Hot-food takeaways near schools;
An impact study on takeaways near secondary schools in Brighton and Hove

September 2011
Foreword

The study was jointly commissioned by Brighton and Hove City Council Planning Department and the joint NHS Sussex/ Brighton and Hove City Council Public Health Directorate. The study was commissioned as part of the city's strategy on preventing and reducing obesity in children and the Healthy City agenda of creating healthier urban environments.

The study was conducted by Ben Coleman in the Local Development Framework Team at Brighton & Hove City Council with support from Liz Hobden and Rob Fraser. Public Health support was provided by Lydie Lawrence and Katie Cuming.

We would also like to thank for their valuable contribution Vic Borrill and Judith Hodge from Brighton & Hove Food Partnership, and Sam Beal in the Healthy Schools Team. Support has also been provided by the Secondary Schools and the City Council’s Licensing Team.
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References
Reducing obesity is a national priority. In England two-thirds of adults and a third of children are either overweight or obese. It is estimated that if no action were taken 60% of men, 50% of women and 25% of children would be obese by 2050 (Foresight Report, 2007). In Brighton and Hove the estimated annual cost to the NHS of diseases related to obesity is £78.1 million (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Summary 2011)

There is significant evidence of the role that the built environment plays in shaping our lives. The government’s recent call to action on obesity highlights the significant influence planning policies can have to help tackle obesity by creating built environments that encourage healthier lifestyles.

In recent years a handful of local authorities have successfully developed planning guidance to prevent the proliferation of hot food takeaways on sites close to schools or other youth amenities.

As part of the Brighton and Hove Public Health strategy to reduce levels of childhood obesity and to promote healthier built environments, the Local Authority Planning Service and the joint NHS and City Council Public Health Directorate commissioned a small study to:

- Map where hot-food takeways are geographically situated in relation to secondary schools in the city;
- Observe secondary school pupils’ movements and behaviours at lunch times in relation to availability of food outside school premises.

Key Findings:

The findings from the study suggests that large volumes of pupils are leaving school premises at lunchtime and purchasing a variety of ‘unhealthy’ food types, such as chips, soft drinks and chocolate. However hot-food takeaway premises were only part of the problem, with newsagents and supermarkets equally as influential on the unhealthy choices of pupils.

The catchment area appears to be defined by time not distance. The 400m boundary is the most popular mechanism for planning policies nationally, but the findings from this study suggest that it would not sufficiently cover the areas used by pupils. The 800m radius was more relevant and covered significantly more lunchtime journeys than 400m. However in some cases, for example Dorothy Stringer, some pupils travelled further than 800m.

School’s lunchtime policies have an overarching influence on pupil’s eating habits. There was a clear relationship between the volume of pupils leaving schools and the number of school year groups that were allowed to leave the school at lunchtime. Evidence from the schools suggest that they are trying to improve the provision of healthy options in schools, but unfortunately use of such menus still depends on the pupils and may actually have a negative impact on the business. The capacity of the dining facilities is a factor in driving these policies.
Key recommendations:
The main recommendation of the study is for the adoption of a holistic and co-ordinated approach in future work between Public Health, secondary schools and the Healthy Schools Programme, the City Council’s licensing and planning policy departments. This further work could be undertaken as part of the new Public Health Responsibility Deal approach, working with food outlets, supermarkets, schools, licensing, planning etc.
**Glossary**

**A5 Use Class:** Takeaways; premises where the primary purpose is the sale of hot food to take-away (as defined by the 2005 Use Class Order).

**Amenity:** factors which contribute to the pleasantness of living in a particular place.

**DoH:** Department of Health

**Nudge theory:** An approach adopted by the Coalition Government in the Public Health White Paper Healthy Lives, Healthy People (2010) to encourage or “nudge” people in the right direction so that they can make healthier choices rather than banning or significantly restricting their choices.


**Section 106 Agreements:** Section 106 agreements are types of planning obligation authorised by section 106 of the Town and Country Planning act 1990. Planning obligations are used following the granting of planning permission (normally major developments) to secure community infrastructure to meet the needs of residents in new developments and/or to mitigate the impact of new developments upon existing community facilities.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD):** Provides detailed guidance on how policies in the saved local plan and replacement Development Plan Documents such as the Core Strategy will be implemented.

**The School Fringe:** the doughnut of shops that surround secondary schools.
In the UK the prevalence of obesity has trebled in the last 20 years. A recent report produced for the Department of Health found that 65% of males and 56% of females were overweight, and over a third of these individuals were obese. Obesity is a major factor for cardiovascular disease, certain cancers and a number of other health problems (JSNA Summary 2011).

Applying estimates from the Health Survey for England 2008 to the local population, there would be 14,000 children and young people aged 2-19 years who are overweight or obese out of a population of 54,000 children and young people in Brighton and Hove. By 2020 there will be an estimated 16,400 overweight or obese children and young people in the city. A local healthy Weight Strategy and Action Plan have been developed to reduce the prevalence of childhood obesity through the delivery of a range of nutrition and physical activity prevention and early intervention initiatives.

As a World Health Organisation (WHO) Healthy City since 2004, Brighton and Hove city Planners have been working closely with Public health Specialists to promote a healthier built environment under the remit of a Healthy Urban Environments Steering Group. More recently one aspect of this work has been to explore how the prevalence of childhood obesity could be further reduced by looking at the influence the city’s environments may have on children and young people’s behaviours in relation to diet and exercise.

The proposal for a new hot-food premises within 200m of a secondary school in Brighton and Hove was recently approved at appeal. The case attracted significant local interest, with over 300 local residents signing a petition against the proposal, opponents to the proposal argued that a hot-food premises would undermine the integrity of the school’s Healthy Eating programme. The school’s Healthy School Status was deemed a material consideration, however the Sustainable Community Strategy (‘Creating the City of Opportunities’) was given little weight in the appeal decision. A condition was imposed which restricted the opening times of the premises’ until after 4pm, the condition would prevent over the counter sales to pupils at lunchtimes and immediately after school times. It would not stop all sales of hot food takeaways to pupils; however it will remove the immediacy and easy availability from a large number of pupils. This case and the growing number of local authorities nationally seeking to use planning regulations to manage the proliferation of fast food outlets near schools has lent this work even more relevance and impetus.

1.1 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence that the availability of fast food from hot-food takeways in proximity of secondary schools may have on pupils’ eating behaviours.

1.2 Aims of the study

- To research the existing policy framework in terms of planning guidance and regulations regarding hot-food takeways
- To map all food premises within a reasonable walking distance (up to 800m) of secondary schools in the city
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- To record what food premises were selling and whether they were deliberately targeting school pupils
- To observe pupil behaviour with regard to locally available food outside school premises
- To understand whether Hot Food takeaways significantly contribute to school day food sources
- To identify potential actions/opportunities for planning

1.3 Definitions

What is a hot-food takeaway?

A5 Hot-food takeaway premises are defined by the 2005 use Classes Order as "premises where the existing primary purpose is the sale of hot food to take away". Takeaways are differentiated from restaurants because they raise different environmental issues such as litter, longer opening hours, and extra traffic and pedestrian activity, from those generally raised by A3 restaurant and café uses.

In cases where different uses are taking place on the same premises e.g. A3 and A5, information would have to be provided to confirm the premises' primary use. Under an A1 (shop) use some hot food (and hot drinks) can be sold to take away, provided it is heated up rather than cooked from scratch, e.g. soup, pastries, paninis etc.

### Examples of A5 Use Class types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fish and Chips</th>
<th>Public Houses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pizzeria’s</td>
<td>Restaurants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese/Indian Takeaway</td>
<td>Cafes</td>
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*Table 1; Examples of A5 and non-A5 uses*

"The School Fringe"

The term 'school fringe' has been used widely in policy and research since being coined in a study by London Metropolitan University on what pupils buy and eat from shops surrounding secondary schools. The term refers to the "doughnut of shops that surround secondary schools". This was the first study to highlight the importance of the school fringe and its influence upon pupil’s eating habits.

The university’s study identified a gap in research which was the need to explore what secondary school pupils purchase out-of-school and the contribution that these purchases made to the pupil’s diet.

The study adopted two London secondary schools as case studies and then recorded what the pupils purchased from the school fringe and where they purchased food from.

The research found that food purchased in the ‘fringe’ provided at least 23% of pupil’s daily energy requirements, purchased foods were often high in sugar and fat. The most popular purchases were fizzy drinks, chocolate, sweets, crisps, cakes, biscuits and chips. 30% of purchases made in takeaways, and 70% were made in supermarkets/newsagents. The study also found that the school canteen prices were being undercut by other premises, and were also targeting their marketing at pupils.
2.1 Obesity in Brighton and Hove:
Reducing the prevalence of childhood Obesity is a priority for both the NHS and the Local Authority in the city. There are targets to reduce child obesity in the City Performance Plan. The estimated annual costs to the NHS of diseases related to people being overweight and obesity in Brighton and Hove was £78.1 million in 2010.

In Brighton and Hove obesity prevalence data for children is captured through the annual implementation of the National Children Measurement programme in all primary schools for children in Reception Year (4-5 year olds) and in Year 6 (10-11 year olds). In the 2010/11 academic year the obesity prevalence for Year 6 pupils was 15.2%. For children in Reception year the proportion of obese children was 8.2%. Whilst this is slightly lower than nationally, it must be noted that the prevalence of obesity in England is now one of the highest in Europe.

A Strategy “Promoting Healthy Weight and Healthy Lives in Children and Young People in Brighton and Hove 2008/09-2011/12" and a delivery plan were produced in 2009. The Delivery Plan outlines a combination of prevention and early intervention initiatives delivered in a range of settings. NHS Brighton and Hove spend around £300,000 per year on diet/nutrition and physical activity initiatives. A proportion of the city council sports development team budget is spent on work with children. A large part of the Children and Young People’s Trust Healthy Schools work focuses on promoting a healthy diet and increasing physical activity. Additionally, a considerable amount of the Local Authority's work contributes to the childhood obesity agenda in terms of parks and leisure facilities and walking and cycling infrastructure (JSNA Childhood Obesity 2010).

2.2 Brighton and Hove Planning Policy background
The city’s policy framework reflects how important the issue of obesity and sustainable communities are to the city council. The following policies are felt to be of particular relevance:

- Sustainable Communities Strategy; Creating the City of Opportunities
- Brighton & Hove City Plan Part I (Core Strategy) CP4 Healthy City
- Brighton & Hove City Plan Part I SA6 Sustainable Neighbourhoods
- SR6 and SR7 of the adopted Brighton & Hove Local Plan

Currently there is no specific planning policy with the Brighton and Hove local plan which relates specifically to Hot-Food takeaways. Hypothetically if an application was received for a new hot-food premises the applicant would be referred to the following policies within the Local Plan;

- Chapter 2; Energy, water, pollution and waste
- Chapter 3; Design, safety and the quality of development
- Chapter 6; Shopping, recreation and leisure- maintaining vitality and viability
Brighton and Hove Core Strategy CP4 Healthy City
The focus of CP4 is to reduce health inequalities and promote healthier lifestyles, focusing on maximising the positive health benefits of development, encouraging access to attractive, safe outdoor spaces and access to fresh, locally produced, food and food growing opportunities.

CP4 encourages development that works towards lifetime neighbourhood principles; promotes health, safety and active living for all age groups, including healthy living options.

Planning will support programmes and strategies which aim to reduce health inequalities and promote healthier lifestyles by undertaking Health impact assessments on all planning policy documents to maximise any potential health gains and minimise any potential negative impact on health.

Brighton and Hove Core Strategy SA6 Sustainable Neighbourhoods
SA6 outlines the role of health within neighbourhoods; priorities 1, 2 and 16 are of particular relevance to this study.

Priority 1: Focus new development in neighbourhoods into local shopping centres and parades where proposals contribute to the range and viability of local facilities by maintaining and creating a focal point for community activities and encourage investment to improve sustainable transport.

Priority 2: Ensure a good balance and mix of uses in existing defined local centres is maintained and carefully monitored.

Priority 16: Support programmes and strategies that aim to reduce health inequalities and promote healthier lifestyles through working with other agencies.

SR6 and SR7 of the adopted Brighton and Hove Local Plan
Policies SR6 and SR7 give planning the ability to refuse applications for non retail A type class uses in local centres and parades if it is considered that approval would result in over-concentration of non-retail uses. It also allows the control of business hours.

Other local authorities e.g. Angus Council and Bridgend Borough Council have used policies similar to SR6 and SR7 as their policy hooks by including school environs alongside local shopping centres.

2.3 Other local initiatives
Sustainable Communities Strategy; Creating the City of opportunities
The third edition of the strategy was introduced to improve sustainability and quality of life in the city.

Part 3 of the Strategy is relates to improving health and well-being in Brighton & Hove. It aims to reduce health inequalities in the city and addresses obesity through measures such as weight management programmes and extended physical activity initiatives to tackle childhood obesity.

The school sports partnership and NHS Brighton & Hove organises a sports festival annually for school children called ‘TAKEPART’. The programme ran for three weeks in schools and included a launch event in Preston Park.

Measures have also been introduced to promote healthier eating such as; the healthy choice awards and a new healthy school meals menu.
Brighton and Hove Food Partnership; Healthy Choice Award (2008)

Brighton and Hove Food Partnership: Spade to Spoon; A food strategy and action plan for Brighton and Hove (2006)

Healthy Settings Programme (previously Healthy Schools)

**Healthy Choice Awards**

The award is designed to help customers easily identify healthy food choices when eating out and is run by the Brighton and Hove Food Partnership and Brighton and Hove City Council (with funding from NHS Brighton & Hove). Currently 71 outlets in the city have qualified. To date the award holders are predominantly cafes and restaurants with only one hot-food takeaway (Khan’s of Kemptown - an Indian takeaway) holding a healthy choice award.

Food outlets/businesses which qualify have access to free nutritional advice on making their menus healthier, and current award holders are identified on the BHCC website with regular publicity about the scheme in the local media.

Businesses can be awarded gold (75%+), silver (50%+) and bronze (35%+) status. The status depends on the percentage of the menu which offers healthy choice options.

Only businesses with 3 stars or above in their Scores on the Doors' food hygiene standards are eligible to apply for a Healthy Choice award.

A few Hot-food takeaways have inquired about the awards, but the general experience was that the menus were hard to modify sufficiently to gain even a Bronze (35%) status (although Khan’s has demonstrated that meeting the standard is possible having been given a silver award.) It was hard to find alternatives for particular uses i.e. fish & chips; where a majority of the ingredients are cooked in oil. In most cases they could suggest that items were grilled as opposed to fried, but most takeaways are unable to do so.

A number of similar award schemes run by different local authorities include a separate award for Takeaways supporting healthier catering practices (e.g. frequent changing of oil in deep fat fryers etc) and this could be a future development for the Healthy Choice award.

**Spade to Spoon; A food strategy and action plan for Brighton and Hove (2006)**

Spade to Spoon is about creating a more sustainable food system for the city. It was developed to address the problems that our current food system causes both in terms of health of residents and environmental concerns. It also looks to reduce health inequalities between rich and poor communities in the city. Spade to Spoon was developed in partnership between the City Council, PCT and voluntary and community sector. The Brighton & Hove Food Partnership was established to co-ordinate the work in Spade to Spoon and drive forward action against the action plan. Objectives 4, 5 and 9 are of particular relevance to this study.

Objective 4 is focused on increasing access of all the city’s residents to nutritious, safe and affordable food. The objective aims to reduce childhood obesity, improve access to fresh food outlets and increase consumption of fresh food.

Objective 7 seeks to introduce policies in schools which favour the use of locally produced and healthy food.

Objective 9 aims to create a policy forum to initiate research, publications and activities that encourage the exchange of ideas both within the city and beyond to inform emerging trends in food policy.
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Brighton and Hove’s Healthy Settings Programme
As part the programme Brighton & Hove Schools have Healthy Eating/Whole School Food Policies which aim to ensure that there are teaching and learning opportunities relating to food education across the curriculum, lunchtimes, breakfast and after school clubs. For example:

- Curriculum map highlighting healthy eating learning opportunities
- Cross-curricular opportunities to learn about food and healthy eating are maximised for all year groups
- School meals staff, Midday Supervisors and dining arrangements maximise opportunities to encourage and reward healthy eating
- Healthy eating messages are reinforced by displays in the dining area
- Practical cooking skills are included in the curriculum
- Child and family workshops relating to healthy eating
- Cooking and Growing Clubs
- Participation in the Lunchtime Improvement Programme

2.4 Relevant national strategies and guidance:
"Delivering Healthy Communities" guidance note (RTPI 2009), in which the Royal Town Planning Institute describes the key role of spatial planning in shaping environments which make it possible for people to make healthier choices about exercise, local services, travel, food, nature and leisure. It recommends the use of existing plan making to promote access to a diverse range of healthy foods.

"Healthy Lives, Healthy People: A call to action on obesity in England" (2011) emphasises the importance of maximising the contribution of the planning system and the application of planning rules to create a healthier built environment. It recognises the importance of the planning system as a vital tool for influencing the environment to support strong and healthy communities. The Action Call also highlights the importance of engaging local businesses and partners to increase access to healthy food choices.

The new Public Health White Paper "Healthy Lives, Healthy People: our strategy for public health in England" (2010) marks a shift in approach. Instead of looking to central government for legislation, the Paper points us in the direction of encouraging citizens and businesses to behave in a healthier and more socially responsible manner. It is about nudging people in the right direction rather than banning or significantly restricting their choices. Health and well being can be improved by working collaboratively with businesses and the voluntary sector through the Public Health Responsibility Deal around food, alcohol, physical activity, health at work and behaviour change.

2.5 Examples of local authorities’ planning practice
This section reviews the practice of four local authorities who have developed specific guidance on Hot Food takeaways. This section also introduces Leicester’s "Street Trading policy" as an example of licensing practice.

- London Borough of Barking and Dagenham "Addressing the health impacts of hot food takeaways"
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets "Creating Healthy and liveable neighbourhoods"
- Waltham Forest Council "Hot Food takeaway SPD"
- Leicester City Council "Street trading policy".
Barking and Dagenham Supplementary Planning Document (SPD); "Saturation Point; Addressing the health impacts of hot food takeaways" (2010)

Barking and Dagenham’s SPD was developed in conjunction with their Obesity Strategy and Action Plan. There was a disproportionate amount of hot-food takeaways (135) compared to greengrocers (5), the borough also had the highest rates of obesity in London. The SPD was introduced to reduce the clustering of hot-food premises near sites which were close to youth amenities. Barking and Dagenham’s holistic approach sought to reduce the prevalence of A5 premises and also to promote initiatives which tackled obesity in the borough.

The SPD specifically supplements the policies of the Core Strategy.

The three planning implementation points are:

- Hot food applications are refused within 400m (estimated 5 minute walk) of primary and secondary schools
- Applications would only be granted if they fell within one of the borough’s major retail centres
- Where A5 Takeaways are granted a £1000 levy is charged using Section 106 agreement, The money is used exclusively on NHS obesity initiatives to mitigate the impact of the new premises on its customers.

The council representative noted that their SPD has been used to refuse three planning applications so far but that the SPD has faced criticism from A5 owners who have queried the direct relationship between their premises and obesity.

‘Saturation Point’ has recently been used to refuse a proposal for a pizza take-away near a school. The pizza company contested the soundness of the document, arguing that they bring vitality to areas and that other A class premises offer equally unhealthy options. The case went to appeal after the Council refused permission for a proposed takeaway in Dagenham. In dismissing the appeal, significant weight was given to the Council’s adopted planning guidance on the location of hot food takeaways.

Tower Hamlets "Creating healthy and liveable neighbourhoods" (2009)

Tower Hamlets is currently assembling an evidence base on hot-food takeaways in the borough to help the potential introduction of development management policies. Proximity to schools is one of the borough’s concerns; however their broader concern is with the general proliferation of hot-food premises in the borough.

Tower Hamlets is a relatively small and dense borough, and a representative commented that any future restrictions would cover the whole borough. Any policy would therefore inadvertently incur a borough-wide prohibition on new hot-food premises.

Developing a SPD would supplement Strategic Objective 3; of the Core Strategy, which sets out a spatial framework for dealing with health-related elements of spatial planning. An SPD would specifically help implement another Strategic objective that sets out ‘to deliver healthy and liveable neighbourhoods that promote active and healthy lifestyles and enhances peoples wider health and well-being’.
The 2010 case of R (obo Copeland) vs. Tower Hamlets LBC; increased the profile and national interest in the subject of Hot-food takeaways. It was argued that Tower Hamlets had acted unlawfully because they had granted permission for a new A5 premises without considering the impacts of development on a school's healthy eating policies. The school's 'healthy eating policy' was recognised as a 'social objective' and therefore used as grounds for refusal of the application. This approach was successful and considered acceptable by the judge.

Tower Hamlet’s work is closely linked with the 'healthy borough programme' which was focused on restricting the over-concentration of A5 uses, particularly in sensitive residential areas. The clustering of A5s has also been the main concern of Redcar and Cleveland borough, whose policy has placed tight restrictions on the relative proximity of units to each other.

Tower Hamlets have collaborated closely with the local Primary Care Trust to work with existing food premises in close proximity to schools. For example the first 25 local business that took part in their ‘Food for health awards’ received 10kg worth of free potato wedges. The idea was that the wedges were healthier than chips, and so businesses would be incentivised to review their existing menus.

Waltham Forest Hot Food Takeaway Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2009)

The SPD is a material consideration in planning applications. Test "HFT3; Proximity to schools, youth facilities and parks" is Waltham’s most important mechanism, it states; "With regard to proposals which fall outside designated town centre and local parade locations, hot food takeaway will be resisted where the proposal will;

- Fall within 400m of the boundary of an existing school or youth centred facility
- Fall within 400m of a park boundary "

Waltham’s primary concern was with the combination of proximity of premises to schools and low prices which would entice pupils into ‘over consumption of food that is often a disproportionate amount of their daily nutritional requirements’. The council recognises that hot-food takeaways can provide an important complementary service; however they are more likely to have a detrimental impact on amenity.

The council undertook an exhaustive consultation period to raise awareness of the proposed SPD and has also introduced a steering group;

Over 300 residents commented during the consultation period on the document with 89% of interviewees supporting the proposal.

To investigate how collectively the different agencies can ensure the hot food takeaway businesses operate as responsibly as possible.

To develop strategies for tackling the wider environmental and economic issues associated with the proliferation of hot-food takeaway shops.

Ensuring that corporately the council was doing all it could to address 'residents' concerns.

So far 7 planning applications have been refused because of the SPD. And has also led to the closure of 12 premises because of tightened environmental health checks on A5 uses.
Leicester City Council "Street Trading Policy" (2008)

Leicester City Council introduced this licensing policy in 2008 to combat city-wide issues that the council was experiencing with hot-food mobile traders.

One of the policy's key objectives was to ensure that mobile traders are not allowed to operate within close proximity to schools.

If an application is within 1km of a secondary school or 500m of a primary school then the headteacher of that school is consulted to see if they have any comments/concerns regarding the application.

A council representative commented that the policy has generally been well received. The policy has had little impact on the number of traders, but the representative felt that having better regulation of their trading was a more important benefit of the policy.

Other local authority guidance on hot-food takeaways

The following local authorities have also developed planning policy on the subject of Hot Food Takeaways:

- Angus Council; Advice Note 18; Hot Food Takeaway (1999)
- Barnsley Borough Council; "Supplementary Planning Guidance 7; Hot-Food takeaways“ (2003)
- Bridgend County Borough Council;SPG14; Hot Food Takeaway establishments.
- Bromsgrove District Council; Investigation into the impact of hot-food takeaways on communities and the environment (2009)
- Gateshead Council; Advice Note 3; Hot Food Takeaway (2008).
- Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council; Interim Policy on hot-food takeaways (2008)
- Salford City Council SPD; Hot-food takeaways (2007)
3.0 Methodology

A desktop study: This initially explored the existing local and national policy framework on hot-food takeaways. All existing ‘good practice’ was reviewed and informal conversations were held with representatives with representatives of Barking and Dagenham and Waltham Forest Local Authorities.

Mapping: Mapping a 400m periphery was the most popular planning mechanism in existing policies, and so a 400m radius was calculated for each secondary school within the city. All food premises were then mapped within this 400m boundary using data from the licensing team at the city council. The mapping included any premises which sold or prepared food e.g. takeaways, supermarkets, newsagents, off-licenses, cafes etc.

However the 400m radius covered relatively few premises. The radius was extended to 800m (an estimated 10 minute walk) which introduced an additional 41 premises to the study.

Information from schools: Each secondary school was then contacted via a school bulletin requesting information on their lunchtime policies. Schools were asked to inform us of their lunchtime policies regarding leaving school premises during lunch breaks, the on-site school food offer and any current issues that they were aware of. Information was collected generally from assistant heads, however the bulletin was distributed amongst different members of staff at each school.

Site visits: Site visits were made to each secondary school in the last week of October to inform the study of the existing ‘food environments’ around each school. Notes were made on any specific unhealthy or pupil-tailored options that were on offer within the 800m periphery based on the premises which had previously been mapped.

Five secondary schools were then chosen for a second round of site visits during mid-November. The five schools were chosen because they allowed pupils off the premises at lunchtime and because the respective school fringes varied significantly in character and make-up which enhanced the scope of the study. The primary purpose of the visits was to verify that the retail areas mapped in the vicinity of the schools was the area that was actually visited by pupils at lunchtimes. For example Cardinal Newman pupils only had access to one cluster of food premises within its school fringe, whilst Portslade pupils could choose from three clusters of food premises.

The second round of visits consisted of observation of the pupil’s eating habits around five secondary schools during lunchtime breaks. The observation visits highlighted which premises were popular, what food types were most popular and the movement patterns of pupils at lunchtime. Each school was visited once by two researchers from planning and the food partnership, the visits lasted between 30 and 50 minutes depending on the length of the lunchbreak.
4.0 Results

4.1 A Review of best practice and evidence base are covered in section 2.4

4.2 Mapping

The tables below summarises the findings from the first mapping exercise.

Only six A5 premises were found within 400m of the 10 secondary schools. When the peripheral margin was extended to 800m this increased to 19. However when all A class (shop) premises were included in the analysis a total of 84 premises were within 800m of the schools.

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<th>All A-class premises</th>
<th>A5 premises</th>
<th>Other A-Class premises</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total premises (n)</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within 0-400m</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within 400-800m</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Total food outlets

The tables below show that a majority of food premises and hot-food premises were located in the 400-800m area. A5 premises represented 22% of the total premises in the school fringe area, with a higher proportion of A5 premises in the 400-800m area. In terms of density Longhill School had no A5 premises within 800m whereas Portslade and Cardinal Newman schools had the highest number with 4 each within 800m of the respective schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary School</th>
<th>Total Premises</th>
<th>0-400m radius</th>
<th>400-800m radius</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A5 Other A Class</td>
<td>A5 Other A Class</td>
<td>A5 Other A Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blatchington Mill</td>
<td>1 5</td>
<td>0 2</td>
<td>1 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardinal Newman</td>
<td>4 10</td>
<td>2 5</td>
<td>2 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorothy Stringer</td>
<td>2 7</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>2 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falmer (BACA)</td>
<td>1 3</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hove Park Lower</td>
<td>2 10</td>
<td>0 3</td>
<td>2 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hove Park Upper</td>
<td>1 7</td>
<td>1 4</td>
<td>0 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longhill</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patcham</td>
<td>3 11</td>
<td>2 7</td>
<td>1 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portslade</td>
<td>4 5</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>3 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varndean</td>
<td>1 7</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Food premises density table
4.3 Information from schools

The following table summarises the information collected directly from schools regarding their lunchtime policies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary School</th>
<th>Pupils allowed off-site at lunch?</th>
<th>If so, which years?</th>
<th>Length of lunchtime?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blatchington Mill</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardinal Newman</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorothy Stringer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9, 10 &amp; 11</td>
<td>40 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falmer (BACA)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hove Park (both)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longhill</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patcham</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portslade</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7-11</td>
<td>40 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varndean</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4: School lunchtime policies*

4.4 Information from site visits

4.5 Stage 1 Preliminary Site Visits

This section will summarise the findings from each of the city’s secondary schools during the first round of site visits. All of the identified food premises from the licensing deskwork were visited. The findings are cross-reference with comments made by the schools in their response to the school bulletin. A map is included for each school which shows all food premises identified during the first round of site visits.

Blatchington Mill School

Nevill Avenue, Hove, BN3 7BW. 1760 pupils

The school does not allow pupils off-site at lunchtime. The school representative commented that their only issue is the pressure put on seating in the school canteen because of the high uptake of school meals.

Three key areas were identified in the school fringe area, each of which corresponds to one of the school’s three exits.

Area 1 was located on Old Shoreham Road and consisted of a pizza take-away and small newsagents. Both premises were open during school hours and within a 10 minutes walk of the school’s southern exit.

Area 2 was Nevill Road which had a small supermarket and a convenience store. The premises were within a 5 minutes walk from the school.

Area 3 was the Grenadier which is identified as a local shopping centre in the city’s local plan. The Grenadier is located just outside of the 800m periphery, but a shortcut would make the walk less than 10 minutes away. There are a variety of amenities at the Grenadier, including hot-food premises, newsagents and supermarkets.
Cardinal Newman School
The Upper Drive, Hove, BN3 6ND, 2041 pupils

The school could only provide limited information on its lunchtime policy as it is currently reviewing its catering facilities.

At the moment only year 11 pupils are allowed off-campus at lunchtime. The school currently operates a cashless/reward based system which rewards pupils who choose highly nutritional options.

The shop options available to Cardinal Newman students were concentrated at the junction of Dyke Road and The Drove. Three A5 premises were located at the junction as well as a small chain store convenience shop and a small newsagents.

At least three A5 premises on Dyke Road were selling hot-food options at a discounted rate for school students. For example all the lunchtime options in one takeaway came with chips and in another takeaway all pupil options were £2 cheaper than the normal menu.

Interestingly an arrangement has been made between the school and the chainstore to stop selling high-energy drinks to any school children.
Dorothy Stringer
Stringer Way, Brighton, BN1 6QG, 1670 Pupils
The school have introduced a ‘healthy option points system’ which rewards children who choose to purchase these options. The school have banned selling of unhealthier options on school premises e.g. fizzy drinks, sweets etc. to reinforce the healthy eating campaign. The school’s representative believes that their health efforts are being undermined by mobile food units operating at the school’s exits. The mobile vans are selling hot dogs, ice cream, fizzy drinks etc. after school and mainly to pupils. The school’s representative also highlighted the school’s small canteen as a constraint on their catering options.

The food premises around Dorothy Stringer were concentrated on Fiveways and Preston Drove.

Fiveways is the local shopping parade and so the obvious focus of retail in the area. There was one A5 unit (fish and chips) and several other A3 units located including two bakeries and several cafes and newsagents. Interestingly Fiveways was the only area which had a fruit and vegetable store.

On Preston Drove there was another fish and chip shop, two newsagents and a small deli.
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Falmer High School (now Brighton Aldridge Community Academy)
Lewes Road, Brighton, BN1 9PW, 700 pupils

The availability options were limited by the school’s location. However there were two small clusters of food premises towards the edge of the 800m periphery.

On Park Road there were two newsagents and a kebab shop. And on Barcombe Road there was a newsagents and fish and chip shop.

Figure 3; Dorothy Stringer stage one map

Figure 4; Falmer High stage one map
Hove Park Upper
38 Nevill Road, Hove, BN3 7BN, 1750 pupils (including lower school)

Both Hove Park schools have introduced a biometric system in the school canteens to pay for food. The school have devised a health points system which corresponds with choices on the menu so that the school and parents can monitor what pupils are eating. The schools have introduced a reward scheme which will give prizes to pupils who collect the highest number of health points in a term.

Food premises near Hove Park School were concentrated along the Old Shoreham Road; it consisted of a pizza take-away, Deli, Newsagents and a burger shop. Each of these premises was comfortably within the 800m periphery.

There was also a supermarket on Nevill Road

Hove Park Lower
Hangleton Way, Hove, BN3 8AA, 1750 pupils (including upper school)

As previously mentioned the Hove Park schools have both made extensive efforts to modernise their catering services and increase the availability of healthier options.

The school is located within easy reach of several food premises

The main cluster is at the Grenadier, where there is a wide selection of hot and cold food options. But most of the amenities at the Grenadier double-up as community amenities for the Hangleton residents.
Hot-food takeaways near schools; An impact study on takeaways near secondary schools in Brighton and Hove

Figure 6; Hove Park Lower stage one map

Long Hill
Falmer Road, Rottingdean, BN2 7FR, 1200 pupils

Pupils are not allowed of the campus during lunchtime breaks

The school’s representative believed that the in-school catering options are affordable and healthy, and that they were unaware of pupils purchasing food from the school’s ‘fringe’ environment.

There were no food premises located within 800m of the school.

Figure 7; Longhill School stage one map
Patcham
Ladies Mile Road, Brighton, BN1 8PB, 1020 pupils,

The school allows year 11 pupils off-campus because the school is unable to seat all of the school’s pupils in one lunch sitting.

The school is currently supporting the refusal of an application for a pizza take-away on the Ladies Mile Road because of its proximity to the school’s campus, and because they feel that another hot-food premises would undermine their efforts to introduce healthier choices in pupils.

Food premises surrounded the Patcham campus, with three areas of particular concentration.

There were a variety of options on the Ladies Mile, including a deli, newsagents, Italian restaurant and a fish & chip shop. The Ladies Mile amenities form part of the local shopping parade in Patcham.

At the junction of Ladies Mile Road and the Old London Road was a deli, newsagents and a co-op supermarket.

There is a newsagents, burger shop and a fish and chip shop scattered along Carden Avenue.

![Patcham High School](image_url)

Portslade Community College
Chalky Road, Portslade, BN41 2WS, 980 pupils

All pupils are allowed off-campus at lunchtime with parental permission and the school hasn’t yet incentivised its own menus.

There are three clusters of food premises which were all located within 600m of the school in three separate clusters. Cluster 1 consists of a curryhouse, Chinese takeaway and newsagents on Graham Avenue. Cluster 2 on the Mile Oak Road consisted of a curryhouse, newsagents and a fish and chip shop.

Cluster 3 on Valley Road had a newsagents, two off-licenses, a Chinese takeaway and a pizza takeaway unit.
Varndean High  
Surrenden Road, Brighton, BN1 6WQ, 1280 pupils

The school representative felt that despite the good intentions of the healthy eating policy, the regulations have actually created a barrier to trade which has limited the income in the canteen to the point where the operation is no longer profitable.

The school is also hoping to introduce an entirely cashless system to encourage in-school eating. But in reality many students have lost cards which apparently is making the process difficult in terms of administration.

The school is currently trying to find means to ban a mobile food unit from locating close to the school during breaktimes. There are several reasons for the school’s objection, one of which is the food choice which the van sells to pupils.

Fiveways is a local shopping parade and so the obvious focus of food premises in the area. There was one A5 unit (fish and chips) and several other A3 units at Fiveways including two bakeries and several cafes and newsagents. Interestingly Fiveways was the only area which had a fruit and vegetable store.
4.6 Stage 2 Observations

Five schools were observed during the second round of observational visits. These five schools were selected on the basis of the findings from the first round of site visits and the responses from the school bulletin.

The observations from this stage of site visits are based upon one observed visit and are therefore approximate and may not be typical. Two members of the team would observe the main school entrance and then based on where the pupils went, would move accordingly to observe the movement and eating patterns. Observation focused on;

- What the pupils were generally buying
- Where they were buying the food from
- Numbers of pupils that were leaving school at lunchtime

In this section the observations are presented alongside maps which highlight the key findings from the site visits.
Cardinal Newman

An estimated 100-120 pupils out of 400 left the school during the observed period. All the observed pupils used premises at the junction of Dyke Road and the Drove. Nearly all pupils purchased chips from the Chinese takeaway or the fish and chips takeaway. A majority of pupils then purchased a drink or chocolate bar from the newsagents. There was evidence to suggest that the more popular premises were those that promoted 'student or pupil' lunchtime deals such as kids chips for 70p in the fish and chip shop. No pupils were observed purchasing healthier options. The school and the chainstore nearby have agreed to stop selling high-energy drinks; however this means that pupils now purchase the drinks from the newsagents over the road.

Cardinal Newman School

![Figure 11; Cardinal Newman stage two map](image)

Dorothy Stringer School

An estimated 240 pupils out of a possible 1000 left the school at lunchtime. A large majority of the pupils descended upon the Preston Grove premises. High-energy drinks, sweets and chips being the most popular choices. A significant amount of pupils queued to shop at two convenience stores on Preston Drove to purchase crisps, chocolate and sugary drinks. At least 150 of the pupils made a visit to one of the newsagents. Most pupils were purchasing chips and pizza slices from the fish and chips shop, with a constant flow throughout the lunch break. The deli was quite popular, with pupils generally purchasing healthier options such as baguettes with salad. It’s worth noting that a high proportion of pupils that left at lunchtime were observed smoking too.
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Patcham High School

(N.B. it was raining quite heavily on the day of observation)

An estimated 120 pupils left the school at lunchtime out of a possible 200 and concentrated on two sites; Ladies Mile and Carden Avenue

Use of Carden Avenue was focused on the Fish & Chip shop and the newsagents. The typical diet of pupils on the parade was high-energy drinks and chips. At least 20 pupils visited the parade in the lunchtime window when we visited. This parade was just under a 5 minute walk from the school.

An estimated 100 pupils used amenities on Ladies Miles Road, with roughly 2/3 staying on the immediate parade and the remaining pupils carrying on to Patcham Village. The fish and chip shop, deli and newsagents were the most popular options. Chips and fizzy drinks were the most popular choices.

The supermarket and the deli were the most popular options in Patcham Village. Interestingly pupils using Patcham Village were purchasing more healthy options; such as sandwiches and salads.

It’s worth noting that a high proportion of pupils that left at lunchtime were observed smoking too.
Hot-food takeaways near schools;  
An impact study on takeaways near secondary schools  
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Portslade Community College
Around 60-70 pupils left the school at lunchtime out of a possible 980.

Movement was focused on two small shopping parades in Graham Avenue and Valley Road.

A large majority of the pupils were purchasing more unhealthy food types, such as soft drinks, crisps, drinks and chocolate bars.

The newsagent on Graham Avenue and Chinese take-away on Valley Road were particularly popular. The newsagent promotes a £1.20 hot-dog option which was very popular and actually sold out at lunchtime. Pupils using the newsagent also stocked a variety of other unhealthy choices as well as the hot-dog option. The Chinese take-away chose only to sell chips at lunchtime because of their popularity with the school children.

Other newsagents were generally popular too, with most only permitting two students at a time in the shop which caused a queue outside the stores.

It’s worth noting that a high proportion of pupils that left at lunchtime were observed smoking too.
Varndean High

The Varndean students focused mainly on the options available at Fiveways, with the remaining students using Preston Grove. We estimated that around 100 pupils left the school at lunchtime from a possible 240.

The bakery and newsagents were the most popular premises, with most pupils visiting both premises and pupils queuing to get in. The Deli and other bakery were also well used. There were no A5 premises open during the lunchtime period at Fiveways.

The observations from Fiveways exemplify how pupils continued to purchase unhealthy food types without an A5 premises present.

The few pupils that went to Preston Grove used the fish and chips shops and the deli.

Varndean School
5.0 Findings

5.1 Stage 1 Findings from site visits

The comments from the school’s representatives show that a majority of schools have developed healthier menu options and incentives to encourage pupils to choose these options more often.

School policy was quite influential on the volumes of pupils that would leave schools during lunchtimes. The feedback from the school bulletin however suggested that it’s not practicable for some schools to keep all pupils in school at lunchtime, and so pupils have to be allowed out at lunchtime.

In terms of the ‘food offer’ available in the school fringe, there was a disproportionate amount of ‘unhealthy’ options compared to ‘healthy options’. Newsagents in particular were stocking predominantly unhealthy food types.

There was some evidence to suggest that premises were selling products to exploit demand for the pupil’s needs. At Cardinal Newman for example two hot-food premises had cheap chip options which appeared to be targeted at pupils.

In a majority of cases food premises were catering for a local community’s needs and in five cases the premises formed part of a local shopping parade.

5.2 Stage 2 Findings from observations

Hundreds of pupils were observed leaving schools during one set of lunchtime intervals, with a vast majority of the observed pupils purchasing unhealthy food types. The popular diet for those who ate off-campus consisted of fizzy drinks, chips and confectionary items.

The 400m periphery was fairly irrelevant; with pupils in three of the five observed schools prepared to travel much further. It’s ultimately the pupils who decide on the relevance and size of the school fringe.

The observed food environments are limiting pupil’s exposure to healthier options. Premises within the 800m radius were selling a disproportionate amount of unhealthy food types compared to healthy options.

A5 premises are only part of the problem, with other A class uses such as newsagents, small delis and supermarkets equally as popular with pupils. Newsagents were the most popular premises, with more pupils visiting newsagents than any A5 premises. Observations from Varndean demonstrated that in the absence of any A5 premises, pupils continued to purchase unhealthy food types.

The findings from the observations suggested that there was a strong relationship between pupils who left schools at lunchtime and smoking. At least 60% of the observed pupils would smoke at some point whilst off campus.
Hot-food takeaways near schools;  
An impact study on takeaways near secondary schools  
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5.3 Key findings

The catchment area appears to be defined by time not distance. The 400m boundary is the most popular mechanism for planning policies nationally, but the findings from this study suggest that it would not cover sufficiently the areas used by pupils. The 800m radius was more relevant and covered significantly more lunchtime journeys than 400m. However in some cases for example Dorothy Stringer some pupils travelled further than 800m.

School’s lunchtime policies have an overarching influence on pupil’s eating habits. There was a clear relationship between the volume of pupils leaving schools and the number of school year groups that were allowed to leave the school at lunchtime. Evidence from the schools suggest that they are trying to improve the provision of healthy options in schools, but unfortunately use of such menus still reliant on pupil acceptance and may actually have a negative impact on the business. For example Patcham School believe that their canteen is no longer profitable since the introduction of its healthy menu. Schools which did not allow pupils off campus at lunchtime could control the pupil’s habits for at least part of the day.

A majority of pupils’ off-campus lunchtime purchases were very unhealthy, consisting of high-energy drinks, chips and snacks. But A5 units are only part of the surrounding school food environments, with other food A class uses equally popular. A majority of pupils were observed using more than one food premises in their lunchtime, and in cases where there wasn’t an A5 use (Varndean), pupils still purchased other unhealthy snacks.

Pupils are being targeted by some premises around schools. For example at Cardinal Newman several premises within the school fringe offered lunchtime discounts on chips, pizzas, burgers etc. However there wasn’t a strong correlation between marketing and pupil’s propensity to use these premises.

It’s important to distinguish between premises which are targeting pupils and those which are providing a genuine community amenity. For example in Patcham and Hangleton the schools are located in close proximity to local shopping parades, and so there is an inevitable overlap.

In other Local Authority areas there have been proliferations of A5 premises and significant clusters within the school fringe e.g. Tower Hamlets. In other authorities policies have been introduced because of specific concerns with poor health within the local population e.g. Salford and Sandwell. The findings from this study suggest that the school fringes in the city aren’t as intensely populated by A5 premises and that actually there are a variety of food providers which contribute to the unhealthy choices of pupils.
6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Planning Policy
There is the option to introduce a policy in the future for Brighton & Hove that addresses healthy eating and locating new takeaways near secondary schools. On the basis of the evidence in this study it may be difficult to justify such a policy. Given the findings of the study any policy would need to be based upon an 800m radius around schools.

It is recommended that a future policy could:
1. require the attachment of conditions to control hours of opening at school lunchtimes and leaving times; and
2. consider a requirement for section 106 contributions or a community investment levy from developers for all new A5 premises across the city to alleviate their impact on the local area. This citywide fund will go towards NHS promoting healthier eating campaigns.

6.2 Licensing
Licensing is only able to control the opening hours of hot-food takeaway premises if they are open after 11pm, so the impact of licensing restrictions in the observed fringe environments would be somewhat limited.

The forthcoming “rebalancing the licensing act” will enable increased involvement of local health bodies in licensing decisions by designating Primary Care Trusts (or their equivalents) as a responsible authority. If public health protection becomes a licensing objective then it would mean that matters such as proximity of takeaways to secondary schools could be a material consideration in licensing decisions.

6.3 Schools
The findings of this Study vindicate that the greatest influence over whether students choose to access unhealthy food is the policy of the individual schools regarding allowing students to leave school premises during the day.

This is largely dictated by the capacity of schools to accommodate students during lunch breaks. However it is important to note that children have many opportunities to buy unhealthy food from non hot-food outlets on their way to and from school and that is an important element to consider in terms of further work.

This report has found examples of particularly good practice, of schools working with adjoining non hot food outlets but inconsistencies suggest that information on best practice is not readily available or exchanged between schools in the city. Secondary schools need to have a more co-ordinated approach and successful examples of practice needs to be cited and promoted.
6.4 Public Health

Public Health have already established good links with A5 premises in the city, and are best positioned to promote healthier approaches in the existing food premises in the school fringe. The impact of this work needs to be maximised by providing support to hot food take-aways near schools to modify or reformulate some of the dishes for example by reducing fat, salt and sugar content, switching to healthier ingredients and offering a greater proportion of healthy food options at the same price as the "good value deals for pupils".

The forthcoming 'Rebalancing the Licensing Act', will enable Public Health to make representations to the local licensing committees regarding concerns about the impact on health of new licensed premises. This would mean that health harm would be considered as a material consideration in licensing decisions.

The study has highlighted that hot-food premises are only part of the problem with regard to the availability of unhealthy food. In some cases non-hot-food premises such as supermarkets are making a more significant contribution to the offer of unhealthy foods.

The Public Health Directorates is taking forward a Public Health Responsibility Deal approach working with large and small retailers to promote the availability of healthier food options in proximity of secondary schools. At the same time Public Health is working with the Healthy Schools team and schools to reinforce the importance of healthy eating, improve healthy food options in schools and encourage children to adopt healthier lifestyles.

The observations of pupils' movements and behaviours at lunch-times has shown that a relatively high proportion of pupils smoke when outside school premises. Therefore it would be worth exploring how existing work on smoking cessation in schools could include further health promotion work around healthy eating.

6.5 Further research work

There is little research conducted on how pupils make food choices and interact with the school fringe. It is important to better understand pupils' lunchtime choices to contextualise the findings from this study. Gaining the pupils' perspective would supplement our understanding of the choices they make. Engagement with School Councils would be central to the research.

6.6 Way forward

In light of the findings and the recommendations above, further work should be undertaken led by Public Health and Planning so that there is a more holistic and co-ordinated approach in terms of children and young people’s behaviour relating to food choice and availability and the influence and role of the environment on that behaviour.

An inter-disciplinary project team should be created to oversee the implementation of the recommendations made in this study. The team should consist of representatives from the

Public Health
Planning policy team
Food Partnership
Healthy schools
School Councils
Secondary schools
References

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Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives as above.


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