



Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2013

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are writing to let you know about an exciting new initiative to make Torriano Junior a *Change2Water* school by December 2013. This means that water will be the only drink permitted in school outside of breakfast clubs and school meals. You will have the opportunity to respond to this letter in a survey during Parents' Evening next week and in a consultation workshop for parents in November.

Torriano Junior has come to this decision after noticing how many students were regularly drinking fizzy and sugary drinks, before and after school as well as in their packed lunch. Excess sugar contributes to tooth decay and is a source of calories but few other nutrients. If we eat more calories than we need, in time we'll gain weight which increases your risk of heart disease. More than a quarter of the added sugar in young people's diets comes from sugary drinks so swapping to water makes a real difference.

Below are the answers to some questions that you might have:

## Frequently asked questions

### **Won't restricting pupil's choice of beverages affect their hydration?**

There is no evidence that hydration is compromised by a lack of availability of drinks in schools. Water, which by law must be freely available to pupils at all times, is sufficient to meet any hydration needs, and pupils should be encouraged to drink water as part of a school's healthy eating policy.

### **Why introduce more rules? Surely pupils can be educated to make appropriate choices?**

Torriano Junior is committed to being a Healthy School and part of that commitment means encouraging healthy choices in food and drink. There is no evidence that when pupils are faced with a choice between healthy and less healthy options, they make healthier choices as a result of greater awareness of the benefits of healthier drinks.

### **What about fruit juice and milk. Isn't that healthy?**

Water should be promoted as the drink of choice as it is best for hydration and must be available free of charge to all pupils. Drinks such as fruit juice and milk are healthy drinks in moderation because of the nutritional benefits they offer and these will be available during school meal times.

### **What about sports drinks, flavoured water, and diet drinks? Surely they are needed after exercise, or for hydration, or to combat obesity?**

There is no evidence that specific drinks are required for these purposes. Water is able to fulfil all hydration needs, and milk or fruit juice provide nutritional benefit as well as additional choice. Sports drinks, flavoured water and diet drinks are not classed as 'healthier' drinks, and so are not permitted.



### **What other benefits are there to making Torriano Junior a Change2Water school?**

Other than the health benefits, restricting fizzy and sugary drinks helps the environment by reducing waste and keeps the school and grounds litter free.

### **How can you tell if children are dehydrated?**

Symptoms of mild dehydration can be difficult to spot. Some children may become irritable, tired and less able to concentrate. Dehydration can also cause dizziness and headaches.

We appreciate your support in our campaign for a healthier school!

Yours sincerely

**Helen Bruckdorfer**

Head of School

01LBC Health Improvement Team

