

Putting teachers at the heart of health promoting schools

A RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS:

healthy eating, physical activity and emotional well-being for teachers and pupils.

How?

teaching a healthy food attitude



WALK or ride your bike



quiet time during breaks



develop anti-bullying strategies



make it easy to eat healthy

less junk food in schools



healthy meals and healthy pack lunches

HEALTHY TEACHER =
less stress
more enthusiasm
longer career

HEALTHY SCHOOLS =
teachers, colleagues and pupils working together for everyone's benefit

HEALTHY PUPILS =
better attainment
less disruptive behaviour
happier people!



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The Educational Institute of Scotland

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INTRODUCTION

Every Scottish school has been given the target of becoming a health promoting school by 2007. As Scotland's main teaching union, the EIS supports constructive measures to improve the health of our school communities.

What is a health promoting school? Why does it matter? Is it something that teachers can get involved in, or is it just for education authorities? Will it mean lots of additional work for over-stretched teachers? How can teachers get involved? These are some of the questions answered here.

A health promoting school promotes the health of its pupils and staff and of the community which it serves. This guide is not a précis of all the current work on health promoting schools, nor a comprehensive guide to all the topics of importance to health promotion. We hope, however, it will help teachers to become more involved, and help schools and education authorities put teachers at the heart of health promoting schools.

Ronnie Smith
EIS General Secretary



LEGEND

- T** teacher focussed
- P** pupil focussed

WHAT IS A HEALTH-PROMOTING SCHOOL?

Ten years ago, the World Health Organisation said that 'a health promoting school is one in which **all members of the school community** work together to provide pupils with **integrated and positive experiences** and structures which promote and protect their health. This includes both the formal and informal curriculum in health, the creation of a safe and healthy school environment, the provision of appropriate health services and the involvement of the family and wider community in efforts to promote health'.

Given the importance of the whole-school approach, teachers are not only part of a team which is responsible for providing a healthy school environment for pupils: they must also enjoy the benefits of a healthy school. In short, a health promoting school is one where staff and pupils are happy, safe, secure, and healthy.

This booklet will provide advice for teachers who wish to get involved in major areas of health promotion, advice for schools who are in the process of becoming health promoting schools, and advice for local associations on how to work with education authorities who wish to put teachers at the heart of educating for health.

The ideas and advice examined here build on EIS policies around health promotion, free school meals, school buildings and estate, and nutrition in schools.

The **Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit** was established by the Scottish Executive in May 2002 to provide national leadership, coordination and support for partnership working aimed at developing health promoting schools throughout Scotland.

Development officers were appointed to take forward objectives from three national health programmes: physical activity and active schools, eating for health / Hungry for Success, and the mental health and well-being programme as part of a broader framework.

The unit also provides links to useful resources for teachers, and case studies of successful projects at www.healthpromotingschools.co.uk.

WHY ARE TEACHERS INTERESTED IN THIS?

Although teachers in Scotland are overworked and new initiatives are frequent, the case for health promoting schools is persuasive. Teachers care about their own health and the health of others.

Rates of heart disease in Scotland are amongst the highest in Europe. One third of Scottish 12 year olds are overweight and one in five are clinically obese. One in four people in Scotland will develop some form of mental ill-health during their life. Early changes in habits can affect health in later life.

There is considerable evidence to show a correlation between good levels of health and good levels of discipline and attainment.

Indiscipline and behaviour in schools

Teachers know intuitively that **emotional well-being influences behaviour in class**. Pupils who are happy are more likely to concentrate and behave better.

"There is no separation of mind and emotions; emotions, thinking, and learning are all linked". (Eric Jensen, 1998)

Diet and exercise are important too. Extensive research from the United States suggests that teenagers with a poor diet are three times more likely to be excluded from school and three times more likely to see an educational psychologist. Other studies have shown that physical activity in school can reduce disruptive behaviours.

Good health and attainment

With increasing world-wide evidence to show that **healthy pupils attain better** academic outcomes, the Scottish Council for Research in Education at the University of Glasgow undertook an extensive review of such studies in 2001. They concluded that:

- better diet enhances the development of the brain, cognitive processes, and short-term and long-term attainment in school
- pupils with a low birth weight are more likely to be held back or require learning support
- the effects of passive smoking, high blood lead levels, anaemia and the level and quality of light in classrooms all impact on attainment
- poor mental health is associated with low achievement at school
- participation in breakfast clubs improves test scores and attendance rates.



A SOUND FRAMEWORK FOR HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS

Teachers remain at the forefront of school development. Teachers need information, resources and time to make the health agenda work effectively in schools.

Many partners need to work together to create a health promoting school: teachers, senior education managers, support staff, suppliers, parents, pupils, the NHS, local support services, and others. To be effective, a central steer is required from education authorities.

“To become effective health promoting establishments schools need to operate within a strategic framework developed at the highest levels within their local council and community area”
– HMIE, **The Health Promoting School: the role of education authorities and their partners.**

- Within agreed management structures, schools should identify a **health promotion co-ordinator** with suitable time to carry out their activities should identify one.
- Schools that wish to develop a health promoting **team** to take forward school-based initiatives should do so.
- Education authorities must have the staffing and **expertise** to support health promotion in schools, including curricular advice to teachers.
- Developments in health promotion in schools should be set in the context of the school development or improvement **plan**.
- A suitable **training package** on health promoting schools should be developed centrally for teachers as part of their CPD.
- Education authority working groups on health promotion should involve the **EIS** local association.
- Education authorities should develop partnerships with **local NHS boards** and invite relevant trade unions from both sides to be involved.
- Schools should work with Scotland's Health at Work

SHAW will support and assist employers in improving their health at work. They run a **programme of awards to champion health at work**. There is generally no charge for their services.
www.shaw.uk.com

- Education authorities should work in partnership with teachers, as well as other experts, when planning the **building of new schools** and when refurbishing existing schools. The amount of space in and between classrooms, the amount and positioning of natural light, and the design and layout of classrooms and corridors can all have a significant impact on the health of the school community. Poor heating and ventilation may damage health and impact negatively on learning and teaching.

HEALTHY EATING IN SCHOOLS

School is a place where young people both eat and learn about eating. The opportunities for changing behaviour and educating for better behaviour are therefore enormous.

What can teachers do? **P**

Knowledge about healthy eating and the skills which support it can be incorporated into virtually every **area of the curriculum**. There will be many cross-curricular links:

- food diaries and books where food plays a role
- practical skills such as where food comes from, shops, and preparation
- looking at what food grows where, food miles, and how it is transported
- the role of water
- examining how people's relationships with their environment impact on health, and what can be done to improve environments and reduce disadvantage and food inequality
- an understanding of what people ate in the past and why
- portion sizes and weights and measures
- the links between healthy eating and exercise
- the nutritional values of foodstuffs
- food science, vitamins and minerals
- diet and disease
- celebrating cultural diversity through food culture and diet at home and abroad
- art work with fruit and vegetables
- campaign poster designs.

Help with curriculum resources:

- SHPSU: www.healthpromotingschools.co.uk – click on resources
- Grab5! is a website dedicated to healthy fruit and vegetables: <http://www.sustainweb.org/g5cp/>
- The Food Standards Agency has interactive quizzes and games: <http://www.food.gov.uk/interactivetools>
- Scottish Water has resources on water at <http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/education>, and in the campaign section of their main website



What can schools do?

- Provide suitable **staffroom facilities** for storage and re-heating of healthy meals. This may mean the purchase of fridges, dishwashers, microwaves and cookers. Strategies should be developed to ensure they are kept clean and working. **T**
- Make sure attention is paid to **hygiene**. Are there sufficient facilities to wash hands before eating, for example? **P T**
- Ensure teachers are equipped with up-to-date **curriculum resources** on health promotion. **P**
- Manage the **pupil lunch break** effectively. Some schools, in consultation with lunchtime staff and teachers, have introduced lunchtime rotas so pupils can eat at different times and avoid queuing problems. The right of employees to have a reasonable break around the middle of the day must be observed. Pupils with packed lunches should be able to eat with friends who are eating a school lunch. A pleasant atmosphere in school canteens can be created by artwork, background music, and new furniture. Well-managed lunch breaks can promote good discipline. **P**
- Work with local retailers to **reduce unhealthy food sold near school**. **P**
- Ensure that food sold in tuckshops **includes healthy options**. **P**

One primary school has run a **fruit tuck shop at break time**. Around 200 fruit boxes were prepared twice weekly and offered alongside crisps and low-sugar baked products. By making the pupils choose the fruit, rather than just receiving it, the school encouraged pupils to make active choices about their health.

- Work with parents of children who bring **packed lunches**. What advice can be offered to these parents, and how? **P**



What can the EIS do?

EIS local associations can work with their education authorities to:

- Implement the recommendations arising from **Hungry for Success**, the landmark analysis on school meals in Scotland. **P**

WHAT IS HUNGRY FOR SUCCESS? Hungry for Success was a major report from a panel of experts published in 2002 to consider ways to improve school meals in Scotland. It recommended nutritional standards for meals, ways of eliminating stigma, and methods for improving the presentation of school meals. It can be downloaded from the Scottish Executive website.

- Ensure schools have sufficient resources to buy **curriculum materials** and that subject advisers can advise on curricular development and lesson planning. Many materials are available from the voluntary sector and from responsible food producers. **P**

- Establish **breakfast clubs** with appropriate staffing, to ensure that pupils have a healthy start to the day. **P**

Research by Ernesto Pollit in 1991, Professor of Human Development at the University of California, Davis, found that **breakfast was critical in improving academic performance**. A test of the speed and accuracy of response on problem-solving tasks was performed on a variety of pupils, and those who had had breakfast consistently performed better. More recent research by Sigrid Quendler at the University of Vienna concluded in 2002 that 'the positive impact of a breakfast club cannot be underestimated' in improving the academic performance of children.

- Ensure teachers and pupils have access to **fresh drinking water** in the classroom where the teacher can supervise. **P T**

Glasgow City Council has supplied all its schools with upgraded water pipes and cooling. The Scottish Executive is funding sports-style **water bottles for all pupils**. The hygiene issues associated with this must be examined and addressed.

- Make sure the lunchtime environment in all schools is welcoming and **encourages pupils to stay on site**. Minor cosmetic changes can make the canteen a more exciting place to eat. Some schools have gone much further and developed juice bars and internet cafes. **P**

All secondary dining halls in Fife have been refurbished and have plasma screen TVs showing music videos, flagging up menu choices, and displaying school messages. **The number of school meals has increased over a short period of time.**

- Develop a policy on the sale of snack foods in schools through cafeterias, tuck shops and vending machines. Local associations could **campaign not to promote or advertise unhealthy food in schools**. This may include reviewing the branding of vending machines and other point-of-sale materials.
- Ensure that the free fruit initiative is embedded into schools and support is given to teachers to integrate the fruit into lessons. The Scottish Executive has provided funds for free fruit three times a week for P1 and P2 pupils. The EIS supports the extension of the scheme to pupils from nursery age upwards.

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The Edinburgh Community Food Initiative is a co-operative which supplies schools in Edinburgh with the fruit. **Over one million pieces of fruit have been delivered to schools, along with resources for teachers to embed fruit into the curriculum imaginatively.**

- Campaign for **school meals** for all which are both **free and nutritious**. The EIS believes that every pupil in Scotland should be entitled to a free school meal.

P

Glasgow City Council recently re-introduced **free school milk** to all primary schools – the first local authority to do so since 1979.

- Resource and **provide CPD opportunities** for teachers in areas related to healthy eating. The Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit website also contains project reports from various activities around the country.
- Co-ordinate **incentive schemes** to encourage students to eat healthy meals.

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Each secondary pupil in North Lanarkshire has an electronic card to receive school meals, and pupils earn points based on the healthiness of their meals. **Each school will have prizes such as vouchers for sports and music shops and passes to leisure centres for the pupils who eat the healthiest meals each month.**



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS

Physical activity in schools is not just about PE lessons, although these are important. The Active Schools programme is facilitated by sportscotland and has a budget of £24 million from the Scottish Executive. There are 32 Active Schools managers, 260 primary co-ordinators and 370 secondary co-ordinators based in councils and schools throughout Scotland.

The Scottish Executive is in the process of recruiting another 400 PE teachers to schools in Scotland. All pupils will receive at least two hours of PE each week.

It is important that teachers at school also have access to physical activity opportunities.

What can teachers do?

- Consider **healthier routes to work** such as cycling and walking, if not for the whole journey then for a mile or so.



The Sustrans website www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk and the Scottish Road Safety Campaign website www.srsc.org.uk may help.

- **Establish the importance of physical activity throughout the curriculum** in creative ways. Teachers can look at the importance of exercise on the human body. Are there texts relating to sport that pupils could study? Classes could consider the differing cultural and social roles that sports play in other countries. Pupils could be encouraged to find out what sport was like in the past. Do other countries use healthy transport more than ours? What art activities could relate to physical activity?



What can schools do?

- Ensure that there are suitable storage and changing facilities for teachers who **walk or cycle to work**. Cycling Scotland are in the process of developing a standard for cycle-friendly workplaces. See www.cyclingscotland.org.uk. **T**
- Work with parents to encourage pupils to walk to school where safe and practical. The Sustrans website provides resources for schools to use. **P**
- Work with colleagues and specialist coaching staff to develop **extra-curricular sports clubs and teams**. The right of teachers to their nationally agreed working hours must remain absolute. **P**

What can the EIS do?

EIS local associations can work with education authorities to:

- Provide **free or discounted entry to swimming pools** and exercise facilities for council employees. **T**
- Implement '**salary sacrifice**' schemes to allow employees to purchase bicycles and associated safety gear. Employers can recover VAT on cycles purchased for commuting under the Department for Transport Cycle to Work scheme. **T**
- Agree an essential and casual **bike users' allowance** to complement the allowances for car users. **T**
- Provide centrally-purchased **pedometers** for employees to monitor their physical activity during the course of the day. **T**
- Work with Sustrans to develop safe routes to and from school. **T P**
- Ensure that where new **schools are being built** or existing ones refurbished, the school is fit to be an active school. Early and comprehensive involvement of teaching staff in the design of such schools is critical. There should be **exercise facilities** such as swimming pools, sports hall and playing fields, and sufficient playgrounds. **T P**

The Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit has produced advice on making sure school buildings and estates promote health.

- Consider investing in **mobile gyms** designed for young people. **P**
- Ensure that councils put **traffic calming measures** in place. Councils have received funding from the Scottish Executive to create 20mph zones in vulnerable areas. The Scottish Road Safety Campaign provides some useful advice on their website. **P**

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EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING IN SCHOOLS

For teachers and pupils alike, school can be a high-pressure environment.

We know that in Scotland one in ten children and young people experience mental health problems which impact on their thoughts, feelings, behaviour, learning and relationships on a day-to-day basis.

Amongst teachers surveyed in 2004, 90% believe that the job has become more stressful in recent years.

By taking a whole-school approach to improving emotional well-being, we are able to increase the mental and emotional resilience of pupils and teachers, provide a good environment, and support those experiencing difficulties. Strategies need to be both proactive and reactive. While all teachers have important roles to play here the responsibilities of pastoral care or guidance staff must be supported. The conclusions of Happy, Safe and Achieving their Potential, the report of the National Review of Guidance, are relevant.

What can teachers do?

- Be aware of the causes of stress. The Health and Safety Executive have advice at www.hse.gov.uk/stress. The EIS provide a confidential stress or bereavement line - 08705 234729 for its members.
- Be aware of **workload**. Teachers are contracted to work only 35 hours per week.
- Consider how emotional literacy can be linked to the curriculum. The Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit website www.healthpromotingschools.co.uk has lots of information and advice. There are a host of mental health charities which provide advice and support to teachers on a wide range of mental health issues. The See Me campaign hosts an excellent contact list at www.seemescotland.org/links. You can also phone them on 0131 624 8945.

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What is See Me? The 'see me' campaign was launched in October 2002 to **challenge stigma and discrimination around mental ill-health** in Scotland. The campaign is run by an alliance of five Scottish mental health organisations: Highland Users Group, National Schizophrenia Fellowship, Penumbra, the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and the Scottish Association for Mental Health.

- Consider the advice available to teachers provided by the Anti-Bullying Network at www.antibullying.net.

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What can schools do?

- Ensure that teachers are **managed as professionals** in a supportive environment and are not over-managed.
- Ensure that suitable negotiations with the EIS take place to ensure that the school **working time agreement** is fairly agreed and adhered to.
- Ensure that staff are aware of **dignity at work** policies.
- Make **sufficient staff room space** available in the school for staff to be able to relax during breaks. Some may prefer a quiet area; others may prefer a more social environment. No one should be forced to spend breaks in a work base area or classroom.
- Work with local providers to offer occasional **complementary therapy** sessions.

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North Ayrshire Council and Ayrshire and Arran NHS have organised **a series of health days for staff** in school clusters during in-service days. Links with local colleges have allowed for sessions on salsa, line and Scottish country dancing, aromatherapy/reflexology, tai chi, Bach flower remedies and relaxation techniques

- Ensure that teachers are **trained to spot early signs** of emotional and mental difficulties and know how and where to refer themselves and pupils.
- Ensure that there is clear responsibility within the school for anti-bullying. The Anti-Bullying Network website will be useful.
- Ensure that the school and staff are suitably equipped to deal with **bereavement** stress.
- Ensure that the school and staff are aware of and trained in issues around **domestic abuse**.

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What can the EIS do?

EIS local associations can work with their education authorities to:

- Ensure that a clear policy has been agreed to deal with both stress and dignity at work. It is important to make sure **training** is provided to school management on the operation of these policies. **T**
- Allow employees to self-refer to **occupational health** advisors, rather than having to be referred by a manager. **T**
- Establish a confidential, non-directional **listening service** for employees. **T**
- Working with the EIS nationally, engage in the campaign to **reduce class sizes** as a matter of priority. Increased class sizes creates a more challenging and stressful environment for teachers and for learners. **T P**
- Ensure teachers are equipped with CPD opportunities to **understand mental ill-health** and promote positive environments in schools. **T P**

One council has engaged two instructors to show children how to **use physio-pressure techniques to calm each other** (with their own and parental permission). Participants report that it helps children to settle and promotes a good class environment.

- Develop robust **anti-bullying strategies** in schools. These will include restorative approaches but must be supported by the ultimate sanction of permanent exclusion of a violent pupil from school. **P**
- Help education authorities work with partners to deliver targeted mental and **emotional health improvement programmes**. **P**

In a West Dunbartonshire Council cluster, a Just Boy's project was set up to target boys at risk of exclusion from school. It aimed to tackle issues related to behaviour such as bullying, violence and masculinity through the medium of drama and dance.



HOW WILL WE KNOW IF ALL THIS HAS WORKED?

Creating schools that promote the health of staff, young people, and their communities will not be an easy task. It will be necessary to evaluate and assess how well programmes work, and whether or not people's health is improving. These are assessments which can be made in both the short term and over many years, as the young people in school today grow up. Teachers should remain in close contact with their EIS Local Associations as the health promoting agenda develops.

HMIE has developed a **self-evaluation guide** called The Health Promoting School, and is available from their website.

www.hmie.gov.uk. The purpose of the document is to allow schools to consider how well they are doing in becoming health promoting schools.

If together we succeed, the improvement to the lives of people across Scotland will be enormous.

Other health issues

Health promoting schools aren't just about diet, exercise and emotional well-being, important though these are. There are other topics that a health promoting school will need to think about too. You will find many links and resources on Learning and Teaching Scotland website, www.ltscotland.org.uk.

Sexual health and relationships are important in health promotion. How effectively is sex education delivered in your school? What links does your local authority have with local health boards, and can they be used to improve the quality of sex education?

Substance misuse is also a difficult topic that must be tackled in schools. Are drugs a problem in your local community? What advice is available to pupils in your school, and what is the key message of that advice? What is the school policy on dealing with smoking? You may wish to visit the website www.knowthescore.info for information and advice on drugs in Scotland. Scotland Against Drugs provides some advice for educationalists at www.sad.org.uk. Alcohol Focus Scotland (www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk) publish a leaflet on alcohol and young people.





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