



Health Heroes

A whole school approach to healthy weight

Final Evaluation Report
March 2014



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1. Executive Summary

Childhood obesity presents a significant challenge to children, families and professionals across London Borough of Hackney (LBH). Evidenced through the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP), Hackney currently has some of the highest childhood obesity rates in the country.

In January 2012, the Children's Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group (LBH Advisory Group) agreed to fund a pilot project in one school which would take a whole school approach to promoting healthy lifestyles and tackling obesity (including pupils, teachers, parents and the wider community). The project focused on the following strands:

- Increasing Physical activity
- Providing education on nutrition
- Supporting access to healthy food
- Use of local parks and green spaces.

Preparation for delivery of the pilot project began in April 2012. The pilot project began in Randal Cremer Primary School in September 2012, and initially ran for one academic year, alongside a wider programme of work tackling childhood obesity across the borough.

Interventions were planned across the four project strands: healthy eating; increasing physical activity; providing nutritional education and supporting access to healthy food; and increasing the use of local parks and green spaces. An open approach was employed to trialling interventions as this has been a pilot programme which enabled officers to assess impact and effectiveness of a range of interventions. Some interventions were targeted specifically at students, staff or parents and some were targeted at the school as a whole.

Overall Outcome Analysis:

Post intervention, evaluation showed improvements in health behaviours by children, parents and teachers and improved links with the wider community to improve health. These included reductions in waist measurement and BMI of children, increases in physical activity and physical activity performance, anecdotal improvements in behaviour and implementation of newly acquired knowledge on how to cook and eat healthily. Specifically:

- Almost all children increased their physical activity performance and amount of physical activity done during the intervention: 95 % of children improved their physical activity performance over the course of the intervention and the amount of time children spent doing physical activity per day (as reported by parents) almost doubled during the intervention.

- A significant proportion of overweight and obese children reduced weight - 92 % of children measured reduced waist measurement; 66 % of these were statistically significant reductions (12 and 8 classes out of 13 respectively). 69 % of children measured reduced BMI; 46 % of these statistically significant (9 and 6 classes out of 13 respectively). Of the remaining 4 classes, 3 showed BMI remained steady.
- The number of children eating a healthy breakfast increased by 23 % to 60 % by the end of the intervention and those not eating breakfast reduced from 19 % to 0 %.

Strategic whole school interventions:

- The steering group – school led, met monthly and led on all decision making. The group is now being chaired by the deputy head teacher.
- Involvement of the wider school community in actively promoting healthy weight – parents are engaged in the programme – examples include parents now running the weekly food co-op stall and parents co-ordinating regular play streets events.

Increasing physical activity:

- 95 % of all children improved their physical activity performance and performance level in P.E. lessons when tested post-intervention.
- There is now a comprehensive Physical Education (P.E.) curriculum delivered in the school, with improvements reported in teacher delivery skills and confidence delivering P.E. and 9 additional physical activity extra curricular clubs for children to participate in.
- Parents and teachers, including the head teacher have participated in, promoted and are continuing to lead physical activity and physical activity performance sessions.
- At baseline, 22 % of parents reported that their children spent 30 minutes to an hour engaging in physical activities per day, 11 % said 1-2 hours. Post-intervention the figures were 40 % and 20 % respectively.
- Teachers report positive impacts of improved P.E. in the school, including on behaviour.

Providing education on nutrition:

- Cook and eat sessions were well attended and all participants tested were able to place different foods in the correct groups, after intervention.
- 17 % more children reported eating a healthy lunch when questioned post-intervention.
- At baseline 37 % of parents reported that their child/ren usually ate a 'healthy' breakfast; this figure increased to 60 % post-intervention. In addition, numbers of children having 'nothing' to eat reduced from 19 % at baseline, to none post-intervention.

Supporting access to healthy food:

- The food co-op attracted 79 customers in less than an hour on its first day.
- The children in the gardening group have tended their crops well and learnt about how to use different herbs and vegetables in their cooking.

Use of local parks and green spaces:

- Nearby parks and playgrounds are now being used more - the school sports day took place in Haggerston park and was attended by many parents, and a bi-weekly running club takes place at Haggerston park, along with weekly BMX sessions.

2. Introduction

Childhood obesity presents a significant challenge to children, families and professionals across London Borough of Hackney (LBH).

Evidenced through the NCMP, Hackney currently has some of the highest childhood obesity rates in the country. Among children attending maintained schools in Hackney in 2012-13, key facts include:

- 13.2% of children are obese at reception year and 13.1% are overweight, higher than both the London and England averages.
- 25.2% are obese at year 6, and 16.0% are overweight – again higher than the London and England averages.
- Obesity rates are similar for boys and girls at Reception year, but by year 6 boys have significantly higher rates than girls.
- In both year groups, the highest obesity rate is among Black pupils and the lowest rate is among Asian pupils. Nationally, childhood obesity is more prevalent among Black, Asian and Mixed ethnicity children than among children of White ethnicity. Childhood obesity is also strongly correlated with deprivation.
- Participation in the NCMP for City and Hackney is very high – in 2012/13, 98.1% of reception children and 96.7% of Year 6 children were weighed and measured. Only children in state maintained schools are measured, and with approximately 20% of Hackney's children and young people in Independent schools, there is a significant gap in complete data.

Issues around childhood obesity were explored in January 2012, highlighting how significant the level of challenge is in tackling this issue. The Children's Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group (LBH Advisory Group) agreed to fund a pilot project in one school which would take a wholeschool approach to promoting healthy lifestyles and tackling obesity (including pupils, teachers, parents and the wider community). The project focused on the following strands:

- Increasing Physical activity
- Providing education on nutrition
- Supporting access to healthy food
- Use of local parks and green spaces.

After securing agreement with Randal Cremer Primary School to work with LBH to run the pilot project, initial consultation sessions were held with staff and children at the school. The children of Randal Cremer School were unanimously happy to help steer, design, and participate in the pilot project. They also came up with the name of the project: Health Heroes.

Preparation for delivery of the pilot project began in April 2012. The pilot project began in the school in September 2012, and initially ran for one academic year, alongside a wider programme of work tackling childhood obesity across the borough.

Key management mechanisms for the programme included:

- The Health Heroes project team – fortnightly meetings of LBH delivery officers and Public Health officers.
- School Steering Group – monthly advisory group made up of the Deputy Head, school health lead, school students, parents, school nurse, LBH officers and HUHFT Dietetics with ad hoc input from other professionals as appropriate.

The following criteria were considered for selecting a school:

- City and Hackney NCMP data on underweight, healthy weight, overweight and obese children;
- Eligibility for free school meals, ethnicity data and in-borough pupil count (to ensure a reflection of Hackney’s demography);
- School performance – since a school classified by Ofsted as ‘Satisfactory’ or below was considered to be more likely to have pressures relating to academic results and lack capacity to embrace a new initiative;
- Early years provision (to allow for early intervention);
- Size of school (preferably two-form entry);
- Ward (to target interventions to an area where there was wider prevalence of overweight and obesity).

A number of schools were considered against this criteria; Randal Cremer was approached and agreed to participate in the pilot project.

3. Description and Implementation of the Pilot Project

3.1 Whole School Strategy and Set Up

One of the key principles underpinning the programme was the involvement and steering of the project by and across the whole school. Governance and operational delivery was set up as below:

- The programme was overseen by the London Borough of Hackney Children’s Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group (detailed above).
- The programme had support from the London Borough of Hackney Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board (now the Health and Wellbeing Board), and from lead members for Children and Young People and Health.
- The programme was endorsed by the Head teacher who was actively involved. The programme was led in school by dedicated engagement officers and the Deputy Head.

Operationally, the programme was implemented through:

- The Health Heroes Working Group - fortnightly meetings of LBH delivery officers and public health officers
- School Steering Group – monthly advisory group made up of the Deputy Head, school health lead, school students, parents, school nurse, LBH officers and HUHFT Dietetics with ad hoc input from other professionals as appropriate.
- Two LBH officers were dedicated to the project and spent approximately two days per week in school. They were supported by LBH’s Children’s Health and Wellbeing, and Public Health teams.

3.2 School Policy: Targeted at School Staff

An audit was carried out of existing school policies relating to healthy eating and physical activity through the school steering group. Policies were reviewed, revised and enforced to embed healthy lifestyles into the ethos and practices of the school.

3.3 Partnerships

Strategic Partnerships

The programme was LBH-led and partners that supported delivery of the programme included:

- Former NELC PCT Public Health strategists (now LBH) – input in the design, evaluation, oversight and delivery of the pilot project;
- HUHFT Dietetics team – nutritional support for the catering team;
- Hackney Playing Out – planning play street events;

- LBH Sustainable and Active Travel department - support with bikers breakfast event and cycling proficiency training;
- LBH Communications team – development of communication materials;
- Young Hackney Play Development team – supporting play street event and linking with local playgrounds;
- Project lead in the school – main lines of communication with staff, students and parents;
- Gardening lead in the school – co-ordinating gardening club and harvesting of produce;
- Parent health champions who led on health initiatives from within the school – supporting/organising coffee mornings, play street events, food co-op and parent physical activity performance sessions.

Commissioned Interventions

The following organisations were commissioned to deliver interventions:

- The Children’s Food Trust – conducted the catering review;
- HUH Dietetics team – menu planning;
- Badu Sports – helped adapt P.E. curriculum, introduced new extra-curricular activities and organised competitions;
- Shoreditch Trust – ran cook and eat sessions;
- St Mary’s Secret Garden – provided initial support with gardening;
- Gorgeous Gardens – provided ongoing support with gardening;
- Core Health (commissioned by Public Health to run the Healthy Lifestyles programme) – conducted the measuring process;
- East London Food Access – provided produce for the food co-op stall.

3.4 Communications

- The name Health Heroes was suggested and chosen by a focus group of children at the school. A Health Heroes logo that is in line with the Change4Life branding was designed and used to illustrate banners, information leaflets and stickers which have been distributed at events at the school to raise awareness and the profile of the Health Heroes pilot project.
- T-shirts with the Health Heroes logo and the Randal Cremer school logo were distributed to every child to wear in P.E. lessons. Staff members also received a t-shirt.
- A notice board with details of after school clubs, cooking classes and other updates was installed by the gate for parents to view when picking up children.
- Parent health champions were recruited to improve communications with parents and allow us to engage parents more effectively and deliver information easily to them. One of them is Turkish speaking, which helped reach the large Turkish community.

3.5 Description of Interventions

a) Increasing Physical Activity

Huge emphasis was put on improving the physical activity provision in the school to instil an understanding of the importance of active lifestyles in keeping healthy. Interventions included:

Interventions targeted at students

- P.E. provision: Badu Sports were commissioned to establish and embed a structured P.E. programme in the school. The coaches have been delivering P.E. lessons using schemes of work based on the National Curriculum and embedding this into the school. All students now do a minimum of two hours of physical activity during curriculum time per week.
- Extra-curricular activity: A running club was established twice a week which was well attended by students and staff. Attendance and physical activity performance levels were recorded at each session by coaches.
- Alongside this, a weekly BMX club was introduced for students in partnership with Access Sports at Haggerston park BMX track. Through this agreement, it was also arranged that students in the BMX club would have extra-curricular membership to the skate park free of charge.
- Competitions: As part of the programme, the school were entered into nine new borough-wide football and athletics competitions and they were competitive in all of them. Students have been participating regularly since the introduction of the Health Heroes pilot and finished mid-table in the Sports Hall Athletics Competition. Having not competed at any competitive sports events before, this was a major achievement for the school. Two pupils from the school were subsequently selected to join the borough athletics development team. The team recently won the London Sports Hall Athletics Competition with representatives from the school competing.
- Personal Bests: Personal Bests, Hackney's established sport and healthy lifestyles programme, usually aimed at 9-11 year olds, was rolled out across the whole school. Students participating in the Personal Bests programme set a personal score in a range of sports, including: long jump, triple jump, shot put, discus, javelin, speed bounce and boccia. Once they have been set, students then attempt to beat their previous record at subsequent P.E. lessons and after school clubs, to achieve their personal best. All pupils received a Hackney Personal Bests workbook which includes health messages, a personal lifestyle diary, and a record of their own Personal Bests performances.
- Active alternatives to screen time: Opportunities were provided in partnerships with Hackney Playing Out to encourage children to engage in active play rather than sedentary behaviours such as watching television and playing computer games. The parent health champions organised a play street outside the school in which approximately 200 pupils from the school took part.

- Apples and Pears adventure playground across the road from Randal Cremer School were also involved in encouraging families to use the space for active play after school rather than going home.
- Cycling: With the Transport for London funding secured by the Health Heroes working group, cycling proficiency classes were arranged for all students in Key Stage 2. This course ran for 10 weeks.
- Holiday provision: A holiday sports programme was delivered at Forest Road Youth Hub for students to attend during Easter holidays. Activities included: badminton, football, climbing, basket ball, table tennis and athletics.

Interventions targeted at staff

- P.E. Coaching: The Badu Sports coaches introduced schemes of work developed from the National Curriculum along with lesson plans to support teaching staff in delivering challenging, high intensity P.E. lessons. Coaches initially took lessons, and then taught jointly with teachers, finally encouraging teachers to embed their new skills on their own.
- Running club: A running club was established for students and staff. The club took place twice weekly and will continue through the next academic year. It was well attended by staff, including the head teacher.

Interventions targeted at parents

- Parent fitness sessions: A fitness coach was commissioned to run weekly fitness sessions for parents after they dropped children off at school on Wednesday mornings. The sessions focused on walking and jogging; encouraging participants back into exercise, and was regularly attended by parents.
- Running club: parents attended the running club above at Haggerston Park – twice weekly throughout the year.

b) Providing education on nutrition

Interventions were put in place to change unhealthy eating behaviours and encourage a culture of eating healthily in the school. Interventions included:

Interventions targeted at students and staff

- Catering review: The Children's Food Trust were commissioned to carry out a catering review of the school meals service; recommendations specified in the review were implemented with the support of the dietetics team at Homerton Hospital. The catering team will continue to be supported by the dietetics specialist next year to maintain healthier menus and provide students with healthier daily meals.
- Gardening: 8 large growing beds were set up in the school, funded as part of the project. A member of staff participated in a gardening course to gain an accredited horticultural qualification and learn the basic principles of planting, growing, maintaining and harvesting a garden. With this knowledge and experience, she established a student gardening club to sustain the growing project. Children have been taking the produce home and cooking with it ever since.

A specialist community gardener supports the group monthly and educates children on the nutritional values of the produce.

Interventions targeted at students and parents

- Cook and eat classes: Shoreditch Spa were commissioned to run two 6 week family cooking courses. Sessions were well suited to the Randal Cremer community as they focused on supporting families in cooking healthy, affordable, culturally relevant dishes at home. The key areas of behaviour change the programme worked towards are detailed in appendix 2.

c) Supporting access to healthy food

The following interventions were designed to enable families to access affordable healthy food and understand nutritional values of foods. Interventions included:

Interventions targeted at students and staff

- Healthy Lifestyles lessons: The dietetics team at Homerton delivered nutritional education sessions to students. They learned about the different food groups, functions and effects of different foods on the body, food labelling and the importance of living physically active lifestyles.

Interventions targeted at students and parents

- Food Co-op: A fruit and vegetable stall has been funded to operate from the school playground weekly to enable parents to access affordable fresh food in a convenient setting. The stall commenced trading in September 2013 to avoid the summer holiday interrupting positive changes in shopping and eating behaviours. It was incredibly successful in its first week, attracting 79 customers in less than an hour. The stall is staffed by parent and staff volunteers. There are opportunities for teachers to use the stall to embed messages about healthy lifestyles. Students can learn to develop budgeting skills and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle by engaging with the stall.

d) Use of local parks and green spaces

Interventions were put in place to encourage the school community to make the most of the assets in the borough, including Hackney's award winning parks, and facilitate positive outdoor experiences. Haggerston Park is the nearest park and has been used regularly. Interventions included:

Interventions targeted at students and staff

- P.E. in the park: The sports coaches delivered some of the P.E. lessons in Haggerston Park to provide outdoor learning experiences for students and encourage recreational use of the park.
- Sports day: A whole school sports day was delivered at Haggerston Park which was attended by parents and was a huge success. Many children also had an opportunity to ride the smoothie bike to make a healthy fruit fix.

- Running club: The aforementioned running club takes place at Haggerston Park twice a week.
- BMX: The BMX club also takes place at the skate park in Haggerston Park.
- Devon trip: Five children were selected to attend a week long residential in Devon with Badu Sports to take part in outdoor sporting activities.

Interventions targeted at students and parents

- Apples and Pears Adventure Playground: Families were encouraged to enjoy the play facilities after school.

3.6 Pilot Project Aims and Objectives

Project aims

Short term: In the 1 year of the pilot project, there is no increase in the proportion of overweight/obese children.

Medium term: In year 2, there is a slight reduction in the proportion of children attending the school that are overweight/obese.

Long term: Reduction in proportion of children attending the school who are overweight/obese.

Project objectives

The following objectives were set at the planning stage of the pilot project; interventions were designed to enable the pilot to meet these objectives:

Objective 1: Increase the physical activity performance levels of the students

Objective 2: Increase the number of school sports teams

Objective 3: Increase the number of students eating breakfast daily

Objective 4: Increase the number of healthy lunches consumed at school

Objective 5: Support parents in being able to prepare fresh and healthy meals

Objective 6: Increase in the proportion of students using active modes of travel to school

Objective 7: Increase numbers of students cycling to school

Objective 8: Increase the use of parks and green spaces by the school community

Objective 9: Introduce nutritional education to the curriculum

4. Evaluation Methods

The programme was evaluated using the following methods:

- Student BMI and waistline measurement was taken at baseline and post-intervention
- 'A Day in the Life' behaviour and attitude questionnaires were completed by students at baseline and post intervention
- Physical activity performance levels of the students were recorded at baseline, mid-point and post-intervention
- Parents completed behaviour and attitude questionnaires at baseline and post-intervention
- Staff completed questionnaires about the P.E. provision at baseline and post-intervention

5. Results

5.1 Measurement Data¹

BMI and waist measurements were taken in November 2012, early on in the programme and again in July 2013, at the end of the first school year of the programme. 276 children were measured twice.

Results for individual classes showed:

- Of the 13 classes measured in total, 9 classes showed a reduction in BMI (6 were statistically significant), and the mean estimated BMI reduction was 1.96 BMI for age percentiles ($P=0.002$). The differences were similar in both genders
- 12 classes showed a reduction in waist measurement (8 were statistically significant).
- The mean reduction in waist measurement across the school was 1.33cm ($P<0.001$)

5.2 'A Day in the Life' Student Questionnaires²

To establish a baseline position in the behaviour and attitudes of the students at the beginning of the programme, they completed the 'A Day in the Life' questionnaire. The questionnaire collected information on eating behaviours; levels of activity at school and at home and modes of travel to school. The questionnaire asked students about their activities the previous day in order to provide a snapshot of an average day in the life of the student body. The questionnaire for the pilot project was designed by North East London and the City Public Health team and was adapted from a model used in other areas of the country. The questionnaire was repeated at the end of the summer term to establish whether the programme had had an impact on the behaviours of the students in line with the objectives set at the outset. There were 321 respondents at baseline and 237 post-intervention.

¹ BMI calculated to UK 1990 reference population using mid-year birthdate of 28 February for all children. Pan H, Cole TJ. LMSgrowth, a Microsoft Excel add-in to access growth references based on the LMS method. Version 2.77. www.healthforallchildren.co.uk It is important to note that BMI measurement in children is conducted using growth charts. For a number of reasons – including that children grow at different rates, these results should be interpreted with caution. For more information see: www.noo.org.uk/NOO_about_obesity/measurement/children.

² The idea for the 'A Day in the Life Questionnaire' was adapted from a study which measured fruit and vegetable consumption in schools for children aged 7-9 years old. Edmunds LD, Ziebland S., Development and validation of the Day in the Life Questionnaire (DILQ) as a measure of fruit and vegetable questionnaire for 7-9 year olds, Health Education Resource, 2002 Apr; 17(2), pp. 211-20.

Meals

Objective 3: Increase the number of students eating breakfast daily

At baseline, 8 % (n= 26) of children in the school reported not eating breakfast the previous morning . This number reduced slightly in the post-intervention data set with only 4 % (n= 8) reporting not eating breakfast the previous morning.

Objective 4: Increase the number of healthy lunches consumed at school

To establish which lunches were 'healthy' we asked students to report exactly what they had eaten, then interpreted the results by categorising them into three groups: healthy; unhealthy; unable to define whether the meal was healthy or unhealthy. The latter was most commonly applied to packed lunches, where the student would often report having eaten a 'sandwich', the contents of which was undefined.

At baseline, 32 % (n= 103) of students were interpreted to have eaten a 'healthy' lunch the previous day. This number increased to 49 % (n= 116) post-intervention.

Active Travel

Objective 6: Increase in the proportion of students using active modes of travel to school

Students were asked to identify how they travelled to school the previous morning by selecting either: walk; cycle; by bus; by car. Some students reported a combination of two modes. We defined 'active' as walking and cycling. The figure below is a total of those that reported travelling to school using these modes.

At both baseline and post intervention, approximately 75 % (n= 241) of students reported travelling to school the previous morning using an 'active' mode of travel.

How students travelled home from school was also recorded. At baseline, 71 % (n= 229) students travelled home using an 'active' mode of travel. Post-intervention, this percentage remained 71 % (n= 168).

Objective 7: Increase numbers of students cycling to school

At baseline, 4 % (n= 12) of students reported having cycled to school the previous morning; this figure increased to 9 % (n= 20) post-intervention.

At baseline, 6 % (n = 18) of students reported having cycled home from school the previous day; this figure increased to 10 % (n= 24) post-intervention.

The increase in cycling could be credited to the weather conditions towards the end of the programme; the cycling proficiency classes could also have influenced this behaviour change.

5.3 Parent Questionnaires

A baseline questionnaire was also carried out with parents to measure behaviour and attitudes of families. The questionnaire was similar to the student questionnaire in that it collected information on eating behaviours and levels of activity at home, although the parent questionnaire asked parents to provide an 'average' picture of their lifestyles rather than focusing on just one day. There were 54 respondents at baseline and 30 post-intervention.

Breakfast

The question to parents about breakfast links to objective 3: increase the number of students eating breakfast daily. The responses were categorised into: healthy; unhealthy; unable to determine; nothing. At baseline, 37 % (n= 20) of parents reported that their child/ren usually ate a 'healthy' breakfast; this figure increased to 60 % (n = 18) post-intervention. In addition, numbers of children having 'nothing' to eat reduced from 19 % (n= 10) at baseline, to none post-intervention.

Lunch

The question to parents about lunch links to objective 4: increase the number of healthy lunches consumed at school. The number of parents reporting that their children ate school meals at lunchtime remained the same at baseline and post-intervention at 80 % (n= 43; 24 respectively).

The percentage of parents who were aware of the school lunch menu increased 1 %, from 52 % (n= 28) at baseline to 53 % (n= 16) post-intervention.

Of those parents that provided a packed lunch (n=17 at baseline, 11 post-intervention), 65 % (n= 11) were interpreted as 'healthy' at baseline, and 81 % (n= 9) were interpreted as 'healthy' post-intervention.

Evening Meals

The question to parents about food consumed at home links to objective 5: support parents in being able to prepare fresh and healthy meals. Parents were asked how often they had takeaway meals. At baseline, 82 % (n= 44) reported 'never' having a ready meal or having one 'once a week'. This figure was 80 % (n= 24) post-intervention.

Parents were asked how often they cooked fresh fruit and vegetables. At baseline, 63 % (n= 34) reported cooking fresh food '4 or 5' or '6 or 7' times a week. This figure was 77 % (n= 23) post-intervention. See below under Objective 5 for further details about parents cooking at home.

Physical Activity

The question to parents on levels of physical activity links to objectives 1 and 6: increase the physical activity performance levels of students; increase in the proportion of students using active modes of travel to school. We asked parents how much time their children spent doing physical activities per day.

At baseline, 22% (n= 12) of parents reported that their children spent 30 minutes to an hour engaging in physical activities per day, 11% (n= 6) said 1-2 hours. Post-intervention, the figures were 40% (n= 12) and 20% (n= 6) respectively.

Objective 5: Support parents in being able to prepare fresh and healthy meals

The facilitator of the cook and eat sessions said: “the participants benefited from hands on experience of cooking delicious food without salt, using wholegrain products and increasing the content of fruit and vegetables. Through careful messaging and clever recipes, they learned about the affordability of home-cooked foods and that consuming processed food and takeaways on a regular basis are not always good for their health.” Further information on the skills the course delivers is available in appendix 2.

Objective 8: Increase the use of parks and green spaces by the school community

Use of parks and green spaces was not measured formally; although anecdotal information suggests an increase in the use of parks and green spaces through the interventions put in place as part of the programme. P.E. lessons, extra-curricular activities and sports events took place in parks and green spaces and were well attended by students, parents and staff.

5.4 Staff Questionnaires

Staff were asked to complete a questionnaire on the P.E. provision in the school post-intervention to enable us to gain an understanding of staff attitudes to the aspect of the programme they had the most direct involvement with. 17 members of staff completed the questionnaire.

1. 16 out of 17 members of staff who completed the questionnaire agreed that the programme had had a positive impact on the school. 1 member of staff wasn't sure.
2. Staff were asked whether they felt P.E. sessions with the sports coaches had improved the physical activity performance levels of the children, 5 of 17 said they strongly agreed with the statement, 9 of 17 said they agreed, 2 said they weren't sure and one member of staff disagreed.
3. Staff were asked whether they felt the P.E. sessions with the sports coaches had improved the concentration levels of the children in school and 4 of 17 said they strongly agreed with the statement, 11 of 17 said they agreed and 2 said they weren't sure.
4. The final question asked staff whether they agreed that the P.E. sessions with the sports coaches had improved the behaviour of the children, 3 out of 17 said they strongly agreed with the statement, 10 members agreed, 3 said they weren't sure and 1 member disagreed.

Comments boxes were provided to allow staff to express personal views about the benefits and impact of the programme, some of the responses are captured in the anecdotal evidence in section 6.6.

5.5 Increasing Physical Activity: Measuring physical activity performance levels

Children completed a series of activities to determine their physical activity performance level at baseline, this was then recorded and compared to the assessment taken post-intervention. The activities test cardiovascular ability, endurance and balance.

The baseline was taken in November and post-intervention was taken in July. Children in years 1 and 2 completed three activities: the 1 minute shuttle run; 1 minute star jumps and the balance beam test. Children in years 3 and 4 completed four activities: the 1.5 minute shuttle run; 1 minute crunches; 1 minute squat lunge and the balance stalk.

Objective 1: Increase the physical activity performance levels of the students.

Children in years 1 and 2 (n=119) completed three activities to test their physical activity performance levels:

- Activity 1 – 94 % (n=112) children improved their physical activity performance levels
- Activity 2 – 97 % (n=115) children improved their physical activity performance levels
- Activity 3 – 88 % (n=104) children improved their physical activity performance levels

Children in years 3, 4, 5 and 6 (n=220) completed four activities to test their physical activity performance levels:

- Activity 1 – 96 % (n=212) children improved their physical activity performance levels
- Activity 2 – 94 % (n=206) children improved their physical activity performance levels
- Activity 3 – 97 % (n=214) children improved their physical activity performance levels
- Activity 4 – 99 % (n=219) children improved their physical activity performance levels

In both groups, the physical activity performance levels of the children who did not improve stayed the same; there was no decrease in the physical activity performance levels of the students.

Running club data

Many children who participated in the running club increased their performance by exceeding targets set when the club began.

At baseline, 40 % of year 1 and 2 students; 30 % of year 3 and 4 students and 30 % of year 5 and 6 students were able to complete their target of 1 lap, 2 laps and 2.5 laps respectively. Post-intervention, 100 % children in years 1,2, 5 and 6 completed their targets and 90 % children in years 3 and 4 completed their target.

Personal Bests

Children in all year groups participated in the Personal Bests programme. Overall, most children improved their scores in all six activities. All children improved in at least one element of the Personal Bests programme.

1. 67% children improved their score in the Javelin
2. 66% improved in the Shot Putt
3. 78% improved in the Standing Long Jump
4. 66% improved in the Standing Triple Jump
5. 85% improved in the Speed Bounce
6. 84% improved in the 60 Metre Shuttle Run

Randal Cremer came 13th of 40 schools at the final.

Objective 2: Increase the number of school sports teams.

At baseline, the school had a football team in which students were able to join and compete against other teams. As a result of the Health Heroes programme, the number of teams has increased significantly. Students are now participating in:

- Gymnastics
- Athletics
- Hockey
- Basketball
- Dodge ball
- Tag Rugby
- Orienteering
- BMX training

6. Discussion and Recommendations

The Health Heroes programme was delivered as a pilot at Randal Cremer Primary school with the following aims:

Project aims

Short term: In the 1 year of the pilot project, there is no increase in the proportion of overweight/ obese children.

Medium term: In year 2, there is a slight reduction in the proportion of children attending the school that are overweight/ obese.

Long term: Reduction in proportion of children attending the school who are overweight/ obese.

6.1 Sustainability

There have been a number of pieces of work to ensure that many aspects of the programme have been embedded in the school to enable the programme to be sustained.

- The school steering group will continue to meet monthly and have ownership of the project. All decisions to sustain healthy living practices beyond the Health Heroes pilot project are made by steering group. From September 2013, the deputy head teacher will chair the meetings. Members include: students, parents and staff from the school, LBH public health representatives and a dietician.
- The extra-curricular sports activities have been embedded and will continue through the next academic year.
- The catering manager will continue to work with the dietician to embed healthy menu choices in the school meals service.
- To enable the school to continue providing high quality P.E. and extra-curricular activity going forward, LBH have agreed to match the funding from Sport England which will be provided to all schools for the academic year 2013/14.
- Healthy lifestyles lessons will continue to be timetabled into the curriculum.
- The gardening club has been very popular among students and will continue next year.
- Play Street events will be organised regularly by the parent health champions in partnership with Hackney Playing Out.

6.2 What Worked Well

Increasing Physical Activity

- Embedding a P.E. curriculum and lesson plans significantly improved the quality of P.E. provision in the school

- The numbers of students competing in school teams significantly increased
- The programme provided higher quality and greater volume of extra-curricular sports offered to students in the school
- Children in all year groups participated in the Personal Bests programme. Overall, most children improved their scores in all six activities
- All children who participated in the running club increased their stamina and ability, and consistently demonstrated performance improvement.

Providing education on nutrition

- The cook and eat classes were well attended and successful in delivering healthy eating messages to families and changing behaviours around food
- The gardening club has worked really well because it was well managed from within the school and children were enthusiastic in participating, students have been very committed to maintaining the good work

Supporting access to healthy food

- The catering review has made a positive impact on school lunch quality and will continue to improve the standard of the meals
- The food co-op was incredibly successful in its first week of operating with 79 customers in less than an hour and has been doing good business since

Use of local parks and green spaces

- The sports day in Haggerston Park was successful in enabling students, parents and staff to enjoy the local facilities
- The Play Street event not only encouraged active play for families, it also encouraged use of the Apples and Pears Adventure playground

6.3 Lessons learned

- It is important to establish a high level of commitment from the school prior to the programme commencement to ensure compliancy with initiatives
- Accountability within the school needs to be agreed to support the smooth delivery of the programme. A member of staff with adequate authority should be given responsibility of leading on the programme and provide a line of communication between the project group and the school
- All interventions should be planned prior to the programme delivery and incorporated into the school calendar
- Organisations which were best suited to work in Hackney but also provide good value for money were established throughout the process
- One academic year is a short time to embed interventions and ensure sustainability. Ongoing support is required to enable sustainability

- Staff and parental engagement can sometimes be hard to establish and takes time and commitment

6.4 Recommendations

- Agree a contract with the school early on to ensure compliancy with initiatives
- Find ways to incentivise the lead within the school
- Plan the interventions in phases to make them manageable for the school to facilitate
- Establish a greater degree of parent involvement as their behaviours have a broader impact on the child than the school alone
- Introduce competitions between schools

6.5 Next Steps

- Roll out the programme to seven other schools in the borough
- Maintain support for Randal Cremer to ensure sustainability of the programme
- Support all schools in working towards a Healthy Schools London accreditation
- Support all schools in working towards a Youth Sports Trust quality mark
- Work with school sports teams to best utilise the primary premium P.E. funding
- Pilot the school food plan nutritional guidelines in one of the new programme schools

6.6 Anecdotal evidence: quotes from staff, children, parents and partners

Staff said:

“The children are enjoying P.E. now and seeing it as a valuable subject.”
Member of staff, Randal Cremer School

“Children are able to name the muscles in their bodies.”
Member of staff, Randal Cremer School

“P.E. lessons are more organised, better structured and more fun.”
Member of staff, Randal Cremer School

“Parents are more involved in sporting activities.”
Member of staff, Randal Cremer School

“[There are now] more male role models for the children to respond and aspire to.”
Member of staff, Randal Cremer School

“Children are eating more healthily – more fruit and vegetables are being considered instead of burgers and chips.”
Member of staff, Randal Cremer School

“Children are talking about their enjoyment of the sessions and more eager to take part in P.E. activities.”
Member of staff, Randal Cremer School

“Children have learned some good things about health and about their bodies.”
Member of staff, Randal Cremer School

“Benefits include fitness awareness, concentration levels and self management.”
Member of staff, Randal Cremer School

“Children now look forward to their P.E. lessons.”
Member of staff, Randal Cremer School

“All children want to take part, even the less confident. They have pride in their appearance.”
Member of staff, Randal Cremer School

“The children are more confident and independent in P.E. lessons. They are also better at giving and receiving instructions.”
Member of staff, Randal Cremer School

Speaking of the Play Street event, Mrs Figaro, the Head Teacher said:

“As many of the children spend too much time indoors, it is a welcome change to be able to shut the street for a couple of hours so the kids can enjoy playing freely whilst the parents and staff come together too.”

Parents said:

“Its been great at promoting healthy eating to parents, and children get taught what gets blood and organs functioning and what foods are good for them.”

Parent, Randal Cremer School

“The children are healthier as they do activities outside more. Sports day was a great event, there were lots of activities.”

Parent, Randal Cremer School

“The fruit stall will be a great success.”

Parent, Randal Cremer School

“The programme has been good for the children. They love the smoothie bikes!”

Parent, Randal Cremer School

“We haven't ever cooked as a family, so it's been really good to all learn this together.”

Parent, Randal Cremer School

“It's really tasty and I've never seen the kids eat spinach before.”

Parent, Randal Cremer School

Students said:

“It has changed the way I live at home because I eat differently. I eat fruits and vegetables because I know its good for you.”

Year 5 student, Indigo class

“I got faster in my running when I race.”

Year 5 student, Indigo class

“I do exercises at home more and I want to work harder so I look at the medals I have won and it makes me smile which makes me push myself more.”

Year 6 student, Gold class

“ I have been in an athletics tournament twice which I enjoyed. I have got faster and I have more stamina since I’ve been pushing myself. ”
Year 6 student, Gold class

“ What’s that – mango? Can we try some? Yum, I have never eaten this before, it’s amazing! Will you take my picture of me eating mango!? ”
Year 4 student at the cook and eat session

“ I even like the vegetables, they are really small and tasty! ”
Year 3 student at the cook and eat session

“ I think I lied, I like sweetcorn and spinach. The sweetcorn is really juicy. ”
Year 6 student at the cook and eat session

“ Mum can’t cook, thanks for teaching her, she made us a really good dinner last night. ”
Year 4 student, Randal Cremer School

Partners said:

“ [Participants] are cooking delicious food without salt, using wholegrain products and increasing the content of fruit and vegetables. ”
Local Food Project Manager, Shoreditch Trust

“ Lots of children took spinach and parsley home to cook with and bring the dishes in to share. They are asking questions about the beans and the produce and they’re eating the chives and tasting the herbs and leaves. They have been very keen and planned an assembly for September to share their learning. ”
Gardener

“ The Health Heroes programme is a great initiative and has enabled us to work closely with the children in developing key skills and techniques in various forms of P.E. The children have been very engaged in the sports, competitions and after school activities and we have seen significant improvements in their concentration, performance and retainment of information.

As an organisation we are passionate about providing the platform for children to achieve and enjoy being physically active. This compliments the objectives of the Health Heroes programme. By providing support to schools with the organisation and delivery of high quality P.E. we hope to enable children to adopt and lead healthy active lifestyles. ”

Nana Badu, Badu Sports Ltd

6.7 Gallery



Children enjoying the Play Street event



Students making pitta pizza at the cook and eat class



Sports day – children using the smoothie bikes to make healthy fruit drinks



Chopping herbs and spices for a curry paste



Planting in the garden



Food co-op stall

7. Contact details

 For further information on this project please contact David Toombs:
david.toombs@hackney.gov.uk or call **020 8356 3897**

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1: Guidance and Resources

Guidance

National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) Framework:

www.noo.org.uk/NCMP

P.E. Curriculum KS1:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/primary/b00199167/pe/ks1

P.E. Curriculum KS2:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/primary/b00199167/pe/ks2

Physical Activity Guidelines for children and young people:

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/fitness/Pages/physical-activity-guidelines-for-young-people.aspx

Physical Activity and the Environment NICE Guidance:

<http://guidance.nice.org.uk/PH8>

Promoting physical activity in children and young people NICE Guidance:

<http://guidance.nice.org.uk/PH17>

Attainment target level descriptors:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/primary/b00199167/pe/attainment

Resources

Change 4 Life Campaign:

www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/change-for-life.aspx

Badu Sports: www.badusports.com

Children's Food Trust: www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk

School Food Plan: www.schoolfoodplan.com

St Mary's Secret Garden: www.stmaryssecretgarden.org.uk

Shoreditch Spa: www.shoreditchtrust.org.uk/Health-and-Wellbeing

East London Food Access: www.elfaweb.org.uk

Personal Bests Programme: www.hackney.gov.uk/hackney-personal-bests

Healthy Schools London: www.healthyschoolslondon.org.uk

8.2 Appendix 2: Shoreditch Spa Cook and Eat Behaviour Change Themes

Theme 1 Key knowledge increase	Theme 2 Key behaviour change	Theme 3 Barriers to change	Theme 4 Dealing with fussy eating	Theme 5 Maintaining healthy changes
Importance of eating a variety of foods (eatwell plate)	Swapping to brown rice	The extra time it take to cook healthy recipes	Children more adventurous & open to trying new foods	A course manual with content to refer back to for support
Healthier cooking techniques	Reducing use of oil, salt	Compensating the change in flavour when reducing oil, salt & frying foods	Realising children's tastes change & should regularly try new & disliked foods	A recipe binder to separate breakfast, lunch & dinner recipes & keep recipes safe
Ideas for cooking healthier recipes	Halving the amount of sugar in recipes	Price of vegetables	Importance of involving children in cooking preparation	Refresher session: on topics, recipes & share experiences after the course
More aware of hidden sugars & fat in foods	Baking and steaming food instead of frying	Failing to recall information learnt on the course	When one child is a fussy eater to still provide other children with varied diet	For parents with school children info on healthy packed lunches
Appropriate portion sizes for children & adults	Swapping high sugar cereals for lower sugar alternatives	Partners complaining about the changes		Provision of physical activity classes for adults
Understanding nutrition labelling	Using nutritional labels to make healthier choices			
	Swapping from sugar to fruit on porridge & desserts			
	Cutting out high sugar drinks			

8.3 Appendix 3: Communications Materials

Well done Randal Cremer Health Heroes!
This is what you've achieved so far:

- You've been so impressive in P.E. lessons that we have introduced end of term P.E. assemblies to reward you. Keep up the good work!
- The herbs and vegetables you planted in the new beds are growing really well in the playground.
- Your fitness levels have increased since the beginning of this year and those of you that are attending running club are doing really well!
- You were excellent in leading healthy lifestyles at the launch event. Your pedal power on the smoothie bikes was impressive and you enjoyed lots of fruits you don't usually eat.
- The mechanics that came to the Biker's Breakfast to repair your bikes told us that more of you came along with your bikes than any other school in your area.
- Lots of you are now attending sports competitions for the first time and two of you have even been selected to join the borough athletics team.
- Your teachers say that you have all been working really hard and enjoying difficult and energetic P.E. lessons and that you are behaving really well in P.E.
- We're glad to see that you have encouraged Ms Figaro to join the running club, any students who are interested in joining in, come along on Fridays!




Randal Cremer 'Health Heroes' project

Why are we running this project?
Obesity is rising at an alarming rate in the United Kingdom. Already, around one-third of children and two-thirds of adults in England are overweight or obese. Obesity can lead to severe health problems, including the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, some cancers and heart and liver diseases. Studies have proven that a poor diet can also lead to children underachieving at school.

By improving our diets, engaging in more active lifestyles and reducing time spent in front of televisions and computers we can help to reduce the risks that obesity and being overweight can pose to our health.

Randal Cremer was chosen to participate in a healthy schools project supported by Hackney Council and the NHS because it is a central Hackney school which has a history of responding well to new initiatives. The project aims to help children and families adopt healthier lifestyles and to pioneer strategies which will consequently be adopted by primary schools across the borough of Hackney.

It was the children of Randal Cremer who came up with the title 'Health Heroes', the aim of the project being that the children themselves become 'Health Heroes' through participation with the various areas of the project.




health heroes
RANDAL CREMER






8.4 Appendix 4: Interventions Timeline September 2012 – July 2013

September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July
Let's Get Fit for Sport sports coaches begin supporting staff with P.E. delivery, curriculum and lesson plans	Planting beds were installed at the school	A launch event took place at the school to raise the profile of the pilot and engage students and staff in adopting healthy lifestyles	Students in years 1 and 2 took part in an inter-school borough-wide football tournament organised by DT	Second steering group meeting took place - members agreed to commission services chosen by the working group	Catering review and kitchen and dining review. Improvements actioned	BMX club starts in Haggerston Park	Spring planting and harvesting club established - staff, children and parents	First harvest	School sports day - invite families	Personal Bests finals
Members of the working group met with staff and introduced the pilot	A running club was initiated by representatives of LGFFS and is attended by students and staff	Shoreditch Spa ran a cooking class for families at the school	Shoreditch Spa commissioned to deliver a 12 week family healthy, low-budget cooking programme	School policies reviewed and updated	Gardening workshop for parents run by St Mary's Secret Garden and Shoreditch Trust	Parent Health champions established	Personal Bests second visit	Personal Bests third visit	Students to complete 'A Day in the Life' follow up questionnaire; parents to complete behaviour and attitudes questionnaire	Report back on results from questionnaires, measuring, student fitness levels and other evaluative methods
A logo, banner and leaflet with information on the pilot were designed	The logo, leaflet and banner were signed off and produced by comms	The school hosted a bike's breakfast	The School Food Trust commissioned to conduct a catering service review and support catering staff in improving school meals going forward	A member of staff attends a 12 part gardening course run by St Mary's Secret Garden and Shoreditch Trust	Shoreditch Spa cooking classes begin	1st parent health champions coffee morning held - focus on play street	Increase after school sports provision			
Staff baseline data collected on proficiency and confidence in delivering P.E. lessons	Randal Cremer entered the first borough-wide athletics competition	Students participated in planting and growing workshops		Cycle training for year 5 begins	TFL Cycling grant used to purchase equipment to allow the school to hold family cycling clubs		Biker's Breakfast		Second round of measuring of students	Future planning
	Baseline data collected from parents on attitudes and behaviour linked to the priorities identified in the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan	The first steering group meeting took place. The working group begin to hand authority on decisions over to the school		Record numbers of students receiving FSM	Screen-time intervention at parents evening				Food co-op established	Review of the sports coaching service
	LGFFS recorded the first round of student fitness monitoring	All students in the school were measured (height, weight, BMI, body fat percentage) and data was recorded		Set up food focus group to lead on embedding actions from the catering review	Healthy Lifestyles workshops for students in years 5 and 6		Resources to raise awareness on key health messages given to parents at parents evening			Record numbers of students receiving FSM, compare to numbers before CFT intervention
	School awarded a £3k cycling grant by TFL	Students baseline data collected on attitudes and behaviours linked to priorities identified in the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan		Student fitness monitoring	Student fitness monitoring	Healthy Lifestyles workshops for parents after school				Student fitness monitoring
				First round of personal bests						Play street event

8.5 Appendix 5: Objectives and Evaluations Table

Randal Cremer Health Heroes Pilot Project

Project aims

Short term: In the 1 year of the pilot project, there is no increase in the proportion of overweight/ obese children.

Medium term: In year 2, there is a slight reduction in the proportion of children attending the school that are overweight/ obese.

Long term: Reduction in proportion of children attending the school who are overweight/ obese.

Project area	Objectives	Baseline	How measured?	Comments
Healthy eating	Support parents in being able to provide fresh healthy meals. Provide access to fresh fruit and vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are limited fresh produce shops nearby the school or neighbouring estates, limiting access to healthy foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before/after survey of parents/carers 	ELFA devised a questionnaire prior to the food co-op to support this
	Increase uptake of free school meals for eligible pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 215/465 pupils (46%) currently eat school meals (N.B. overall, not just FSM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School meal figures from school admin 	Does the school meet nutritional standards for school meals?
	An increase in the number of pupils who have breakfast every weekday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They have a "Magic Breakfast" club for a maximum of 40 children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers of children attending recorded by staff 	
Physical activity	An increase in numbers of pupils engaging in moderate-intense physical activity for at least 60 minutes each day	The school has the following facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football pitch Basketball pitch Hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers of children attending recorded by staff 	
	Ensure 2 hours of P.E. curriculum for every child per week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School currently adopts this but can look into enforcement Y3 do swimming once week 		
Physical activity	An improvement in physical activity performance of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determined by fitness level testing and children's performances in Personal Bests programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collected during P.E. lessons and the Personal Best programme 	

Project area	Objectives	Baseline	How measured?	Comments
Green spaces	An increase in awareness of local green spaces among pupils and their parents/carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Younger children (Reception and nursery) use Hackney City Farm and St. Mary's Secret Garden quite a lot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before/after survey of all groups 	Haggerston Park could be used in P.E. lessons
	An increase in number of teachers trained to deliver running/walking sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff delivering running club 	
	An increase in active travel (walking/cycling) to/from school among pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data available from Travel dept WOW (Walk Once a Week) promoted at the school Cycle training delivered and school has cycle bike lock stations 		
School policy	Relevant school policies reviewed and healthy weight embedded in the school's work (including school's food policy, travel policy etc)			
	Introduce nutritional education onto the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not currently delivered 		

