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Epsom and Ewell 5th least obese 10 year olds in the UK

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Year six schoolchildren in Surrey have some of the lowest obesity rates in the country, with Mole Valley leading the way. The figures were published as part of the Government's National Child Measurement Programme, which covers mainstream state-maintained schools. Children in Year 6 are aged 10 to 11 and the data is based on the address of the child rather than their school.

Mole Valley, at 9.7 per cent, was the only borough in the country where fewer than one in 10 children were classed as obese. Three boroughs, Sandwell and Wolverhampton in the West Midlands and Knowlsey in the North West had rates above 30 per cent.

The complete top ten was:

- Mole Valley – 9.7 per cent
- St Albans – 12.0 per cent
- Richmond upon Thames – 12.1 per cent
- Cambridge – 12.7 per cent
- Epsom & Ewell – 12.8 per cent
- Elmbridge – 13.1 per cent
- Waverley – 13.1 per cent
- South Hams -13.1 per cent
- Uttlesford -13.2 per cent

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- Guildford – 13.6 per cent

The remaining Surrey boroughs had the following obesity rates among year six children:

- Surrey Heath – 14.5 per cent
- Woking – 15.2 per cent
- Reigate & Banstead – 15.7 per cent
- Tandridge – 16.7 per cent
- Runnymede – 16.9 per cent
- Spelthorne – 18.2 per cent

Councillor Nick Wright, Mole Valley District Council cabinet member for leisure and community assets, said one of their priorities was to support residents to live healthy and fulfilling lives. He said: “These childhood obesity figures, which shine such a positive light on Mole Valley, are very encouraging for parents, carers and young people who live in our district. For our part in contributing towards these low obesity rates, we are proud of the work we do and the initiatives we provide which can only help participating children be healthier and more active. Examples include our popular free summer holiday activities programme, most recently run this past summer, and the wide range of indoor activities – such as the kids swim for a pound offer – available at Dorking Sports Centre and Leatherhead Leisure Centre, both run on our behalf by Better.”

“Our sports club access scheme also provides up to £250 per eligible young person to cover all, or part, of a sports club membership and free taster session at that specific club. “The Mole Valley parkrun and junior parkrun initiatives that we helped to establish also continue to go from strength to strength, most recently highlighted by the junior park celebrating its sixth anniversary. “The funding opportunities we provide, for example our neighbourhood fund, are available for sports clubs or other youth projects to apply for money to help improve existing and build new facilities which young people can benefit from.”

“Our commitment to improving our already impressive range of play facilities, including playgrounds and skate parks, across Mole Valley will always be a high priority for us, and a decision due to be taken by cabinet later this month could see several million pounds of Community Infrastructure Levy funding become available for a major parks and recreation ground enhancement programme.”

Chris Caulfield LDRS

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