

This is a published notice on the Find a Tender service: <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Notice/076619-2025>

Planning

HAC6121 Children's Oral Health Specialist Service

Tower Hamlets

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-076619

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05e7c1

Published 24 November 2025, 4:18pm

Scope

Reference

HAC6121

Description

Local authorities in England hold a statutory responsibility for improving the oral health of their populations, with a particular focus on children and reducing health inequalities. Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, councils are responsible for assessing local oral health needs, commissioning preventive programmes such as supervised toothbrushing and fluoride varnish schemes, and delivering community-based education and interventions.

Up to 40% of 5-year-olds in Tower Hamlets have tooth decay, with children in deprived areas and Asian/Asian British communities disproportionately affected. Poor oral health affects children's wellbeing, learning, and school readiness, and is a common cause of hospital admissions for children under ten. Dental decay is preventable and effective health promotion programmes in early childhood can reduce inequities supporting children to develop healthy lifelong habits.

Tower Hamlets' children's oral health programme has been reviewed, in advance of end of the current contract for children's oral health services (Healthy Teeth in Schools) in 31st August 2026. This review recommended that the local children's oral health programme needed to strengthen specialist oral health leadership, introduce supervised toothbrushing, increase prevention activities in the early years and provide poverty-sensitive interventions (e.g. free toothbrushing packs). Evidence shows these interventions offer a strong return on investment, reduce inequities, and improve lifelong health outcomes.

Public Health currently commission 'Healthy Teeth in Schools', a service that delivers oral health checks and fluoride varnish for 3-6 year olds in schools. In March 2025, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) announced funding for a new, targeted, supervised toothbrushing programme for 3-5-year-olds to be delivered in September 2025 in early years settings. This is being mobilised in the borough through a 1-year contract. Both these contracts will be end in August 2026 and be placed by this new contract.

Scope of contract

The contract will replace two existing contracts: 1) Healthy Teeth in Schools 2) Targeted supervised toothbrushing. It will bring together other activities that improve oral health into one contract to improve integration and efficiency.

The service will deliver the following:

All children attending schools aged 3-6 years (Nursery, Reception, Year 1) will have an oral health check and protective fluoride varnish applied to their teeth, every 6 months.

All children attending early years settings, including childminders and reception classes, aged 3-5 years will benefit from supervised toothbrushing. This will involve training staff, organising delivery of resources, auditing settings and evaluation of the programme. This programme has been shown to create healthy habits, improve toothbrushing practice at home (through children better accepting the practice and teaching their parents), as well as ensuring children from all backgrounds brush their teeth regularly.

All children will be offered age-appropriate Brush for Life packs (toothbrushes, toothpaste, information leaflet) at the following universal health visiting contacts: 3-4 months, 6 months, 12 months and 2 years. The service will procure these packs but delivery of resources to families has been included in the Health Visiting specification.

Training and system leadership: The service will provide oral health promotion training and resources to partners across Tower Hamlets. This includes the school nursing service, health visiting, midwifery, paediatrics, Family Hubs and Early Help, Children's Social Care, early years settings, schools, voluntary and community organisations, faith organisations, Healthy Lives, Healthy Early Years London. Training and resources must

be flexible and meet the needs of different families, for example, accessible online and available in a variety of community languages.

Total value (estimated)

- £1,504,000 excluding VAT
- £1,880,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 September 2026 to 31 August 2029
- Possible extension to 31 August 2030
- 4 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 85000000 - Health and social work services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Engagement

Engagement deadline

3 December 2025

Engagement process description

2.1.1 Providers wishing to participate are asked to submit a brief (see portal for separate Market Engagement Activities document with submission template) covering:

1. A description of your organisation's experience of delivering Strategic leadership, oversight, and training offer in oral health (Max 300 words)
2. A summary of your organisation's experience of delivering Oral health checks and fluoride varnish application in for school aged children. (Max 300 words)
3. A summary of your organisation's experience of delivering Universal supervised toothbrushing programme and provision of Brush for Life Packs at health visiting contacts (Max 500 words)
4. Any other information or examples of good practice you would like to share with Commissioners prior to the publication of an invitation to tender. (Max 300 words)

2.1.2 Answers to questions 1 - 4 should consider how your organisation will ensure the provision of effective, quality services that deliver:

- A strategic holistic children's oral health offer
- National data reporting requirements
- Improvements in health and wellbeing, meeting needs of all eligible residents, and ensuring pathways to ongoing care where needed.

2.1.3 This information will be considered by Commissioners as part of our ongoing review.

2.1.4 Providers wishing to participate are asked to register your interest free of charge at www.londontenders.org with Reference No. DN798511 and submit a brief along with contact details for the market engagement event (see portal for separate Market

Engagement Activities document with submission template) via the Proactis portal (ONLY) no later than 3rd December 2025, 13:00.

Participation

Particular suitability

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
- Voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

23 January 2026

Contracting authority

Tower Hamlets

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PQBL-2673-MVYG

Tower Hamlets Town Hall

London

E1 1BJ

United Kingdom

Contact name: Ms Joanne Spree

Email: joanne.spree@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk>

Region: UKI42 - Tower Hamlets

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government