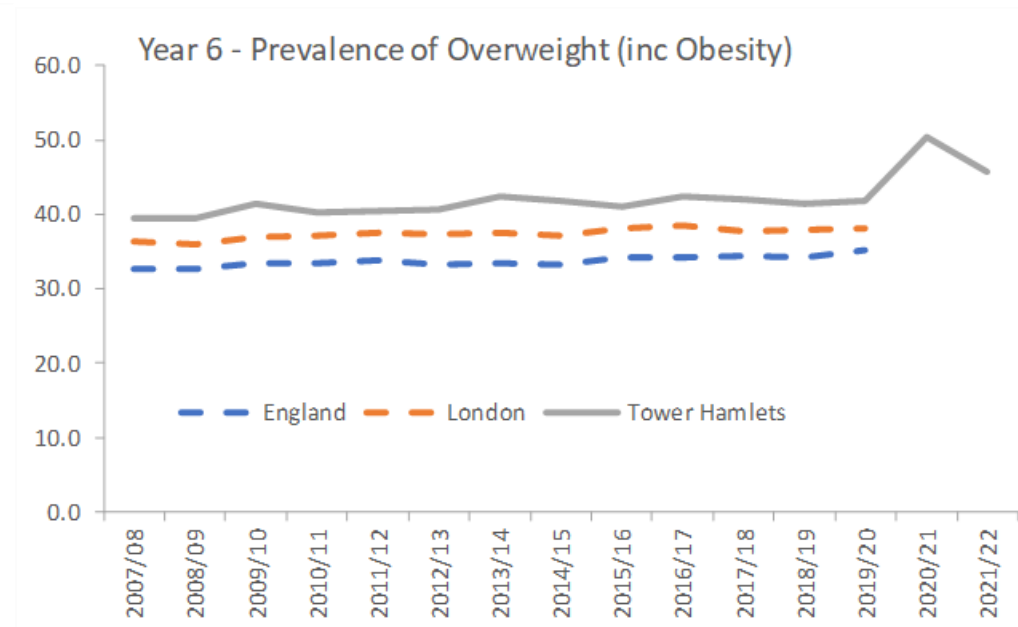
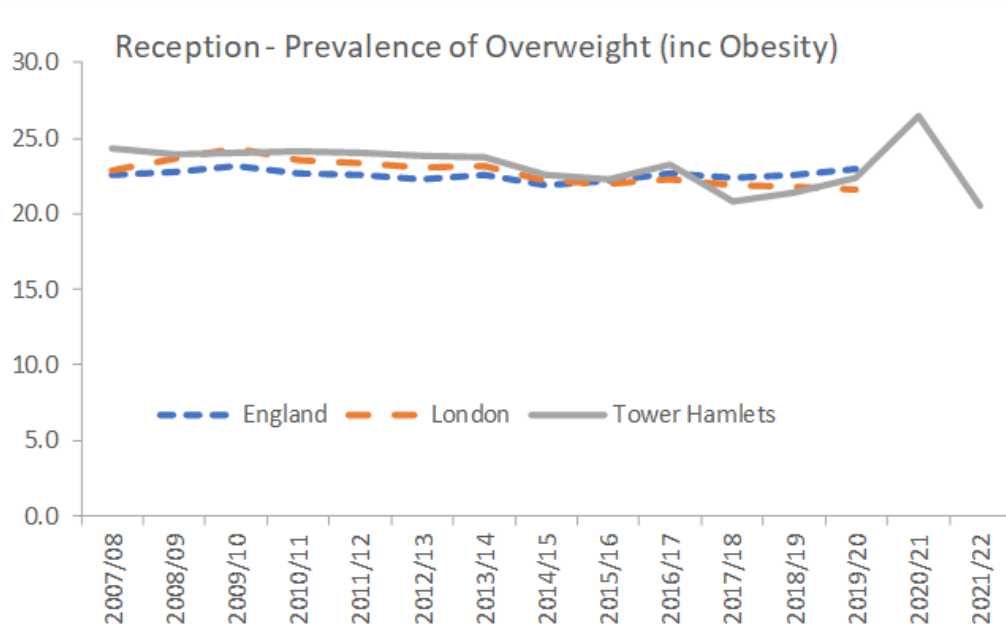


NCMP 2021/2022



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 children, 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

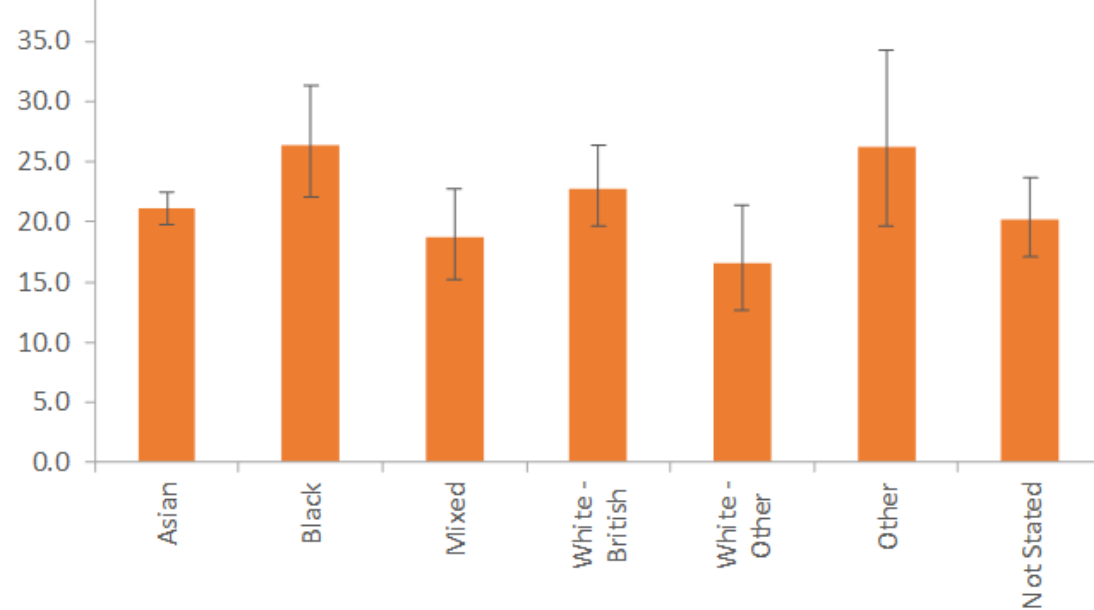


In Reception, excess weight levels were highest among children from a Black ethnic background (26.4%) and those recorded as 'Other' (26.2%). Excess weight levels were lowest in children from a White Other (16.1%) ethnic background.

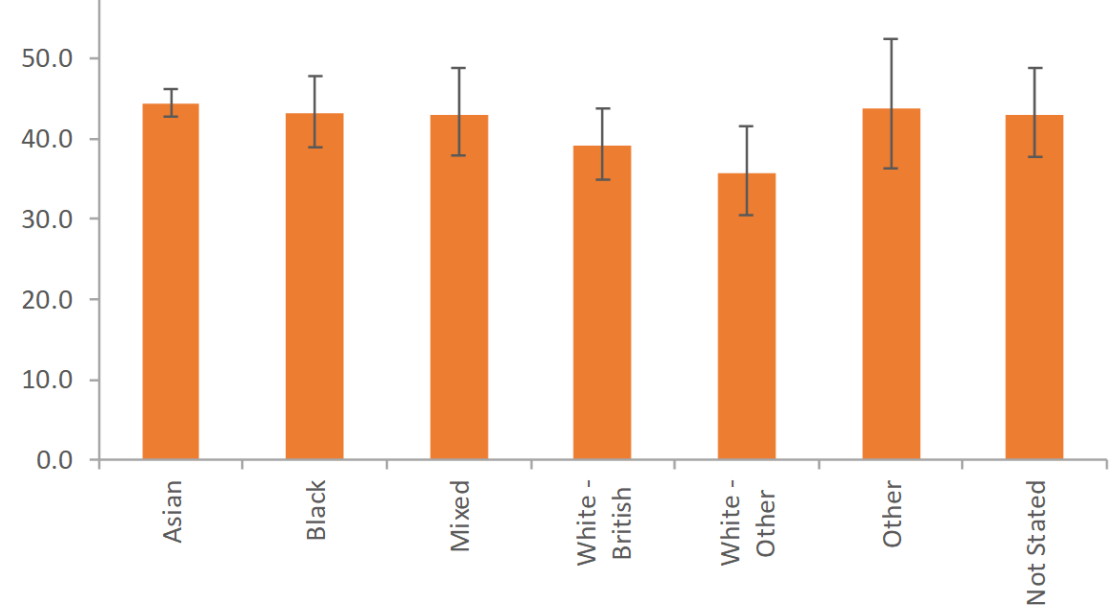
In Year 6, children from Asian (44.3%), Black (43.2%) and Other ethnic backgrounds (43.8%) had the highest levels of excess weight. Children from a White Other background had the lowest (39.8%).

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

Reception - NCMP Prevalence by ethnicity (2019/20-2021/22)



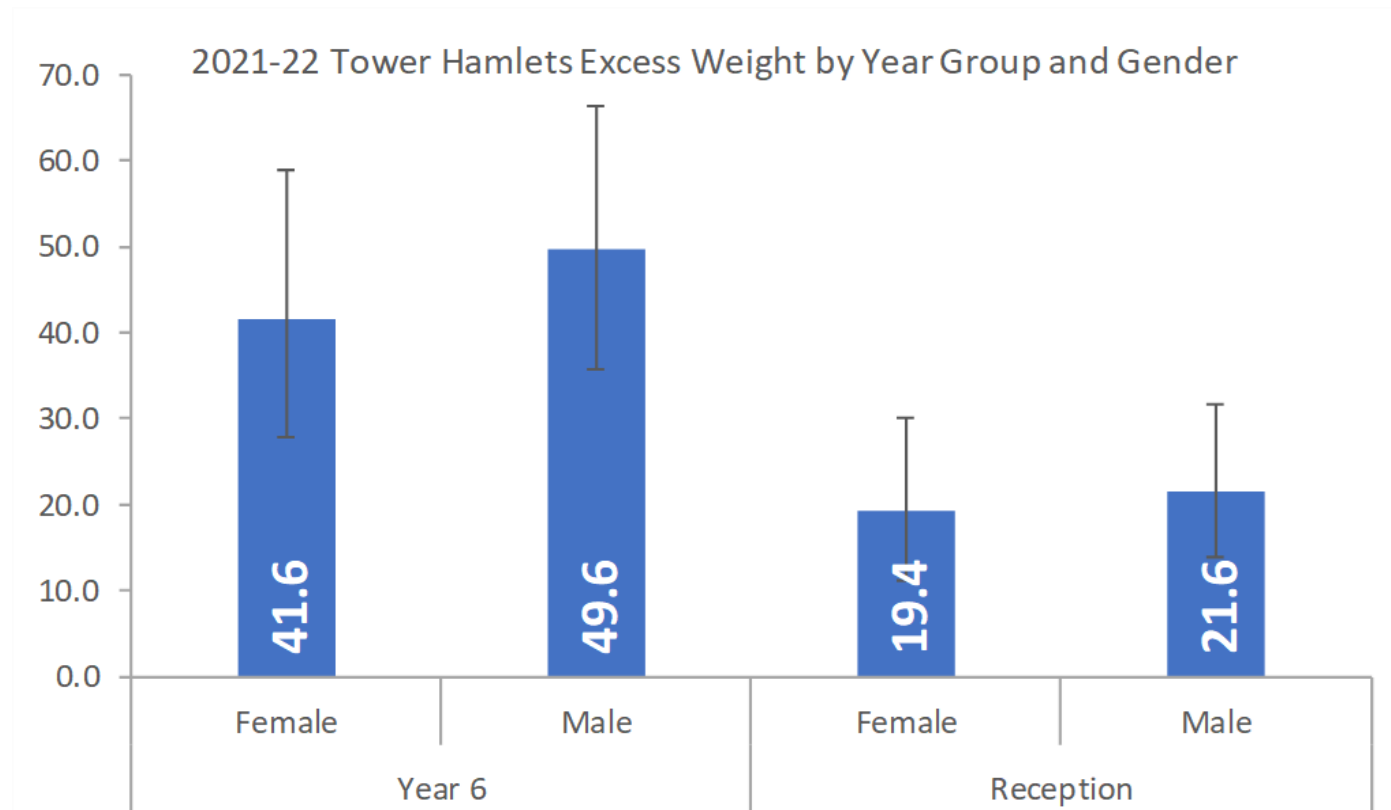
Year 6 - NCMP Prevalence by ethnicity (2019/20-2021/22)



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**.





TOWER HAMLETS

Developing our Child Healthy Weight Action Plan



Developing initial priorities for our Child Healthy Weight Action Plan



To agree priorities to for our Child Healthy Weight Action Plan, we took the following steps:

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

- We reviewed the evidence for best practice and what works
- We reviewed the 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

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

- Partners included:
- Tower Hamlets Council
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Health partners
- Voluntary and community sector
- Businesses

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

- These meetings were:
- Maximising physical activity opportunities through the environment
- Driving change in healthy eating
- Tackling unhealthy social, media and cultural environments
- Support for children and families with excess weight

We listened to children, young people and families

- We heard from:
- Children and young people
- Families
- Community groups



Prioritising proposed actions

After we engaged with key stakeholders, we collated a list of potential borough-wide actions (see logic models in Appendix 1) and then set about prioritising these actions for 22-23 using the process below:

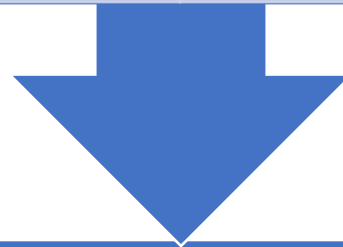
We developed a prioritisation framework to systematically review, assess and prioritise the potential actions based on the following criteria:

Sufficient evidence on its impact

Opportunity to address health inequalities

Achievable with available resources

Within our control or influence



This prioritisation framework helped us to establish a set of key actions to focus on. These actions comprise our 2022-2023 Child Healthy Weight Action Plan.



Tower Hamlets Child Healthy Weight Action Plan 2022-23



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 2022/23 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



Revise Local Plan to further optimise physical activity and play

- Ensure future built development in the borough maximises the opportunity for children and young people to be active – use the re-development of the Local Plan to achieve this.
- Review recent developments to assess their use, accessibility, quality and enjoyment by children and young people.
- Ensure children and young people are represented in new guidance and policies to refresh the Local Plan, as well as inform new developments.

Led by: LBTH Planning and Public Health
Due: June 2023

Promote, support and enable play for all children

- Deliver projects that increase access to good quality play spaces and explore barriers to accessing play provision, particularly for children with SEND.
- Develop a communication plan that outlines access to resources and promotes play activities across the community.

Led by: LBTH Public Health / Parent & Family support
Due: June 2023 & ongoing

Ensure children and young people's voices shape development and regeneration work

- Conduct learning session on how to include children and young people's insights to drive places-based work.
- Develop guidance for developers and landowners on the best practice for engaging young people in developments and how to deliver for them.

Led by: LBTH Regeneration
Due: June 2023

Restrict local advertising of unhealthy food and drink products

- Collate evidence base to inform action.
- Map existing advertising contracts to inform policy implementation.
- Develop and launch a healthier advertising policy, communication campaign and evaluation strategy.

Led by: LBTH Public Health and LBTH Communications
Due: March 2023

Continue to tackle the health impact of fast food on our high streets

- Enlist more fast-food businesses to participate in the Food for Health programme so that residents in Tower Hamlets will have access to more healthier options.
- Evaluate current implementation of A5 policy (hot food takeaways) to inform an evidence base to strengthen this policy in next Local Plan.

Led by: LBTH Environmental Health and LBTH Strategic Planning
Due: Ongoing



Healthy Settings



Increase health promotion support and engagement with schools

- Ensure every school has a health and wellbeing lead who is trained to champion health promotion.
- Deliver materials/resources and support health and wellbeing governor leads to support them in their role.
- Provide support to schools to facilitate engagement with the Healthy Schools London programme.
- Support The Daily Mile.

Led by: LBTH Education
Due: August 2023 & ongoing

Deliver school food improvement programme across the borough

- Establish a new School Food Improvement Programme, with a full range of key stakeholders, to take a multi-pronged approach to deliver healthier school food borough-wide; including training, better monitoring, and improved partnership working.

Led by: LBTH Public Health, LBTH Education,
and Contract services
Due: May 2025

Tackle food poverty and improve food provision where nutritional value can be improved

- Chair the Fair Food for All action group and deliver a plan through this group that supports healthy affordable food provision.
- Support the extension of food pantry numbers so that more families have access to healthy food.
- Pilot a 12-month fruit & veg prescription schemes to enable families on a low income to have a healthy diet.
- Deliver a healthy holiday food programme to feed children entitled to free school meals during the school holiday.

Led by: LBTH Public Health and Tackling
Poverty
Due: June 2023 & ongoing



Healthy Services



Increase knowledge, skills and confidence of professionals

- Deliver training to professionals in the 0-19 integrated services
- Develop and deliver evidence-based healthy weight training to early-years settings (children and family centres)

Led by: GP Care Group
Due: March 23 for 0-19 service. Then wider to other professional groups

Child healthy weight pathways

- Deliver a child healthy weight pathway that offers sustainable, family-focused and holistic support
- Support the implementation of child healthy weight pathways as informed by Task and Finish Group
- Publicly launch a new child healthy weight pathway to enable child-facing services to understand their role in delivering family focused support

Led by: GP Care Group
Due: September 2023

Extend peer-led support to families dealing with excess weight

- Identify resources, design and deliver a 12-month programme of work to scale up our Healthy Families Parental Engagement programme
- Develop a network of Healthy Family Parent Ambassadors to deliver peer-led support to families dealing with excess weight; and extend the Healthy Families programme

Led by: LBTH Public Health and Parental Engagement
Due: Ongoing

Develop a communications strategy on healthy weight for residents

- Develop a culturally appropriate shared language
- Eliminate stigmatising narratives on healthy weight
- Develop a professional communications strategy

Led by: LBTH Public Health
Due: September 2023



Healthy Services continued



Lead an improvement programme to transform local delivery of the NCMP including engagement with schools

- Identify resources, design and deliver a 12-month programme of work to improve communications, child/family experience of NCMP measurement, and subsequent support offer
- Co-produce with school staff, parents and children a 'shared language' around healthy weight
- Pilot a supported offer in selected schools in the borough

Led by: LBTH Public Health and GP Care Group
Due: Sept 2023

Establish a directory of child healthy weight support services

- Collate local services available to families to support healthy weight
- Create a directory that supports professionals who work with children and families to connect them to the range of services that support health and wellbeing and that are appropriate to their needs

Led by: GP Care Group
Due: March 2023

Engage in ongoing partnership working with academic partners in Act Early collaborative

- Regularly collaborate with academic colleagues on research bids to support the child healthy weight agenda

Led by: LBTH Public Health and GP Care Group
Due: Ongoing

Health inequalities: Continue to strengthen approach

- Continue to explore how best to address inequality/promote equity in service delivery relating to wider determinants of child healthy weight

Led by: LBTH Public Health and GP Care Group
Due: Ongoing



Healthy services – 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



Appendix 1: Child Healthy Weight Logic Models

These are the logic models that were created after exploring what we could do to support children and young people to be a healthy weight.



HEALTHY PLACES (environmental interventions at borough level)

| INTERVENTIONS (OUTPUTS) | | SHORT TERM OUTCOMES | | MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES | | LONG TERM OUTCOMES | |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------|--|----------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| 1 | Address advertising and promotion 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 new fast food outlets 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 play spaces 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 parks feel safe and welcoming | 6 | Relevant council policies, strategies and contracts support childhood obesity agenda | | | | |
| 7 | Ensure all council policies, strategies and contracts 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 food and drink controlled by the council and support partners to do the same | 9 | More children actively travel to school | | | | |
| 10 | Ensure the voice of children and young people 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 school meals | 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 physical activity opportunities at schools | 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 Healthy Early Years London | 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 food offer in borough’s vending machines, including leisure centres | 4 | Vending machines in the borough are healthier | | | | |
| 5 | Adopt Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services 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 food supply chain (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 healthy eating offer | 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 eating and physical activity sessions 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 cycling training 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 communications strategy 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 services 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 healthy weight pathway 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 professionals 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 infant feeding and wellbeing service | 8 | Those working in the community have the necessary skills and knowledge to discuss healthy weight with families | | | | |
| 9 | Promote healthy start 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)