



Healthy Schools
Healthier Living & Learning

Local approaches that make a difference

Sharing the lessons learned by the
Healthy Schools Beacon Authorities



2007-2008
Healthy Schools

Foreword

In less than a decade, the National Healthy Schools Programme has established itself as one of the country's most widely embraced non-statutory government initiatives in schools.

I believe that one of the major reasons for the Programme's longevity and success is due to the hard work and commitment of its Local Programmes, and thanks to the dedication, enthusiasm and vision of the Headteachers and staff they support. They have fully embraced and owned the ethos of Healthy Schools, by recognising that health and education go hand in hand.

This approach isn't about giving up on high educational standards, because these really do matter, but it recognises that a child who is healthy is likely to perform better in school, and a child who feels they're achieving is less likely to get involved in risky or negative behaviour.

Throughout the country, there are countless examples of creativity from schools in promoting the health and wellbeing of children and young people, and each of these seven Beacon Authorities have been recognised with Beacon Status for their excellence in working with schools to successfully overcome challenges and implement the Programme.

Each of these approaches are local initiatives that have already made a big difference, and I am confident that the ideas, advice and learning presented by these Beacon Authorities will be an important support to many other Healthy Schools Local Programmes, as we continue to take the Programme forward.

Richard Sangster,
Head of National Healthy Schools Programme

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Setting the Scene

What is the National Healthy Schools Programme?

The National Healthy Schools Programme (NHSP) is an exciting long-term initiative supported by the Department of Health (DH) and Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), promoting the link between health, behaviour and educational achievement.

Delivered through a network of 150 Local Programmes, Healthy Schools offers guidance and support for primary care trusts, local authorities and their schools. The aim is to equip children and young people with the skills and knowledge to make informed health and life choices and to reach their full potential.

Schools work towards achieving National Healthy School Status (NHSS) by demonstrating good practice and meeting criteria around four core themes: PSHE education, Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Emotional Health and Wellbeing.

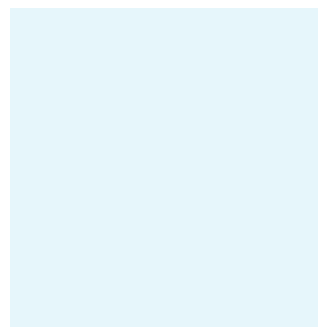
Ultimately, Healthy Schools is all about creating happier, healthier children who do better in learning and in life!

Who are Healthy Schools Beacon Authorities?

The Beacon Scheme was launched in 1999, to identify, promote and share best practice in public service delivery. Beacon status is granted to those local authorities who can demonstrate a clear vision, excellent services and a willingness to innovate within a specific theme. Healthy Schools was one of ten themes for which Beacon status was awarded in March 2007.

The Beacon Scheme for the Healthy Schools theme recognised excellence by asking councils to assess their outcomes and to apply only if they were ahead of the national target of 50% of schools achieving National Healthy School Status by the end of 2006, and if they felt their schools would judge the Local Programme as excellent.

The Beacon criteria also recognised that to be sustainable and embedded in local expectation and culture, Local Programmes needed to have built effective partnerships with a range of local stakeholders, and have processes in place that truly engage children, young people, staff, parents/carers and governors.



How have the Beacon Authorities helped others?

Over 15 months the Healthy Schools Beacon Authorities worked with their multi-agency partners to support other local authorities across the UK to improve their Healthy Schools practice.

This support included sharing policies, guidance, documentation, toolkits and their own experience as local authorities striving to deliver health and wellbeing to the children and young people in their schools.

As well as supporting local authorities, the Beacons worked closely with the National Healthy Schools Programme, supporting Regional Co-ordinators and contributing to central policy development for ongoing improvements to the Programme.

Committed to ongoing improvement, the Beacons continue to look for ways to further develop their practice. With the support of the National Healthy Schools Programme, they have developed, tested and extended their practice through a series of local projects.

For further information on the Beacon Scheme visit: www.beacons.idea.gov.uk

For further information on the National Healthy Schools Programme visit: www.healthyschools.gov.uk



The Purpose of this Booklet

This booklet is designed to provide insights into the Local Programmes implementing projects on the ground. The local initiatives delivered by the Healthy Schools Beacon Authorities have a particular focus on rolling out small scale projects to achieve positive outcomes in health and behaviour for children and young people in schools, at home and in their local area.

Through this booklet, the difficulties encountered by the Beacon Authorities are explored, and subsequent lessons learned throughout their work are identified.

The projects are at different stages and form part of the Beacons' ongoing work on Healthy Schools. This publication shares the learning to date from these local projects, which range from tailored curriculum content supporting vulnerable children and young people to working cross-boundary on Local Area Agreement priorities. It encapsulates not just what has worked well to date but the lessons learned along the way.

Inside you will find the key learning from all the projects drawn together under thematic challenges, with essential information on each project and what the Beacons did to overcome their challenges to deliver local solutions to Healthy Schools.



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Learning from Local Projects

Getting Started

Be clear about what you want to do, why you want to do it and what outcomes you aim to achieve. What priorities are you responding to? Be explicit about this, and make sure you have the right strategic stakeholders involved at the start.

Clarify roles - sometimes people involved in the project are unsure of their exact role and need more guidance than they let on. Your project will only be successful if those engaged share your objective and are aware how to contribute accordingly to achieve it. Always ensure that anyone involved in the project has received a thorough brief and knows what input you would like from them, so that they can help you in the way you want to be helped!

Invest to save - the project management team can lose a lot of time if they continually have to step in and sort things out on the ground. If you give sufficient training to the people who are delivering the project and ensure they not only know how to respond to issues and problems but can use their initiative to keep the project going, then they are in a better place to 'get by' and solve issues as and when they arise. This ensures that central resources can concentrate on the high level work, and the team taking action are fully equipped to manage the 'nitty gritty'.

Spend time early on - for external partners getting involved in a project, it can be extremely daunting as often it is a new area for them and they are trying to get to grips with what it all means and how they are involved.

It is important to ensure that once partners, stakeholders, schools or individuals are briefed, they are given sufficient time to set up and prepare for their engagement. They will need time to absorb what they've been told and make arrangements to input into the project.

From small seeds - funding is always an obstacle when it comes to getting a project off the ground. The process of searching for funding can be stressful and discouraging, perseverance however does prevail. Funding can be easier to find if you start small and grow bigger. If partners see that others have invested in the project, they are reassured and are more likely to consider giving funding. A portfolio of investors is equally as good as having one individual donor.

Engaging Partners

Tailor your message - different partners need different information. For strategic partners, identify the strategic priorities that you are responding to, and your proposed measurable outcomes. Operational partners' interests will be in understanding how they fit in, so give a clear brief and explain the whole process.

Spark their interest - project teams often find that they have a project they wish to roll out, however, they are struggling to generate interest from potential partners. Competition from other projects, lack of time and knowledge of the project can prevent partners from getting involved.

Project managers have found that if you offer the partner data or analysis, this demonstrates the benefits for them at your first meeting. You can then get them engaged and hopefully, they will want to know more and are encouraged to work with you.



Working with schools ...

Maintain a healthy distance - once a project has kicked off and is being rolled out, it is easy to focus on the end goal and keep the momentum going. Often project teams are so concerned with getting the job done, they find it difficult to step back and have an overview of progress made and direction. Some project teams have found that having a third party peer group is great for keeping a project in check and ensuring that all stages of the project - planning, preparation, briefing, delivery and evaluation - are still relevant and true to the purpose.

A two way deal - it is great when a project has lots of partners signed up to it and willing to engage. It is important for a project team to ask itself if it is getting the most out of its partners. Often, knowing the wider context of what your partners are doing outside of this project can be key to utilising their skills and experience. Some teams have found out too late that partners were running parallel projects which linked in really well to their own: knowing this beforehand could have helped shape both projects so that they complemented each other.

Plan ahead - engaging schools can be a challenge; as enthusiastic as they are to help out, they can underestimate the commitment required when contributing to projects. Schools are busy institutions with lots of activity taking place, so many project teams have found it difficult to change arrangements with schools at the last minute. It is important to ensure that if you require input from school staff, they are told with lots of warning and accurate instruction. This will ensure that you get a solid commitment from schools.

Delay to gain - even though project roll out can be delayed and pushed back, it is never a good idea to start your project too late in the academic year if you require significant input from schools. When projects slip, it is preferable to wait an academic year to roll it out rather than asking a school to squeeze in activity in a confined amount of time. The project will be rushed and stressful for all - avoid it at all costs.

Maintain a profile - when rolling out a project, it is easy to limit contact with schools to just the personnel you require, such as the admin staff, the headteacher and other selected members of staff. There could be repercussions, however, if you do not keep the governors and Senior Leadership Team in the loop. Although they do not have a direct input to the project, they need to know what is going on and if they are included in the communications that can be vital in pushing the project forwards and ensuring that the necessary contribution is made available.

Time ...

Editorial process - project teams should allow good time for designing and producing documents, as experience proves this can be a long-winded and laborious process. One thing that can get missed off though is time required for proof reading. When working with partners, they often have to have an input in the review and sign off of documents - when you have a number of players involved reading time is required for all partners engaged. To ensure that you have a document or publication which can be fully endorsed by all partners involved in the project, factor in time to ensure that the copy gets reviewed and approved by all relevant parties. If this procedure is not in place, it can lead to hold ups and suspension as documents are awaiting sign off.

Term-time operations - when planning a project, it's easy to assume that you have 52 weeks in a year in which to work with. Caution is issued however if you are working with partners associated with children and young people as often you must completely discount the summer holidays from your plan. Pencilling in activities which involve teachers, parents, children and young people and agency workers is never a good idea between mid July and September as most people are away intermittently and it is unlikely that you will have a full team available.

Reserves and contingencies - it can be really frustrating when key activities planned in your project are dashed when there is a cancellation of a date. Often work is carried out, with a particular date in mind, which when cancelled leaves the team asking, 'what next?' Momentum is interrupted and there is a period of upheaval as the team attempt to re-plan. Providing back up dates from the outset can be key in ensuring that if anything does crop up, or if unforeseen circumstances prevent the activity from taking place- the team have another date to work around and frantic last minute planning is not required.

Achieve a balance - it is a great feeling when a project is getting underway and partners are engaged and progress is being made. It is easy however to get caught up and invest more time in this, and less in your other priorities. No matter how inspiring a project is, always remember your other projects and commitments, and ensure that you distribute your time and effort accordingly across all your priorities. Maintain a bird's eye view of all of your projects and ensure that enough resources are being provided to them.

Beneficiaries ...

Maintain your focus - it is great to be able to work with the people who will benefit from the outcome of the project whilst you are rolling it out. Sometimes the objectives of the project can be misinterpreted and so the best way to get round this is to ensure that whoever you are in contact with is clear about why you are there, what you can do for them and what your limits are - i.e. you are not able to rectify issues outside of your project. Presenting the aim of each visit to them is a good way of letting them know what you intend to do.

Keep it real - project teams have found that when undertaking project work which aims to deliver outcomes to children and young people, the staff working with children are a key way to channel the project and should not be overlooked. It is essential that they are briefed and included in what the project intends to do for children and young people, and how it will be rolled out on the ground. They should be key contributors as they see the individuals on a daily basis and can help turn a project round.

Communicate with clarity - in a time where there are many initiatives taking place to improve the life chances and wellbeing of children and young people, it is important to ensure that your project promotes a clear and consistent message. It is a good idea to look at other local projects taking place and ensure that communication messages are coherent and would not confuse the recipients. If a child or young person is inundated with various messages related to social issues for example, it can cloud them and will limit the impact of your project. Always check out the wider context that the beneficiary is being exposed to, and ensure your message has a clear place within it.

Research ...

Keeping track - when project managers get into the swing of delivering their project, some things only come to light with hindsight. When carrying out research via surveys and questionnaires, it is easy to lose track of who has and who is yet to complete one. This is particularly evident when rolling out a survey among school staff: How do you ensure each staff member takes part, and how do you collect their responses and ensure everyone is checked off the list when it is designed to be confidential? Tracking surveys with codes is a good way of keeping on top of them and also maintains any confidentiality agreement.

Current knowledge - when you are delivering a local project, project teams may have a good understanding of the local context and thus feel that there is less need to carry out background research as they already have a good understanding of the local area. However, because situations can change, issues can gain pace, slow down and move on to affect different localities, it is always a good idea to ensure that research is carried out to support anything you intend to do.

Ready, steady, tested - the prospect of using new technology or software to implement your project can appear to have many advantages. It is imagined that technology will make delivery more efficient and reliable - this can hold true, however, only if you have a good command of the technology and know how to use it. If you are using new software, ensure that you run a few trials because if technology does not perform well, it can wreak havoc for a project leading to time delays, frustrations and tense relationships. Most technologies bring about teething problems - so counteract yours by getting to grips with it well in time before you put it to use for your project.



First Hand Experiences

Secondary PSHE Education Consultant – targeted work

Leeds Healthy Schools team

Young people between the ages of 11-19 gain increasing levels of independence, making decisions about their personal lives in the context of prevalent social 'norms'. They increasingly choose their own eating and physical exercise routines. Many are increasingly exposed to potential risk and harm - possibly experimenting with relationships, sexual activity, drug and alcohol use.

From age 15, students experience three successive years of public exams, and are more likely to have their first serious (and sexual) relationship, increased access to drugs and alcohol and leave home for the first time. Young people in alternative learning settings may experience no PSHE education input at all, or a disjointed programme. A coherent taught and extended PSHE education curriculum is of critical importance for young people of this age group to help them manage the changes in their lives and reduce emotional and physical health risks; this is particularly so for vulnerable groups.

The Leeds Healthy Schools team proposed to appoint an advanced skills teacher (AST) to lead on supporting secondary schools to implement the new Quality and Curriculum Authority (QCA) framework, aligned with SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning), with particular regard to schools serving the most deprived wards and vulnerable groups. The project is in its early stages as the PSHE education Consultant came into post in September 2008 and is now tasked to deliver the following outcomes:

- Improved strategic provision for wellbeing and achievement of Healthy Schools wellbeing standards in relevant schools and alternative settings
- Improved quality of PSHE education and Physical Activity in alternative settings and schools
- Improved PSHE education/ health provision in post 16 settings
- Co-ordination of additional PSHE education support for vulnerable young people

With further support from the Leeds Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Connexions (an organisation providing information and advice for young people), an Advanced Skills PSHE education teacher is now in post for a year. The PSHE education consultant will work with targeted schools and their Headteachers and partners in Education Leeds, in partnership with the Leeds Healthy Schools team.



Successes and future outcomes

The initial funding - £10,000 - increased five-fold in the course of two months, as other Leeds partners agreed to support the appointment of a new post. The appointment of the post has led to further funding proposals - 'incentives for schools' that will help launch a new campaign and strategy for PSHE education within Leeds.

Challenges

Securing matched funds took longer than anticipated as did the recruitment processes. However, the extra time allowed for detailed and useful discussions with strategic partners in Leeds, which allowed for further refinement and development of ideas to support the appointee, has led to further funds being allocated.

Lessons learned

If funding is an issue, starting with a small funding pot and then attracting further partners to the table has proved to be very productive. Aligning any new interventions with city priorities is crucial.

Understanding Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) - improving outcomes for all

Rochdale Healthy Schools Programme

In order for young people to grow up with a good understanding of sex and relationships, the Rochdale Healthy Schools team believe that effective Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) is key. Given its importance, the Rochdale Healthy Schools team set out to ensure that young people were receiving valuable SRE at school.

In 2004-2007, research on teenage pregnancy singled out a number of secondary schools which were operating successful SRE and contributing to positive outcomes for children and young people. The Rochdale Healthy Schools team decided to build on this research and uncover why the SRE in these schools had led to improved sexual health knowledge.

By commissioning a teenage pregnancy research officer, the Rochdale Healthy Schools team were able to ascertain the factors that contributed to making SRE effective. This knowledge will help inform a model of good practice which can be shared with other schools across the borough to ensure that all children and young people have the opportunity to engage in effective SRE and, through this, acquire a good level of sexual health knowledge.

In partnership with key personnel and organisations, the Rochdale Healthy Schools team conducted interviews with staff at three schools/colleges in the borough. This project is in its near final stages and when completed, the research will be compiled into a report which provides a model of good practice for SRE which will be shared with schools.

Indicative findings suggest that strong SRE is characterised by:

- Consistent messages across the school in SRE
- SRE that is relevant to children and young people
- Input from external bodies
- Children and young people who are involved in the delivery and evaluation of the programme

Successes and future outcomes

As a result of successfully engaging schools/colleges to identify strong practice in SRE, the Rochdale Healthy Schools team are in the process of developing an audit tool for schools which will assist them in identifying effective practice within their own schools. Once the report has been concluded, the Rochdale Healthy Schools team plan to host an event to feedback on SRE provision among local schools and share the models of good practice.

Challenges

The sample was reduced from four to three schools as one of the schools had to withdraw. Whilst there was no mitigating action that the Rochdale Healthy Schools team could take to resolve this, it did mean that research was based on a smaller sample of good practice.

Time was lost when a staff member from one of the schools sought to review and amend some of the research interviews. Given that the team had requested honest and confidential feedback, this setback had to be intercepted and the staff member was re-briefed on the objectives of the project.

Securing allocation of time and availability of staff to conduct interviews proved extremely time-consuming. The team had to remain flexible and ensure that their partners were able to adapt and work around the delays incurred.

Lessons learned

Brief partners thoroughly so they are sure about the input required.

Factor in surplus time for co-ordinating input from others, as things inevitably get cancelled or postponed, so contingency time is a necessity.

Inspire and motivate - the Pastoral Leaders Award

St Helens Healthy Schools Programme

St Helens is devising and implementing a multifaceted programme for children and young people that recognises the ability of the whole child to take responsibility within a school framework beyond prescribed subject areas.

A stakeholder group has been formed with the remit to design and produce a toolkit for a Pastoral Leaders Award. The stakeholder group is comprised of the St Helens Healthy Schools team, Advisory PE Teacher, the PSHE education & Citizenship Consultant and Halton Local Authority personnel. The stakeholder group have liaised with the PSHE education secondary cluster group who have understood the purpose and the objectives of the Pastoral Leaders Award, and have acted as a critical friend to the group.

The toolkit is now designed and comprises photocopiable resources for activities and guidance notes. It has been piloted with a Year 10 group followed by a review period before being printed and disseminated.

A DVD will be produced to accompany the Pastoral Leaders toolkit demonstrating the activities used, including comments from the students.

Successes and future outcomes

Once the toolkit has been piloted and any improvements made, it will be introduced through training sessions. The aim is for it to become an annual programme that is delivered in house by the schools themselves.

Challenges

The St Helens Healthy Schools team had to develop the toolkit under time constraints. There were a number of partners in the stakeholder group, so finding a suitable time for everyone involved to meet, plan and produce the resource was a challenge.

A pilot school was selected to act as the test bed for the toolkit. It was a struggle to find a school that could commit the time and resources and agree to roll this out at short notice.

Lessons learned

Given that the toolkit will be available in schools, it would have been much better to include schools as part of the stakeholder group. Ensure that the people you intend to use your toolkit are involved in the planning and development of it. This then gives them ownership and motivation to implement it.

Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

Healthy Kids Programme

Bristol Healthy Schools Programme

The Bristol Healthy Schools Programme operates as a partnership between the City Council and Primary Care Trust (PCT). In order to continue to promote the two themes of Healthy Eating and Physical Activity among children and young people in schools, the Bristol Healthy Schools team introduced an 8 week programme to Key Stage 2 children to evaluate the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity programme of five schools.

The programme was originally developed by Sports Services (Bristol City Council's sports department which aims to increase participation in sport and physical activity) and was piloted in a local primary school. In partnership with the Sports Services, the Bristol Healthy Schools team project extended the delivery of this programme in an additional five schools.

The Healthy Schools team delivered this programme by training the teaching assistants of the participating schools. The teaching assistants received a resource pack with session plans and handouts for the young people taking part.

Once they were fully trained, the teaching assistants delivered two 60 minute sessions a week for a period of 8 weeks, before and after school. The session involved teaching children basic nutrition, healthy lifestyle knowledge and key sports skills using the FUNdamentals scheme, which is designed to help young people enjoy physical exercise. To celebrate the end of the 8 week programme, the children took part in a mile fun run.

The programme commenced and concluded with a sports skills circuit and stamina runs, both of which will contribute to the analysis of the research. The delivery of the project is now complete and the team are currently reviewing the programme in light of the research findings. Now that the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity teaching sessions have taken place, Bristol University are carrying out an evaluation on the effectiveness of the programme.

Successes and future outcomes

The Bristol Healthy Schools team have worked well with Sports Services and schools overcoming any setbacks and delivering the programme to all targeted schools. Once the review of the materials is completed to take on board the evaluation, Bristol Healthy Schools team plan to develop a dissemination strategy to roll out the programme to all primary schools in Bristol. In addition, the resource pack and handouts for children and young people will be accessible to other schools and programmes via the website:

www.bristolhealthyschools.nhs.uk

Challenges

The length of the programme (8 weeks) did not lend itself to a one-term roll out. Consequently, the teaching assistants divided the programme over two terms. This led to the challenge of maintaining momentum and enthusiasm for the project.

Given the staggered roll out of the programme, a further challenge for Bristol Healthy Schools was that each school was operating at a different pace. The team had to therefore manage a number of schools, all of which were at different stages of the project and required varying levels of support.

The Bristol Healthy Schools team had specified to the schools that two teaching assistants were required to deliver the programme to their children and young people at Key Stage 2. Sometimes, however, schools would depend on just one teaching assistant. Similarly, delivery was stalled on occasion, as schools cancelled or postponed sessions owing to staffing issues.

Lessons learned

Resource materials are time-consuming to produce so always allow extra time for design and printing, as they are always more time-intensive than anticipated!

To enjoy an effective engagement with schools on local projects, ensure that you give lots of advance notice to schools if you are planning to use school resources or to take their staff out for training.

When working with schools, ensure that you give them substantial preparation time between the initial briefing and the start of the project. This allows them to plan staff and resources in good time for the bulk of the project. Things can get problematic if they do not have time to assess what is required of them and how they can arrange their resources to accommodate engagement in projects.

Meeting the challenge - Be Healthy! Stay Safe

Leeds Healthy Schools and Wellbeing Programme

The Leeds Be Healthy! Challenge invites young people and adults to take on a challenge, 'Just do one thing well' for a period (say four to six weeks) sustaining the new behaviours into the future, e.g. eat an additional piece of fruit or vegetable daily. Tens of thousands of children and young people have participated in this student-led programme over three years. The aim was to build on this success and invite families to join in!

Schools were invited to bid for £1000 funding to design emotional or physical health challenges which would include whole families: parents as well as children and young people.

With support from the Leeds Healthy Schools team, the schools came up with some fantastic and innovative ideas as to how they could link the Be Healthy! Challenge to the priorities they had as a school for engaging their parents. This included charting family food choices, an outdoor sound system to engage families in 'funky feet sessions', running and cycling clubs run by parents.

11 schools were accepted to implement the Be Healthy! Challenge. They are all at different stages of the roll out of their initiatives; however, once finished, their evaluations of the projects will be used by the Leeds Healthy Schools team to indicate what works in terms of engaging families. This will, in turn, influence the second phase of the project, which will develop methods of sustaining parental engagement with health activities, using the Be Healthy! Challenge as a 'gateway'.

Successes and future outcomes

The Be Healthy! Challenge has been an extremely successful and popular programme with schools - tens of thousands of young people in Leeds have participated in the challenge. Through the initial piloting of family activities, the Leeds Healthy Schools team have demonstrated that the Be Healthy! Challenge provides an excellent 'access point' for further work with families.

Challenges

The Leeds Healthy Schools team had to review their project plan. Review of bids, contact and development work with schools and rolling out of projects were carried out with limited staff resources.

Being able to secure funds for the programme and its sustainability has been a huge risk to the project and therefore has required some skillful resourcing.

Lessons learned

It's a good idea to tie your project in with schools' current priorities - it's easier to get them on board and motivated.

Working together to tackle obesity

Rochdale Healthy Schools Programme

Rochdale Healthy Schools team have launched a local project in which they will work with Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale Primary Care Trusts (PCT) and Link4Life (a leisure and cultural trust) to determine the factors which contribute to the decrease in obesity levels and improvement in levels of physical activity among children and young people.

The intention is to use this research to inform the MEND (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition, Do it!) project for families. In particular:

- The correlation between high levels of obesity
- National Healthy School Status and physical activity levels
- To identify the change in obesity levels from reception to Year 6
- To identify school commitment/priorities.

The Rochdale Healthy School team are already planning and making contact with stakeholders and have started extensive data analysis from various sources; Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME), National Healthy School Status data, Activemark, Sportsmark (awards by Sport England) and PESSCL (PE, School Sport and Club Links) scores.

Successes and future outcomes

The Rochdale Healthy Schools team will disseminate evidence of factors which contribute to obesity level improvement and take up of physical activity among children and young people by reporting to stakeholders and evidencing good practice via national websites.

Challenges

As always, obtaining data to inform research is a challenge and there were delays in waiting for data to come through. The Rochdale Healthy Schools team were reliant on a number of data sources and as a consequence of one of the sources being late in issuing the required data, the core work was hugely delayed and so the project remains at its initial stages.

Lessons learned

When working on data dependent projects, ensure that any partners you are dependent on are fully briefed on the project and understand their input before planning starts.

Ensure that partners have the time and facilities to support you in the way you request.

Ensure that you have good communications with partners from the outset.

Ensure that partners' expectations are managed so that they understand your commitment to them and theirs to you.

Active for Life

South Gloucestershire Healthy Schools Programme

The South Gloucestershire Healthy Schools team are currently in the early stages of implementing Active for Life for Year 5 students. Active for Life is a programme which has previously proven effective in encouraging children and young people to be more active and eat more healthily.

Having initially piloted this project in a number of schools in the region, the South Gloucestershire Healthy Schools team are in the process of rolling it out to 15 schools in localities with a prevalence of high levels of obesity.

The project will be delivered by teachers at the school, who will receive a full days training on how the programme works and will be given a teaching pack to support its implementation.

Year 5 students in the selected schools will have 16 lessons on Active for Life. Given the promising results from the pilot project, in which a control group and evaluation were used to determine the effectiveness, it is anticipated that the outcome of this intervention will be lower levels of obesity and that screen viewing among this cohort will also be reduced.

The project will be managed by two members of the Healthy Schools Advisory Teachers on behalf of the local authority and PCT. Training has been delivered to the teachers who will run the lessons in school, and the training pack consisting of lessons plans, a CD and homework activities has been distributed.

The project managers will ensure that expertise from the Health and Citizenship team, Senior Health Promotion Specialists, PE Advisers, South Gloucestershire Catering Manager and the Sports Link Co-ordinator (individual responsible for promoting club-school links) is fed into the programme.

The project will be evaluated by the University of Bristol who will use measurements of height, weight, waist and accelerometers, alongside interviews and questionnaires, as a means of obtaining information from children and young people, staff and parents/carers. Success criteria will be based around the attitudes and behaviours of students. A longitudinal evaluation will monitor attitudes and behaviours a year after the project is completed.



Successes and future outcomes

Once the project is rolled out, an evaluation will be undertaken with the hope of introducing the project to all Year 5 teachers across the authority so they are well informed to tackle local priorities around obesity and lack of physical activity.

Challenges

It has been highlighted that the engagement of parents/carers within the project is a necessary development. The team must aim to include parents in sessions for schools despite the challenges this can present.

Lessons learned

The South Gloucestershire Healthy Schools team originally intended to roll this out to the most deprived localities, however, it has emerged that other areas were facing higher levels of obesity and would benefit more from it. Do not assume that the most deprived area needs the intervention; do some research to find out where best to target.

If you are fortunate to have piloted your project, ensure that you use this experience to improve roll out in future delivery.



Emotional Health and Wellbeing

Growing up and getting on - supporting Emotional Health and Wellbeing for Years 8-10

Lancashire Healthy Schools Programme

During their Beacon year, the Lancashire Healthy Schools team have worked towards designing a package of tools which address Emotional Health and Wellbeing for young people in Years 8 to 10. These tools will vary in audience and effect; some will be individual tools for children and young people, some will be strategies for schools, some will be a classroom based resources and others will be of assistance to teachers.

As part of the project, a multi-agency steering group has carried out extensive market research and student consultation to consider how best to support children and young people's Emotional Health and Wellbeing at secondary phase. It was found that this group is particularly vulnerable to issues around bullying, family, school, relationships, self-image, healthy eating and leisure among others. The Lancashire Healthy Schools team have identified twelve schools in which to pilot their resource package.

Through consultation with key partners (teacher consultants, fire and rescue services, police, young people's services, education welfare officers, Healthy Schools Local Programme Co-ordinators, educational psychologists, policy development officers for health services and senior management staff in schools) and young people, the team will soon commence design and production of a range of resources, including:

- Wallet card with useful phone numbers/ websites on areas of vulnerability
- Page in the school planner with useful phone numbers/websites
- Posters in and around schools
- Sat-nav website with tips, websites, and scenarios and tips from students and professionals
- Lesson plans/activities for teachers linked to Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) and scenarios on website.

The team are halfway through the project and once the tools are sufficiently developed and designed by stakeholders, they will be produced distributed in schools.

Challenges

The Lancashire Healthy Schools team found that working with a multi-agency group, all of whom have their own targets and interests, was challenging to manage. At times, the team found that the project agenda was diverted to accommodate the interests of stakeholders. The team had to control this in order to ensure that the project was focussed on its primary objectives and intended outcomes.

Lessons learned

If you're working with an array of partners, be sure to have the wider context of the projects that they are currently delivering as there may be scope to weave into their projects and link with what they are doing.

Provide your steering group with a thorough brief; this will ensure they know how their input could be helpful.



Making the leap - a transition guide from Years 6 to 7

St Helens Healthy Schools Programme

Making the move from primary to secondary school can be a daunting experience for children and young people. The St Helens Healthy Schools team are fully aware of this difficult time of transition and have begun work on a project that addresses the fears and concerns that students may experience when moving to new school settings.

The project team will design and produce a transition guide for Year 7 students entering secondary education, to ensure that the Emotional Health and Wellbeing of children and young people is maximised.

With over two thirds of the project complete, the St Helens Healthy Schools team have carried out extensive research and have consulted many key stakeholders including the teenage pregnancy co-ordinator, St Helens Youth Parliament, school councils and the Youth Democracy group to help inform the content of their transition guide.

The content has been developed and is currently being reviewed by the stakeholder group. Once approved, it will go to a graphic designer and the resulting booklet will be shared with over 70 schools.

Successes and future outcomes

Having engaged a number of partners to input into this guide, St Helens found that there was a definite need for a localised resource that assists children and young people in fitting into their new surroundings, allows them to be recognised for their individuality and builds on their own self esteem. The team are determined that the transition guide will be an example of a localised resource that addresses emotional health and wellbeing for their children and young people.

Challenges

The main challenge encountered in devising a guide for Year 7 was an underestimate of the time required to draft new content for the guide. Time allotted to the writing of the guide was insufficient and as a consequence, the deadline slipped. Significant time and effort was invested in developing appropriate language for the guide that placed an emphasis on positive messages to our children and young people in schools.

Lessons Learned

When writing guidance for any cohort of the community, consider the timescales. Always build in surplus time for rewrites and proof reading by a number of people. The St Helens Healthy Schools team would strongly recommend that some contingency is built into the planning cycle to facilitate this.

Children, young people and staff

Health Related Behaviour Survey

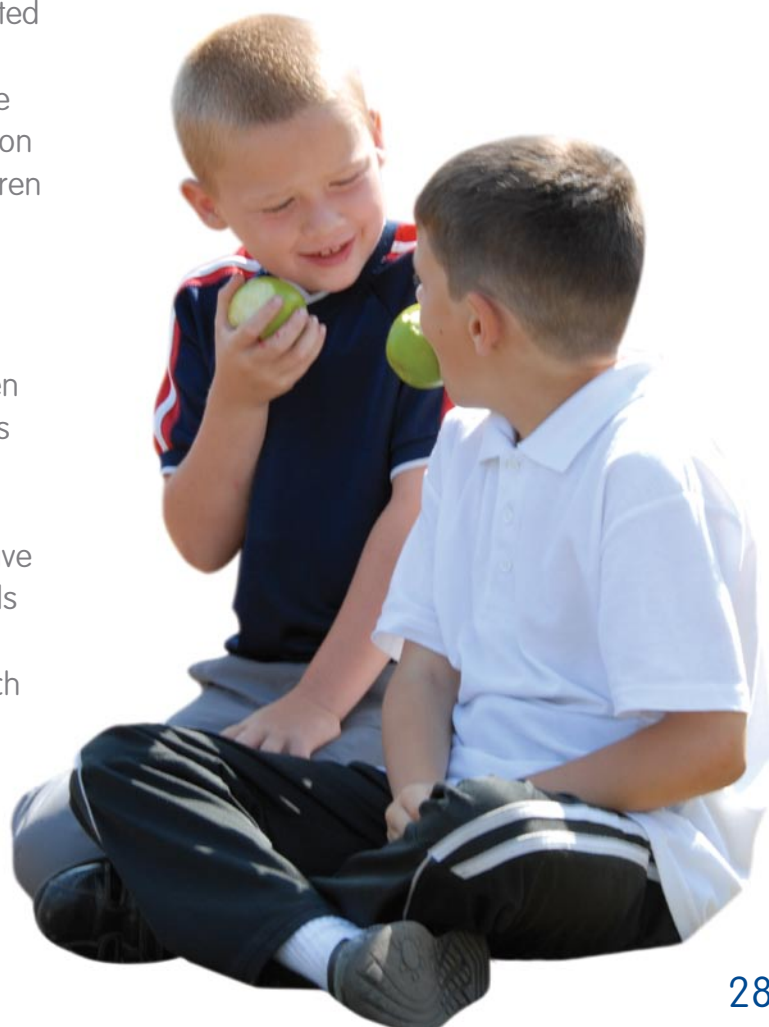
Bristol Healthy Schools Programme

The Bristol Healthy Schools team have almost completed the roll out of their additional local project. Thanks to significant funding from the National Healthy Schools Programme and the Public Health directorate, the Bristol Healthy Schools team are significantly advanced in the delivery of their project which aims to establish a robust set of baseline data.

The data would serve as a measure against which the effectiveness of health education and health promotion programmes in Bristol schools can be assessed. The data collected through the project will also be used to evaluate services and to form an evidence base for the development of future policy on planning and delivery of services for children and young people.

The project started with an online Health Related Behaviour survey and data was gathered from a total of over 5000 children and young people. The questionnaire was constructed with input from colleagues in Children and Young People's Services and Public Health Services. Responses have been collated and analysed by the Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU) which is an organisation that provides survey, research and publishing services.

Reports are currently being drafted for wider circulation reporting headlines and highlights at both city and local level. The schools will own this data and will be able to choose whether they wish to share it more widely.



Challenges

The team have so far experienced recurrent time delays throughout the project. This was due to slippage encountered whilst awaiting questionnaire responses from the schools.

The slippage meant that the SHEU was delayed in its evaluation work and had to commence collation and analysis of results later than intended. As a result, the schools will receive their datasets later than expected and any work that they intended to carry out as a result of receiving the data will be delayed.

Lessons learned

If there are dependencies in your project, e.g. some workstreams can only commence once other parts have concluded, ensure that contingency time is factored in.

Ensure your partners are aware of any dependencies and can be flexible in their approach.

Often when research is involved, it is worth investing some time in looking at what else has been done in your particular area and seeing if that could be adapted to meet your requirements, rather than starting something from scratch.

Accept the reality of working with schools - they are busy institutions and may not be able to work to your timescales. Remember the constraints on a school's time and find ways to work around that.

Health and wellbeing - inspired thinking around staff wellbeing

Derby Healthy Schools Programme

The Derby Healthy Schools team are implementing a pilot project which aims to produce a staff health and wellbeing package for schools. Once finished, this package will comprise of an online wellbeing survey, staff training, action plan, guidance and support materials. The aim of the package is to enable schools to identify areas of need and to set targets to address and develop the health and wellbeing of all their staff.

The project is based upon national and local information on staff wellbeing and also the input of a working party which was formed to oversee the project. Representatives include pilot schools, the Derby Healthy Schools team, Vantage Technologies Ltd (a company which provided software to enable public sector organisations to manage services) and Derby City Council.

The project was initiated with a half-day training session which was delivered to senior management and governors from the eight participating schools. During this session, the aims and processes of the project were made clear to attendees.

A further training day was then held for up to four individuals from each school who had put themselves forward to be 'facilitators' of the project. Once trained, the intention was that the facilitators would take the lead on moving the

project forward in their school, supported by the working party. This session familiarised the facilitators with the aims and content of the pilot staff wellbeing project and examined some of the main issues affecting organisational and personal wellbeing. The role of the facilitator was clarified, as were their responsibilities in supporting the completion of the wellbeing survey, disseminating information, contributing to action planning and moving the project forward.

The training was followed up with an hour long staff meeting at each school in which facilitators introduced the pilot projects to all the staff. After this meeting, all staff were required to complete an anonymous online survey which produced an automated summary highlighting the main issues derived from the results.

Facilitators have reported the findings back to all staff members and these have been put into an action plan. To measure outcomes and improvements brought about as a result of the staff wellbeing package, the wellbeing survey will be taken again in a years time.

Successes and future outcomes

To sustain support for this project, the Derby Healthy Schools team are aiming to produce a set of guidance materials to accompany the project, giving advice and suggestions for developing staff health and wellbeing as well as information on support services.

Lessons learned

Often when trying to achieve good outcomes for children and young people, staff are overlooked. Ensure they are addressed, as staff wellbeing plays an essential part in delivering and improving outcomes for young people.

Do not underestimate the need for training when rolling out new programmes to staff. Ensure that staff have direction and are able to find solutions from the outset.

Keep Governing Bodies and Senior Leadership Teams in the loop and ensure that they are kept up-to-date with the aims and objectives of the programme.

School facilitators should not be seen as counsellors and should be clear in their role of moving the project forward, not taking on individual cases of staff wellbeing within their organisations.

It is important to make sure that sources of support for staff are signposted to help support the individual needs of staff.

Staff wellbeing can only be moved forward if all members of staff make a firm commitment to addressing the issues in a positive, pro-active way.

It should always be made clear that staff wellbeing is not just about workplace wellbeing but also personal wellbeing. It should be recognised that everyone has a personal responsibility to make changes to aid their own wellbeing.

Joined up thinking, joined up outcomes - support for children and staff

Lancashire Healthy Schools Programme

In Lancashire, schools facing the most considerable challenges are piloting the Local Area Agreement (LAA) Risk Taking Behaviour project. To support this project, the Lancashire Healthy Schools team introduced the Lancashire County Council (LCC) Staff Emotional Health and Wellbeing Programme. By ensuring staff wellbeing underpins all that happens in a school, staff are better placed to have a positive impact on students emotional health and wellbeing. The Risk Taking Behaviour scheme operated with designated school Project Managers targeting specific children and young people to evidence prevention and early intervention plans.

The Wellbeing Programme supports this by helping staff maintain a position where they can affect positive change. It provides a useful way of identifying aspects of a school's practices that impact on staff emotional health and wellbeing. It also encourages staff to work together to maximise their own wellbeing and support that of their colleagues.

The programme started off with an anonymous and confidential employee survey. Staff then worked together, guided by a team of facilitators, to select priority areas to address over the forthcoming year. The survey will be carried out again in a year's time to assess any progress and celebrate good practice.

The project is currently halfway through completion with six out of the twelve schools engaged so far.

The Wellbeing Programme is managed by the Lancashire Staff Wellbeing Programme Co-ordinator in partnership with the Senior Managers and Governing Bodies of the target schools. As part of the programme, engagement and participation from stakeholders (including the whole school community) and partners agencies who work with young people is anticipated.

So far, the LCC Wellbeing Programme has supported the LAA Risk Taking Behaviour project by affecting the necessary change to deliver a confident and empowered workforce. Staff support systems have been designed through the union of the two programmes:

- School audits were carried out that provided valuable insight into training needs and support structures needed to deliver prevention and early intervention plans effectively
- In-Service training was given with an emphasis on making sure that change was young person and needs led

- Multi-agency Support Teams (MASTs) meetings take place each term in schools and aim to deliver prevention and early intervention strategies in line with the local context
- The programme has mobilised existing resources to identify and meet need in a more preventative, co-ordinated and integrated way.

Successes and future outcomes

Linking a staff project with a young people's project has helped to design staff support systems and identify the necessary training to help staff help children and young people.

It is anticipated that the outcome of these two projects being delivered together will enable quality mark standards for ethos/ emotional health and wellbeing, drugs, SRE, and community and partnerships.

Challenges

When working with the designated school Project Managers, it soon emerged that they had limited time. The Lancashire Healthy Schools team had to embed their Wellbeing programme into the Risk Taking Behaviour

Project in a constrained timescale.

Some actions which were identified were difficult to implement as they were not in line with the school's ethos and disciplinary policies. Achieving the best outcomes in a restricted environment was a challenge.

Some schools have got used to dealing with issues in a certain way. For schools that operate in a reactive fashion, it is a challenge to encourage prevention and early intervention. In addition, some schools are preoccupied with looking after their children and young people so staff emotional health and wellbeing is not a priority.



Enhancement to the National Healthy Schools Programme

Need to be stretched – get an enhancement

Derby Healthy Schools Programme

The Derby Healthy Schools team found that many schools were asking, 'What next?' once they had achieved National Healthy School Status. After a consultation exercise undertaken with schools, the idea of enhancements to the National Healthy Schools Programme was proposed.

The enhancement project, now almost halfway through completion, is effectively an extension to the National Healthy Schools Programme. Derby Healthy Schools team worked with local partners such as b-active (part of Derby City Partnership's Physical Activity strategy), Children First Physiotherapist (specialist physiotherapy committed to the wellbeing of children and young people), a Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator and Community Safety Partnership to develop several enhancements to the National Healthy Schools criteria.

Examples of enhancements which were developed are:

- childhood obesity
- Drug Education
- Sex and Relationship Education (SRE)
- School council achievement award
- Together against bullying award

- back care
- citizenship
- b-active

To be able to direct schools in undertaking an enhancement relevant to their circumstances and needs, the Derby Healthy Schools team conducted a mapping exercise. They identified local need by utilising teenage pregnancy data, physical activity levels, obesity statistics and social cohesion data incorporating both anti-bullying and drug related incidents. They were then able to guide schools to the enhancements relevant to their local circumstances, for example, an area with a prevalence of childhood obesity and low physical activity levels would be directed to either the childhood obesity or b-active Enhancement.

The team organised a large conference to launch the enhancement project. They invited all the schools in the city who had achieved National Healthy School Status and had attendance from 45 teachers from 32 schools, 12 children and young people and 10 strategic partners from the Local Programme.

During the event, workshops on the enhancements took place. Partners such as the b-active Team, Primary Care Trust, Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator and Community Safety Partnership were present as well as two secondary school councils who facilitated a workshop to explain the School Council Award Scheme. The conference was interspersed with physical activity led by children from two primary schools and a chair exercise for lazy backs. Evaluation of the day suggested that it was a successful event providing plenty of inspiration.

Following the conference, schools were directed to the enhancement(s) relevant to their local needs. They were assigned to the appropriate supporter who, with the required knowledge and expertise, was able to help them work on their chosen enhancement.

The enhancements project was supported by the production of a glossy brochure which contained all details of the programme. This document was shared at the conference, and has been subsequently shared regionally and nationally.

The projects are currently being developed in schools in Derby and, once completed, the schools will conduct an evaluation of each of the enhancements which will be received and reviewed by the Derby Healthy Schools team.

Successes and future outcomes

The Derby Healthy Schools team have lots of ideas in store to further their work on enhancements. They are hoping to share their guidance booklet with neighbouring authorities and are also keen to develop more enhancements which would help address local need. The central team are looking at the possibility of adopting the back care enhancement as part of the National Healthy Schools Programme.

Challenges

Producing the booklet was challenging as the Derby Healthy Schools team faced a tight deadline. The booklet had to be ready before the conference which did not leave much time to draft, review and design.

Much of the work conducted with the brochure designers was carried out virtually through telephone or email and this was not always ideal for discussing ideas. For the Derby Healthy Schools team, they found that virtual discussion on design and publishing of the brochure at times led to misinterpretation and misunderstanding.

Version control associated with the proofreading of the brochure also proved problematic at times.

With up to 10 proofreaders, it was a challenge to ensure that one master version was in circulation and not 10 different versions which could cause delays and frustration among the working group.

This project was carried out under the backdrop of a number of targets. Both the local authority and the schools work to various targets, including Ofsted indicators and the National Healthy Schools Programme targets. Harmonising the input and accepting that organisations are motivated by differing targets was a challenge.

Lessons learned

To produce an effective high quality document, a substantial amount of time is required. To ensure that it is user friendly it will need to be proofread by a number of people meaning sufficient time should be put into the project plan as this is paramount.

Engaging schools can be challenging as they are already busy and booked up all throughout the year. The Derby Healthy Schools team found that sharing the

statistical evidence for locality needs worked in drawing schools in and engaging them on the enhancements project. They need to know what's in it for them!

The enhancement project was exciting and staff and partners were keen to get involved. As a consequence, there was a risk that other commitments could suffer. Please remember to have a bird's eye view of all of your projects and do not concentrate all your efforts on one project - ensure that all your priorities are being addressed.

The Derby Healthy Schools team found that it was more effective to send literature to schools once they had achieved National Healthy School Status, as at this point, they are in a good position to pick up new guidance. During their application process they are often preoccupied and inundated with other guidance booklets.

Be cautious when including the summer holidays in your project plan as it is difficult to co-ordinate because as colleagues and key partners are on holiday at this time so it is rare to be able to have the full team in operation.

Future Projects

The learning from the implementation of these local initiatives has been invaluable to the Healthy Schools Beacon Authorities. Having recently been awarded significant funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government to roll out a set of projects related to behavioural change, they will ensure that the learning explored in this booklet is recalled so as to successfully deliver their projects, and maximise outcomes for children, young people, staff and parents/carers.

They will be collaborating together on the delivery of a 16 month programme which is related to the behavioural change of parents/carers and their children in the context of the National Healthy Schools Programme.

As part of Healthy Schools, each Beacon Authority will deliver a project which is focussed on effective parental involvement to sustain behavioural change within families. The main outcomes of these projects will be to develop, test and evaluate approaches to involve parents/carers in all areas for sustainable behavioural change, to inform Department of Health policy development with regard to the delivery of improved health outcomes for families and to address health inequalities. Each project is being delivered to two other Local Authorities in addition to the Beacon Authority, with an external researcher who will research and evaluate the 21 individual projects and the programme as a whole.

The Beacon Authorities are pleased to have this opportunity to continue working together to bring about positive sustainable change in families, in conjunction with the National Healthy Schools Programme.

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