



Increasing the uptake of Healthy Start retailers

Croydon Food Poverty Alliance

Interim report, November 2019

A community approach to increasing the uptake of Healthy Start retailers in Croydon

Parchmore Methodist Church and Community Centre have agreed to contribute to the work of increasing the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers in Croydon by accepting and promoting Healthy Start vouchers as part of the Gateway's Community Connect Food Stop partnership. The model is a partnership between Croydon Council Gateway services and community organisations helping to ensure residents are financially stable and able to better manage their money and maximise their income through personal budgeting support and housing advice. The Community Connect Food Stop partnership offers local residents the opportunity to reduce their food shopping bills by paying £3.50 a week for £15-£20 worth of grocery shopping.

Parchmore's Community Food Stop is now registered as a Healthy Start retailer, meaning its members who are also Healthy Start beneficiaries can redeem their vouchers and benefit from additional fruit, vegetables and milk.

Parchmore's Food Stop volunteers recently undertook training on Healthy Start, and in partnership with Croydon Councils Gateway team, will be helping to raise the awareness of the scheme in the Food Stop by promoting Healthy Start material and developing conversations with the right families who may be eligible.

We hope these actions will benefit a number of families to claim Healthy Start as well as offer the wrap around support services of Community Connect and The Food Stop.

Next steps

Parchmore's Community Connect and The Food Stop will be officially celebrated with a launch event in January 2020. The event will be promoted with the Healthy Start offer as a key feature for its members who join and qualify for the scheme.



“We are proud to champion the uptake of Healthy Start food vouchers at Parchmore's Community Food Stop, helping to tackle food poverty in Thornton Heath and making a real difference.”

Jenny Harms, Parchmore Methodist Church and Community Centre

Outcomes

We have been able to form a more joined up and coordinated approach with partners across the community, voluntary and statutory sectors to tackling food poverty in Croydon.

We hope to inspire more community food projects to demonstrate that they too can accept vouchers and play a vital role in delivering and promoting the Healthy Start scheme within their local communities.