



Children and Young People

Nearly 100,000 children (aged 0-15) live in Glasgow and children make up around 16% of Glasgow's population. **Good early eating patterns are essential to ensure that they grow and develop appropriately. This in turn contributes to a healthy body weight in childhood.**

Breastfeeding provides the best nutrition for babies and supports both short- and long-term health for both the child and mother. Rates in Glasgow City have been slowly increasing. Exclusive Breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks in 2016/17 was 24.6% and in 2019/20, this had increased to 27.3% (Source ISD Scotland). We wish to further support these improvements through the plan, providing enhanced support where required. The plan will work collaboratively with current work programmes in relation to UNICEF, the Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland Scheme and breastfeeding support groups.

High numbers of young children are at risk of being overweight or obese with a growing inequality between the most and least deprived areas in the city. In 2018/19, 74.5% of Primary 1 children in Glasgow were in the healthy weight range and 24.4% were at risk of overweight or obesity. The likelihood of being overweight or obese increases with age for the majority of children.

Free school meals are available for pupils in Glasgow from P1 to P4 and this is being considered for P5 to P7. Around 40% of Glasgow's school children are currently entitled to a free school meal. In 2019/20 uptake of free school meal entitlement was 77% in primary school, 57% in secondary school. The relatively high uptake of free school meals at primary school does not follow through to secondary school, where many young people report buying their lunch from a shop or van outside of the school (47% of S1 to S6 in 2014/15). Around many of our secondary schools there are numerous opportunities to buy unhealthy food cheaply and only 35% of Glasgow's young people reported having had five or more portions of fruit and vegetables per day. Initiatives funded through the Children's Holiday Food Programme provide meals and activities during school holidays. The Scottish Government over the course of the Covid 19 Pandemic have provided resources to provide payments to families entitled to free school meals over school holidays. Proposals to make this a permanent support are currently being progressed.

[Glasgow City Food Plan](#) actions 61-76 relate to this theme.