



PLANNING POLICY NOTE – CHILDREN OBESITY

January 2026



Healthy and Proud Communities

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Planning Policy Note – Children Obesity

Introduction

1.1 Policy R5 of the Rossendale Local Plan (2019 to 2036) aims to manage the development of hot food takeaways to avoid over-concentration and to address potential issues such as noise, litter and smell. Health considerations are also important since associations have been found between deprivation areas, density of hot food takeaways and obesity¹. Therefore, the Local Plan has introduced a criterion to restrict hot food takeaway proposals in areas where children obesity rate is over certain thresholds (criterion 'd'). Please see below an extract of Policy R5.

Policy R5: Hot Food Takeaways

The development of hot food takeaways will be supported provided the following criteria are met and subject to other policies of this plan:

- a) the development is located within a town or district centre and it would not adversely impact the vitality and viability of the area;
- b) where the proposed development would be located outside of the primary shopping area of the town or district centre, it is of no more than 100 square metres (gross) floorspace and it would not give rise to an over-concentration of hot food takeaways that adversely impacts the vitality and viability of the area;
- c) where the proposed development is located 400m of a secondary school that lies outside of designated town and district shopping centres, takeaway opening hours are restricted at lunchtimes and school closing times;
- d) applications for new hot food takeaways are not in wards where more than 15% of Year 6 pupils or 10% of Reception class age pupils are classified by Public Health England as obese;
- f) where a new shopfront is proposed it is of high quality design that is in scale and keeping with the area;
- g) provision is made for the control and management of litter both on site and on the public highway;
- h) provision is made for the treatment and management of cooking odours and any external flue/means of extraction would not cause harm to visual or residential amenity, and;
- i) the development would not give rise to unacceptable adverse impacts on local amenity, privacy or highway safety.

¹ Hot Food Takeaways Public Health Advice Note for Planners, Lancashire County Council (December 2025). Available at: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/media/967505/hot-food-takeaway-advice-note.pdf>

Children Obesity Data

2.1 The Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (previously Public Health England) publishes obesity data on its Obesity Profile² website annually. The data originates from the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) which records the height and weight of children in Reception (4-5 years old) and Year 6 (10-11 years old) classes within primary schools every year. A Body Mass Index is then calculated and each child is assigned to one of four categories (underweight, healthy weight, overweight and obese). Obesity rates for Reception and Year 6 children are then reported over a three-year period, at various geographies, including at ward level.

2.2 As of November 2025, the latest period reported for the prevalence of obesity in children in England is the period 2022/23 and 2024/25.

2.3 The prevalence of obesity is used to identify wards where more than 15% of Year 6 pupil and where more than 10% of Reception children are classified as obese. Table 1 below reports the obesity rate for this period. Wards with a higher level than the Policy R5 thresholds are highlighted in red whilst wards with a lower level are shown in green.

Table 1: Prevalence of obesity for Reception and Year 6 pupils in Rossendale per ward for the period 2022/23 and 2024/25 compared to Policy R5 thresholds.

Ward	Prevalence of children obesity Period 2022/23 – 24/25		Rossendale Local Plan Policy R5 Thresholds	
	Reception %	Year 6 %	Reception %	Year 6 %
Bacup	11.5	23.6	10	15
Britannia & Lee Mill	10.8	22.0	10	15
Goodshaw & Cribden	10.0	14.0	10	15
Greenfield & Eden	13.6	21.7	10	15
Hareholme & Waterfoot	8.9	26.5	10	15
Haslingden	9.6	27.7	10	15
Helmshore	11.8	15.6	10	15
Longholme	10.9	20.8	10	15
Whitewell & Stacksteads	13.6	26.4	10	15
Whitworth	8.5	28.6	10	15

2.4 The table shows that only one ward in Rossendale (Goodshaw & Cribden) has a rate of obesity for both Reception and Year 6 pupils lower than the thresholds set out in Policy R5. The other wards have a higher rate in either one or both groups of children. A map of the electoral wards colour coded according to whether they pass or not the Policy R5 criterion 'd' is shown in Appendix A.

2.5 As such, applications for new hot food takeaways in Goodshaw & Cribden comply with criterion 'd' of Policy R5 from 4 November 2025 until new data is published. Any applications

² Obesity Profile, Office for Health Improvement & Disparities - <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/national-child-measurement-programme>

submitted in other wards in Rossendale would not meet the criterion and will therefore not be compliant with the policy.

2.6 It is not possible to compare the trend in children obesity rate at the ward level this time due to the data being provided for the new ward boundaries for the first time.

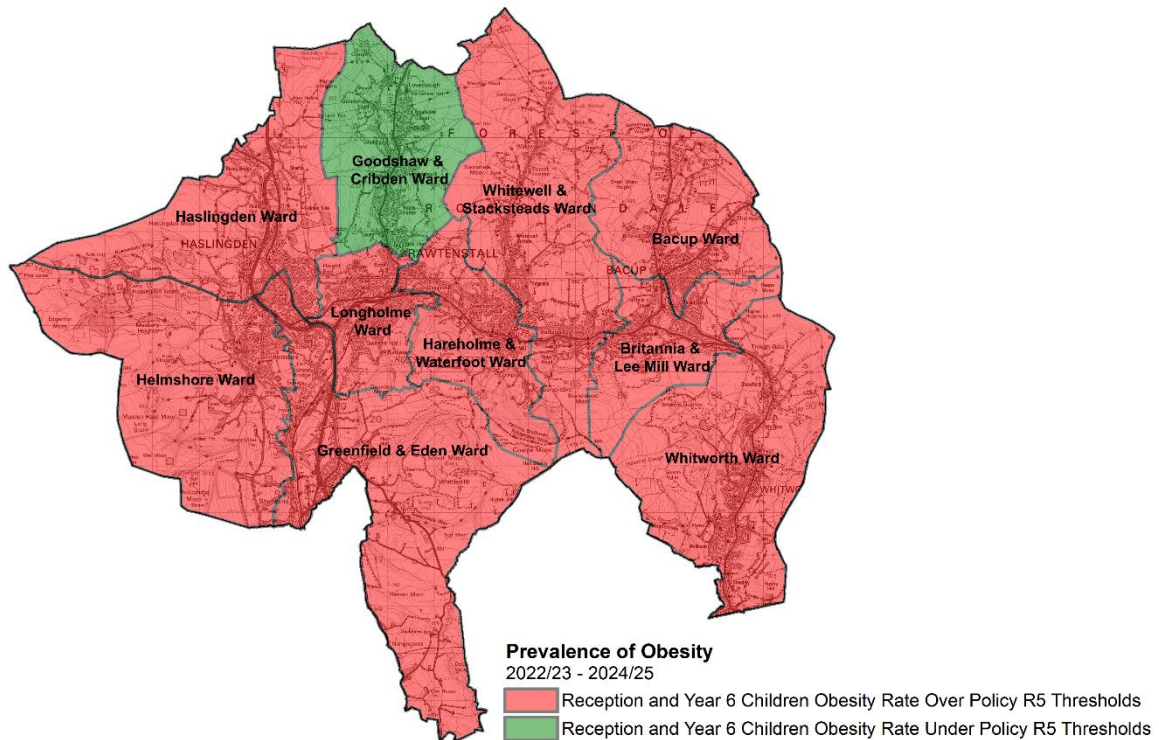
2.6 It is to be noted that the prevalence of children obesity in Rossendale is higher than the average in England (please see Appendix C). Also, compared to last year's data, Rossendale children obesity has increased for both Reception and Year 6 children.

Conclusion

3.1 Currently, one out of the 10 wards in Rossendale has a rate of obesity for Reception and Year 6 children lower than the thresholds set out in Policy R5: Goodshaw & Cribden ward. As such, applications for new hot food takeaways in this ward meet criterion 'd' of the policy, whilst applications in other wards do not. This applies from 4 November 2025 until new data is published, most likely in November 2026, at which point this note will be reviewed and updated if necessary.

Appendix A – Children Obesity Prevalence Map by Wards

RECEPTION AND YEAR 6 CHILDREN OBESITY RATE BY WARDS FOR THE PERIOD 2022/23 - 2024/25



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Map displays NHS England data from the National Child Measurement Programme

Scale 1:100,000
Date drawn: January 2026
Drawn by: Forward Planning

Appendix B – Comparison at local, regional and national geographies

Prevalence of children obesity (including severe obesity)	2021/22 – 2023/24		2022/23 - 2024/25		Trend	
Geographies	Reception (%)	Year 6 (%)	Reception (%)	Year 6 (%)	Reception (%)	Year 6 (%)
England	9.6	22.7	9.8	22.3	↑	↓
North West	10.2	23.8	10.5	23.6	↑	↓
Lancashire	9.6	22.0	9.8	21.8	↑	↓
Rossendale	9.6	20.7	10.6	22.7	↑	↑