

Providing excellent community and primary care in partnership with others

Tower Hamlets 0-19 Service - School Health & Wellbeing Service

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The School Nursing team works in partnership with schools in Tower Hamlets to gain an understanding of the younger population's health needs and medical requirements.

Through a range of screening programmes, health promotion sessions, and regular drop-in sessions, the team of School nurses, staff nurses, nursery nurses, and support workers help to improve the physical, emotional, and mental health of the children, young people, and families within the community.

The School Nursing team applies a 'Universal in Reach - Personalised in Response' model in line with the Healthy Child Programme 2009/2021.

Safeguarding responsibilities are fulfilled through elements such as identifying risk and need, to early help and targeted work, and formal child protection. Health needs are identified in partnership with parents, children and young people using an approach that builds on their strengths as well as identifying any difficulties. Clinical judgement is used alongside formal screening and assessment tools. Families are assessed using caseload weighting /assessment and risk stratification. Health promotion and prevention issues are integral to making every contact count and promoting healthy conversations.

Population served

The School Health & Wellbeing Service caters to children aged 5-16 who attend mainstream schools in Tower Hamlets. This extends to young people up to 19 who attend mainstream schools that have 6th forms.

The caseload incorporates the London East Alternative Provision schools (Pupil Referral Units - PRU) and one PRU college. The service also covers one moderate learning disability school.

How do we support primary care?

The team liaise with Primary Care regarding care plans and medical interventions to enable nurses support children and young people in schools, for example, children and young people who have a medical condition or those who are very overweight. We also accept referrals from GPs and attend the locality Network meetings.

The School Health Commission in Tower Hamlets

- HCP programme for 5+ (4 levels & Outcomes)
- Health Promotion
- Screening programme for Reception and Year 6
- National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP)
- Health reviews reception and Year 6
- Drop-ins (Secondary)/Coffee Mornings (Primary)
- Health Needs Assessments
- Brokerage for Children requiring Care plans for Medical Needs/Advice/Guidance, provision of awareness session for Schools in relation to medical conditions.
- Support with care plan management where not provided by targeted /GP services.



Innovative highlights from the service

This project has proved to be an innovative highlight for the service. The Care Group has taken on two of the Youth Advisors as apprentices (Healthcare Support Workers) within the team.

Both young people attend college and a practical day in a Primary Care health setting once a month. They also support the Child Health Nursery Nurses with the National Childhood Measurement Programme for Year 6 and Reception children, and the Reception Screening.

The aim is for these young people to be successful with their apprenticeship and to become permanent members of the School Health service and progress their careers in healthcare. This project has also enabled us to develop a pathway for apprenticeships in place for future staff development across different bands.



How we add social value:

Youth Advisor Project

In the summer of 2021, the Tower Hamlets Public Health team made a successful application to the Mayor's COVID-19 Fund to employ three Youth Advisors who would support the School Health service. In particular, they would assist the Child Health Nursery Nurses who carry out the National Childhood Measurement Programme and screening for pupils in Reception and Year 6. They would also have some responsibility on health promotion and co-production to improve our service. This one-year fixed term contract began in December 2021.

Three young people aged between 16 and 17 were appointed. They were identified as having varying learning needs; it was also recognised that they needed some life skills in how to navigate the world of work and interact with work colleagues. Safe East, a local user-led organisation supporting disabled people, facilitated a programme at the beginning of March 2022 to meet this learning need. Other learning needs such as IT was provided by the GPCare Group IT department. The young people were supported by a mentor.

As part of their contract, the young people attended the London East Alternative Provision school for classes in English and Maths in readiness to sit their exams in the summer of 2022. This proved challenging for those who previously did not attend school.

This project created a much-needed employment opportunity for the young people who may have found it more difficult to gain employment, particularly during the pandemic, as the roles were prioritised for vulnerable young people e.g., those not attending school, care leavers or young offenders. With the help of high level supervision as well as mentoring and shadowing opportunities, during the year, the Youth Advisors were given opportunities to rotate between different entry-level roles in the GP Care Group and the Youth Service, spending six months in total in each organisation.