



# Oral Health Awards

## for schools

BECOME A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR  
ORAL HEALTH PROMOTION



### Step 1: Register.

Email: [catherine.wheatley@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.wheatley@n-somerset.gov.uk) to register your school for the scheme. Then flick through this handbook for ideas and all the proformas you'll need to gain your award.

### Step 2: Plan.

Go through the accreditation standards and choose the goals you want to achieve. Discuss this with the wider staff team, pupils and families where possible. Talk it through with Better Health North Somerset (BHNS) to get input and support. Submit your plan to BHNS for approval.

### Step 3: Act.

Work through your plan, capturing stories, photos and evidence along the way.

### Step 4: Share.

Tell us and others what you've done using the proforma in the Accreditation Handbook or in a more creative way if you'd rather, just make sure you answer all the questions.



# Oral Health Awards for schools

## Accreditation Handbook

To gain accreditation for integrating oral health promotion within your school strategies and operations, you must demonstrate meeting goals within each of the following standards:

Bronze Award	<b>Two</b> goals in each standard (= total of 6)
Silver Award	<b>Two</b> goals in each standard plus one extra goal in any standard (= 7)
Gold Award	<b>Three</b> goals in each standard (= 9)
Platinum Award	<b>Three</b> goals in each standard as decided up and driven by pupils

Health is created when people have control over the decisions that affect them and are equal partners in the schemes designed to support them. Therefore, for the top award pupil participation should be at its very best. However, any attempts to engage students with any level of this accreditation and have them practice their autonomy and community action skills will be commended by Better Health North Somerset.

Schools					
Standard 1		Standard 2		Standard 3	
Educating		Integrating		Reinforcing	
	Oral health lessons		Staff training		Early Years Toothbrushing
	Oral health assemblies		Water and Milk only policy		Oral Health policy
	Family Engagement		Food Policy		Encourage dental care
	Display boards		Whole school change		Supply toothbrush packs
	Social media / leaflets		Opportunistic OH advice		Expanded Toothbrushing

You may achieve this by whichever means you feel is appropriate for your school however, for some suggestions of what this might look like please refer to the descriptions below. For any of the goals you choose, Better Health North Somerset will be on hand to support and help you make it happen. Please contact our Oral Public Health Specialist for any guidance or information: [Catherine.Wheatley@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Catherine.Wheatley@n-somerset.gov.uk)



## Educating

### Oral Health Lessons

Get your students interested in the causes of oral diseases and the science of taking care of teeth through classroom lessons. This could be lessons specifically focussing on oral health and take a deep dive into the science of the processes, or the techniques of toothbrushing. It could be a way in to exploring other topics. Or it could be around personal hygiene and building a routine around self-care. Some lesson plans have been put together by Better Health North Somerset and are available on the Oral Health Awards section of the website: The science behind decay; Getting toothbrushing right; Acid-Eggshell Experiment; Write a two-minute toothbrushing song; Instructions for toothbrushing; Chronological reports of the caries process.

### Oral Health Assemblies

Take an assembly plan from off the shelf, or invite Better Health North Somerset's Oral Public Health Specialist, Catherine Wheatley to come in and deliver one for you. Even better, book a series of one each term for the year! Assembly plans are available on the Oral Health Awards section of the Better Health North Somerset website.

### Family Engagement

Invite parents and carers in for a Health Promotion Event at school in which tips for taking care of teeth can be shared. This doesn't need to be restricted to oral health – why not cover physical activity, food and nutrition and mental health too? You could have the children deliver the lessons to the parents that attend, each class having a different information stand or, you could invite professionals in from the local area to deliver it for you. Be sure to make it interactive and engaging just like your best lessons!

### Display boards

Noticeboards packed full of bites of information can grab attention and give students, parents and even staff little take aways that will stay with them. Make an attention-grabbing display that people simply can't walk past without learning or remembering an important tip for taking care of their teeth. Display board ideas and print outs are available on the Oral Health Awards section of the Better Health North Somerset website.

### Social Media / Leaflets

Getting those messages home can be one of the hardest things to achieve but get it right and it'll make all the difference. Think about how you can get key information about oral health into the hands, minds and hearts of grownups at home, to provide a supportive environment for students trying their best to implement their learning. Various leaflets and social media posts are available for download and to order by post from the Department of Health and Social Care's (DHSC) Campaign Resource Centre. A social media toolkit is available on the Oral Health Awards section of the Better Health North Somerset website.



## Integrating Staff Training

Better Health North Somerset provide training for the children and young people's workforce to improve oral health promotion. This covers the basics of oral health and diseases, ideas for practice and behaviour change. This can be delivered for a whole staff team during a normal staff meeting or training session, or a few select staff at a convenient time. It will be adapted for the school's specifications to include for example considerations for those with additional needs or incorporating supervised toothbrushing. Options and weblinks for staff training are listed on the Oral Health Awards section of the Better Health North Somerset Website.

## Water and Milk Only Policy

Sipping throughout the day on drinks that contain free sugars, including fruit-based drinks, delivers too many "sugar-hits" to the mouth feeding harmful bacteria throughout the day. Introduce a policy whereby students are to only have water in bottles though may be offered milk at some other point in the day, to greatly reduce their risk of developing dental erosion or decay. Some students may find this transition difficult, so it is up to the school how they manage this. You could: invest in bottles that keep water chilled for the day as some find this more palatable; phase in the policy to allow students time to dilute squash increasingly over a period of time, until they are able to tolerate water.; or allow fruit-based drinks at lunch, so students can enjoy the drink of their preference once a day.

## Food Policy

Evaluate and improve the food and drink options available to students throughout the school day and year. This includes not only regular meals like lunch and puddings but also special occasions where treats are shared, such as birthdays or celebrations. You could include packed lunches as part of this policy and provide guidance for parents. Be as radical as you like, this has to work for your school and your students. A Food Policy Planner is available on the Oral Health Awards section of the Better Health North Somerset website.

## Whole School Change

Just because it is for the whole school it doesn't mean it has to be big. Little tweaks to the school day or environment can have a big impact and sometimes last a lot longer than the big changes we try to introduce. Think about what little changes could be made around the school to promote healthier choices, toothbrushing, reducing sugar or visiting the dentist. You could think about where unhealthy food choices are inadvertently advertised to students such as through vending machines or on teacher's desks. Maybe you could ensure there is space and incentive for young people, particularly those with braces, to freshen up after eating?

## Opportunistic Oral Health Advice

This couples with staff training but can also be implemented if staff feel equipped to do so. Staff make the most of opportunities to drop in brief guidance around toothbrushing. This could be picking up on something seen or said informally (e.g. having sugar in tea or drinking cola everyday), or as part of a normal lesson (e.g. when discussing daily routines highlight the need to brush teeth for two minutes, twice a day).



## Reinforcing

### Supervised Toothbrushing (Early Years)

There are so many reasons that supervised toothbrushing might be so effective in reducing oral health inequalities: teaching children the technique, giving them the opportunity to do it once a day, building a habit, making it fun, providing peer support of friends and encouragement from teachers. These reasons and probably more are identified as reasons that this intervention for just 2 or 3 critical years, keeps children brushing for a lifetime, protecting their teeth for years to come. Doing this with 3–5-year-olds is highly evidenced as being effective and the best thing you can do to protect children's teeth. It does not substitute brushing at home but supplements it – even encourages it. Many schools have reported that since they have begun brushing with children, those who weren't before are now brushing at home.

### Supervised Toothbrushing (Expanded)

While the most robust evidence for supervised toothbrushing is with younger children, the principles are likely to apply to older students too. Expanding supervised toothbrushing to older students can improve oral health outcomes and reduce inequalities, teaching proper brushing techniques and reinforcing the habit of daily brushing. Older students benefit from the structured routine, peer support, and encouragement from teachers, making toothbrushing a positive and communal activity. This may be of particular relevance for students who are at high risk of developing poor oral health, such as those in particular vulnerability groups.

## Oral Health Policy

An Oral Health Policy includes the promotion of dental care where appropriate, keeping sugar intake at school to a minimum, understanding the signs of dental neglect & knowing where to report this, and training staff in oral health promotion and promoting oral health through both one-off and whole school approaches. A template is available on the Oral Health Awards section of the Better Health North Somerset website.

## Encourage Dental Care

Consider what can be done to ensure that school attendance does not take precedence over dental care. You could: Foster relationships with local dentists and request to be told when they are taking on new patients, so that information can be passed onto families; Remind families that students may attend dental appointments during the school day- you may wish to request that all family members are seen on the same day to reduce impact on attendance when siblings are required to attend each other's appointments; Support families to attend outside of school hours by offering free afterschool places for household members of anyone attending a dental appointment.

## Supply Toothbrush Packs

Wholesale toothbrushes and toothpastes can reduce cost significantly making quality products affordable for those on the smallest budgets. Consider buying wholesale packs or items to hand out or sell at cost price / less to families at your school. This ensures that students have access to the resources they need to maintain a strong oral hygiene routine. Brush Bus and Sanderson AMS International can provide dental packs upon request and Dental Aesthetics sells toothbrushes in boxes of 32 or 100 in the wholesale section of their website.



# Plan

## Educating

Y/N	We will promote oral health through...
	Oral health lessons
	Oral health assemblies
	Family Engagement
	Display boards
	Social media / leaflets

## Integrating

Y/N	We will promote oral health through...
	Staff training
	Water and milk only policy
	Food policy
	Whole school change
	Giving opportunistic oral health advice



## Reinforcing

Y/N	We will promote oral health through...
	Early Years Toothbrushing
	Oral Health policy
	Encourage dental care
	Supply toothbrush packs
	Expanded Toothbrushing

## Mobilising

Describe the extent to which students will be involved in the award process

Do you intend to apply for The Platinum Award?	Yes / No
How have you involved students in the choosing of these goals and their associated actions?	
How are you involving students in the planning of how these actions are implemented?	
How do plan to involve students in the implementation of these actions?	
How will students be involved in the sharing of the progress and reaching these goals?	



# Share

How did you find the Oral Health Awards process?	
Are you pleased with the goals that you chose and overall, how they panned out?	
What would you change / like to see changed if you were to do it again?	
How are you going to share what you've been doing with the school and wider community?	
<b>Educating</b>	
1	Goal: e.g. Oral Health Lessons
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
2	Goal: e.g. Oral Health Lessons
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
3	Goal: e.g. Oral Health Lessons
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
Further comments and reflections	





Integrating	
1	Goal: e.g. Staff Training
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
2	Goal: e.g. Staff Training
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
3	Goal: e.g. Staff Training
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
Further comments and reflections	



## Reinforcing

1	Goal: e.g. Supervised Toothbrushing
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
2	Goal: e.g. Supervised Toothbrushing
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
3	Goal: e.g. Supervised Toothbrushing
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
Further comments and reflections	

## Mobilising

Please explain the ways in which you mobilised the students of your school in carrying out these initiatives: