



**Community Wellbeing Scrutiny  
Committee**  
28 February 2018

**Report from the  
Director of Public Health**

**Childhood Obesity**

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Non-Key
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	None
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Marie McLoughlin Consultant in Public Health Email: <a href="mailto:marie.mcloughlin@brent.gov.uk">marie.mcloughlin@brent.gov.uk</a> Tel: 020 8937 6214

**1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The report describes the pattern of childhood obesity in Brent and action being taken to address the high levels.

**2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 Members of the Scrutiny Committee are recommended to note the action being taken to address the high levels of childhood obesity in Brent.

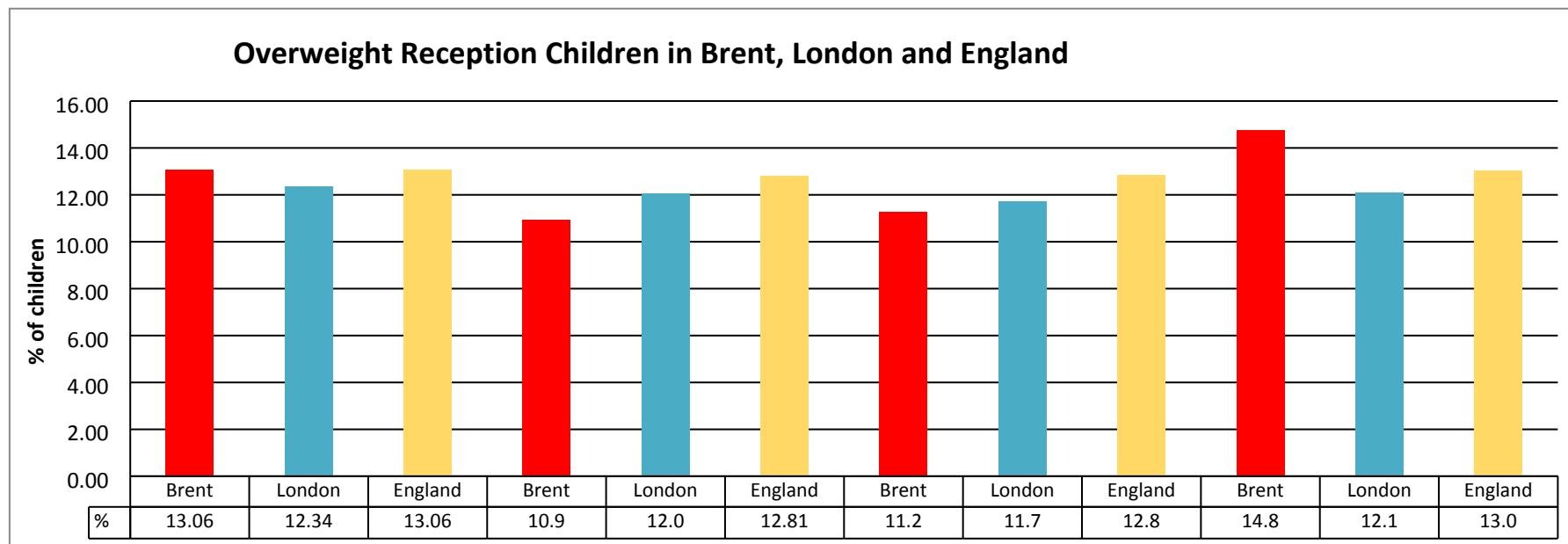
**3.0 Detail**

**The extent of the problem**

- 3.1 The National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) is a mandated local authority public health service which weighs and measures all pupils in Reception and in Year 6. In Brent this is carried out by the 0-19 years children's public health service provided by Central London Community Healthcare (CLCH) National Health Service (NHS) Trust.

3.2 The following graphs show the percentage of children in Reception and Year 6 who are overweight or obese for each year since 2013/14. Figures for Brent are compared to those for England and for London.

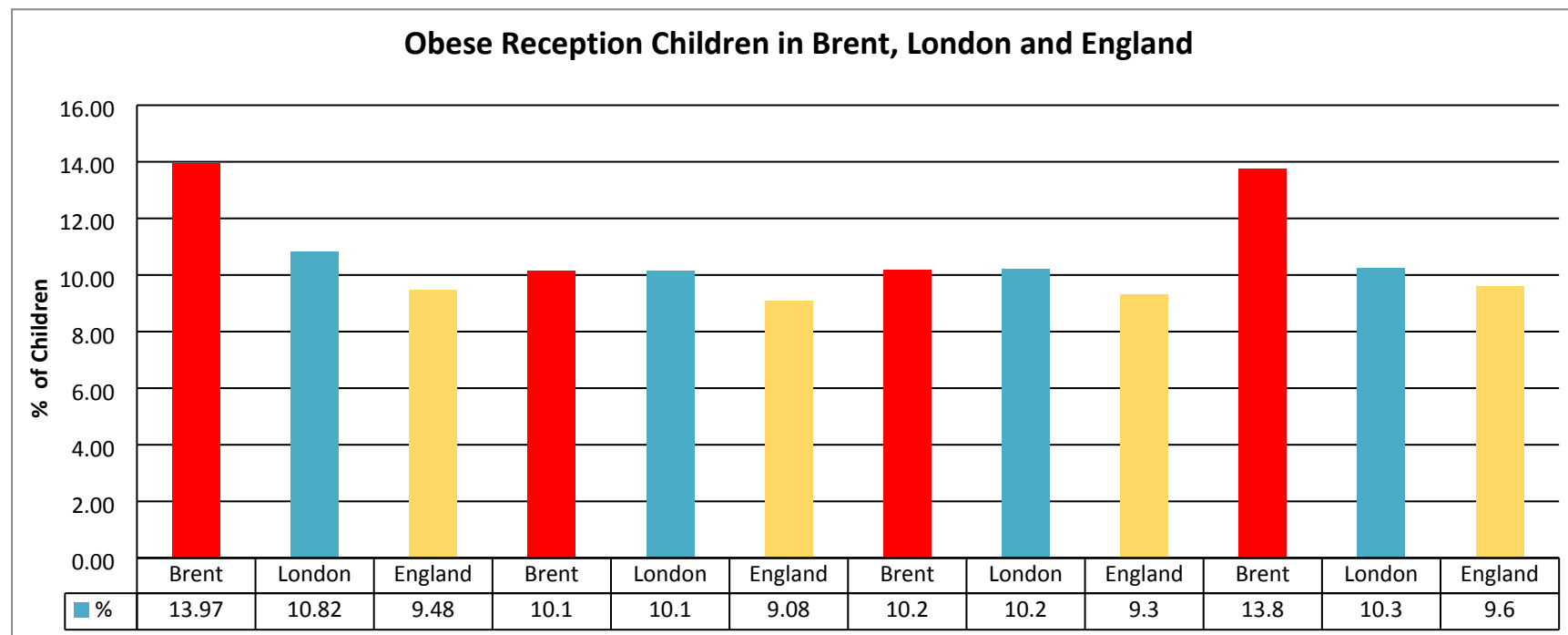
Graph 1: Overweight children aged 4/5 (reception)  
 Source: NCMP data 2013 – 2017



3.3 Year on year fluctuations are apparent but there has been a worsening of Brent's position since 2014/15, with the most recent local data being above London and England.

Graph 2: Obese children aged 4/5 (reception)

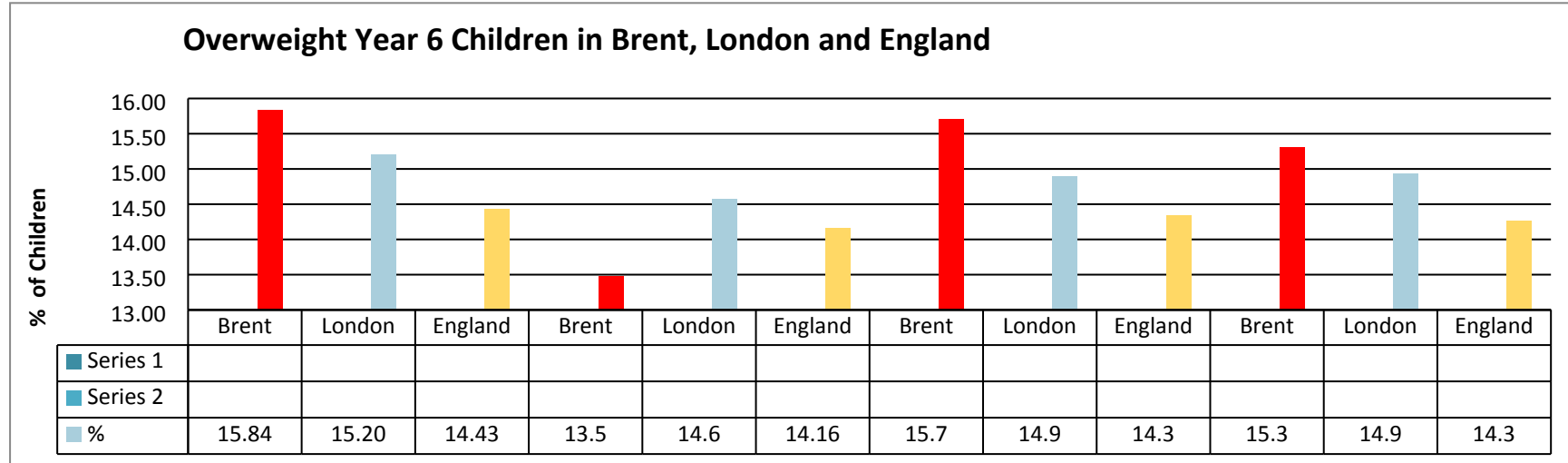
Source: NCMP data 2013 – 2017



3.4 The trend for obese children aged 4/5 is similar to children who are overweight.

Graph 3: Overweight Children aged 10/11 (Year 6)

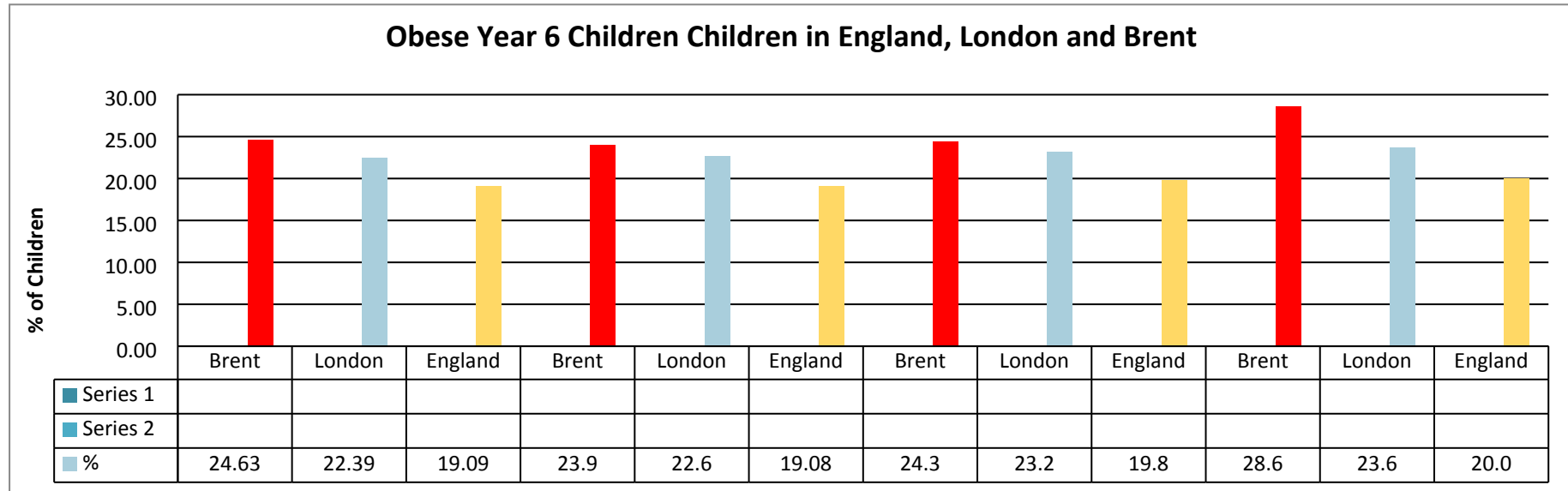
Source: NCMP data 2013 – 2017



3.5 Again there are year on year fluctuations. The most recent Brent data has shown a slight decline while remaining higher than the London and England average.

Graph 4: Obese children aged 10/11 (Year 6)

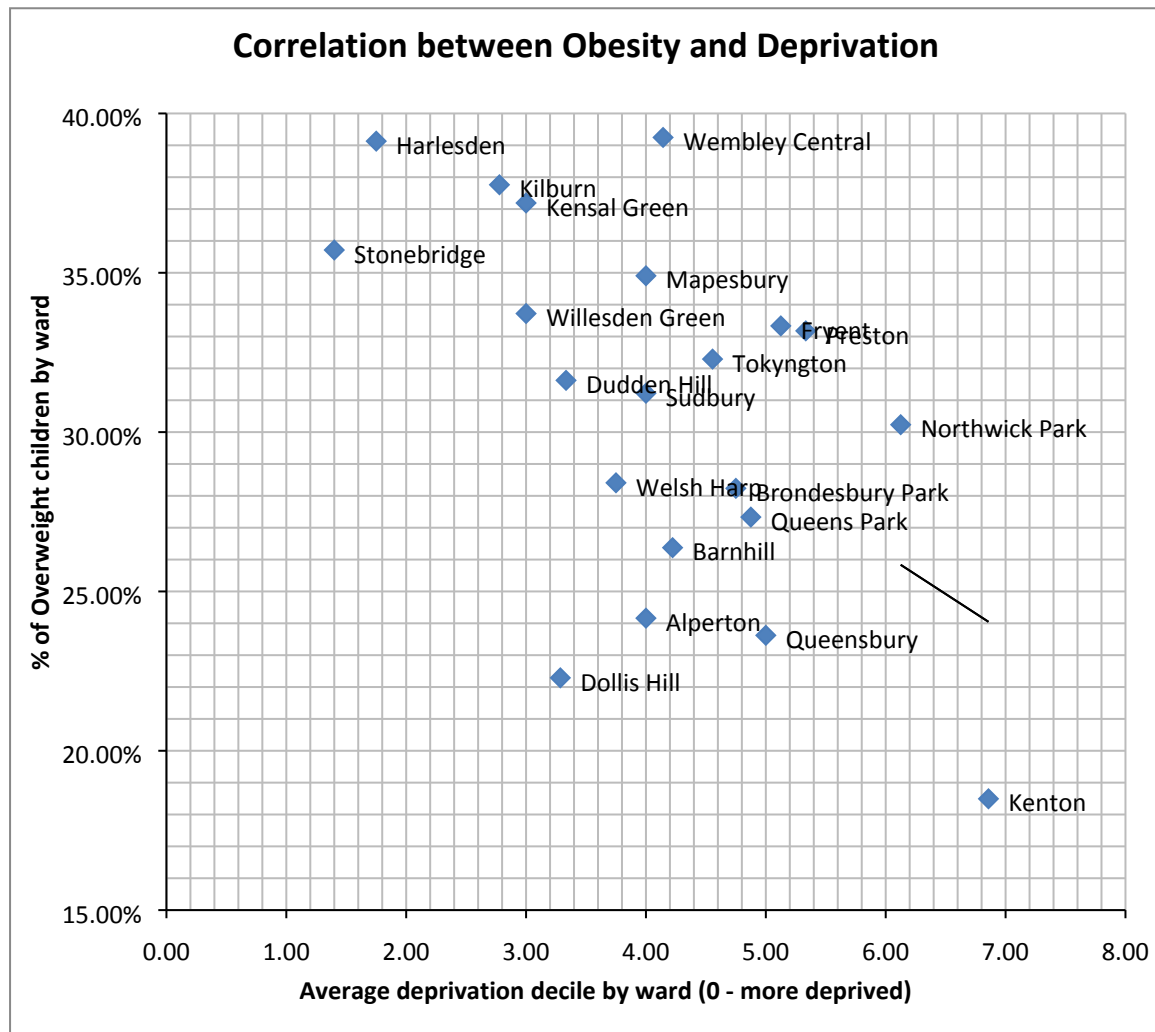
Source: NCMP data 2013 – 2017



3.6 This is the most worrying trend with the proportion of children who are obese in year 6 in Brent showing an increase since 2013 and remaining higher than the London and England average. This shows that one in three of our children are obese by the time they leave primary school.

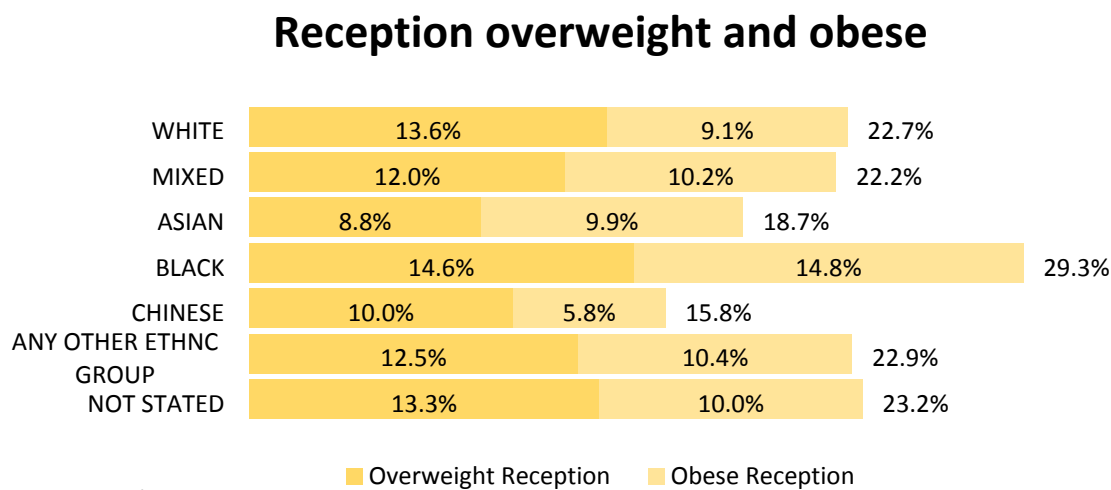
3.7 The prevalence of childhood obesity varies within Brent. The following graph shows levels of overweight and obesity by ward plotted against deprivation. This shows a weak correlation (of 0.3145) between average levels of deprivation in a ward and average levels of obesity. This suggests there is a link but it is not a strong one; a significant link would result in a correlation of 0.5 and above.

Graph 5: Correlation between overweight and obesity and deprivation

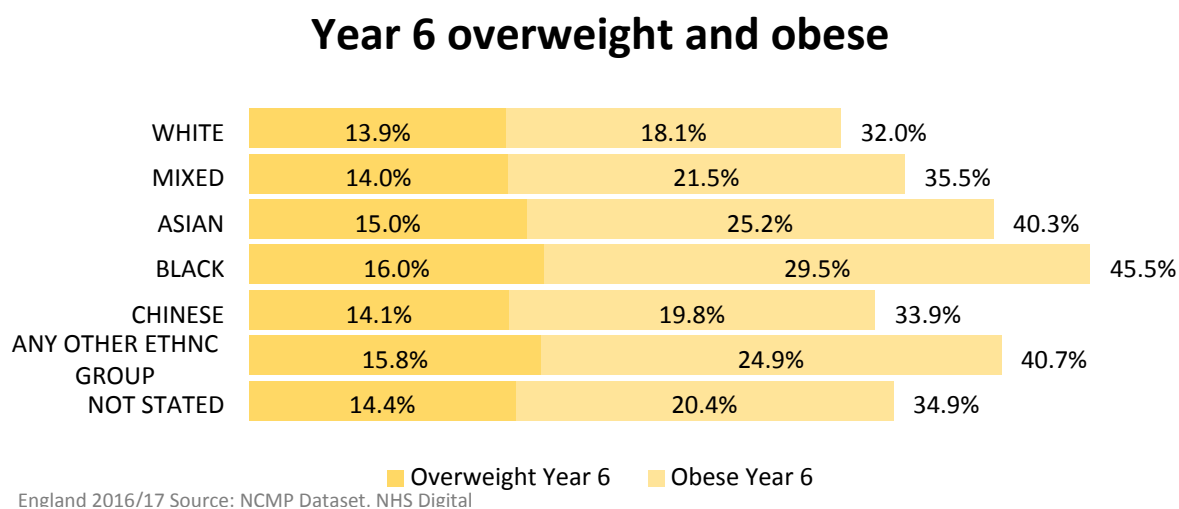


3.8 Data from the national NCMP allows examination of overweight and obesity levels by ethnicity, shown below for Reception and Year 6.

Graph 6: Reception overweight and obesity by ethnic group



Graph 7: Year 6 overweight and obesity by ethnic group



The highest levels of excess weight are seen in the Black ethnic group. However, of note are the figures for the Asian ethnic group where there are relatively low levels at Reception but much higher levels at Year 6.

### The cost of obesity

3.9 Childhood obesity can effect a child’s physical and mental health and wellbeing. It is also a predictor of adult obesity and, thus, places a significant burden on the NHS and wider society. The UK-wide NHS costs attributable to overweight and obesity are projected to reach £9.7 billion by 2050, with wider costs to society estimated to reach £49.9 billion per year.

### Local action to address childhood obesity

## **Promotion of breastfeeding**

- 3.10 Breastfeeding has many health benefits which include reducing the risk of obesity. Supporting mothers to breastfeed is therefore a priority for the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Council. Brent's Children's Centres and health visiting service have achieved stage 1 accreditation with the UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI) and are on track to achieve level 2 by April 2018.
- 3.11 Midwifery services promote breastfeeding antenatally and support mothers to initiate breast feeding before handing over to the care of a health visitor around day 10.
- 3.12 The new 0-19 years children's public health service specifies the provision of breast feeding support through an infant feeding co-coordinator, breast feeding champions who run breast feeding support clinics in each locality and peer support.

## **Maternity Early Childhood Sustained Home visiting model (MESCH)**

- 3.13 The new 0-19 years contract introduced the MESCH model to Brent. This provides additional support for vulnerable families from pregnancy until the child reaches two years. Additional training modules have been introduced into the programme in Brent to address particular local issues – including obesity.

## **Healthy early years award scheme**

- 3.14 The Healthy Early Years (HEY) Award is a local scheme in Brent which supports children's centre staff, private and voluntary nurseries, childminders and health professionals to promote young children and their families' health and wellbeing. Since its launch in 2012, 77 settings have achieved HEY status. The award standards reference national guidance including the Healthy Child Programme<sup>1</sup>, Ofsted inspection guidance and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff achieving the award undertake training on healthy eating, physical activity and breastfeeding.

## **Healthy Schools London**

- 3.15 Brent participates in the Healthy Schools London programme. Supported by the Council's Public Health Team, schools can apply for Bronze, Silver or Gold accreditation with the scheme. The scheme includes action on nutrition and physical activity; for example a school may develop a lunchbox policy, become water-only or include the daily mile in the timetable.
- 3.16 To date, 32 Brent schools have achieved a bronze award and 11 schools have achieved silver.

---

<sup>1</sup> Healthy Child Programme can be found here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthy-child-programme-pregnancy-and-the-first-5-years-of-life>



## **Action on sugar**

- 3.17 Many children (and adults) have far more sugar in their diets than is recommended. Children aged 7 to 10 should have no more than 24g of sugar daily (6 sugar cubes) with children aged 4 to 6 having no more than 19g of sugar (5 sugar cubes). A single can of cola can contain over 9 sugar cubes showing how easily these recommended levels can be breached. It is recommended that children under 4 should avoid all sugar sweetened foods and drinks.
- 3.18 The Council therefore developed a Slash Sugar campaign with outreach work in community groups, libraries, children's centres and health awareness days. Messages on obesity have been combined with the promotion of good child oral health.
- 3.19 For the past two years, the Council's Public Health Team have included sugar awareness in the Junior Citizen Scheme which reaches almost all Year 6 children in the Borough. These popular sessions shocked children (and teachers) with the amount of hidden sugar in some of their favourite foods and introduced the Public Health England food scanner app.
- 3.20 Sustain have developed a Local Government Declaration on Sugar Reduction and Healthier Food which is akin to the Declaration on Tobacco Control which the Council is already signed up to. Work is underway across the Council to support signing of the Sugar Reduction Declaration which requires a commitment to take action in six key areas:
- Commitment 1 – Tackle advertising and sponsorship
  - Commitment 2 – Improve the food controlled or influenced by the Council and support the public and voluntary sectors to improve their food offer
  - Commitment 3 – Reduce prominence of sugary drinks and actively promote free drinking water
  - Commitment 4 – Support businesses and organisations to improve their food offer
  - Commitment 5 – Public events
  - Commitment 6 – Raise public awareness.

## **Community food growing**

- 3.21 The Council works with a number of partners to support food growing. For example:
- The Borough has 22 active sites in the Capital Growth scheme.
  - There is an active transition town project in the south of the Borough, Kilburn Station Planters, which holds regular gardening sessions.
  - The Council has provided small grants for food growing projects, including a grant to Sufra to create an edible garden on a local estate.
  - The Council supports food growing initiatives within parks <https://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/sport-leisure-and-parks/allotments/food-growing-conservation-and-gardening-projects/>.

- Brent Council provided match funding to LIFT to develop the Harlesden City Garden. This pocket park, built on what was formerly waste ground, has 27 individual or small group raised beds, and four communal ones. A green club provides Saturday gardening training, supported by Veolia who maintain the equipment and are responsible for rubbish and waste removal.

3.22 Brent has a Food Growing and Allotments strategy:

<https://www.brent.gov.uk/your-council/about-brent-council/council-structure-and-how-we-work/strategies-and-plans/food-growing-and-allotments-strategy/>

3.23 Brent Council also works Food Growing Schools London which encourages schools to grow food. To date, 18 schools are food growing.

3.24 Support for community food growing is included in the Development Management Policy 8, which encourages food growing opportunities within major developments.

### **Good Food for London**

3.25 The Good Food for London report is produced annually by Sustain. Boroughs are measured on 11 different good food measures including Fairtrade, food growing and school food. In 2017, Brent was ranked 13 out of 33 London boroughs and was the most improved borough, having climbed 10 places since 2016.

### **Healthier Catering Commitment**

3.26 The Healthier Catering Commitment (HCC) is a voluntary accreditation scheme particularly aimed at fast food outlets. To achieve the award, businesses need to show a range of healthier practices such as using healthier oils (rapeseed, sunflower, corn oil) instead of lard or palm oil; limiting salt (for example not pre-salting chips); promoting water and low sugar drinks; and considering healthier sides such as salad, sweetcorn or jacket potatoes as an alternative to chips. To date, 18 premises have achieved the HCC award. There is a dedicated page on Brent website, explaining the award, benefits of the award, how to sign up, and listing companies who have achieved the award: <https://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/healthy-living/diet-and-healthy-eating/healthier-catering-commitment/>

### **Planning policy**

3.27 Brent Planning and Public Health teams successfully defended the development management policy which restricts the opening of any new fast food restaurants within 400m of a secondary school or a further education establishment.

## Promotion of physical activity

- 3.28 The Council undertakes a range of activities to promote physical activity in children:
- The HEY award includes a physical activity component.
  - Schools are encouraged to sign up to the Daily Mile/Marathon Kids, which are low cost initiatives easily included in the primary school timetable which have been shown to increase activity levels.
  - The Transport Department support schools to develop Active travel plans which encourage walking, cycling and scooting to school.
  - Schools have been supported with funding applications to Wembley National Stadium Trust for funds to increase Physical Activity in school settings.
  - Public Health and Physical Education teachers held a successful conference *The Power of an Active School* at Wembley Stadium in January 2018
  - There is a popular and accessible offer to children and their families at the Council's leisure facilities
- 3.29 The Active People survey produces estimates of levels of physical activity in adults, but does not include children.

## NHS action

- 3.30 The NHS Operational Planning And Contracting Guidance for 2017-19 sets out a requirement on CCGs to *lead a step change in the NHS in preventing ill health and supporting people to live healthier lives*. This includes working towards a measurable reduction in child obesity 2020, as part of the Government's childhood obesity strategy.
- 3.31 Following requests from parents, NHS England is currently testing an electronic replacement for the Red Book (e-Red Book), the parent-held child health record. A key ambition of this project is to provide parents with targeted alerts, advice, and information about how to give their child the right level of nutrition and activity for healthy weight and a healthy lifestyle.
- 3.32 The CCG proposes to introduce the following targets into the contract schedules for the provider Service Delivery Improvement Plans (SDIP) in 2018/19. These will be subject to negotiation and agreement with each provider.

The proposed Service Delivery Improvement Plan would be:

- 1) Review food provided by the Trust in line with guidance on reducing obesity and health weight by end of Quarter 1 (30 Jun 2018);
- 2) Develop a local action plan to promote healthier options by end of Quarter 2 (30 Sep'18), and monitor in Quarter 3 (Oct-Dec 2018) and Quarter 4 (Jan-Mar 2019);
- 3) Develop a plan for front-line staff to have 'Make Every Contact Count' training about reducing childhood obesity and local weight management services by end of Quarter 2 (30 Sep 2018), and monitor in Q4 (Jan-Mar 2019);

- 4) Identify conditions where obesity is a risk factor (e.g. CHD, dementia, diabetes), ensure family members are aware of ways to reduce their risks by being healthy weight, and ensure the family knows how to access weight management support, in Q3 (1 Oct 2018) onwards.

### **The treatment of childhood obesity**

- 3.33 The new 0-19 children's public health service includes tier 1 and 2 weight management service. This is a preventive universal service with additional lifestyle weight management services for those children, and their families, who are overweight or obese. This is a new service within health visiting and school nursing and mobilisation has been delayed by difficulties recruiting to the new team. However, the full establishment has now been appointed.
- 3.34 The CCG commissions tier 3 services for those children who require specialist paediatrician or dietician clinical assessment and advice. A very small number of children will require drug treatment or surgery.
- 3.35 The CCG and public health secured funding from Health Education England which was used to provide tier 1 weight management training to front line staff working with children in Brent. 173 people have attended this training which should ensure a consistent high quality offer across the Borough.

### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The national child measurement programme is a mandated public health service.

### **6.0 Equality Implications**

- 6.1 Services for children in Brent have been commissioned with specific regard to the diversity of the local population and the increased prevalence of overweight and obesity in particular ethnic groups

### **7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

- 7.1 There has been engagement with Councillors and partners through a number of workshops and seminars to inform the development of the Childhood Obesity Action Plan.

**Report sign off:**

**MELANIE SMITH**  
Director of Public Health