

Harold's Giant Picnic: promoting healthy eating through a giant healthy picnic at six primary schools

Petal(s): Inclusion & Participation and Food & Drink	Specialist: Hilary Stirling & Sylvia Greenfield
Type of school: Primary	Size of school: various

Context

The two schools involved are on the West Sussex coast between Brighton and Worthing. It's considered an under-privileged, suburban area.

Background

Life Education Centre (LEC) is a national charity that promotes healthy living and healthy life choices for primary aged children (see www.lifeeducation.org.uk). Life Education Centre West Sussex (LECWS) has been building a partnership with local schools, community groups, the local authority and businesses to increase the number of children receiving the LEC programmes. For this pilot project, Life Education worked in partnership with Personal Finance Education Group (pfe), which embeds financial understanding and what money means into the curriculum.

Starting point

LEC began negotiations with the bank HSBC in 2005 to gain funds to promote the healthy eating aspect of LEC's work through Giant Picnics with Harold, the charity's giraffe mascot. HSBC agreed to fund a pilot project in Kent in 2009, and LEC West Sussex (LECWS) undertook a 'test run' to gain further experience – also fully funded by HSBC. In January 2008, four primary school Head Teachers attended an LECWS presentation at Shoreham and Southwick Rotary Club, and the Club subsequently helped to finance the Giant Picnic project. With local authority agreement as part of the Healthy Schools Project, this group of four became the focus for the Giant Picnic. The schools had not previously been visited by LECWS.

Goals and objectives

- Promote healthy eating and healthy life choices
- Gain more understanding of what money means
- Raise awareness of the initiative by achieving a world record for the biggest picnic

What did they do?

Each school received a 'pre-visit' from the LECWS educator who told them about the programme and its emphasis on healthy eating and well-being, as well as the content and cost of the picnic and its impact on the environment. The children considered their favourite healthy foods and took home menus for their parents to prepare a healthy picnic lunch.

During June and July every child in the project group received a lesson/visit from the educator and the LECWS mobile classroom. On 16th July a total of 1635 children from the

six schools, some with their parents, enjoyed a healthy picnic during their regular school lunchtime at their school, and Harold the Giraffe, LEC's mascot, visited each school picnic to celebrate the event. Each school had an LECWS mentor who collected the recorded numbers and these have been passed to the Guinness Book of Records to establish a world record for a healthy picnic.

Curriculum areas

PSHE, numeracy, understanding how much a picnic costs, community involvement.

Outcomes and achievements

Children planned and costed their picnic. They learned about healthy food choices and they shared their knowledge with their families. Every child in each of the schools attended a LEC programme tailored to their age:

Year R	All about me	Year 1	My wonderful body
Year 2	Feelings	Year 3	Meet the Brain
Year 4	It's great to be me	Year 5	Friends
Year 6 & 7	Decisions		

And see attached evaluation form. The LEC programmes, working with pfeg, meets all the Every Child Matters outcomes and aims: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being. Further detail of the individual programmes can be found on the website: www.lecws.org.uk

Lessons learnt

What's next for this school?

Continuing to deliver the PSHE curriculum and work with the community. Using LEC & pfeg to help the children to build a comprehensive set of skills to manage their complex worlds through annual LEC/pfeg visits. Healthy School status.

Resources used

Staff and parents from six primary schools, £6000 grant from HSBC, the support of a team of 12 volunteers, two members of HSBC staff, support from five Rotary Clubs, support of the local authority Healthy Schools adviser and the Free School Meals Service, support from the 'Eco Grannie', Gay Cossins, printing of posters and t-shirts sponsored by Kerryprint – and one volunteer to be a life sized giraffe!