

## CHILDHOOD OBESITY IN SUNDERLAND

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the National Child Measurement Programme<sup>1</sup> and the whole systems approach to childhood obesity, through the 'maintaining a healthy weight' agenda in Sunderland.

## 2. Context

- 2.1 Local Authorities are mandated to commission<sup>2</sup> the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) for a child, who at the beginning of the academic school year, is:
- (a) in the school year in which the majority of children are aged either 4 or 5 years; or
  - (b) in the school year in which the majority of children are aged either 10 or 11 years.
- 2.2 Delivery of the surveillance elements of the NCMP – completing the height and weight measurements and returning relevant data to NHS Digital – is a statutory function of local authorities set out in legislation. The Office for Health Inequalities and Disparities has responsibility for national oversight of the programme.
- 2.3 Local Authorities are also responsible for public health services<sup>3</sup> for children and young people aged 0 -19 including the Healthy Child Programme and interventions to tackle obesity such as community lifestyle and weight management services and locally-led nutrition initiatives.

## 3. Background

- 3.1 The World Health Organization (WHO) considers that childhood obesity is reaching alarming proportions in many countries and poses an urgent and serious challenge. We know that living with obesity can significantly affect health outcomes for children, leading to rising concern about the impact this is having on their physical and mental health, both in the short term and also into their adult life<sup>4</sup>. In England, the health problems associated with being overweight or obese cost the NHS more than £6.1 billion every year.
- 3.2 **In England, nearly a third of children aged 2 to 15 are overweight or obese**, with younger generations becoming obese at earlier ages and living with obesity for longer. This falls hardest on children from low-income backgrounds, as obesity rates are highest in the most deprived areas, exacerbated further as a result of Covid. The increases in children living with obesity and severe obesity in 2020 to 2021 followed the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in school closures and restrictions to public health interventions. For example, the NCMP participation rates for 2019 to 2020 and 2020 to 2021 were affected by COVID-19. The impact of school closures, workforce pressures and school attendance, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, are referenced throughout the data reports in [NCMP publications](#).
- 3.3 Physical activity is associated with numerous health benefits for children, such as improved muscle and bone strength, health and fitness, improved quality of sleep and maintenance of a

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<sup>1</sup> [National Child Measurement Programme: operational guidance 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [The Local Authorities \(Public Health Functions and Entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives\) Regulations 2013 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [dh\\_131901.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> Time to Solve Childhood Obesity, Davies SC, 2019

healthy weight. There is also evidence that physical activity and taking part in organised sports and after school clubs is linked to improved participation in the school day. A recent review<sup>5</sup> highlighted a 17 minute reduction in children's engagement in daily moderate to vigorous physical activity levels from before to during Covid.

- 3.4 Whilst the return to educational settings has increased activity levels, which improves child health by contributing to maintaining a healthy weight, the Obesity Health Alliance highlight that ensuring opportunities to improve child health is estimated to save £30 billion by 2030.
- 3.5 The NCMP data shows that nationally, the prevalence of children aged 4 to 5 and 10 to 11 who are overweight and living with obesity is unacceptably high. The overall change in prevalence levels has been relatively small each year, with the exception of the unprecedented rise seen in the [2020 to 2021 NCMP annual report](#) which showed an increase of around 4.5%, for both cohorts.
- 3.6 The data consistently shows that the number of children living with **obesity doubles between reception year and year 6** (from around 10% to around 20%). Additionally, year-on-year the data has shown that children living with obesity in the most deprived 10% of areas in England are more than twice that in the least deprived 10%. This gap in obesity prevalence by deprivation continues to widen for both reception and year 6, and for those children measured as severely obese, this gap rises to more than 4 times for both year groups.

#### 4. Whole System Approach to Maintaining a Healthy Weight in Sunderland

- 4.1 A range of stakeholders and services make an important contribution to the health of the individuals and communities they serve. Success depends on the whole system - commissioners, providers and wider stakeholders - working together to make these services as responsive, relevant and as easy to use as possible; ultimately to improve the public's health. Therefore, working across the Council and with a wide range of partners is key to reducing health inequalities by contributing to improving the social determinants of health and strengthening resilient communities and support services.
- 4.2 The following update builds on elements of this work, sharing the progress made against subsequent investment and ways of working in support of the whole systems approach to maintaining a healthy weight.

#### 5. Maintaining a Healthy Weight Update

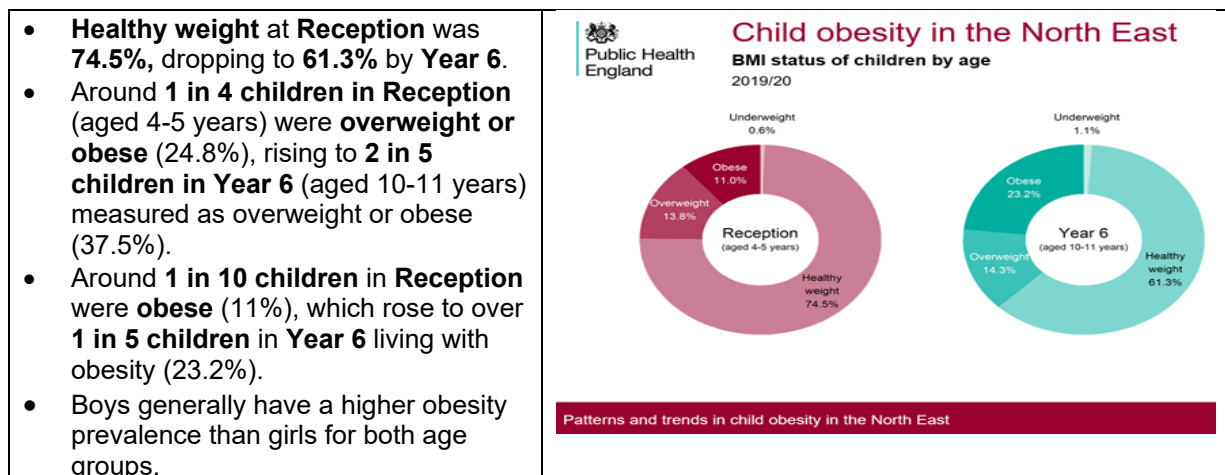
##### 5.1 An Overview of 3 years of NCMP Data for Sunderland

An NCMP update has been shared with key stakeholders as well as being presented at key groups including Starting Well Delivery Board, Best Start in Life Working Group, School Sports Coordinator Group and the Healthy Weight Steering Group and Alliance.

##### **a. NCMP headlines Academic year 2019/20** In the **North East**:

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<sup>5</sup> [Global Changes in Child and Adolescent Physical Activity During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis | Adolescent Medicine | JAMA Pediatrics | JAMA Network](#)



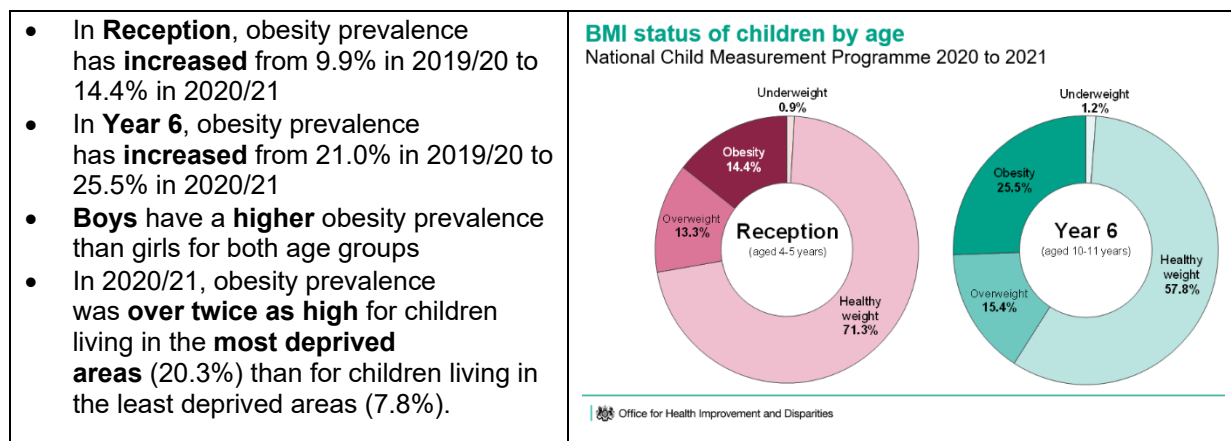
### In Sunderland:

- **Children (Reception)** – Healthy weight at **Reception** was **77.2%**, The prevalence of overweight (including obesity) was reported at 22.1%, a 2.3% decrease from the previous year. This was **lower** than both the NE regional average at 24.8% and the England average at 23.0%.
- **Children (Year 6)** – Healthy weight drops to **61.8%** by **Year 6**. The prevalence of overweight (including obesity) was reported at 36.9%, a 2.3% decrease from the previous year. This was **lower** than the NE regional average at 37.5%, although higher than the England average at 35.2%.
- The prevalence of severe obesity in both age groups was reported **higher** than both the NE regional and England average.

### b. NCMP headlines Academic year 2020/21

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020/21 collection was carried out as a sample and statistical weighting was applied to the data, producing an estimate of obesity prevalence at national level. The nationally representative sample of 10 - 20% that LAs were advised to collect in March 2020, due to school closures, was less than the minimum 75% required to produce robust estimates of obesity prevalence at the Local Authority level, meaning there is no validated LA level data available, only at regional level.

Overall across **England**, the data below shows that **obesity rates** in both reception and Y6 pupils **increased** by around **4.5 percentage points** between 2019-20 and 2020-21. This is the **highest annual rise** since the NCMP began in 2006/07, the previous highest rise was less than 1 percentage point.



In the **North East**, there was a 4% point change from the previous year in obesity prevalence in **Reception** and a 5.9% point change for **Year 6**, meaning **healthy weight decreased**,

and **excess weight indicators were up**, with a similar trend for Overweight & Obese/Severely Obese, which **doubled or nearly doubled by Year 6**.

**Sunderland** completed measurements for 30% of the cohort, with the unvalidated data indicating healthy weight was down by over 10% for both **Reception** (from 77.2% to 65.4%) and for **Year 6** (from 61.8% to 51.4%). Excess weight prevalence had risen for both cohorts across the 3 indicators.

*\*This data was not released, therefore is not to be shared publicly, as it is not validated due to impact of Covid on the NCMP sample.*

### c. NCMP headlines Academic year 2021/22

**National prevalence** findings from the 2021/22 NCMP<sup>6</sup> show **decreases** in the proportions of children who are overweight (including obesity), living with obesity, and living with severe obesity compared to 2020/21. **Decreases** are seen in both Reception (a 4.14 percentage point **decrease in obesity prevalence to 10.1%**) and Year 6 (a **2.11 percentage point decrease in obesity prevalence to 23.5%**), with Reception seeing the biggest relative reduction (**App. 1**).

Though the percentage of children living with obesity and severe obesity has decreased compared to the stark increase last year, **prevalence levels remain slightly higher than before the pandemic** and are at the highest level since the NCMP began, if the 2020/21 figures are excluded.

**For Sunderland**, the 2021/22 NCMP<sup>7</sup> Obesity Profile indicates that prevalence across the indicators has seen a rise in healthy weight and a drop in excess weight, although not all have returned to pre Covid levels, including the slight rise in underweight. The Table below shows the data across three reporting years.

<b><i>Programme Year Overview</i></b>	<b>2019/20</b>		<b>2020/21*</b>		<b>2021/22</b>	
<b><i>Cohort</i></b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Y6</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Y6</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Y6</b>
<b>Underweight</b>	0.5%	1.5%	0.4%	0.9%	0.7%	1%
<b>Healthy Weight</b>	77.2%	61.8%	65.4%	51.4%	74.2%	54.2%
<b>Overweight</b>	12.2%	13.1%	15.9%	17.4%	12.8%	15.3%
<b>Overweight &amp; Obese</b>	22.1%	36.9%	33%	47%	25.3%	45%
<b>Obesity &amp; Severe Obesity</b>	10.1	23.6%	18.3%	30.3%	12.5%	29.7%
<b>Severe Obesity</b>	3%	6.1%	2.4%	12.9%	3%	9%

*\*20/21 This data was not released, therefore is not to be shared publicly, as it is not validated due to impact of Covid on the NCMP sample.*

**In summary**, increases from NCMP data persist for Y6, however Reception is generally recovering; there have been noticeable increases in obesity during the pandemic, with a widening of inequalities. This was likely driven by a marked reduction in physical activity and some changes in diet, resulting in a short term impact on children's health, although the longer term impact is uncertain, for example the potential uncertainties for Y6 children in maintaining a healthy weight going forward.

The latest Childhood Obesity Profiles at ward level for Sunderland time period: 2019/20 to 2021/22(**App. 2**), show historic trends. Key Points for the latest analysis, which supports a targeted approach to maintaining a healthy weight, highlight that:

- **In Reception** Doxford, St Michael's, Washington South and Fulwell are all significantly lower than the Sunderland average. There are no wards significantly higher than the Sunderland average.
- **In Year 6** Fulwell is significantly lower than the Sunderland average, with Sandhill significantly higher than the Sunderland average.

<sup>6</sup> [National Child Measurement Programme, England, 2021/22 school year - NDRS \(digital.nhs.uk\)](https://digital.nhs.uk/national-child-measurement-programme-england-2021/22-school-year)

<sup>7</sup> [Obesity Profile - Data - OHID \(phe.org.uk\)](https://phe.org.uk/obesity-profile-data)

#### **d. Health Related Behaviour Survey**

The 2021 Health Related Behaviour<sup>8</sup> survey informed us that secondary pupils are 3 times more likely to skip breakfast and eat less portions of fruit and veg than primary school pupils. Although primary school children are more likely to have breakfast, those who do not is highest where they are also more likely to eat sweets/chocolate most days. There is an **upward trend** in the number of **girls** who report having 'nothing at all' for breakfast, 6% of Y6 girls, 18% of Y8 girls and 23% of Y10 girls.

Participation in physical exercise is more prevalent in **primary school** pupils than in **secondary**, with **38% of primary** pupils exercising 5 times a week or more compared to only **22% of secondary** pupils. Again, the **clear difference between girls and boys** continues as pupils get older; **fewer girls** say they consider themselves fit, **reducing** from 30% in **Y6** to 18% in **Y8** to 14% in **Y10**, with the boys being more active where 30% of the **Y10 boys** exercised enough to breathe harder and faster on at least 5 occasions in the previous week compared with 14% **Y10** girls.

More than **half** of secondary school pupils would like to **lose weight**, and almost **two thirds** have been bullied because of their weight, with a clear sex based difference; **46%** of **Y6** girls said they would like to lose weight, **rising to 62%** of **Y8**; by **Y10**, **65%** of females state they would like to lose weight compared to **39%** of males. Overall **43% of Y6** pupils reported they wanted to lose weight; this is highest in areas where pupils eat chips or potatoes most days.

When you look at this alongside information on **body image**, it is interesting to note **47% of secondary school** pupils **worry about the way they look** and **54% of secondary school** pupils said they would like to lose weight, this was similar across the 5 localities. There are clear differences for boys and girls – by Y10 **69% of girls** worried about the way they looked as opposed to **26% of boys**.

**In summary**, this analysis highlights that that although secondary school pupils generally understand the importance of looking after their own health, the healthy behaviours that are present in primary school pupils decline over the year groups in relation to nutrition, physical activity and body image.

#### **e. Broader Impacts**

Given that we know hunger and obesity co-exist in vulnerable groups, children are adversely affected by poor nutrition. Families are making tough decisions to enable a level of management for eating, cooking or heating. Through the root cause of inequality, impacted adversely by the pandemic and exacerbated further by the current cost of living crisis, food poverty is often hidden and comes with a level of stigma, which will impact on health outcomes and likely continue the widening of inequalities both in the short and long term. Sunderland City Council has a task group in place to support a coordinated response to the Cost of Living Crisis and support financial wellbeing.

### **5.2 Health, Housing and Communities**

#### **a. Healthy Weight Declaration and Action Plan**

The Healthy Weight Steering Group delivered a Healthy Weight Declaration workshop in 2020, initiating the development of the Healthy Weight Declaration concept, discussing and mapping the commitments and forming a 'Healthy Weight Alliance' for Sunderland. This initiated the whole system approach to Healthy Weight in Sunderland, through a Healthy Weight action plan, monitored by the Healthy Weight Steering Group and reported to Sunderland's Health & Wellbeing Board. In February 2022, Sunderland were the first Local Authority in the North East (and in the Country since the outbreak of the global pandemic) to adopt the Declaration

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<sup>8</sup> [Sunderland Survey 2021](#)



via a virtual event. Actions include a Prevention Booklet<sup>9</sup> circulated to schools and the development of a 'Maintaining a healthy weight pathway for children and young people' in Sunderland, with a range of key colleagues .

### ***b. Best Start in Life***

The findings from The Impact of Covid Survey (which explored the effect on early years), highlighted evidence of developmental delay and health impacts on vulnerable infants under 3 years. The recommendations from this have led to actions to improve early years developmental levels and close the gap of inequalities for all children in Sunderland. The implementation of the Family Hub Model and trailblazer priorities including infant feeding and physical literacy, will influence the Best Start in Life action plan, alongside strategies to enable support in line with the national Early Years Development review.

Healthy Start<sup>10</sup> is an NHS scheme intended to support a reduction in child poverty and health inequalities by providing eligible families with weekly vouchers to buy nutritious food including milk, pulses, plain fresh, tinned and frozen fruit and vegetables. Eligible families also receive vouchers every eight weeks for vitamins.

Part of the SCC Financial Wellbeing response includes commissioning The Bread and Butter Thing to establish 5 hubs in Sunderland and provide low-cost healthy groceries to households across the city. TBBT is now accepting Healthy Start vouchers at all its hubs spanning the North of England<sup>11</sup>. This and other opportunities will be utilised to further promote the Healthy Start programme through a range of methods, including pull-ups, posters, leaflets and videos, of which there are a range of materials available to increase uptake to over the current 81%.

### ***c. School Meals Service***

The School Meals Service and Public Health invited Sunderland primary schools to take part in a new national pilot scheme, to educate children on the many benefits good nutrition has on their health and well-being. Belly Bugs<sup>12</sup> introduces children to a set of fun characters based on the latest scientific research in gut microbes.

The initial pilot is for **Year 3 pupils**, although the overall programme also works for other years as the curriculum planning covers KS1 and KS2. The rationale for this year group as a focus of the pilot is to target a key touchpoint between the National Child Measurement Programme cohorts of Reception and Year 6, where there is a reported decline in maintaining a healthy weight through both national, regional and local NCMP data.

### ***d. Active Sunderland Sport and Physical Activity***

In 2018, the Council developed a policy position for sport and physical activity in Sunderland. The approach provided a clear direction for physical activity, identified a joined up approach for partners that included shared priority objectives and a vision of establishing an '**Active Sunderland - a city where everyone is as active as they can be**'. This approach is consistent with the Healthy City Plan aim to develop a city where 'more people are physically active'.

The policy position objectives are:

- **Active environments** - making it easier for people to be active through everyday activities
- **Sport and leisure facilities** – ensuring Sunderland has accessible, good quality sport and leisure facilities, and opportunities
- **Active educational venues** – ensuring students and families are provided with a positive experience and the best opportunities within and beyond the curriculum

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<sup>9</sup> [Layout 1 \(togetherforchildren.org.uk\)](https://togetherforchildren.org.uk)

<sup>10</sup> [Healthy Start website](#)

<sup>11</sup> [TBBT extends Healthy Start Vouchers to all hub locations — Bread and Butter Thing.](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Belly Bugs - The Inside Story](#)

- **Active workforces** - ensuring opportunities are available for the workforce to be active
- **Empowering communities** - supporting and enabling communities to look at informal opportunities to be active and increasing support to the community sector
- **Supporting individuals** – ensuring opportunities are in place for those who may need more help in accessing opportunities to be active.

Until recently, Sunderland had low physical activity levels for children (Years 1-11). However, over the past year significant progress has been made, with more children now being active. The table below shows that Sunderland has increased activity levels from 23.8% to 56.5%. ***Sunderland now has the highest levels of active children in the region and is also outperforming the national average.***

<b>Children (Years 1-11)</b>	<b>Active</b> (an average of 60 minutes or more a day (%))	<b>Fairly Active</b> (average of 30-59 minutes per day)	<b>Less active</b> (less than an average of 60 minutes or more a day (%))
<b>Sunderland</b>	<b>56.5%</b>	<b>16.7%</b>	<b>26.9%</b>
North East	47.2%	21.6%	31.3%
England	47.2%	22.7%	30.1%

*Sport England Active Lives Data: December 2022*

The ability to improve activity levels not only rests with the Council, but also includes other city organisations, for example community groups, sports clubs, the private sector and the educational sector. Increasing activity levels is a key priority for the Active Sunderland Board, which includes partners such as Everyone Active, Leisure United, Foundation of Light and StreetGames. Working in collaboration to the same shared objectives (as identified above), the Board has contributed and enabled progress to be made. This work has been predicated on previous good practice and introducing new programmes to engage young people.

Part of the challenge of getting more children and young people active has often involved working in those localities with significant health and financial inequalities. Whilst some progress has been made, more work needs to be done to understand further the barriers that prevent activity from taking place and working with schools to encourage additional activity beyond the school curriculum. It is hoped that Sunderland's increasing activity levels will make a significant contribution to improving the city's long-term health priorities.

**Appendix 3** provides examples of the work undertaken by **Active Sunderland** to create and improve opportunities for children and young people to be active, including **Change 4 Life Sunderland**, who provide an accessible, cost effective and high quality universal offer of physical activity opportunities and nutrition information for children and young people and their families, based on evidence-based guidance and through utilising national Change 4 Life resources. The Change 4 Life Sunderland programme provides healthy lifestyle sessions to encourage and support families to eat well, move more and live healthier for longer. A number of initiatives (**App.3**) have been developed as part of the offer, including pre and post natal, early years and in educational and community settings, which recognises the need to engage both families and communities in eating well and moving more.

#### **a. Additional Funding**

Progress has been made towards supporting and developing local stakeholders in taking a whole systems approach in reducing overweight and obesity prevalence to support maintaining a healthy weight, through increasing the availability of healthier food and improving access to affordable physical activity.

A variety of programmes of work have been delivered by a range of providers in support of the maintaining a healthy weight agenda. The outputs and outcomes from the work delivered have also contributed to the ongoing recovery from the impact of Covid for residents in the

city, particularly children, young people and families. Key headlines include 60 participants accessing behavioural insights training, 151 participants in Aquanatal classes, 36 children learning to swim, 802 attendances (720 Individual participants) at 91 taster sessions, 12 nutrition and movement sessions with 53 adults and 53 children. Further proposals have been developed to support the maintaining a healthy weight agenda (**App 4**).

### **5.3 Growing Healthy Sunderland 0-19 Public Health Service**

#### ***a. Health Visiting***

Growing Healthy Sunderland deliver Health Visiting to families across Sunderland, including provision of all mandatory universal reviews from ante-natal to pre school, enhanced support to children and young people with higher levels of need and access to public health information such as infant feeding, safe sleeping and accident prevention, alongside advice and support available through baby clinics.

#### ***b. School drop ins***

Growing Healthy Sunderland deliver the NCMP in primary schools across Sunderland. School Nurses work alongside partners to support children, young people and their families with access to information and support on a range of issues including maintaining a healthy weight and general health and wellbeing through a health promotion programme in primary schools and a school based drop in in secondary schools. School health profiles are also updated using NCMP information to enhance the support from Growing Healthy Sunderland (school nursing services). Secondary schools are offered support via the healthy settings approach to be able to respond to identified need. School Nurses also support with referrals to appropriate services including Tier 3 Dietetic Services provided by South Tyneside and Sunderland Foundation Trust.

### **5.4 Together for Children**

#### ***a. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)***

Together for Children are coordinating a Children and Young People's JSNA with a range of stakeholders, which replaces the 0-19 JSNA. It will link with the Healthy Weight JSNA, which is also under review.

#### ***b. Mobile Prevention Bus***

Wear Here 4 You provides information, advice and support for children, young people and families, delivered from a recognisable hub on wheels in different parts of Sunderland, such as schools, local parks, at a community hub, or out and about across the city. The service is delivered in partnership with organisations from across the City, who deliver through outreach as part of the prevention offer.

#### ***c. Sunderland Healthy Schools Award***

Sunderland Healthy Schools Award is an offer to educational settings to sign up to five charter marks and develop an evidence based portfolio of activity against an assessment framework for each charter. The Food & Nutrition Charter Mark, currently available at Bronze Level as Silver and Gold are in development, is coordinated by Public Health and involves partners including School Catering and the Low Carbon Team. One early years setting and two primary schools have currently achieved. A further two schools are ready for assessment and over 26 settings are currently gathering evidence to submit for assessment.

#### ***d. Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme***



The HAF programme provides grant funding to local authorities to coordinate free, locally delivered holiday provision during the Easter, Summer and Christmas school holidays, for eligible children. The programme provides fun, enriching activities centred around sports, culture, arts and learning, as well as providing tasty, nutritious meals and activities based on developing cooking skills and knowledge about nutrition, that families can use at home.

#### e. **Family Hubs**

Sunderland is one of 75 Local Authority's in the UK to be awarded Department for Education's Transformation Funding to develop a Family Hub<sup>13</sup> and Start for Life programme. The aim of Family Hubs is to ensure that families can access the help and support they need at an early stage, prioritise the crucial first days of children's lives, tackle any issues before they escalate, reduce disadvantage and achieve better outcomes for all children and young people. This includes improving young children's home learning environments (HLE), to help them to recover from the pandemic.

The hubs will enable services such as midwifery, health visitors, mental health support and services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities to provide support in one place; through an integrated, wrap-around service for the whole family from conception to early years, until 19 years of age (or 25 with special educational needs and disabilities).

### 5.5 Healthy City Plan Priorities

Progress has been made in contribution to the Healthy City Plan key areas for improvement for Best Start in Life and Healthy Weight priorities, evidenced through this report and in the table below.

<b>Best Start in Life</b>	
<i>Breastfeeding Continuation</i>	<i>Update</i>
Key agencies will achieve UNICEF Baby Friendly accreditation, with Maternity Services and Health Visiting Services reaching level 2 as a minimum.	<b>In progress.</b> GHS – achieved UNICEF Level 2 and Level 3 deferred until 2023 – awaiting new date. STSFT - Infant feeding co-ordinator appointed (not yet started); registered intent to work toward UNICEF Level 1 accreditation.
A regional infant feeding touchpoint pathway will be implemented.	<b>Completed</b> as part of regional approach. To be reviewed in support of the development of a pathway to access infant feeding formula.
Findings and recommendations from the city's Infant Feeding research project regarding the barriers to breastfeeding for women in Sunderland, will be used to enhance support services and promote the benefits of breastfeeding.	<b>Completed</b> with recommendations as actions in the Best Start in Life action plan to support the Breastfeeding Friendly City agenda.
Behavioural insights work will be undertaken with a focus on increasing breastfeeding rates through the use of digital support.	<b>Completed</b> with recommendations as actions in the Best Start in Life action plan to support the Breastfeeding Friendly City agenda.
<b>Healthy Weight</b>	

<sup>13</sup> [Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme Guide \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

<i>Healthy Weight for Children, Young People and Families</i>	<i>Update</i>
There will be increased take up of Healthy Start Vitamins in Sunderland and an increased awareness of their benefits.	<b>In progress.</b> Healthy Start uptake had increased to 81% in March 2022. Access to Healthy Start vitamins is available through Growing Healthy Sunderland Health Visiting and Family Nurse Practitioners is in place. Development of Comms plan to utilise resources and promote HS throughout the City in response to the Cost of Living Crisis, including Healthy Start Vitamins through pharmacies.
Change4Life Sunderland will deliver preventative services within communities and tailored lifestyle support for children, young people and families in areas of greatest need.	<b>Completed.</b> C4LS offer accessed through educational settings and in the community. Pre and post natal and early years offer in place. Additional funding accessed to enhance the current C4LS offer including Roots and Shoots, Secondary School weigh and measure.
More schools will sign up to and achieve the Great Active Sunderland Schools Charter and the Food and Nutrition Charter Mark, as part of the Sunderland Healthy Schools Award.	<b>In progress.</b> SHSA celebration event held at Ryhope Juniors. Continued good uptake of GASSC. 3 settings achieved Bronze FNCM, with over 26 gathering evidence to submit for assessment.
'This mum moves' programme, which supports women to be active and have a healthy diet during and after pregnancy, will be promoted	<b>Completed</b> – training accessed through national programme.

## 5.6 Future Actions

As well as continuing to share the NCMP intelligence to influence and target the city's maintaining a healthy weight offer to children and young people, particularly those who are not accessing support currently, there a range of further actions identified for 2023-24:

- Update relevant Joint Strategic Needs Assessments to include the appropriate data, as well as consideration of NCMP output data for 2021 and 2022.
- There is key data highlighting the inequalities aspect of healthy weight in Sunderland, for example sex, ethnicity and deprivation, often linked to the ward you live in. The facilitation of engagement with communities who are underserved in current provision to better understand need, attitudes to health behaviours and enable access to correct information through appropriate health promotion resources, should be linked to and embedded in the range of inequalities work we do and not seen as something in addition.
- Utilise the Family Hubs governance structure and support a health focus through key priorities, which will be reviewed against the Best Start in Life action plan, including breastfeeding and Healthy Start.
- Embed the Maintaining a Healthy Weight Pathway for children and young people with key partners through the Family Hub model.
- Continue to promote the Food and Nutrition Charter Mark to increase uptake of the Bronze Level.

- Present a paper with further Maintaining a Healthy Weight proposals for Health, Housing and Communities DMT agreement.
- Continue to review progress made against identified to support maintaining a healthy weight across the Starting Well 'lifecourse' to acknowledge achieved outcomes and identify future opportunities.

## **6. SUMMARY**

As demonstrated in the report, current NCMP data indicates that healthy weight prevalence has improved after the noticeable increase in obesity during the 2020-21 pandemic period, with the impact of covid generating the widening of inequalities. The 2021-21 NCMP data highlights that although increases persist for Y6, Reception is generally recovering, underpinned by a broad programme of work and activities in place to support children and young people to be more active and maintain a healthy weight. It will be important to maintain the momentum gained through this work and to build on further opportunities moving forward.

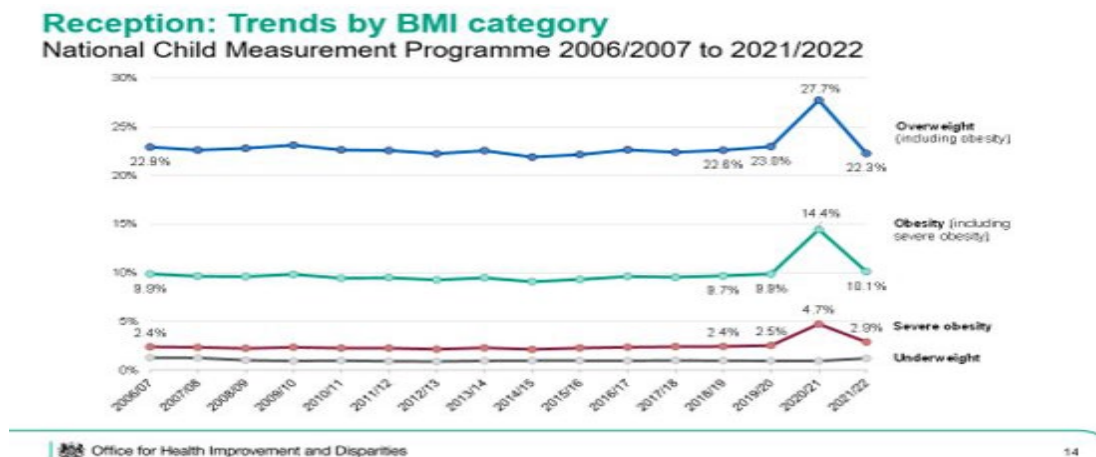
## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- Receive the NCMP data to inform of rates of childhood obesity in Sunderland and note the maintaining a healthy weight workstream update.
- Endorse the future actions identified, which support sharing information with key stakeholders to inform and influence our approaches and plans for the development of a programme of work to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people in Sunderland.

## Appendix 1 - 2021-22 NCMP data

**Reception:** 2020/21 saw a 4.6 percentage point increase for obesity to 14.4%. The data for 2021/22 shows a 4.14 percentage point **decrease in obesity prevalence to 10.1%**. Prevalence of **severe obesity has also decreased** from 4.7% in 2020/21 to **2.9%**. The 2021/22 data shows that **22.3% of Reception children were living with overweight or obesity**, down from 27.7% in 2020/21. The underlying trend for Reception was quite flat leading up to the pandemic and is seen to recover to almost 2019/20 levels.



### Reception: Prevalence of obesity

National Child Measurement Programme 2021 to 2022

In 2021 to 2022, 1 in 10 children in Reception (aged 4-5 years) were living with obesity (boys 10.3%, girls 9.9%, all children 10.1%)



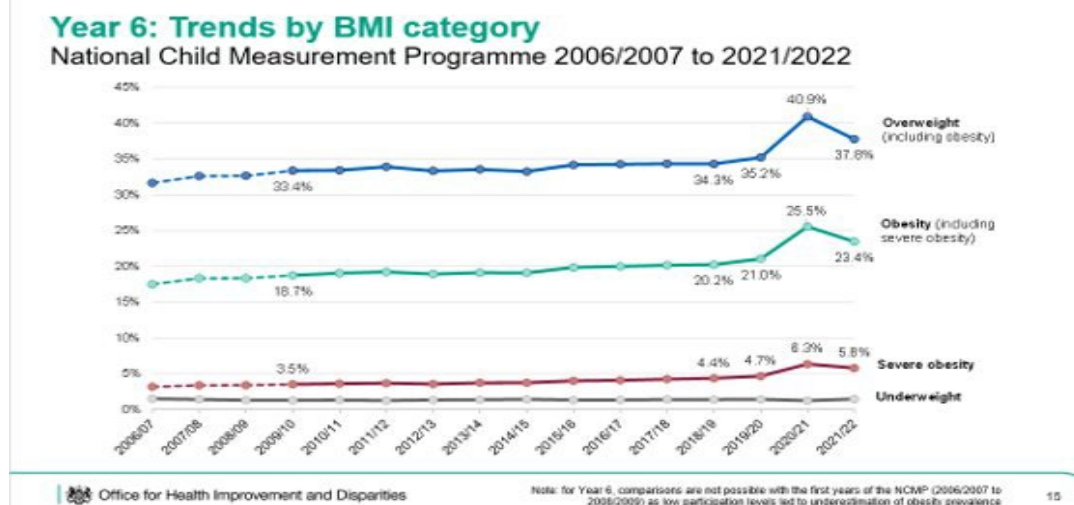
### Reception: Prevalence of obesity

National Child Measurement Programme 2021 to 2022

In 2021 to 2022, 1 in 10 children in Reception (aged 4-5 years) were living with obesity (boys 10.3%, girls 9.9%, all children 10.1%)



**Year 6:** In 2020/21, prevalence increased by 4.6 percentage points to 25.4%, 2021/22 data has shown a **2.11 percentage point decrease to 23.5%**. Prevalence of **severe obesity** has **decreased** from 6.3% in 2020/21 to **5.8%** in 2021/22. The 2021/22 data shows that **37.8% of Year 6 children were living with overweight or obesity**, down from 40.9% in 2020/21. Y6 hasn't recovered as well as Reception.



## Year 6: Prevalence of overweight (including obesity)

National Child Measurement Programme 2021 to 2022

In 2021 to 2022, nearly 4 in 10 children in Year 6 (aged 10-11 years) were living with overweight or obesity (boys 40.7%, girls 34.7%, all children 37.8%)



Office for Health Improvement and Disparities

## Year 6: Prevalence of obesity

National Child Measurement Programme 2021 to 2022

In 2021 to 2022, more than 1 in 5 children in Year 6 (aged 10-11 years) were living with obesity (boys 26.4%, girls 20.4%, all children 23.4%)



Office for Health Improvement and Disparities

**For Sunderland**, the 2021/22 NCMP data indicates that prevalence across the indicators has seen a rise in healthy weight and a drop in excess weight, although not all have returned to pre Covid levels, including the slight rise in underweight.

## Obesity Profile

Data view

Area profiles



Geography

Sunderland

Counties & UAs in North East region

Topic

NCMP prevalence data

[Legend](#) [Benchmark](#) [More options](#)

Geography version Counties & UAs (from Apr 2021)

☐ CIPFA nearest neighbours to Sunderland

Indicator	Period	Sunderland		Region England				England	
		Recent Trend	Count	Value	Value	Value	Worst/Lowest	Range	Best/Highest
Reception: Prevalence of underweight <a href="#">New data</a>	2021/22	→	20	0.7%	0.8%	1.2%	4.6%		0.3%
Reception: Prevalence of healthy weight <a href="#">New data</a>	2021/22	→	2,110	74.2%	74.3%	76.5%	69.9%		83.7%
Reception: Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) <a href="#">New data</a>	2021/22	→	720	25.3%	24.9%	22.3%	28.7%		13.7%
Reception: Prevalence of overweight <a href="#">New data</a>	2021/22	→	365	12.8%	13.5%	12.1%	7.0%		15.7%
Reception: Prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) <a href="#">New data</a>	2021/22	→	355	12.5%	11.4%	10.1%	14.9%		5.4%
Reception: Prevalence of severe obesity <a href="#">New data</a>	2021/22	→	95	3.3%	3.4%	2.9%	5.8%		1.1%
Year 6: Prevalence of underweight <a href="#">New data</a>	2021/22	→	30	1.0%	1.1%	1.5%	3.4%		0.6%
Year 6: Prevalence of healthy weight <a href="#">New data</a>	2021/22	→	1,660	54.2%	58.0%	60.8%	49.0%		74.0%
Year 6: Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) <a href="#">New data</a>	2021/22	→	1,380	45.0%	40.9%	37.8%	49.1%		24.5%
Year 6: Prevalence of overweight <a href="#">New data</a>	2021/22	→	470	15.3%	14.3%	14.3%	11.8%		16.8%
Year 6: Prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) <a href="#">New data</a>	2021/22	→	910	29.7%	26.6%	23.4%	34.0%		12.4%
Year 6: Prevalence of severe obesity <a href="#">New data</a>	2021/22	↑	275	9.0%	7.7%	5.8%	10.1%		2.0%
Reception: Prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity), 5-years data combined <a href="#">New data</a>	2017/18 - 21/22	—	—	11.1%	11.0%	9.7%	13.6%		5.3%
Year 6: Prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity), 5-years data combined <a href="#">New data</a>	2017/18 - 21/22	—	—	25.5%	23.6%	21.0%	30.2%		11.8%

2020/21 data is excluded from the '5-years data combined' indicators, see Notes section in Definitions for details.

**Appendix 2 – Ward Level NCMP Data**



NCMP Reception -  
Obesity 3 years poole



NCMP Year 6 -  
Obesity 3 years poole



## Appendix 3 Active Sunderland

Programme	What has been achieved?
<b>Active Environments</b>	
Active Sunderland 3k Run (part of Sunderland Runs Weekend)	A family fun run that specifically targets schools, young people and beginners, attracting around 400 participants.
Active Sunderland Big Walk	Includes 3, 7 and 12 mile led walks, with the 3 mile walk targeted to families with young children.
Active Sunderland Holiday Programme	A citywide activity programme for children and families that takes place during the school holidays. The programme engaged with 2600 individuals in 2022.
Thompson Park – Places to Ride	The installation of a free to use traffic free cycling skills area, in partnership with British Cycling, Sunderland Young Peoples Bike Project and North Area Committee. Children's bikes and safety equipment are also provided to support access. A Places to Ride scheme is currently being considered for the Coalfields.
Swim Bike Run	In order to drive forward the inactivity agenda, a partnership with British Triathlon has been developed to promote existing and new opportunities for residents to participate in swimming/open water swimming, cycling, running and walking.
<b>2023 Priorities</b>	
BIG Events and Holiday programmes	Promote free to access holiday programmes across the city, and identify target groups to support access to Big Events (3K run, Bike Ride and Walk)
Hetton – Outdoor Swimming	A pontoon will be installed at Hetton Lyons Country Park to provide access to the lake for outdoor swimming.
Parkrun	A Junior Parkrun will be established in Mowbray Park, providing free weekly participation running for children aged 4-14.
World Triathlon 2023	British leg of the 2023 World Triathlon Championship Series will offer opportunities to train, participate and spectate as well as inspire children, young people and families to swim, cycle and run.
<b>Active Education</b>	
Sunderland Healthy Schools Award Great Active Sunderland Schools Charter	The Charter celebrates schools who continue to develop the healthy lifestyles of their pupils, create sport and physical activity opportunities and are a great community school. The Charter improves standards in PE and physical activity, with 81 schools currently participating and 32,000 pupils across the city benefitting from the work.
Sportsability	Over 360 children and young people with disabilities participate in organised activities at the Silksworth Community Pool, Tennis and Wellness Centre. The unique aspect of Sportsability events, sees each activity provider offering an exit route for young people to continue with their preferred activity.
Change4Life Sunderland Schools	A healthy lifestyle programme aimed at encouraging and supporting pupils to eat well and engage in physical activity. C4L deliver 450 sessions annually in schools, with 12,600 pupils benefiting from the sessions.
Early Years Programme	Delivery includes an Aqua Natal course, and post-natal Mums on the Move walking programme and Netball sessions. A Weaning and Recipe information booklet has recently been developed.
Change4Life Sunderland Support Programme	Working with over 40 schools on a sustainable gardening and nutrition programme called 'Roots and Shoots'. The programme also includes a secondary school's 'weigh/measure' element.

Daily Mile	Supporting primary schools with various walking challenges, contributing to a positive impact on physical and emotional health and wellbeing of pupils. There are 30 schools participating, supporting 4,500 pupils.
Pedometer Challenge	Supporting the Swim Bike Run agenda, a number of challenges have been devised and shared with schools, using pedometers as a way to measure goals and outcomes. There are 40 schools participating, supporting 7,200 pupils.
<b>2023 Priorities</b>	
Targeted Schools Project	A target project has been developed for those schools who want to be more active and support children who are overweight. The project has been progressed with the support of the Head Teacher of Dame Dorothy Primary School and the School Games Organisers.
Change4Life Sunderland Families	Providing 730 children and family members with food and nutrition advice and delivering physical activity sessions. Targeted work to be undertaken in 2023 to engage some families in the Big Events programme with funded places.
<b>Sport &amp; Leisure Facilities</b>	
Sports Club and Activity Groups	There are over 300 sports and activity clubs in the city with many of them providing opportunities for children and young people.
Everyone Active	Everyone Active deliver swimming lessons, inflatable swimming, fitness sessions, soft play, tennis coaching, skiing, trampolining, table tennis and many more activities in their centres across the city. Everyone Active provide free swimming and gym access cards for 205 Looked After Children.
Leisure United	Following the successful Football Foundation application to develop 3 Football Hubs, opportunities are available for football coaching (boys and girls), youth and mini soccer leagues, and recreational play.
Investment in Facilities	New opportunities have been created through Section 106 investment in Hetton including BMX Track refurbishment, E-bikes for children with disabilities and new gym/sports equipment.
<b>2023 Priorities</b>	
Tennis Court Refurbishment	17 tennis courts will be refurbished across the city and a coaching/activation programme will be developed to support tennis and physical activity on the new courts.
PlayZones	An application will be submitted to the Football Foundation to develop and install a number of Playzones (Multi Use Games Areas) across the city with targeted activation plans.
Go Tri – Schools Triathlon Event	To support the development of Swim, Bike, Run in the city, a schools Go Tri Event will take place in May 2023. The 2022 event was attended by 143 pupils.
<b>Supporting Individuals and Empowering Communities</b>	
Voluntary and Community Sector	Supporting applications for funding that will result in the delivery of physical activity opportunities and the provision of new or improved facilities.
Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF)	Working in partnership with TfC, Change4Life and Streetgames to support activity delivery and provide a focused training offer to upskill HAF delivery partners.
Young Health Champions	The C4L team deliver Young Health Champions Training to Year 5 pupils to enable them to become healthy role models in schools.
Tackling Inequalities Fund	Assisted 15 organisations (many supporting young people) with funding to reduce the impact of COVID-19 and inequalities in sport and physical activity.
<b>2023 Priorities</b>	
Street Games	Over 1300 young people are supported each month through local programmes providing physical activity opportunities in some of the city's most deprived

	communities. Training and funding are provided to help sustain the projects, in addition to offering appropriate information advice and guidance.
Change the Game	A 5-year project which commenced in October 2022 and is funded by the Football Foundation/ Sport England. The project will aim to reduce inactivity and increase football participation in Southwick for residents aged 16+. The work will be supported by a citywide Consortium of community and leisure partners.

## Appendix 4 – Additional Funding

The following table shows progress on previous funding proposals and reflects the whole systems approach taken to reduce overweight and obesity and support maintaining a healthy weight.

Project	Outcomes
<b>Call to Projects Maintaining a Healthy Weight &amp; Reducing Inequalities</b> Sunderland City Council invited local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) groups and statutory providers only, to submit an applications to develop and implement innovative projects that supported the city to reduce health inequalities and residents to improve their health and wellbeing, in relation to healthy weight and engaging in regular physical activity, as we embarked on the road map to recovery from the impact of Covid 19.	1. Funding Awarded £263,735.00 Original Grant £69,315.00 Project Extension <b>TOTALLING £333,050</b> 2. <b>16</b> Providers awarded funding 3. <b>3657</b> individuals supported 4. <b>3672</b> face to face sessions delivered to 5. <b>125</b> sessions delivered virtually
<b>Behavioural Insights</b> The Behaviouralists delivered sessions to promote healthy behaviours to support staff and parent/carer skills in relation to the maintaining a healthy weight agenda.	1. 3 sessions delivered to colleagues and HAF providers 2. <b>Participants 60</b> 3. Feedback – majority found the method very interesting and would use it to support their work. 4. 2 sessions to deliver to Parent/ Carers in partnership with Children Centres, health visiting and Change 4 Life Sunderland
<b>0-3 Years Consultation</b> A small fund to support Early Years settings with nutrition and physical activity projects.	1. <b>Five applications</b> received from Early Years providers. 2. £500 per project awarded. 3. Projects support nutrition and physical activity. 4. Evaluation follow up in March 2023.
<b>At What Age Leaflet</b> Produce an information leaflet with Growing Healthy Sunderland to support a better understanding of nutrition and physical activity, including the link of NCMP with the Red Book, as well as information for key milestones of age related information as a child develops from early years to secondary.	1. Transfer budget to 22-23 2. Leaflet developed with University student to be added to Growing Healthy Sunderland APP – no cost. 3. <b>In progress</b> - Youth Worker to support young people to develop an At What Age leaflet with key age related information.
<b>Infant Feeding Booklet (C4LS)</b> Accessible formats support evidence-based information and guidance in relation to infant feeding, to enable families to provide healthy and nutritious food choices to contribute towards maintaining a healthy weight.	1. The 500 copies of the booklet are printed with a programme of activity and comms to plan, including easy read and translation.
<b>Aqua Natal Classes (C4LS)</b> A well-attended pilot course was near to completion as Covid struck and lockdown commenced. This was supported by Growing Healthy Sunderland and Everyone Active.	1. Supported a 12 week Aqua Natal class in each of the 5 localities of the city. 2. Free for an initial 12 week period. 3. Monitoring update: <b>Hetton, Silksworth, Raich Carter, Aquatic Centre and Washington. Nearly 200 female participants to date.</b>
<b>Learn to Swim Programme (C4LS)</b> Funding enhanced the programme to expand to additional key schools, initially targeted to families through NCMP data, IMD deciles and free school meal access.	1. Silksworth, Washington & Aquatic. Stage ½ introductory 2. Lambton Primary, Southwick Primary and Diamond Hall Juniors – <b>36 participants</b> in total 3. <b>Access Fund</b> equipment and travel
<b>Aquanatal training</b> to support capacity to deliver courses consistently through Everyone Active – the cost was sourced through CIMSPA.	Course completed and capacity improved to sustain exercise provision for pregnant females

<b>Sunderland Healthy Schools Award</b> contribution to TfC for a collaborative approach to improve health outcomes for children, young people and families through the <b>Sunderland Healthy Schools Award</b>	1. Supported initial celebration event with awards at Ryhope Juniors 2. HAF programme and Wear Here 4 You Prevention Bus - nutrition and physical activities part of the offer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£10,000 – contribution to running costs for bus</li> <li>£5000 – contribution for healthy snacks</li> </ul>
<b>Together for Children Family Centres</b> Enhanced weaning and activity programmes to encourage and support access to provision with an aim to reduce health inequalities within early years.	1. Programme planned and promoted 2. Monitoring update – <b>12 Nutrition and movement sessions with 53 adults and 53 children.</b> Participants feedback of increased knowledge, confidence and awareness.
<b>Everyone Active Taster Programme</b> including inflatables, snow tubing, tennis camp, fun and float, adult and child swimming lessons.	1. Programme of sessions planned and participants identified with access supported where appropriate 2. Monitoring update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>802 Attendances at 91 sessions, with 720 Individual participants</b></li> <li><b>62 adults (mostly female) 742 children (mostly male, 60 were babies).</b></li> <li>All activities well received and fully booked with waiting list, apart from the tennis, which was changed to enable more snow tubing sessions.</li> </ul>

Further maintaining a healthy weight proposals overview (to be approved at DMT):

<u>Project</u>	<u>Proposal info</u>
<b>Healthy Start Programme</b>	Proposal to purchase a range of Comms resources to promote Healthy Start vouchers and vitamins to families in the community.
<b>Infant Feeding Booklet Implementation Programme</b>	C4LS, GHS and Family Centres to support with a coordinated approach to deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information sessions to support promotion of Infant Weaning Booklet</li> <li>Weaning packs to vulnerable families</li> </ul>
<b>Physical literacy training – Best Start in Life action plan (0-3 Survey)</b>	The offer of access to physical literacy refresher training through access to <a href="#">Active Start   Active Connections</a> training for Sunderland would respond to an identified need for preschool children through supporting the early years workforce continual professional development, which in turn supports early years outcomes with Sunderland families. 5 places at the Early Years Conference.
<b>Change 4 Life Sunderland Programme Enhancement</b>	Change4Life Sunderland Support Worker would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support with the delivery of a healthy lifestyles programme, which would aim to improve the health and wellbeing of children and families.</li> <li>Provide access to support in maintaining a healthy weight through nutritional information and physical activity within schools and the community.</li> <li>Support with delivery of sessions within the C4LS Early Years programme (Mums on the Move walks, Aqua Bumps and post-natal netball programmes).</li> <li>Support with the further delivery of C4LS Roots and Shoots and completion of the Secondary School Weight Management programmes with the cohort groups at Y10.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support with the delivery of HAF and holiday programmes and sessions.</li> </ul>
	<p>Learn to Swim Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to funding would enable the programme to be expanded to additional key schools, initially targeted through NCMP data, and free school meal access.</li> </ul>
	<p>Aqua Natal Classes (Post-Natal)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The funding would support CPD training for the team, to undertake the aqua natal instructor course – building capacity through a continuous professional development opportunity.</li> <li>This would further enable the continuation of the 12-week Aqua Natal classes, which would be delivered in each of the 5 localities of the city.</li> </ul>
	<p>Tier 3 Activity Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to funding would support the Childhood Weight Management Programme through a targeted intervention for children in Tier 3.</li> </ul>
	<p>Roots and Shoots Programme: School herb, fruit and vegetable growing programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional funding would continue access to resources for use in the school setting.</li> <li>Schools will be better equipped to deliver education relating to herbs, fruit and vegetables.</li> </ul>
	<p>Family Activity Programme– link to Healthy City Plan Healthy Weight (Healthy Weight for Children and Young People)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sessions encourage and support children and families to be more active via weekly family fun activity sessions.</li> <li>Delivery is on an evening, delivered outdoors during the summer months and moved indoors during the winter months.</li> </ul>
<b>Belly Bugs Evaluation</b>	Carry out an evaluation of the Belly Bugs pilot opportunity to Sunderland schools as an intervention for Y3 pupils prior to Y6 NCMP, to provide behavioural change programme.
<b>Food Active HAF packs Cost per license x providers</b>	Proposal to purchase licenses for HAF providers to support with nutritional information to Children, young people and families through Food Active
<b>Sunderland Health Award</b>	Develop a health awareness award for children and young people to underpin the SHSA and encourage progression to Young Health Champions
<b>Sunderland Healthy Schools Award</b>	Proposal for joint funding with Together for Children & CCG, to improve health outcomes for children, young people and families
<b>Sunderland Young Achievers Award</b>	Public Health to sponsor a Health and Wellbeing Award at the annual award event to raise the profile of general health and wellbeing for children, young people and families.
<b>Oral Hygiene packs – toothbrush toothpaste</b>	Proposal to promote oral health to compliment the Tooth Brushing Scheme through a whole family approach and ensure level of oral health as ongoing limited access to Dentistry, which in turn can impact on a range of health outcomes.
<b>Leaflet to cost</b>	40p per Toothbrush and 90p per paste – family packs through Food Banks Information leaflet