

Action: 5: To give all children the experience of eating a healthy breakfast

Which ENHPS criteria were covered?

- 2 To develop good staff / pupil and pupil / staff relationships in the daily life of the school.
- 6 To develop good school / home community links and shared activities.
- 10 To consider the complementary role of school policies to the health curriculum e.g. healthy eating.
- 12 To utilise the potential of specialist services in the community for advice and support in health education.

Why did you choose to do this?

From the outset there was a concern about the children's diet as well as the school's dental records. Children were eating on the way to school e.g. chocolate bars, cakes. Some children had no breakfast and others were in receipt of something substantial. We wanted to make all children aware that breakfast was a 'sit down' meal, that it could contain cereals, toast and fruit juice, all of which we felt would be more balanced and yet of interest.

What actually happened?

A Year 6 teacher discussed the possibility of organising the project with her class. The class, following SATs, were very enthusiastic. The head teacher contacted J Sainsbury who agreed to provide £100 for the project. Four children accompanied their teacher to price items and devise a planned expenditure. Approximation took place and it was decided as a matter of principle and economics to buy all Sainsbury's own brand products. Cereals were purchased in advance, with milk, fruit juice and bread bought daily. A three day trial commenced with Year 6 and a letter was drafted and sent to all pupils. This was followed by a 'live' breakfast for the rest of the school starting with the eldest children (Year 5) and working down to reception. A small daily team of servers/washers up etc, was formed, rotating the children throughout the nine days. It was important to return the dining area to a clean state for lunch.

- All children responded very positively to the initiative which took place at the commencement of each day.
- Parents were keen on the initiative and the local press also visited one of the later sessions. Front page coverage in the Evening Post was favourable.
- As part of this work, J Sainsbury offered a diet meeting for pupils and parents. A representative from Gloucester came to the school and gave several inputs during the day.
- A lot of relevant mathematics took place within the Year 6 class.



Which aspects went particularly well?

- Prior to the event Year 6 admitted that only 1 in 3 had breakfast but there was generally a feeling that there were more interesting aspects to breakfast. It must be stressed that the pupils felt that eating breakfast together was more fun than eating it at home.
- Children enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and the fact that they were not in their classrooms!

- There was genuinely a good atmosphere and, as the hall is large, it did not impinge on any other aspect of school life. Children were always punctual on their breakfast day!

What problems were encountered and how were these overcome?

- Toast production was not fast enough! (Not solved, not considered viable to purchase more toasters.)
- Some teachers remarked on the very relaxed atmosphere probably being related to the children's awareness of this being better than curriculum work normally covered at this time.
- Parental response to the Sainsbury Health talk was poor. (It was a lovely day, sun shining etc.)

How do you know how successful it was?

- Children's reactions were extremely positive.
- Parents also seemed to be interested although it was the same group of parents who always take an interest (and who probably provide breakfast anyway).
- Children's comments were asked for and these were all essentially favourable.

Has this led to other activities?

Another idea has been planned with the Swansea Library Service.

Are linked activities planned for the future?

A linked event with some food tasting is envisaged. (Sponsorship is being considered). Actual decisions on venue, timings etc, have yet to be finalised but previous links with the Library Service clearly indicate that this event will take place.