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Action Required: Responses by 31 October 2006



Title of Document: Appetite for Life

Audience: Local Education Authorities; Local Authorities Caterers Association; Diocesan authorities; teacher and other associations and unions; training providers; employer bodies; employers; voluntary organisations; Children's Commissioner for Wales; Governing Bodies; Caroline Walker Trust; and all partners concerned with education, lifelong learning and skills, and a 10% sample of schools for information only.

Overview: This consultation is to give information and seek views on the Food in Schools Working Group's report on the extent to which more stringent nutritional standards are introduced; with the aim of delivering a reduction in pupils' consumption of saturated fats, salt and sugar and an increase in the consumption of fruit, vegetables and other foods containing essential nutrients.

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www.learning.wales.gov.uk and can be copied from there.

Related documents: The Learning Country: A Paving Document. (2001)
Wales: A Better Country. (2003)
Food and Well Being (2003)
Well Being in Wales (2003)
Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services in Wales (2004)
Making the Connections: Action Plan (2005)
Health Challenge Wales - Action on Food and Fitness for Children and Young People (2005)
Learning Country 2: Delivering the Promise (2006)
Health Challenge Wales - Food and Fitness for Children and Young People – Action Plan (2006)

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Appetite for Life

Chair's Foreword

In the period leading up to July 2005 when this Working Group was formally established, it had become increasingly evident that a fundamental review of school meals in Wales was long overdue. This awareness was due partly to the increasing impact that was taking place in Scotland through the publication of *Hungry for Success* and the high profile effect of Jamie Oliver's TV programme which led to his "Food for Thought" campaign.

Also, in the weeks' immediately preceding the publication of this Report we have seen the profile of this issue raised even further in Wales by the hosting by one of the Working Group's members, Professor Kevin Morgan, of his "Local Food - the Power of the Public Plate" 40th Anniversary Lecture.

The challenge of reviewing not simply school meals but all aspects of food consumption should not be underestimated. Equally, it has to be acknowledged that many of the fundamental building blocks required to take the whole agenda forward were already being put in place in other parts of the UK. Key amongst these were the nutrient based standards which had been developed by the Caroline Walker Trust and which like England and Scotland we have now recommended should be adopted in Wales.

Throughout the process, we have been greatly encouraged by the emerging and positive direction of travel amongst the key stakeholders and recognition that there is a clear link between the food consumed in school and the wider health and educational benefits for the students. We are, therefore, optimistic about the future. We recognise however, that there is a need for the Welsh Assembly Government together with key stakeholders, to address influences outside the school environment, in taking forward this important agenda.

In framing our proposals, we are conscious that many of them will inevitably carry financial implications. This has certainly been the case in England and Scotland. However, other than providing a series of illustrative figures suggesting what additional investment might be required, we have been deliberately cautious not to be too prescriptive. The principal reason for this somewhat conservative approach has been the recognition that on the basis of the information available, we cannot be certain how much money is currently being spent on food in schools and, consequently, how much further financial investment might be required. Also, acknowledging that there are several stakeholders involved, we have been reluctant, particularly in the light of the lack of information, to ascribe the source of any such additional investment to a particular entity.

Our proposals are nevertheless heartfelt and based on a partnership approach to their delivery. We sincerely believe that each one requires, as a minimum, serious consideration by the relevant stakeholders. To focus minds, we have also proposed what might be regarded as a challenging timetable for implementation.

In conclusion, may I take this opportunity of thanking most sincerely each member of the Working Group for their contribution to this review. May I also thank those who have put pen to paper (or perhaps more accurately fingers to keyboard) to provide the text that it contains. Finally, and I appreciate that it is always invidious to highlight an individual, but may I personally thank Ruth Conway who has devoted countless hours to this particular Report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Lansdown', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

ALAN LANSDOWN

Summary of Proposals

Proposal 1: The nutrient, food and drink based standards proposed in this report, 'Appetite for Life', should be adopted and applied to the provision of school food.

Proposal 2: In order to facilitate the implementation of the standards the Welsh Assembly Government should procure software to analyse menus which can be accessed and utilised on an all Wales basis.

Proposal 3: Further urgent work should be undertaken to investigate how the dietary needs of minority ethnic groups in relation to the proposed nutrient and food based standards can effectively be met.

Proposal 4: School caterers should ensure that a balanced selection of food is available for all children right through to the end of lunchtime service in order that children eating later in the food service are not disadvantaged.

Proposal 5: All Primary schools should be encouraged to participate in the Primary School free breakfast initiative. Breakfasts provided in secondary schools should be based on the same food guidance.

Proposal 6: Secondary schools should only provide drinks (other than plain water and pure fruit juice) which have a clear nutritional benefit (in that they should provide essential nutrients rather than just calories), are not harmful to teeth, and do not encourage a preference for sweet drinks.

Proposal 7: Water must be readily available free of charge, preferably chilled, at a number of sites throughout the school throughout the whole school day. Importantly, such water sources must be physically divorced from the toilets.

Proposal 8: Primary schools should only offer milk in addition to water as a snack drink. In addition, pure fruit juice may be provided alongside a meal.

Proposal 9: The Welsh Assembly Government should examine application of the current free milk and subsidy schemes with the aim of ensuring maximum nutritional benefit from these schemes.

Proposal 10: Snack food provision in schools must have a clear nutritional benefit (in that they should provide essential nutrients rather than just calories) and in primary schools should be restricted to fruit at break time.

Proposal 11: The sale of confectionery (sweets, chocolates), cereal bars and packaged processed savoury snacks (crisps and related products) should be completely banned as soon as possible.

Proposal 12: Schools should be encouraged to influence, assist and guide pupils and parents in the preparation and provision of nutritious packed lunches and other food brought into school.

Proposal 13: The Welsh Assembly Government should continue to provide strategic direction and should support jointly with the Welsh Local Government Association the appointment of a co-ordinator to assist in the practical implementation of these proposals at local level.

Proposal 14: Once the proposals in this report are agreed, implementation should commence with all schools achieving the new standards according to the timetable outlined in this report.

Proposal 15: Catering staff are central to the whole school approach. Their practical skills should be valued and utilised to the full, and they should be represented on groups like School Nutrition Action Groups and links made with School Councils.

Proposal 16: Caterers should over a period of two years conduct a needs analysis (knowledge & skills, equipment, preparation time).

Proposal 17: The Welsh Assembly Government, in partnership with key stakeholders, should ensure that a list of approved courses and trainers is produced and give consideration to further developing a recognised training standard for school caterers, including training to ensure they are able to support pupils in making healthy choices.

Proposal 18: All schools should be required to write, publish and implement a whole-school food policy in partnership with key stakeholders.

Proposal 19: As part of the whole school approach schools should:

- Ensure consistent standards are maintained for all food served on site which are reinforced through the delivery of the curriculum;
- Consider the length and timetabling of lunch breaks to allow adequate time for pupils to select and eat meals in a civilised environment with a minimum of queuing and enable staff (catering and supervisory) time to influence choices;
- Ensure midday supervisors have access to training so that they can play an active part in encouraging and supporting pupils to make healthy choices and try new foods.
- Ensure there is a clear policy on water in school to ensure easy access to free, preferably chilled drinking water and education of pupils in the classroom on the importance of fluid consumption in their daily diet.

Proposal 20: The Welsh Assembly Government should develop guidance for Governors on their role and responsibility in taking forward a whole school approach to food and nutrition.

Proposal 21: The Welsh Assembly Government proposals for revised National Curriculum Programmes of Study should provide for consultation on the position of healthy living, food and physical activity in the school curriculum.

Proposal 22: Schools should consider how cookery skills and food production in the curriculum might be supported and complemented by extra curricular activities for pupils and/or parents.

Proposal 23: Schools and local authorities should:

- aim for complete take-up of free school meal entitlement; and
- undertake an energetic marketing campaign to maximise uptake of school meals by the end of the implementation period.

Proposal 24: The Welsh Assembly Government in partnership with key stakeholders should undertake further work to consider and develop viable alternative cashless solutions for school meals that can be rolled out on an all Wales basis. This should be linked with the ongoing national citizen smartcard infrastructure work.

Proposal 25: The Welsh Assembly Government should work with Local Authorities and schools to develop a marketing and communication campaign at national and local level to promote the benefits of the service.

Proposal 26: Schools and caterers should work together with appropriate partners to provide easily accessible information on the healthier menus to both pupils and parents, and market these to encourage take-up.

Proposal 27: Local authorities and other catering providers should carry out a review of their existing arrangements for food packaging and waste to identify areas which need attention. Positive action should then be taken to address the issues and make improvements.

Proposal 28: Schools should aim to

- purchase materials from sustainable sources that are made from recycled materials and are biodegradable
- recycle packaging materials as appropriate.

Proposal 29: Local authorities and other catering providers should adopt a more co-ordinated approach to food procurement in discussion with Value Wales and develop and improve specifications for products which satisfy nutrient standards.

Proposal 30: Catering specifications and menu planning should give greater emphasis to sustainability, seasonality and local procurement, whilst ensuring food safety.

Proposal 31: Local authorities should consider exploring ways to improve transparency and accountability in relation to how much they spend on school meals through the operation and financial management of the school meal service.

Proposal 32: Welsh Assembly Government should require all local authorities to conduct an audit of need of buildings, equipment and facilities for the delivery of catering services in order to prioritise local authority spending programmes.

Proposal 33: Schools and local authorities should aim to reach the highest standards and kitchens especially should be a priority in all schools' capital investment programmes.

Proposal 34: The Welsh Assembly Government should in consultation with local authorities recognise their respective obligations to provide appropriate financial support for the implementation of these proposals.

Proposal 35: Local level discussions should recognise the need for adequate investment and the desirability of phased, as opposed to sudden, price increases in school meals to parents.

Proposal 36: Caterers should produce regular standard reports on school lunches through the software provided by Welsh Assembly Government.

Proposal 37: A national database should be established in order to assess progress towards delivery of the proposals related to other school food. The precise nature of the data required will require further work to ensure good coverage without duplication of effort.

Proposal 38: Headteachers should report regularly to school governors on progress in meeting the objectives set out in their whole school food policy. Governors should then include this information in their annual report to parents.

Proposal 39: The Welsh Assembly Government to seek initial advice from Estyn on the extent to which current inspections consider the standards of school lunches. Beyond this, separate advice should be sought on the potential to mirror in Wales developments proposed in Scotland and England that envisage a wider role for inspection in the monitoring of school meal standards.

Proposal 40: The Welsh Assembly Government should consider undertaking, at appropriate intervals, a Wales-wide evaluation of school food provision to assess the types of foods and drinks available, their uptake and their nutrient contribution to the overall diet.

Proposal 41: The standards should be reviewed by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2011. At this time, the standards should be applied to food consumption as well as food provision.

Introduction

1.1 There is no doubt that a healthy balanced diet is important both to our children and young people's health and to their performance at school. Increasing evidence suggests that pupils who eat healthy balanced meals and who have access to drinking water display better concentration, improved attention spans, are less likely to be hyperactive, and are calmer and more alert in class.

1.2 With this in mind, and building on existing work, in July 2005, the Welsh Assembly Government established the Food In Schools Working Group to examine how to improve the quality and nutritional standards of school meals, and how to ensure a consistent and coherent approach to driving forward improvements in food and nutrition in our schools. The terms of reference and membership of this Working Group are at Annex A.

Strategic Context

1.3 In taking forward the Welsh Assembly Government's work to improve educational opportunities and health and to reduce health inequalities that exist between communities, this report builds upon '*Food and Well Being* (2003)¹', '*Well Being in Wales*' (2003)² and '*Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services in Wales*' (2004)³ and the subsequent *Action Plan* (2005)⁴. The Working Group further developed recommendations contained in "*Health Challenge Wales - Action on food and fitness for children and young people*" (2005)⁵ which sought to improve the food and drink consumed in schools throughout the day and explore ways of developing innovative approaches to the teaching of nutrition/cookery skills. In short the Working Group's overarching purpose has been to identify improvements in the arrangements for local service delivery, which are as radical and innovative as necessary.

1.4 The importance of improving our children and young people's diet is already recognised in:

- the Welsh Assembly Government's sustainable development action plan⁶, which makes improving school meals one of its top 10 targets;
- the Children's National Service Framework⁷ identifies 4 key actions to help improve the diet of our children and young people.

¹ <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/foodandwellbeing.pdf>

² <http://www.cmo.wales.gov.uk/content/work/well-being-in-wales/consultation-document-e.pdf>

³ http://www.wales.gov.uk/themespublicservicereform/content/Making_Connection_Eng.pdf

⁴ <http://www.wales.gov.uk/themesmakingconnection/content/action-plan-e.pdf>

⁵ http://www.hp.wales.gov.uk/healthschool_01/nutrition/pdfs/food-fitness-consultation-e.pdf

⁶ <http://www.wales.gov.uk/themessustainabledev/content/action-plan-e.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sites/documents/441/ACFD1F6%2Epdf>

1.5 The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child specifically makes reference to “*the rights of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health*” (Article 24.2 (c)). The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe passed a resolution on healthy eating in schools in September 2005 which recommends that countries:

- review food provision in schools to determine to what extent they comply with or are integral to a health promoting school approach
- consider the elaboration of national provisions and nutritional standards for food in schools which:
 - acknowledge the changing health situation and lifestyles of young people in Europe
 - take into account the good practice in European schools as demonstrated at the Forum on Eating at School
 - contribute to the promotion of young people’s health
 - involve the pupils and all stakeholders in the process
 - are integrated into the health promoting school approach
 - have in-built systems of monitoring and evaluation
- consider the development of assistance at national and regional level to support schools in adopting and implementing policies for healthy eating.

1.6 In formulating this report the Working Group acknowledges that a great deal of work has, and is continuing to be done to develop a whole school approach to food and nutrition. We need to ensure we have effective systems and standards in place for identifying, sharing and replicating good practice. There is a need to build coalitions, locally, regionally and nationally to support the implementation of this ambitious agenda. To ensure maximum impact we also need to empower people at the local level to carry out this work. Following Jamie Oliver’s *Feed Me Better Campaign*, there is a general perception by the public that all food in our schools is not up to standard. We know that this is far from being the case. However Jamie Oliver’s campaign highlights the importance of developing an effective marketing and communication strategy as part of any strategy to further improve the quality and nutritional standards of school meals.

Considerations by the Working Group

1.7 The Working Group in developing its proposals has given consideration to the research and evaluation work undertaken in this area. *Nutrition in Schools - Building the Evidence* - a literature review of this information is at Annex C.

1.8 In addition, Welsh Assembly Government officials visited a sample of schools across Wales to gain an insight into what forms general practice regarding the provision of school meals both in the schools kitchen and canteen. Although this was a relatively small sample, 17 primary and 11 secondary schools from across Wales, it provided the Working Group with a useful overview of the school meals service.

1.9 With increasing concerns over growing levels of obesity and how this impacts on our health we have a responsibility to ensure that the food provided for our children and young people during the school day is healthy and nutritious. Diet in childhood plays an essential role in growth and development, current and future well being, educational performance and avoidance of chronic disease throughout life. We all have a responsibility to ensure that our children and young people have the best possible start in life and integral to this is to provide them with a healthy balanced diet which will contribute to the achievement of a healthy weight.

1.10 It is however important to recognise the food provided at school although important only forms part of our children and young people's diet. We need to send out clear and consistent messages about what constitutes a healthy diet not just at school but also at home and by the wider community. There are other considerations for schools such as food brought into school especially lunchboxes and offsite policies during the lunchtime. Although outside its remit the Working Group feels it must stress the importance of influences outside the school and the need for the Welsh Assembly Government to address this vital wider issue.

1.11 The Working Group recognise that providing our children and young people with the necessary knowledge and skills to support improvements to the food on offer in our schools is vital to the success of taking forward the proposals in this report.

1.12 Local authorities and schools will all be at different stages at introducing and taking forward the agenda proposed in this report. The Working Group recognise that primary and secondary schools will face different challenges and that generally it is more straightforward to successfully introduce change in primary than secondary schools. This should not mean, as some have suggested, that the latter should be regarded as a lost cause and that we should concentrate exclusively on the primary sector.

1.13 As part of the holistic approach to improving school meal provision the Working Group recognises that the environment - both the kitchen and the canteen - is an important consideration. Many local authorities are already taking steps to improve their school meals service and are investing in developing training programmes for their Catering staff. Having the necessary skills and resources available to promote and support the introduction of the new food and nutritional standards proposed in this report will be critical to its successful implementation.

1.14 Improving the quality and the nutritional value of the food on offer in schools is not enough. We have to work with children and young people to ensure they actually consume the healthier options on offer. Initially the Working Group anticipates there may be some reduction in the take up and consumption of school meals. However, with parental and whole school support, as children and young people adjust to the new meals longer term, we strongly believe that take up and consumption will exceed current levels.

1.15 To take people with us in revolutionising the provision of school meals we must involve them in the process. Like adults, children and young people

respond best to change when they are consulted and their views taken into account. School Councils will have a key role to play in taking forward this agenda.

1.16 It is also important that we get public sector food procurement right and that key stakeholders work together to make sure this happens. Where good practice exists, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, we need to learn from this and make sure we have effective mechanisms in place to share such practice. The WLGA have pulled together a small group of local authorities to explore best practice in school meal provision. To support this work the WLGA also commissioned Professor Kevin Morgan and Dr. Adrian Morley to produce the report *Sustainable Procurement: from good intentions to good practice*. Effective collaboration with key stakeholders is vital. We need to encourage creative and innovative thinking in the supply of food to schools. Food for Thought case studies⁸ highlights examples of such approaches.

Legislation

1.17 Currently, legislation allows only standards to be set for school lunches; the Welsh Assembly Government has currently no power to ban particular foods from school lunches.

1.18 The Department for Education and Skills White Paper, *'Higher Standards, Better Schools for All'*⁹, includes proposals to permit nutritional standards to apply to all food and drink supplied on school premises, and to change the duty to charge into a power to charge. This White Paper makes it clear that Wales warmly welcomes these new legislative proposals and wishes to be joined with the draft clauses relating to food in schools in the current Education and Inspection Bill. In addition, the Welsh Assembly Government is seeking to extend the framework power being sought in this Bill to cover all school food. The reason for this is that the policy development process in Wales is not complete. A framework power is sought in the event that the Welsh Assembly Government wishes to take up recommendations for legal change not covered by the draft clauses.

Timing

1.19 The Working Group are proposing that:

- by September 2008, schools must meet all of the food standards for school lunches and the proposals for other food and drink.
- the introduction of the new school meal nutrient standards from September 2008 should be followed by a one year implementation period (2008-2009) in primary schools, and a two year implementation period (2008-2010) in secondary schools.

⁸ <https://www.sell2wales.co.uk/help/1716.html>

⁹ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/schoolswhitepaper/>

1.20 By the end of these periods, schools would be expected to be meeting the new standards in full. A provisional timetable indicating dates for key activities is at Annex E. Following consultation, a more detailed timetable will be incorporated as part of the Action Plan.

Nutrient and Food Based Standards for School Lunches

2.1 Currently, the *Education (Nutritional Standards for School Lunches) (Wales) Regulations 2001*¹⁰ define the different food groups and sets out the daily minimum nutritional standards for primary and secondary school pupils. Local education authorities, schools and school caterers must comply with these standards when providing school lunches.

2.2 The Welsh Assembly Government has also issued guidance entitled '*Nutritional Standards for School Lunches*' *Circular 03/2003*¹¹ which advises LEAs, schools and caterers on ways of meeting or exceeding standards set in the regulations.

2.3 The Working Group were tasked with reviewing this guidance and in doing so consider the extent to which more stringent standards should be introduced. These would need to address such issues as the reduction of the levels of saturated fat, sugar and salt in children's diets.

How the standards are intended to be used in schools

2.4 In undertaking this work, the Working Group's starting point was to consider developments in England and Scotland. Like England and Scotland the Working Group have had their attention drawn to the Caroline Walker Trust (CWT)¹² Nutritional Guidelines for School Meals. These nutrient standards are based on the current Dietary Reference Values published by the Department of Health in 1991 and SACN Salt and Health Report 2005. Dietary Reference Values are the amounts of energy and nutrients needed by different groups of people.

2.5 Tables 1 - 3 at Annex B set out the Working Group's proposals for Nutrient and Food based standards for children aged 5-18 and also the average daily nutrient intakes which menus should supply for lunches over a period of 1 week and which the Working Group believe need to be adopted in Wales.

2.6 The Working Group also recognises that there is an increasing need to consider the diet of those under the statutory school age of 5 since particularly in Wales the Welsh Assembly Government has been proactively introducing free half time places for all 3 year olds as well as, more recently introducing the Flying Start initiative. The Caroline Walker Trust are producing a report which will issue in July 2006 - along with training materials and CD-Rom. It is proposed that subject to further considerations; that these should be similarly adopted.

2.7 The standards are intended to be applied to all food, not just set menus, provided in school cafeterias and dining rooms at lunch time. They are not, however, designed to be applied to the individual meal or child. The implementation framework should also include work to

¹⁰ <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/wales/wsi2001/20011784e.htm>

¹¹ <http://www.wales.gov.uk/subieducationtraining/content/circulars/nutritional-standards-e.pdf>

¹² <http://www.cwt.org.uk/>

encourage uptake of healthier options. This means that in the longer term, standards should be applied to food actually consumed.

2.8 Examples of menus which comply with the recommended nutrient and food based standards as produced by the Caroline Walker Trust are shown in tables 4 and 5 in Annex B. These menus give an indication of what a food service which meets the nutrient standards might look like. Menus like these can be designed and tailored to meet the individual needs of a school and cater to the tastes of their pupils.

2.9 These standards need to be supported by practical, guidance and by tools to enable caterers and schools to achieve them. Practical support can be found in a variety of resources including Catering for Health¹³ Healthy Catering¹⁴ and Eating Well at School¹⁵. The Hungry for Success¹⁶ programme in Scotland has also developed guidance on portion sizes.

Proposal 1: The nutrient, food and drink based standards proposed in this report, 'Appetite for Life', should be adopted and applied to the provision of school food.

2.10 To support the implementation of new standards for school meals in Scotland, set out in Hungry for Success, the Scottish Executive commissioned H4S nutrient analysis software. It is understood that most local authorities are now using this software to develop menus that meet the nutrient standards, although some continue to use other nutrient analysis packages or the 'food group' guidelines. Local authorities have used varied approaches to menu development. Most have provided schools with standard sets of menus on a fixed cycle. A few have provided folders of support materials which catering staff in schools can use to devise menus.

2.11 It is anticipated that increased use of *H4S* software will provide more accurate information on how well the nutrient standards are being met and will also assist local authorities to develop menus which are more flexible and appealing to a wider audience. This approach is of particular interest to the Working Group and, based on information from the Scottish Executive, are strongly of the opinion that the standards proposed in this report need to be supported by easily accessible software which is 'fit for purpose', and which, for example, will enable caterers to generate menus which are complying with the nutritional standards.

Proposal 2: In order to facilitate the implementation of the standards the Welsh Assembly Government should procure software to analyse menus which can be accessed and utilised on an all Wales basis.

¹³ Food Standards Agency Wales, Welsh Assembly Government Catering For Health

¹⁴ <http://www.food.gov.uk/healthiereating/healthycatering/>

¹⁵ Crawley, H (2005) Eating Well at School, Nutritional and Practical Guidelines, Caroline Walker Trust and National Heart Forum

¹⁶ Scottish Executive (2002) Hungry for Success: A Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland. The Stationery Office, Edinburgh

2.12 The Working Group also recognises that there is an urgent need to ensure that the dietary requirements of those with Special Diets/Allergies are taken into account in menu planning. In particular, there is increasing concern as to how we meet the dietary needs of minority ethnic groups in relation to the proposed nutrient based standards. This is a complex area and the Working Group agreed required early attention and discussion with the other administrations and key stakeholders.

Proposal 3: Further urgent work should be undertaken to investigate how the dietary needs of minority ethnic groups in relation to the proposed nutrient and food based standards can effectively be met.

2.13 It is of concern to the Group that surveys show that significant numbers of secondary school pupils, irrespective of their level of knowledge of healthy eating, continue to make less healthy meal selections.

2.14 The majority of secondary schools offer a cash cafeteria system for school lunches which allows young people to choose from a wide range of options each day, either as part of a meal or to make up a full meal. It is essential that within every cash cafeteria service there is a choice of full meal options available (which can be either hot or cold) which, very importantly, meet the proposed standards in this report. These meal options should be heavily promoted and should be encouraged as the meal of choice for this group of young people.

2.15 It is recognised that some young people will choose not to have a whole meal option. To ensure that the choices made as far as possible fulfil the requirements for a balanced diet, it is strongly recommended that service providers consider the options they make available and positively promote a range of healthy meal components. Changing the range of options available at lunch time and at other times in the day to healthier options will help to ensure that more pupils make healthier choices.

2.16 Secondary schools with very short lunch breaks should evaluate their meal provision to consider, in particular, whether pupils and staff have enough time to eat their food properly in pleasant surroundings that allow them to experience the social benefits of eating together and also to gain the maximum benefits from digesting their nutritional lunches.

Proposal 4: School caterers should ensure that a balanced selection of food is available for all children right through to the end of lunchtime service in order that children eating later in the food service are not disadvantaged.

Other School Food and Drink

3.1 While traditionally food consumption in schools has been restricted primarily to the lunch period, the Group recognised that there had been a significant cultural shift in many schools and that food and drink was now effectively available for all of the day. This provides different challenges.

3.2 As part of the whole school approach to food and nutrition the Welsh Assembly Government has already introduced a wide range of initiatives to improve nutrition in our schools, for example primary school free breakfasts, the milk scheme for key stage 1 pupils, fruit tuck shops, water coolers, the piloting of healthy vending machines in secondary schools in Pembrokeshire - leading to the guidance '*Think Healthy Vending*'¹⁷ - and the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes, with a requirement to focus on a whole-school approach to food and nutrition and physical activity. Taking each element separately :

Breakfast

3.3 All breakfasts offered should be consistent with that provided in the Primary School Free Breakfast Initiative and should include four food groups as set out in the guidance for operating this initiative. These groups are milk-based drinks and products; Cereals - not sugar coated; fruit; and breads. These are set out in more detail in the following table:

Food Group	Suggested Standard Items
Milk based drinks and products	Semi- skimmed milk
Cereals - not sugar coated*	Whole-wheat biscuits Corn flakes Rice based cereal Shredded wholegrain wheat biscuits Malted wheat squares Bran flakes Porridge
Fruit	A selection of chopped fresh fruit or dried fruit to add to the cereals Fruit canned in natural fruit juice Unsweetened fruit juices
Breads, preferably wholemeal	Small roll, slice of bread, toast - toppings optional. Note: where required a low fat polyunsaturated spread should be used and similarly a reduced sugar jam.

**To avoid adding sugar, children should be encouraged to use fresh fruit and dried fruit as sweeteners*

¹⁷ <http://www.cmo.wales.gov.uk/content/work/schools/vend-book-eng.pdf>

3.4 For variety, other food items could be introduced one or two days a week. A list of suitable items would be:

Milk food group - yoghurts

Fruit food group - smoothies

Bread food group - plain muffins, crumpets, hot cross buns, tea cakes

3.5 The recommended portion sizes for primary schools are provided in the guidance at <http://www.learning.wales.gov.uk/breakfast/whats-new-e.htm>. Portion sizes for secondary school pupils should be adjusted accordingly.

3.6 The Working Group is also conscious that a number of secondary schools already offer a pre-school breakfast service. It is proposed that this should also be in line with that provided in the Primary School Free Breakfast Initiative. Hot foods, if provided, should be bread not pastry based.

Proposal 5: All Primary schools should be encouraged to participate in the Primary School free breakfast initiative. Breakfasts provided in secondary schools should be based on the same food guidance.

Drink and Snack Provision

3.7 Drink and snack provision should not be looked at in isolation, but as part of the planning for the whole school food service. That service should reflect the objectives of the school 'food and nutrition policy'. The health and welfare of pupils should be at the heart of school policy. It is essential that this provision supports the nutritional standards which are central to the food schools service.

3.8 Drinks and snacks may be provided in vending machines in secondary schools, tuck shops or as a service in out of school hours learning facilities and integrated children's centres. The most essential provision is that of readily available free drinking water.

Drink

3.9 Water must be readily available free of charge, preferably chilled, at a number of sites throughout the school and particularly in the canteen and in areas readily accessible following PE lessons. It is important that such provision should be physically distanced from school toilets, an issue that was particularly highlighted by the Children's Commissioner for Wales in his report '*Lifting the Lid on the Nations School Toilets*'¹⁸. Potable drinking water may be provided using taps in classrooms (usually in primary schools), water coolers which are used to fill bottles, or by securely covered jugs or urns in the dining room. It is recommended that at least one water site should be provided for every 200 pupils in a school. Pupils should be educated in the importance of proper hydration for their health and

¹⁸ <http://www.childcom.org.uk/publications/School%20Toilets%20Report.pdf>

wellbeing and should be encouraged to carry water with them to allow frequent small drinks of it. The Working Group believe that schools should be advised to adopt water on desks policy - water is the only drink which should be available in this way. Further advice can be found in the document: *Think Water: Guidance on Water in Schools*.¹⁹

3.10 In addition to water, primary schools may wish to take advantage of the free and subsidised milk schemes to provide semi-skimmed milk as a mid morning drink. This is normally provided as a non-vended product. It is recommended that vending is not encouraged in Primary Schools. Also, that fruit juice is only provided alongside a meal and not as a snack. This is due to its acidity and the wish to encourage pupils to eat whole fruit which provides fibre as well as vitamins.

3.11 Drinks in secondary schools may be dispensed by vending machines or tuck shops and should be provided by considering the following principles:

- The principal importance of hydration;
- Any drink other than water should have a clear nutritional benefit:
 - Drinks may provide one of the recommended 5 a day portions of fruit and vegetables.
 - Drinks may be a natural source of vitamins e.g. vitamin C and minerals such as calcium.
- Drinks provided (other than pure fruit juice) should not be harmful to teeth and therefore should not be carbonated except for plain water: should have a pH greater than 4.5 and should not contain added sugar. The exceptions are flavoured milk and milk based drinks which should have no more than 5% added sugar. This level of sugar is acceptable, as it has been demonstrated that 5% sucrose in milk produces a small but non-significant increase in calories compared with plain milk.
- Artificial sweeteners not to be included as they mimic sweet drinks which may reinforce children's preferences for sweet drinks.

3.12 Table 6 (Annex B) summarises the arguments for and against their inclusion as a drinks option in secondary schools.

Proposal 6: Secondary schools should only provide drinks (other than plain water and pure fruit juice) which have a clear nutritional benefit (in that they should provide essential nutrients rather than just calories), are not harmful to teeth, and do not encourage a preference for sweet drinks.

Proposal 7: Water must be readily available free of charge, preferably chilled, at a number of sites throughout the school throughout the whole school day. Importantly, such water sources must be physically divorced from the toilets.

¹⁹ <http://www.learning.wales.gov.uk/pdfs/think-water-e.pdf>

Proposal 8: Primary schools should only offer milk in addition to water as a snack drink. In addition, pure fruit juice may be provided alongside a meal.

Proposal 9: The Welsh Assembly Government should examine application of the current free milk and subsidy schemes with the aim of ensuring maximum nutritional benefit from these schemes.

Snack food provision

3.13 While snack foods in schools may be provided by vending machines or tuck shops they should be selected by applying the following principles:

- all snack food served must have a clear nutritional benefit in that they should provide essential nutrients rather than just calories;
- provision should both enhance and complement the school meal service and not undermine it.

Food Vending in Secondary Schools

3.14 Conscious of the Guidance that has already been provided in *Think Healthy Vending: Guidance on vending machines in schools* the Working Group believes that schools should also recognise that snack vending should be mainly provided as freshly prepared items in refrigerated machines, controlled by the school and normally managed by the school caterers. Appropriate foods to be provided in a refrigerated food vending machine would be:

- Fresh fruit, prepared fruit salads;
- Filled rolls;
- Sandwiches;
- Baguettes;
- Wraps;
- Bread sticks and crudités (vegetable sticks);
- Crackers and cheese;
- Salads;
- Pasta mixes;
- Yoghurts;
- Fromage frais.
- Packets of unsalted and unsweetened fruit/nuts/seeds.

3.15 Consideration should be given to the fat, salt and sugar content of the above items as some could contain relatively high levels. The Food Standard Agency's guidance on what constitutes a lot and a little could be used, ultimately working towards achieving the target Nutrient Specification where applicable.

3.16 However, due to the difficulty in assessing and profiling the nutritional contribution of manufactured snack products as part of a balanced diet, the Group would strongly recommend that the sale of confectionery (sweets, chocolates), cereal bars and packaged processed savoury snacks (crisps and related products) in schools in Wales should be completely banned as soon as possible. In the lead time to an implementation date schools should, in consultation with pupils, move towards providing a limited range of products which they feel to have an acceptable nutritional content.

Break time and After School Provision

3.17 The Working Group believes that any items from the snack, breakfast or lunchtime menu could be made available during break time and after school provision. Tuck shops in primary schools should only provide fruit and milk. Guidance on provision of fruit tuck shops in primary schools is available at <http://www.cmo.wales.gov.uk/content/work/schools/fruit-tuck-shops-e.pdf>

Proposal 10: Snack food provision in schools must have a clear nutritional benefit (in that they should provide essential nutrients rather than just calories) and in primary schools should be restricted to fruit at break time.

Proposal 11: The sale of confectionery (sweets, chocolates), cereal bars and packaged processed savoury snacks (crisps and related products) should be completely banned as soon as possible.

Proposal 12: Schools should be encouraged to influence, assist and guide pupils and parents in the preparation and provision of nutritious packed lunches and other food brought into school.

Delivering Change

4.1 To achieve the changes proposed in this report, it is acknowledged that for many there will need to be a fundamental shift in mind set. On the other hand, many local authorities are already improving their school meals service and developing training programmes for their Catering staff. However, it is not just a case of improving the food on offer within our schools, we have to work alongside our children and young people to ensure they eat the healthy choices on offer to them.

4.2 If there is to be such a transformation there needs to be a co-ordinated approach between schools, local authorities, all caterers, Welsh Assembly Government and health services. In the view of the Working Group, the only way that such a fundamental change is going to be achieved is through the appointment of a dedicated Co-ordinator to drive this transformational agenda forward, particularly within the timescales envisaged. Such an individual should be jointly supported by both the Welsh Assembly Government and the Welsh Local Government Association. This joint ownership would create the necessary commitment to these changes from two of the major stakeholders involved. One possible model might be for the Welsh Assembly Government to fund the individual with the WLGA hosting him/her. Any necessary support infrastructure could be provided jointly.

Proposal 13: The Welsh Assembly Government should continue to provide strategic direction and should support jointly with the Welsh Local Government Association the appointment of a co-ordinator to assist in the practical implementation of these proposals at local level.

4.3 There will be key milestones in the process of moving forward this agenda and these will include:

- Developing strategies at local authority and school level which set out key milestones for activity in order to meet the standards;
- Setting up school consultative and development groups including parents, pupils, teachers, caterers and governors to agree policies and timescales;
- Auditing dining room and kitchen premises/equipment to plan for facilities which are fit for purpose;
- Removing all confectionery, pre-packaged savoury snacks and carbonated drinks (except water) from school premises by September 2008;
- Utilising a national analysis software package for menu development to meet nutrient standards and for self-monitoring;
- Auditing school caterer skills and implementing training to meet their needs;
- Putting in place reporting mechanisms for monitoring the standards

School Catering

4.4 There are several approaches adopted by schools for procuring catering services:

- opting into a service level agreement or contract organised by their local authority with catering then provided by a local authority in-house provider or by a private sector contractor;
- employing their own staff directly to deliver the catering service;
- tendering their catering individually or as a group to a private sector contractor or a local authority in-house provider.
- Private Finance Initiative (PFI). These contracts are in operation in some authorities with differing arrangements. The Catering is normally included as part of the Facilities Management (FM) element of the contract which is then either sub contracted to the in house caterer by the FM provider; or awarded to an external company by the FM provider. The service in some but not all cases is monitored by the Local Authority.

4.5 Concerns have been raised by a number of caterers regarding problems that may occur when attempting to raise the nutritional content of school meals when the catering service has been contracted out to PFI. Such contract details will be different from one local authority to another, as each contract has been individually negotiated. However, the vast majority of PFI contracts have to comply with legislation as key terms of the contract, and PFI service providers therefore have to meet the local authority's legal obligations in relation to nutritional standards at any particular time. The Group agreed that local authorities who contract out their catering service need to take legal advice from their in-house legal teams, as to the terms of the existing contract and the enforceability of higher standards on PFI Contractors, should the Welsh Assembly Government decide in the event to impose higher nutritional standards.

4.6 The style of service also differs between primary and secondary schools. Broadly, the picture is:

- Primary schools generally offer a pre-paid set-price, two course, set meal with some limited additional choice in each course which can be:
 - prepared from fresh seasonal ingredients, or recognised suitable alternatives such as frozen or pre prepared potatoes and vegetables;
 - regenerated (i.e. meals are prepared and frozen off site to pre agreed specification which are then cooked in combination ovens and finished at point of service) where there is no kitchen and space allows;
 - cooked in a local school or production kitchen and transported hot to a school with no kitchen.
- Secondary schools generally have a kitchen on site where a cash cafeteria service is offered from one of more outlets with items priced individually.

4.7 The Working Group proposes that the implementation of new school meals standards from September 2008 should be followed by a one-year implementation period (2008-2009) in primary schools, and a two year implementation period (2008-2010) in secondary schools. By the end of these periods, schools would be expected to be meeting the new standards in full.

4.8 By September 2008, schools must meet all of the food standards in Table 2 (Annex B) across the whole day. This means that schools must:

- remove all drinks, confectionery, and pre-packaged savoury snacks which do not meet the standards and not allow others to sell such items on school grounds.
- not serve reformed/reconstituted foods made from “meat slurry” and should not provide processed foods which do not meet the Food Standards Agency’s voluntary Target Nutrient Specifications for manufactured products used in school meals, though the group recognises that meeting these specifications will require some product development and therefore may take longer; and
- ensure that lunches meet the standards for fruit and vegetables (not less than two portions per day); oily fish (at least once every two weeks); deep fried products (no more than two per week); bread (unrestricted throughout lunch); and water (freely available).

Proposal 14: Once the proposals in this report are agreed, implementation should commence with all schools achieving the new standards according to the timetable outlined in this report.

Professional development and training

4.9 The Working Group fully recognises that fundamental to the delivery of these challenging changes is a well trained and motivated work force. Both catering staff and managers need to feel and be a valued part of their school communities. Their professional development and training plans need to verify their level of competence and identify the new skills required to deliver with confidence the changing service.

4.10 In England, People 1st are currently conducting an assessment of the skills, needs and availability of appropriate qualifications for school catering staff on behalf of the Food Standards Agency and the Department for Education & Skills. They will identify gaps and make recommendations on developments required such as additional training qualifications, and evaluate the effectiveness of the ‘Level 1 VRQ ‘Providing a Healthier School Meals Service’. Consideration needs to be given to the work being undertaken by People 1st in taking forward work in Wales relating to training standards for school catering staff.

4.11 Having very carefully considered this important aspect, the Working Group believe that the following minimum training standards need to be applied. This would support existing training such as that for food hygiene:-

- All catering staff **should complete**:
 - Stage 1 training which would encompass food safety, knife skills, vegetable and fruit preparation and cooking methods and the basic principles of healthy eating which impact on nutrition including portion control.
- All supervisors, cooks and assistant cooks should undertake:
 - Stage 2 training which should cover craft skills in preparing recipe dishes including meat, fish, vegetarian, salads and sauces.
- Heads of kitchens, deputies and those who wish to develop further skills should undertake
 - Stage 3 training which should encompass supervisory food safety, menu planning, marketing and customer care skills as well as more advanced craft skills.
 - The Head of kitchen (at the very least) is recommended to undertake an appropriate nutritional qualification encompassing practical use of the standards.
- Catering Management
 - Skills to use the standards correctly, analyse menus, and advise their school based staff appropriately.
- Training courses should be regularly reviewed to ensure they are appropriate to meet the needs of the employees and enable them to understand and share the principles.
- Detailed training records should be maintained.

4.12 The Working Group consider that in order to ensure that auditable standards are achieved which can be monitored nationally, it will be necessary to agree accredited training courses with the current catering providers to enable consistency.

Proposal 15: Catering staff are central to the whole school approach. Their practical skills should be valued and utilised to the full, and they should be represented on groups like School Nutrition Action Groups and links made with School Councils.

Proposal 16: Caterers should over a period of two years conduct a needs analysis (knowledge & skills, equipment, preparation time).

Proposal 17: The Welsh Assembly Government, in partnership with key stakeholders, should ensure that a list of approved courses and trainers is produced and give consideration to further developing a recognised training standard for school caterers, including training to ensure they are able to support pupils in making healthy choices.

Educating our children to eat more healthily

4.13 It is not simply enough to provide healthy food if children reject it out of a desire to eat more familiar foods. They must be supported to develop tastes for a wide range of foods as part of a whole-school approach to food and nutrition. Schools have a key role to play in re-educating children to eat healthier. However, the Working Group recognise that the majority of children's food and nutrient intake will come from the home and that parents have a significant role to play in monitoring their children's diet and weight and influencing their eating habits and lifestyles. Again, it believes strongly that the Welsh Assembly Government must urgently address this wider issue.

4.14 To enable schools to develop and implement a coherent approach to food and nutrition in schools the Working Group feels strongly that there is a need for all schools to produce a whole-school policy. This will provide a focus for the policies and activities a school undertakes to take forward this agenda and should be developed in partnership with key stakeholders. In developing such a policy schools should also give consideration to the importance of tooth brushing. The guidance for operating the primary school free breakfast initiative already includes a section on 'dental issues'.

4.15 The Working Group recognises that Governing Bodies in understanding their role and responsibilities in this area will need advice and guidance from the Welsh Assembly Government; this could take the form of written guidance supported by an interactive DVD.

Proposal 18: All schools should be required to write, publish and implement a whole-school food policy in partnership with key stakeholders.

Proposal 19: As part of the whole school approach schools should:

- **Ensure consistent standards are maintained for all food served on site which are reinforced through the delivery of the curriculum;**
- **Consider the length and timetabling of lunch breaks to allow adequate time for pupils to select and eat meals in a civilised environment with a minimum of queuing and enable staff (catering and supervisory) time to influence choices;**

Proposal 19 (continued)

- **Ensure midday supervisors have access to training so that they can play an active part in encouraging and supporting pupils to make healthy choices and try new foods.**
- **Ensure there is a clear policy on water in school to ensure easy access to free, preferably chilled drinking water and education of pupils in the classroom on the importance of fluid consumption in their daily diet.**

Proposal 20: The Welsh Assembly Government should develop guidance for Governors on their role and responsibility in taking forward a whole school approach to food and nutrition.

4.16 Fundamental to the re-educative process is the curriculum. The areas that appear to be making the greatest contribution to delivering better eating habits are Personal & Social Education (PSE), Design and Technology (D&T), Physical Education (PE) and Science.

4.17 It is acknowledged that in order to support the delivery of this element of the school curriculum, ACCAC has developed guidance entitled *Food in the School Curriculum in Wales, ACCAC, 2001* to assist schools in developing their teaching and learning and to help them recognise standards and expectations in the school curriculum, and there is a commitment to update this guidance.

4.18 Following the merger of the Welsh Assembly Government with ACCAC and other ASPBs on 1 April 2006, the Welsh Assembly Government will be drawing together proposals for revised Programmes of Study for National Curriculum subjects. The proposals will be subject to consultation in 2007, with a view to implementing the revised Programmes of Study from September 2008. The Food and Fitness Action Plan notes the position of healthy living, food and physical activity in the school curriculum, which will be considered as part of the curriculum review.

4.19 The Working Group is strongly of the opinion that practical cookery skills and an understanding of nutrition, healthy eating and food safety are all essential life skills for our children and young people. For many children, schools provide the only opportunity that they have to learn to prepare healthier food for themselves. Many parents do not necessarily have these skills and are not in a position - through constraints on time, financial resources etc - to provide their children with a grounding in basic food preparation and cooking techniques. With this in mind the Working Group feel that there is a need for more focus in the curriculum on these areas as opposed to other less practical aspects of D & T such as designing food products. The consultation on the proposals for revised Programmes of Study for National Curriculum subjects provides an excellent opportunity to consider the position of healthy living, food and physical activity in the school curriculum.

4.20 It is also considered that schools should be encouraged to take food education, including food safety extremely seriously. This could include growing food in the school grounds, which could complement provision in the curriculum or, as an after school activity, and by visiting farms and forming links with local food producers.

Proposal 21: The Welsh Assembly Government proposals for revised National Curriculum Programmes of Study should provide for consultation on the position of healthy living, food and physical activity in the school curriculum.

Proposal 22: Schools should consider how cookery skills and food production in the curriculum might be supported and complemented by extra curricular activities for pupils and/or parents.

Free school meals

4.21 School meals and the provision of free school meals in particular, are an important aspect of the Welsh Assembly Government's antipoverty strategy. A sizeable percentage of children do not take up the free school meals they are entitled to, and it is recognised that entitlement does not always extend to all families who are on low incomes who receive Working Tax Credit. In the January 2005 Welsh Assembly Government's Pupil Level Annual Census, primary and secondary schools reported that 63,000 of the 81,500 pupils (77%) entitled to free school meals took a meal on Census Day (81% of those entitled to free meals in primary schools and 72% in secondary schools).

4.22 To ensure equality across Wales, the free meal benefit should be of the same quality and quantity for all families, regardless of where they live, and local authorities should work to achieve full take-up. In deprived areas where the majority of meals served are free, these set the quality for the whole service. There are still a significant number of children not taking up their free school meal entitlement and the Working Group are of the opinion that schools and local authorities need to be proactive in developing strategies to increase the numbers taking up their free meal entitlement with the aim of complete take-up. This could include measures such as introducing cashless systems to help address the stigma attached to free school meals.

Proposal 23: Schools and local authorities should:

- **aim for complete take-up of free school meal entitlement; and**
- **undertake an energetic marketing campaign to maximise uptake of school meals by the end of the implementation period.**

Smart Card

4.23 As part of the overall ability of schools to organise its meals, it is acknowledged that greater efficiency and effectiveness can be achieved through the application of the latest technology, including cashless systems. Evidence suggests that an increasing number of LEAs and schools are either seriously considering or already operating a cashless system in terms of the delivery of school meals and snacks. This is partly due to the efficiency gains it provides but also, importantly, allows the de-stigmatisation of those who are the beneficiaries of free school meals. The Working Group believes that this is an approach that should be extended to all LEAs and schools across Wales.

4.24 Already the Welsh Assembly Government has been giving serious consideration to ICT that would support improved service provision across different public services including school meals. Ministers have endorsed feasibility and scoping studies recommending a national infrastructure for a multi-application citizen smartcard in Wales. The next stage is development of a business case based on the scoping study which would include schools services (such as schools meals) in the first phase of deployment.

4.25 Following the completion of the business case the Welsh Assembly Government will make decisions on how it proposes to act in support of the application of smartcard technology in the Welsh public service.

4.26 In addition, the Working Group believe that further efficiencies can be achieved by giving serious consideration to the use of ICT to allow parents and children to both pre-order and pre-pay on line. Since research shows that a very high proportion of households with children have access to such technology, it is recommended that further work should take place to develop viable solutions that can be rolled out on an all Wales basis.

Proposal 24: The Welsh Assembly Government in partnership with key stakeholders should undertake further work to consider and develop viable alternative cashless solutions for school meals that can be rolled out on an all Wales basis. This should be linked with the ongoing national citizen smartcard infrastructure work.

Marketing

4.27 Jamie Oliver's "*Food for Thought*" Campaign highlighted the importance of a effective and targeted marketing strategy. Although the profile of school meals was raised, it was more on the negative aspects of the provision rather than recognising the good work that was being done. The Working Group believe there is a need to build public confidence in school meal provision through developing an effective marketing and communication strategy. Partnership working between the Welsh Assembly Government and key stakeholders is essential.

Proposal 25: The Welsh Assembly Government should work with Local Authorities and schools to develop a marketing and communication campaign at national and local level to promote the benefits of the service.

Proposal 26: Schools and caterers should work together with appropriate partners to provide easily accessible information on the healthier menus to both pupils and parents, and market these to encourage take-up.

Sustainability and Procurement

5.1 The main focus of the Working Group has been to recommend what form nutritional standards for school lunches should take in the future and the use of healthy vending machines, fruit tuck shops etc in supporting the delivery of these revised standards. Nutritional content should be the prime consideration for local authorities and schools when purchasing food for schools however the Working Group recognises that sustainability and procurement are also important considerations.

5.2 The public sector in Wales spends almost £4 billion every year buying goods and services. Embedding sustainable development principles into all procurement in Wales will help deliver the vision of a sustainable Wales that will have substantial benefits for our communities, the economy, the environment, health and culture.

5.3 Section 121(1) of the Government of Wales Act 1998 requires the National Assembly to “make a Scheme setting out how it proposes, in the exercise of its functions, to promote sustainable development in all its functions”.

5.4 The *Sustainable Development Action Plan 2004-2007*²⁰ sets out how the Welsh Assembly Government will implement the commitments in the Sustainable Development Scheme *Starting to Live Differently*.²¹

Changing food procurement to deliver sustainable development and health gains

5.5 The public sector in Wales spends some £60 million, around 2% of our total spend, on food each year of which nearly £20 million is on fresh food. As large-scale purchasers of food in Wales, particularly for schools and hospitals, the public sector has a significant role to play in shifting consumption and production onto a more sustainable footing through the creation of markets and the shaping of supply chains.

5.6 There is already a great deal of action in hand particularly through the Value Wales pathfinder project who have produced public sector guidance on how to encourage local and more nutritious supply chains. A number of case studies developed through the SME Food Development pathfinder projects are having a direct impact on food provision in schools for example:

- Pembrokeshire County Council’s “putting some thought into food” pilot;
- Carmarthenshire County Council’s Schools Meals Nutrition Strategy.
- RCT Council’s “Lamb for lunch school meal” pilot
- Caerphilly’s Farmers Pilot

²⁰ <http://www.wales.gov.uk/themessustainabledev/content/action-plan-e.pdf>

²¹ <http://www.wales.gov.uk/themessustainabledev/content/review/sustainable-dev-e.pdf>

5.7 There are clear benefits to working collaboratively on specific procurement projects including reduction of costs and improved efficiencies, avoiding duplication of effort, simplified processes for suppliers, shared distribution arrangements, sharing best practice and exchanging ideas. Given the scale of the procurement of food for schools across Wales the Working Group are of the opinion that this area has great potential to maximise the benefits of collaborative working be it nationally or regionally.

5.8 The Value Wales Food Group has already identified a number of commodities as appropriate areas for collaboration. Initial research with a small sub-group has been undertaken to establish products and volumes and this will now be widened to cover other interested organisations.

5.9 While greater efficiencies, especially in distribution costs that may be obtained through collaborative contracts, this does not always assist the smaller more local suppliers. To overcome this, Value Wales encourages the breaking down of contracts into components to encourage Small Medium Enterprises (SME's) to tender. The Working Group recognise that not all commodities lend themselves to collaborative tendering for a number of reasons including local supply issues and bespoke delivery/distribution arrangements. Therefore, a greater emphasis on local supply chain development is recommended for some types of food and a greater emphasis on collaborative procurement projects for others.

5.10 In order to measure and manage public sector expenditure, it is necessary to break this down to identify the food products organisations are buying and from whom. This will assist in identifying high spend areas which may benefit from collaboration, which food which is best sourced locally, which SMEs and distributors are being used and establish contract start/end dates so that contract mapping can be developed.

5.11 With more organisations now utilising local supply chains, Welsh suppliers could play an increased role in supplying the public sector, both inside and outside Wales. Research has shown that SMEs have struggled to tender effectively for public sector contracts primarily due to a lack of awareness of tender opportunities and contact points and the volume of paperwork relating to tenders. Positive steps have been taken to effectively develop and support SME participation - both at a local level and a national level through the work of the Business Procurement Taskforce.

All Wales approach to supplier audits/due diligence

5.12 Public sector organisations supplying food have a legal obligation to comply with the Food Safety Act 1990, and all food safety legislation. Public sector organisations also have a responsibility for effective due diligence to ensure the quality and compliance of their suppliers. Food safety must be paramount in the procurement of food for schools.

5.13 Some local authorities are working directly with local producers and farmers, implementing 'farm to fork' initiatives such as school visits and

children working in school gardens and vegetable plots where they grow their own produce. This increases children's awareness and appreciation of food and how it is produced. In line with good food procurement practice, purchasers need to ensure that due diligence checks are undertaken to satisfy themselves that the food is safe and the premises from which the food is supplied has the necessary high standard required fulfilling their legal requirements under the Food Safety Act 1990.

5.14 Purchasers may wish to also take into account ethical supply chains, especially where food is being sourced from the Third World and an appreciation of the issues relating to Fair Trade concepts should form part of the evaluation of bids for contracts.

Proposal 27: Local authorities and other catering providers should carry out a review of their existing arrangements for food packaging and waste to identify areas which need attention. Positive action should then be taken to address the issues and make improvements.

Proposal 28: Schools should aim to

- purchase materials from sustainable sources that are made from recycled materials and are biodegradable
- recycle packaging materials as appropriate.

Proposal 29: Local authorities and other catering providers should adopt a more co-ordinated approach to food procurement in discussion with Value Wales and develop and improve specifications for products which satisfy nutrient standards.

Proposal 30: Catering specifications and menu planning should give greater emphasis to sustainability, seasonality and local procurement, whilst ensuring food safety.

Financial Investment

6.1 In proposing changes to the nutritional standards for school meals, the Working Group has given careful consideration to the possible resource and cost implications of introducing these changes.

Background

6.2 Since April 2000 LEAs in Wales have delegated funding for school meals to all secondary schools and may also delegate funding for school meals to primary and special schools if they wish. Where a school has a delegated budget for meals, the school governing body takes on much the same responsibility as the LEA in connection with their provision. Schools with delegated budgets are free to buy back into LEA catering services if they want. Through the school meals contract, responsibility for day to day provision is discharged to the service provider, however the provision of school meals still remains the responsibility of the body letting the contract (i.e. the LEA or school governing body).

6.3 The cost of school meals is currently met through a combination of expenditure by local authorities, schools, parents and carers. The costs of free school meals are met by schools (all secondaries; some primaries and specials) or local authorities (remaining primaries and specials). The recurrent funding that local authorities receive from Government reflects levels of deprivation; and an individual school's share of the local authority schools budget typically takes free school meals' numbers into account.

Baseline Data

6.4 To help inform this work the Working Group set up a small sub group specifically to look at baseline data. This work reinforced the fact that the information available on the position across Wales on the provision of school meals, including the amount of funding spent on ingredients for them is very patchy and not collected on a consistent or comparable basis.

6.5 This can be illustrated from the information gathered by the sub group from ten local authorities across Wales where the cost of ingredients for a primary school meal ranged from 40.5p to 53.1p. In comparing these figures, however it is important to recognise that there are a range of variables such as ingredient costs being dependent to some extent on the location of schools to be supplied and on the size of the contract. It is recognised, therefore that the information needs to be considered as part of a much broader picture as ingredient costs only form one part of the cost of providing a school meal.

6.6 There are also other costs such as labour; training; cleaning; and administration costs that need to be taken into account in arriving at a gross cost per meal. It is not currently clear how the price of a school meal relates to the gross cost of providing that meal. These calculations are

extremely complex and the sub group felt that further work was needed to determine exactly what and how information needed to be collected in the future. It is understood from discussions with representatives of the School Meals Review Panel in England that this was an area they also identified as requiring further work.

6.7 To complement this information there is also a need for the Welsh Assembly Government to revisit the information currently collected through the annual school census on school meals and to look at the possibility of including schools meal data in the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC).

Proposal 31: Local authorities should consider exploring ways to improve transparency and accountability in relation to how much they spend on school meals through the operation and financial management of the school meal service.

Proposal 32: Welsh Assembly Government should require all local authorities to conduct an audit of need of buildings, equipment and facilities for the delivery of catering services in order to prioritise local authority spending programmes.

Investing in school meals

6.8 The Working Group acknowledges that many local authorities have already made improvements to their school meal service. In terms of moving towards the nutrient and food based standards proposed in this report schools and local authorities' will all be at different starting points and as a consequence the transition will obviously be greater for some than others. A number of factors need to be taken into account including: the facilities available - equipment, kitchen, canteen, appropriately trained staff, hours required to prepare the meals and so on.

6.9 To put precise figures on the cost of the transition to the nutrient and food based standards in this report is extremely difficult especially in the absence of good quality baseline data. That said the Working Group took the view that the investment was likely to be not insignificant if we are to successfully achieve the required transformation and develop even higher standards.

6.10 To assist the Working Group in arriving at broad estimates of the level of additional funding needed to implement the new nutrient and food based standards comparisons are made the level of investment in Scotland and England.

6.11 It is understood that of the £63.5 million allocated in Scotland over the 3 years (2003-2005), £14 million was distributed to local authorities in the first year, £21 million in the second and £24 million in the third.

A further £4.5 million was retained centrally for evaluation and central support. On a proportionate basis (60%), for Wales this would give a total indicative cost of around £38 million over three years with £8.4 million in the first year, £12.6 million in the second year, £14.4 million in the third year together with a further £2.7 million retained centrally. In December 2005, a further three year package (2006-2008) of funding for Hungry for Success of more than £70 million was announced to allow local authorities to continue the work they have started with the initial investment.

6.12 The announcement in England on 30 March 2005 pledged £220 million over 3 years for funding grants to schools and LEAs to transform school meals. It also promised £60 million centrally, from a combination of Big Lottery and DfES funding, for a School Food Trust. Providing this level of support in Wales on a proportionate basis (6.1%) would give total costs of around £17 million over 3 years.

6.13 Using the English and Scottish budget figures this provides a level of investment ranging from £17 million - £38 million over a three year period. The Working Group also anticipates that there would need to be some annual investment after the initial three year period.

6.14 Pricewaterhouse Coopers was commissioned in July 2005 by DfES to estimate the additional costs associated with the implementation of the Caroline Walker Trust Guidelines in England. The additional cost of implementing CWT recommendations in England over three years excluding refurbishment costs was quoted as being in the range of £476 million to £493 million. The total cost at primary and secondary level including refurbishment in the first year was estimated to be £453-459 million and £156-£161 million per annum thereafter. Again, on a proportionate basis this would produce a total cost of around £28 million (including refurbishment) for the first year and £10 million per annum thereafter.

6.15 In considering this scale of investment in Wales, the Working Group were conscious that it could not automatically describe the source of this additional investment, and the Welsh Assembly Government since, because of the absence of robust financial data, could not be certain of what capacity already exists within the wider system. It does however strongly recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government should consider the opportunities that will become available from 2007 onwards under the Structural Funds. If successful this could add to the level of investment that might otherwise be available.

Proposal 33: Schools and local authorities should aim to reach the highest standards and kitchens especially should be a priority in all schools' capital investment programmes.

Proposal 34: The Welsh Assembly Government should in consultation with local authorities recognise their respective obligations to provide appropriate financial support for the implementation of these proposals.

Proposal 35: Local level discussions should recognise the need for adequate investment and the desirability of phased, as opposed to sudden, price increases in school meals to parents.

Monitoring and Evaluation

7.1 The ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the current national nutritional standards are met rests with the Local Education Authority or, if they have delegated the budget for school meals, with the school governing body. Although the guidance issued by the National Assembly for Wales 'Nutritional Standards for School Lunches Circular No: 03/2003' includes some advice on monitoring nutritional standards, the Working Group took the view that that this is too general and there is a need to strengthen and formalise monitoring systems for school meals.

7.2 The absence of consistent and comparable baseline data also reinforces the need to establish a national management information system for school food. This will streamline data and provide central monitoring of performance. There is also a need to evaluate the information and data collected locally and nationally to assess the overall impact of the standards.

7.3 The Working Group in formulating these proposals also highlighted two other issues that need to be addressed:

- self monitoring, where caterers, school leaders, and governing bodies do their own monitoring
- external monitoring, where external agencies check on the progress schools have made to achieve the standards.

Self Monitoring

7.4 To achieve the nutrient standards set out in this report, caterers will need to concentrate on planning menus which incorporate a high proportion of nutrient-dense foods. There will be no place for foods which provide little other than calories. The food based standards and accompanying guidance within this report are all designed to make it easier for caterers to fulfil the nutrient standards for provision. If caterers are meeting all the food-based standards and following the guidance it is very likely they will be meeting the nutrient standards for provision.

7.5 Catering providers will be required to produce evidence that the combinations of foods they serve meet the nutritional standards. There are a variety of methods for doing this including the use of computer analysis software. The Working Group has, earlier in this report, proposed that the Welsh Assembly Government should procure software to analyse menus which can be accessed on an all Wales basis. The specification for this software should include a facility to enable caterers to produce regular standard reports on school lunches.

7.6 Schools also have a key role to play in monitoring the food served on site. The Working Group proposes that all schools should be required to write, publish and implement a whole-school food policy in partnership with key stakeholders.

Proposal 36: Caterers should produce regular standard reports on school lunches through the software provided by Welsh Assembly Government.

Proposal 37: A national database should be established in order to assess progress towards delivery of the proposals related to other school food. The precise nature of the data required will require further work to ensure good coverage without duplication of effort.

Proposal 38: Headteachers should report regularly to school governors on progress in meeting the objectives set out in their whole school food policy. Governors should then include this information in their annual report to parents.

External Monitoring

7.7 The Working Group in considering Estyn's role in monitoring school meal standards in Wales have looked at developments proposed in Scotland (Hungry for Success) and England (Turning the Tables) that envisage a wider role for inspection in the monitoring of school meal standards.

7.8 In broad terms the Working Group believe that Estyn's role should be three fold:

- Commenting in inspection reports about the school's general approach to healthy eating and food, including the standard of school lunches. This could be reported in Key Question 4 'How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?'
- Undertaking a separate and specifically-focused survey accompanied by nutritionists, to a smaller sample of schools. This will allow more detailed reporting on the standard of food provided and consumed in schools.
- As part of the inspection of local authorities' education services commenting on how well local authorities ensure that food and nutritional standards are met.

7.9 Scotland and England have already undertaken surveys in this area. In Scotland, in October 2005 HM Inspectorate of Education produced a report '*Monitoring the implementation of Hungry for Success: A whole school approach to school meals in Scotland*'²², describing progress up to June 2005 in implementing the key recommendations and underlying principles set out in the Hungry for Success report. A further report on progress will be produced in 2007, which will include progress with implementation in secondary schools.

²² <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/hmiemihs.pdf>

7.10 In March 2006, Ofsted published their report *'Healthy eating in schools'*²³ which is their response to the increasing public concern about the quality of children's diets, rapidly increasing rates of child obesity and diet-related diseases, and low consumption of fruit and vegetables by children. This report assesses how schools have responded to guidance on school meals and healthier eating. It uses case studies as examples of how schools have improved pupils' healthier eating and the quality of school meals.

7.11 In introducing a comment in the inspection reports of individual schools, Estyn will need to provide additional guidance to inspectors. This guidance will also help schools to evaluate their own provision.

7.12 In undertaking a survey, Estyn would need to link the findings to the objectives of the standards and identify the improvements that would be needed in order to help schools achieve the standards fully. To adopt a similar approach to that in Scotland and England, Estyn would also crucially need the support of nutritionists.

Proposal 39: The Welsh Assembly Government to seek initial advice from Estyn on the extent to which current inspections consider the standards of school lunches. Beyond this, separate advice should be sought on the potential to mirror in Wales developments proposed in Scotland and England that envisage a wider role for inspection in the monitoring of school meal standards.

National Evaluation of Standards

7.13 In addition to internal and external monitoring, it will be important to assess the overall impact of the introduction of these standards. They have the potential to effect on a range of issues including:

- Food and drinks provision in schools;
- Catering practice;
- Eating patterns and the nutritional intake of pupils taking school lunches;
- Numbers of children taking school lunches including free school meals.
- The involvement of pupils in changes to catering, and the degree to which they have accepted these
- Educational performance and the classroom behaviour of pupils in schools;
- Catering costs and revenue.

7.14 The Working Group believe that there are currently significant gaps in the amount of data available and it will be important for the Welsh Assembly Government to draw up an evaluation plan which sets out what information should be collected, by whom and when, in order to obtain the best evaluative picture possible.

²³ <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/hmiemihs.pdf>

Proposal 40: The Welsh Assembly Government should consider undertaking, at appropriate intervals, a Wales-wide evaluation of school food provision to assess the types of foods and drinks available, their uptake and their nutrient contribution to the overall diet.

Proposal 41: The standards should be reviewed by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2011. At this time, the standards should be applied to food consumption as well as food provision.

Food in Schools Working Group

Terms of Reference

The main role of this group will be to take an holistic overview of school meals and in particular advise the Welsh Assembly Government on the extent to which more stringent nutritional standards are introduced; with the aim of delivering a reduction in pupils' consumption of saturated fats, salt and sugar and an increase in the consumption of fruit, vegetables and other foods containing essential nutrients.

In taking forward this work the group will:

- recommend what form nutritional standards for schools should take in the future;
- consider the introduction of nutrient-based nutritional standards, using the Caroline Walker Trust guidelines as a starting point;
- consider developments in Scotland (Hungry for Success) and England (School Meals Review Panel)
- consider the use of healthy vending machines, fruit tuck shops etc in supporting the delivery of revised nutritional guidelines
- establish links with WLGA Working Group and other groups undertaking complementary areas of work
- advise on the extent to which choice should be restricted and the benefits of doing so; including restricting, eliminating or banning certain types of food or food ingredients from school meals;
- advise on the costs and benefits of specifying proportions of fresh/unprocessed food;
- consider the impact on existing contract arrangements when considering the timeframe for introducing change;
- consider the possible resource and cost implications of introducing changes to the nutritional standards;
- contribute to the development of a Food in Schools Action Plan.

It is anticipated that the Group will exist for a maximum of 12 months and aim to meet monthly (from September 2005) during that period.

The review of the Nutritional Standards for School Lunches needs to be completed by the 30 April 2006. The next stage will be to contribute towards the development of a Food in Schools Action Plan.

The meeting will be chaired by Alan Lansdown, Head of Pupil Support Division, Department for Training & Education, Welsh Assembly Government who is the lead official managing this crosscutting initiative. The Assembly will provide the secretariat for this Group.

Food in Schools Working Group - Membership

Member	Organisation
Alan Lansdown (Chair)	Pupil Support Division, Welsh Assembly Government
Joy Whinney	Food Standards Agency Wales
Anne Bull	Local Authority Caterers Association (LACA)
Sue Eakers	Local Authority Caterers Association (LACA)
Chris Smith	Local Authority Caterers Association (LACA)
Carol Davies	Local Authority Caterers Association (LACA)
Joe Harvey	Caroline Walker Trust
Jenny Jones	All Wales Dietetic Advisory Committee (AWDAC)
Lynne Perry	Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes
Daisy Seabourne	Welsh Local Government Association
Kevin Morgan	Soil Association (Representative)
Elinor Plow	Welsh Food Alliance
Shan Williams	National Public Health Service
Andrew Manley	Welsh Primary Schools Association (WPSA)
Rev Tim Williams	Welsh Secondary Schools Association (WSSA)
Jane Morris	Governors Wales
Cath Power	Diocesan Schools Commission
Karen Coombs/ Gwenda Raybould	Value Wales, Welsh Assembly Government
Sue Bowker	Health Promotion Division, Welsh Assembly Government
Maureen Howell	Health Promotion Division, Welsh Assembly Government
Ruth Conway	Pupil Support Division, Welsh Assembly Government
Llion Hughes	Pupil Support Division, Welsh Assembly Government
Jane Powell	Organic Centre Wales

Tables

Table 1: Summary of recommended Nutrient based standards for school lunches in Wales, for children and young people aged 5-18

This table summarises the proportion of nutrients that children and young people should receive from a school lunch. The figures are for the recommended nutrient content of an average lunch over five consecutive school days.

Nutrient Standards	
Energy	30% of the estimated average requirement (EAR) This standard is linked to the recommendation that schools need to promote healthy levels of physical activity
Protein	Not less than 30% of reference nutrient intake (RNI)
Total carbohydrate	Not less than 50% of food energy
Non-milk extrinsic sugars	Not more than 11% of food energy
Fat	Not more than 35% of food energy
Saturated fat	Not more than 11% of food energy
Fibre	Not less than 30% of the calculated reference value Note: calculated as Non Starch Polysaccharides
Sodium	Not more than 30% of the SACN recommendation
Vitamin A	Not less than 40% of the RNI
Vitamin C	Not less than 40% of the RNI
Folate	Not less than 40% of the RNI
Calcium	Not less than 40% of the RNI
Iron	Not less than 40% of the RNI
Zinc	Not less than 40% of the RNI

EAR = Estimated Average Requirement - the average amount of energy or nutrients needed by a group of people. Half the population will have needs greater than this, and half will be below this amount

RNI = Reference Nutrient Intake - the amount of a nutrient which is enough to meet the dietary requirements of about 97% of a group of people

SACN = Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

Table 2 : Summary of recommended food standards for school lunches in Wales

Food Standards	
Fruit and vegetables	Not less than 2 portions per day per child. This should provide a variety of fruits, vegetables and salads over the 5 day period
Oily fish	On the school lunch menu at least once every two weeks
Deep fried products	Meals should not contain more than two deep fried products in a single week
Manufactured meat products ¹	Should not be reformed/reconstituted foods made from "meat slurry"
Bread (without spread)	Available unrestricted throughout lunch. A variety of breads should be encouraged including wholemeal bread
Confectionery and savoury snacks	Not available
Salt	Not added to vegetables during cooking. Restrict or remove salt from recipes and replace with appropriate and acceptable herbs and spices. Not available at lunch tables or at the service counter
Drinks	The only drinks available should be water (still or carbonated), pure fruit juices, diluted pure fruit juices, semi-skimmed milk, milk drinks with less than 5% added sugar, or combinations of these (e.g. smoothies)
Water	Easy access to free, fresh, potable, preferably chilled drinking water

¹ Schools should also aim to adopt the Food Standard Agency's voluntary Target Nutrient Specifications for manufactured foods.

Table 3: Average daily nutrient intakes which menus should supply for lunches over a period of 1 week for groups of mixed gender children in primary and secondary schools.

Max or Min value	Primary Pupils 5-11 years		Secondary Pupils 11-18 years
Energy kcals	557		646
Fat g	MAX	21.6	25.2
Saturated fat g	MAX	6.8	7.9
Total carbohydrate g	MIN	74.2	86.1
Non-milk extrinsic sugars g	MAX	16.3	18.9
Fibre g	MIN	4.5	5.2
Protein g	MIN	8.5	13.3
Iron mg	MIN	3.5	5.9
Zinc mg	MIN	2.8	3.7
Calcium mg	MIN	220	400
Vitamin A µg	MIN	200	250
Vitamin C mg	MIN	12	14.6
Folate µg	MIN	60	80
Sodium mg	MAX	600	710

There are separate figures for single sex secondary schools which have been calculated in the Caroline Walker Trust's Nutritional Guidelines.

Table 4: Example menu for primary school children which would meet the Nutrient based Standards

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunch	Salmon Fishcakes Jacket wedges Peas and sweetcorn Fruit Salad Water	Chicken and broccoli lasagne Baguette Cucumber and carrot sticks Yoghurt and fresh fruit Water	Roast lamb in minted gravy Roast potatoes Carrots and French beans Apple and blackberry crumble Water	Spaghetti bolognese Mixed salad Apricot condé Water	Homemade cheese and tomato pizza Curried rice salad Mixed raw vegetable platter Fruit Squares Water
Lunch (vegetarian)	Baked bean lasagne Baguette Carrot and cucumber sticks Banana and chocolate brownie Water	Homemade pizza Potato wedges Coleslaw Green and red pepper slices Ice cream with canned fruit Oat cookies Water	Vegetable curry Basmati rice Lentil dahl Chapati Greek yoghurt with pears Water	Vegetarian spaghetti bolognese Mixed sauce Jellied fruit salad Water	Mexican beans New potatoes Broccoli florets Sweetcorn Apple cinnamon crumble and custard Water

Menu based on Caroline Walker Trust Guidelines

Table 5: Example menu for secondary school children which would meet the Nutrient based Standards

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunch (cooked)	Beef curry Brown rice Lentil dahl Fruit salad and crème fraîche Milk	Homemade tuna pizza Jacket potato Baked beans Jelly yoghurt whip with fruit Milk	Spicy chicken casserole Noodles Green beans Steamed fruit pudding and custard Milk	Cowboy hotpot Boiled new potatoes Broccoli florets Spiced apple cake Milk	Salmon fishcakes Chips Carrots and peas Ice cream and fruit Milk
Lunch (vegetarian, cooked)	Vegetable and chickpea curry Chapati Lentil dahl Fresh fruit platter Milk	Lentil and tomato quiche Jacket potato Mixed salads Apple brown Betty Milk	Caribbean vegetable casserole Rice and peas Banana custard Milk	Three bean lasagne Broccoli spears Fruit mousse Milk	Spicy vegetable burgers in wholemeal buns Baked beans Fruit square Milk
Lunch (sandwich type)	Onion bagel Egg salad Watercress Apricot oat bar Milk	Pitta bread with corned beef and coleslaw Celery Cherry Tomatoes Greek yoghurt with raisins Milk	Tortilla wrap with smoked mackerel and sweetcorn Three bean salad Dutch apple tart Milk	Burger buns with homemade lentil or lamb burgers Raw carrot and red pepper slices Winter fruit salad Milk	Chicken tikka sandwiches on wholemeal bread Lettuce Banana and chocolate brownie Milk

Menu based on Caroline Walker Trust Guidelines

Table 6: Drinks in Secondary Schools

Drink	For	Against	Yes/No
Plain water	Hydration, neutral pH, no carbonation, no artificial sweeteners or sugar		Yes
Carbonated plain water	Hydration, pH acceptable, no artificial sweeteners or sugar		Yes
Fruit juice - should only be drunk at mealtimes	Hydration, can provide a portion of fruit, provides vitamin C, no carbonation, no artificial sweeteners or sugar	pH of less than 4.5	Yes
Fruit juice diluted with water - no sugar with at least 50% fruit juice	Hydration, can contribute to a portion of fruit, provides vitamin C, no carbonation, no artificial sweeteners or sugar	pH of less than 4.5	Yes
Semi-skimmed milk	Hydration, Provides calcium, neutral pH, no carbonation, no artificial sweeteners or sugar		Yes
Flavoured semi-skimmed milk with less than 5% added sugar	Hydration, Provides calcium, neutral pH, no carbonation, sugar at an acceptable level for milk based products		Yes
Unsweetened smoothies - should only be drunk at mealtimes	Some hydration, can provide a portion of fruit, provides vitamin C, no carbonation, no artificial sweeteners or sugar	pH of less than 4.5	Yes

Table 6: Drinks in Secondary Schools (continued)

Drink	For	Against	Yes/ No
Yoghurt drinks with less than 5% added sugar	Some hydration, good source of calcium, no carbonation, no artificial sweeteners, acceptable level of sugar, neutral pH		Yes
Carbonated drinks other than water	Hydration	Carbonated, contain sugar and or artificial sweeteners, no nutritional benefit	No
Sweetened fruit flavoured drinks	Hydration	Contain sugar and or artificial sweeteners, no nutritional benefit	No
Sweetened juice based drinks	Hydration	Contain sugar and or artificial sweeteners	No

Nutrition in Schools - Building the Evidence

Summary

What's the issue?

- In health terms, childhood and adolescence are particularly important times of life, in which many behaviours, such as eating habits, are established and are likely to be maintained into adulthood. Children over 5 years of age are beginning to take responsibility for their own food intake and so it is important that they understand the need for a healthy diet and develop good eating habits from an early age.
- Research has demonstrated the importance of giving children and young people food choice, rather than telling them what they must eat, and consulting them over plans for new initiatives - a factor that has been found to directly relate to the effectiveness of an intervention.
- School provides an ideal setting for initiatives to encourage healthy eating because it provides an environment where some level of control over access to food and drink can be achieved, and allows messages about healthy eating to be delivered in an educational context.
- As the link between food intake, behaviour, concentration and performance at school becomes more apparent it is important to look into the quality of foods that are on offer to children at school, to ensure that they are provided with the variety and balance needed to achieve their full potential.

Evidence to date

Breakfast

- Eating a healthy breakfast every morning is essential in helping children's performance at school, staying healthy and maintaining a healthy body weight. Despite being thought of as the most important meal of the day, recent surveys have revealed that a large proportion of school children regularly leave home in the morning without having had anything to eat.
- School-based breakfast schemes can meet a range of objectives around the principal aim of improving the health and well being of children: tackling children's health, education, childcare needs and social needs.
- A growing body of evidence has exposed the importance of eating a nutritious, healthy breakfast for children's education and behaviour. Participation in a school breakfast programme has been associated with enhanced nutrient intake, reduced fatigue and children who are more settled, attentive and motivated to learn.

- It has been suggested that children who regularly eat breakfast have enhanced concentration levels, improved memory and attention, score higher on tests, have better attendance and punctuality, improved problem solving abilities, visual perception and creative thinking, and have superior muscle co-ordination.

School Meals

- School meals continue to play a significant role in the diets of young people. Statutory nutritional standards were introduced in all Welsh maintained primary and secondary schools in September 2001, which require all primary and secondary schools to offer meals that can provide pupils with a balanced diet. However, research suggests that despite the fact that a wide variety of foods are on offer, the majority of pupils tend to choose the unhealthy options, such as chips. Factors influencing food choice includes a preference for the 'unhealthy' foods, cost, peer pressure, taste, food available and food quality.
- Suggestions from children and young people for increasing the consumption of healthy foods in school included: offering more fruit and healthy options and presenting them in a more appealing way; improving the quality of meals; offering a wider choice of meals; limiting unhealthy options; reviewing the price of healthy foods; introducing salad bars and providing information on the nutritional content of meals.
- On balance, although children and young people do know what healthy eating and a 'balanced diet' are, the majority do not consume a healthy diet and are not making healthy food choices.
- When food is made available at school for pupils' consumption, the type of service and range of food available should reinforce concepts learnt in the formal curriculum and enable pupils to make informed, healthy decisions.
- In addition, a recent small-scale survey of children's school lunchboxes found that the lunches were high in saturated fats, sugars and sodium, and there was a low inclusion of fruit and vegetables.

Fruit Tuck Shops

- The Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes encourages the development of fruit tuck shops in schools. A study investigating whether fruit tuck shops in primary schools are effective in increasing pupils' fruit consumption found that schools were generally positive about the fruit tuck shops and many identified benefits for the curriculum, social benefits, reduced litter and community benefits. Results found that there was no significant difference between pupils in the intervention and control schools in their intake of fruit and other snacks. However, significant differences were observed in the proportion of pupils reporting that they would use a tuck shop at their school and that they eat fruit as a snack at school 'often' or 'sometimes'. It was concluded that fruit tuck shops on their own did not have a substantial impact on the fruit intake of pupils, but they are likely to be a valuable component of any plan to increase children's fruit consumption.

Other school-based evidence

- Recent reviews have shown that a 'whole school' approach to promoting healthy eating can be effective for children and young people; young women are particularly receptive to these interventions. Successful interventions, often targeted parents and/or involved them in the intervention delivery alongside teachers/health promotion practitioners, and often combined learning about the health benefits with 'hands-on' experience (for example, in the form of food preparation and taste testing).
- Promoting healthy eating can be an integral and acceptable component of the school curriculum, although effective implementation in schools requires skills, time and support from a wide range of people. Research has demonstrated the effectiveness of increasing the availability of healthy foods in the school canteen, particularly if these are complemented by classroom-based activities to promote information on nutrition (e.g. small group discussions, peer-led activities).
- A clear relationship has also been found between what children and young people say is important and intervention effectiveness. Currently, interventions evaluated by good quality research do not always target what young people themselves see as the main barriers to healthy eating and do not always build upon what they see as the main facilitators.
- A recent review of school-based schemes that aim to improve child health concluded that most school based intervention programmes increase knowledge about nutrition, but they rarely produce significant changes in behaviour or favourable short to intermediate term health outcomes.
- To conclude, evidence suggests that interventions can raise awareness of issues relating to nutrition; specific interventions may have significant beneficial effects; some groups are more receptive to interventions than others; when designing new interventions the target group must be taken into consideration and consulted accordingly; and ultimately changes in behaviour can be very difficult to achieve, especially in the longer term. At present there appears to be insufficient good quality research evaluating the effectiveness of interventions to promote healthy eating, particularly in the UK.

What is happening in Wales?

- The following Assembly Government school-based evaluations have recently been undertaken or are ongoing across Wales;
 - **Free breakfast for primary school children**, the focus being on the potential impact on pupils' eating habits and concentration and behaviour in school. The evaluation combines a rigorous randomised trial design with comprehensive process evaluation and economic evaluation. The evaluation is being conducted in two phases. Phase one involves schools in Communities First areas. The intervention schools in this phase started breakfast provision during the spring term 2005 and the control schools will not provide

breakfast until Spring Term 2006 at the earliest. Baseline data collection was completed and follow-up measurements have been taken 4 months and 12 months later. Phase two involves schools in non Communities First areas. Again, schools are randomised to intervention or control. Intervention schools will start providing breakfasts during the Spring Term 2006 and the control schools will not provide breakfast until Spring Term 2007 at the earliest. Baseline data collection for this phase has been completed and follow-up will take place at 4 months and 12 months later. A preliminary report on the work carried out with the first pilot schools has been received. Positive feedback was received on issues such as: flexibility within the pilot phase to experiment; provision of detailed guidelines and the approach of officials to consultation; support received at a national and a local level; schools are attracting at least some of the pupils that are really in need; free breakfast is seen to support other school based health promoting activities; and staff perceive benefits for children attending the free breakfast scheme, such as improved behaviour, ability to concentrate and healthier diet. Concerns were expressed by some individuals in schools and LEAs on funding and workload.

- Research into **school meals** in the primary and secondary sectors has been jointly commissioned with the Food Standards Agency (Wales), to gain an insight into why the majority of pupils fail to make healthy choices and what influences their choices. The research comprised four main elements: observation of the dining environment, food choice, presentation etc.; interviews with pupils as to the choices they made; a pupil questionnaire covering lunchtime arrangements, opinions of school meals etc.; and interviews with meal providers on nutrition policy and practice. Eighteen primary and eighteen secondary schools were randomly selected, stratified by region and affluence. Interviews were carried out with pupils (in friendship triads), head cook or caterer and head teacher. In addition, a sample of pupils was asked to complete a questionnaire. It was found that few schools had written food policies although most had made decisions regarding food. Aspects of healthy eating were covered in most schools through Personal Social Education, Science or Physical Education. School cooks were employed by a catering organisation and were responsible for ordering food, budgeting and cooking. Menus were produced at the regional level and did not always follow the guidelines (particularly relating to daily vegetables in primary schools and minimal use of frying/cooking with fat in both primary and secondary schools). Queuing for school dinners was often a problem with space being limited in both primary and secondary schools. The cost of school dinners ranged between £1.20 and £1.65 in primary schools and £1.60 and £1.80 for a set meal (main meal and dessert) in secondary schools. Many children chose food to fit within their budget and many would choose special offers that cost less. There is some limited choice in primary schools with the choice in secondary schools being much greater.

Having food that was good for you, tasted good and was filling were important factors for primary and secondary children when choosing their school dinner. Choosing food that was not fattening and was what their parents thought that they should have were also important to primary children. Pupils' views about school dinners were mixed and observations reported negative comments about vegetables for one third of primary and most secondary schools. In secondary schools, many children indicated that they would eat more fruit and vegetables if the quality and variety were improved. Children in both schools indicated that if less healthy items (e.g. chips, burgers) were taken off the menu they would choose something else instead. Pupils' suggestions for changes to school dinners included: a wider selection of fresh fruit, vegetables and salad; better quality meat; and primary children in particular wanting more choice on the menu.

- An evaluation of a **pilot water cooler scheme** was undertaken in 2004. Pre and post installation data collection was carried out at both the school and individual pupil level, supported by a more detailed process evaluation. Through focus groups and interviews, staff involved in primary and secondary schools reported more water being drunk and improvements in concentration and behaviour. Findings from the school level questionnaire and pupil study are currently being analysed.
- A small healthy vending machine pilot project involving three secondary schools in Pembrokeshire was undertaken recently, covering refrigerated food and drink vending controlled by the school and managed by the school caterers, rather than the use of commercial vending machines. Sales data showed that of the three machines, two made a sound profit and the other a loss. Wastage was a factor in the participating schools and better planning could have reduced the losses. It was concluded that while healthy vending could offer great benefits to caterer and pupils alike, it requires careful planning and good management and must be seen as a single component in a whole school approach to nutrition.

What next?

- The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey will continue on a 4-yearly basis, collecting cross-national and national data from a national sample of 11 to 16 year olds (years 7-11), to help monitor and track aspects of adolescent health and health-related behaviours and their developmental and social contexts. The HBSC study contributes to particular areas of adolescent health highlighted in, for example, the children and young people's action plan, and Food and Well Being.

- School policy surveys will continue to be conducted by Public Health Improvement Division on an ad hoc basis in primary and secondary schools across Wales to monitor change in health-related policy and curriculum content.
- The evaluation of the Primary School Free Breakfast initiative will continue in both Communities First and non-Communities First schools with the final report being due summer 2007.
- The research on school meal provision and food choice will play an important part in informing new developments and policies regarding school meals. Further research investigating a whole school day approach to nutrition is being considered.

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February 2006

Nutrition in Schools - Building the Evidence

1. In recent months, the link between children's diet, school performance and health has been the focus of much media attention. This paper briefly reviews some of the key evidence in this area and addresses the work on nutrition in schools that is currently being undertaken by the Welsh Assembly Government. It is not exhaustive; its purpose is to provide a basis for discussion and consideration of future work in this policy area.

What's the issue?

2. In health terms, childhood and adolescence are particularly important times of life. Certain behaviours are initiated during the adolescent years, while others, such as eating habits, can be established even earlier in childhood¹. Given this, research into young people's health and health behaviours - and the factors that influence them - is essential for the development of evidence-based policy and practice in Wales². Clearly, health can be affected by many factors - social, biological and environmental - but the focus of this paper is solely on nutrition in schools.

3. It is recognised that those who develop healthy eating habits early in life are likely to maintain them into adulthood³ and have reduced risk of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, certain cancers, diabetes and osteoporosis⁴. A balanced diet is also likely to reduce the risk of more immediate health problems, such as overweight and obesity, which are increasing rapidly in young people. The 2002 Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey revealed that, by the age of 15, 23 per cent of boys and 17 per cent of girls in Wales are either overweight or obese⁵. These figures reflect a wider trend among the adult population in the UK⁶. A change in dietary patterns in recent decades, including an increased consumption of soft drinks and confectionery and a decreased consumption of fruits and vegetables in many countries, has been implicated in the increase in childhood and adolescent obesity⁷, alongside concern over levels of physical activity⁸.

4. Children over 5 years of age are beginning to take responsibility for their own food intake and so it is important that they understand the need for a healthy diet and develop good eating habits from an early age. A range of factors can influence children and young people's food choices, such as: the development of tastes and eating habits; the context and impact of influential people (e.g. peers); repeated exposure or rewards; availability of the foods; costs; appearance of the food; and how foods are marketed or promoted^{9, 10}. Research has demonstrated that it is important to provide children and young people with some degree of choice, rather than telling them what they must eat¹¹. Pupils also feel that they should be consulted over plans for new initiatives - over half of the children in the Sodexo School Meals Survey said that they had never been asked for their view on school catering and felt that they should

have been consulted - a factor that has been found to directly relate to the effectiveness of an intervention.

5. School provides an ideal setting for initiatives to encourage healthy eating because it provides an environment where some level of control over access to food and drink can be achieved, and allows messages about healthy eating to be delivered in an educational context¹².

6. As the link between food intake, behaviour, concentration and performance at school becomes more apparent it is important to look into the quality of foods that are on offer to children at school, to ensure that they are provided with the variety and balance needed to achieve their full potential¹³.

Evidence to date

Breakfast

7. Medical experts and educationalists have long held the view that eating a healthy breakfast every morning is essential in helping children's performance at school^{14, 15}, staying healthy¹⁶ and maintaining a healthy body weight¹⁷. Despite being thought of as the most important meal of the day, recent surveys have revealed that up to 20 per cent of British school children regularly leave home in the morning without having had anything to eat^{18, 19}. The 2002 HBSC survey in Wales found that the proportion of young people eating breakfast every school day declines with age, from 63 per cent of 11-year-olds to 55 per cent of 13-year-olds to 49 per cent of 15-year-olds. The decline is greatest for girls, with less than 40 per cent of girls eating breakfast every day by the age of 15, compared to 58 per cent of boys²⁰.

8. School-based breakfast schemes have attracted widespread interest since the 1990's because they can collectively meet a range of important and complementary objectives around the principal aim of improving the health and well being of children^{21, 22}. Breakfast schemes are able to tackle four important issues: **children's health**, by providing a balanced meal at the beginning of the day and the opportunity for children to sample/develop preferences for healthy options; **children's education**, both in terms of ensuring children start the school day on time, feeling well-nourished and settled, and improving attitude, behaviour and motivation to learn; **childcare issues**, through the provision of a safe, supervised and often stimulating environment before school starts; and the **social needs of children**, such as giving them an opportunity to interact with children from all year groups^{23, 24}. Indeed, a recent evaluation of breakfast clubs by the New Policy Institute^{25, 26} found that all schools participating in the initiative believed that attending a breakfast club provided a good start to the day, leaving the children more settled, attentive and motivated to learn.

9. Eating a healthy diet is crucial to everyone's health needs, but this is particularly true for active, growing school children that have high energy, vitamin and mineral requirements^{27, 28}. Research has found that participation in a school breakfast programme enhances daily nutrient intake, which in

turn, is associated with significant improvements in student academic performance and psychosocial functioning, reduced fatigue during the morning, and decreases in hunger²⁹. Research suggests that people who eat breakfast are more likely to have more nutritionally balanced diets that are lower in fat and higher in carbohydrate compared to those who miss breakfast³⁰ and they are far less likely to snack on high-fat, sugary foods to boost their energy levels³¹, which can lead to health problems such as obesity³².

10. As well as considering the provision of a 'balanced diet' in schools, different foods can also have an impact on school performance³³. For example, foods such as potatoes and breads - which have a high glycaemic index - cause a significant rise in blood glucose levels shortly after being eaten, followed by a slump in blood glucose levels, which stimulates hunger and causes over-eating and fatigue³⁴.

11. A growing body of evidence has exposed the importance of eating a nutritious, healthy breakfast for children's education³⁵,³⁶ and behaviour. It has been suggested that children who regularly eat breakfast have enhanced concentration levels³⁷, improved memory and attention³⁸, score higher on tests³⁹, have better attendance and punctuality⁴⁰⁴¹, improved problem solving abilities, visual perception and creative thinking⁴², and have superior muscle co-ordination⁴³. In addition, research has shown that eating breakfast improves children's memory and attention, visual perception, and creative thinking. These benefits are further enhanced if oatmeal is eaten for breakfast, as opposed to ready-to-eat cereal⁴⁴.

12. Breakfast provision in schools complements the work already being carried out on healthy eating and nutrition, such as the Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme and can underpin the goals of a 'health promoting school', a consistency that is very important for the dietary messages of breakfast initiatives to have an impact.

School Meals

13. School meals continue to play a significant role in the diets of young people. Following concern about the quality of children's diet and the importance of the contribution that school meals can make to the health of children, the National Assembly for Wales introduced statutory nutritional standards in all Welsh maintained primary and secondary schools in September 2001⁴⁵. These standards require all primary and secondary schools to offer meals that can provide pupils with a balanced diet. The Food Standards Agency commissioned research prior to their introduction in 2001, focusing on school meal provision, via an audit of available foods, and observation of pupil food choices⁴⁶.

14. It would appear that despite the fact that a variety of foods are on offer, pupils would not necessarily select a 'balanced' meal. Secondary schools tend to offer far more choice than primary schools, with the latter often being restricted to more healthy foods. As other research has shown, personal preferences for 'fast foods' on grounds of taste tended to dominate food choice; young people particularly valued

the ability to choose what they eat^{47, 48}. Findings from a sample of secondary schools revealed that chips were the most popular choice (particularly for boys) and many meals consisted solely of chips (42 per cent), despite the fact that alternatives to chips, such as potatoes, rice and pasta, were widely available. Hand-held items such as pizza, pasties and pies and processed meat products such as burgers, sausages and chicken nuggets were also a popular selection; a finding echoed in the Sodexo School Meals survey. Although 3 or more vegetables were on offer in 65 per cent of schools, fewer than 2 per cent of pupils chose a stand alone portion of vegetables, 2 per cent chose salad and 1 per cent chose fruit.

15. The National Diet and Nutrition Survey for children and young people aged 4 to 18 also found that young people are eating too much saturated fat and sugar⁴⁹. The 2002 HBSC survey found that the proportion of young people in Wales eating fruit every day also tends to decline with age, but remains consistently lower for boys than girls (31 per cent of girls and 23 per cent of boys at age 11, declining to 24 per cent and 19 per cent, respectively, at age 15). In contrast, daily vegetable consumption has been found to increase slightly between the ages of 11 and 15 for both sexes (19 per cent to 22 per cent for boys and 22 per cent to 26 per cent for girls)⁵⁰.

16. Recent reviews^{51, 52} have noted that children and young people are able to provide valuable insights into their perspectives on food, eating and healthy eating. They tend to talk about food in terms of what was healthy/unhealthy; healthy foods were predominately associated with parent/adults and the home, whilst 'fast food' was associated with pleasure, friendship and social environments. Suggestions for increasing the consumption of healthy foods in school included: offering more fruit and healthy options and presenting them in a more appealing way; offering a wider choice of meals; limiting unhealthy options; reviewing the price of healthy foods; and introducing salad bars.

17. Qualitative research commissioned to inform the Welsh Assembly Government's Food and Fitness Task Group for Children and Young People found that on balance, although children and young people do know what healthy eating and a 'balanced diet' are, the majority do not consume a healthy diet and are not making healthy food choices⁵³. The research established that barriers to eating healthier foods include an attitude that healthy food is 'boring' or 'tastes horrible'; price difference (real or perceived) between 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' foods; and the food available in schools. Indeed, 37 per cent of children aged 8 to 16 years who took part in the Sodexo School Meals and Lifestyles Survey said that they would select healthy foods at school if there was a better choice available and 18 per cent wanted the taste of the healthy food options at school to be improved. A Department of Health study found that children wanted a choice of food that reflected their differing needs; for example, some pupils wanted a healthy option, whilst others preferred a 'fast food option'. Children also felt that sometimes the quality of the food they received was poor and needed appropriate labelling⁵⁴; the provision of information on the nutritional content of school meals was also cited as important by young

women⁵⁵. In response to this, the Food Standards Agency and Department for Education and Skills are currently developing a range of resources for use in schools to explain how to use food labels effectively.

18. Cost is another factor influencing food choice. A recent study revealed that some schools operated a pricing policy to make healthy options cheaper, but this was undermined in some cases by 'meal deals' that included unhealthy food combinations⁵⁶. Rewards and incentives for eating healthy food(s) are increasingly being introduced in secondary schools across Wales to encourage healthy eating. Examples include the use of a 'cashless' payment system such as 'smartcards' (operating in about 20 per cent of secondary schools in Wales⁵⁷) which act as supermarket style reward cards with a range of prizes to encourage healthy eating; free vegetables or salad; and a greater choice of healthy meals⁵⁸. However, concern remains as to the effectiveness of rewards and incentives given the limited evidence to support the contention that their use promotes lasting behaviour change⁵⁹.

19. School catering has an important role to play in supporting and reinforcing the educational messages taught to young people about healthy eating and nutrition. Research on secondary school meals in England by the DfES and FSA, however, found that practice in the dining room intended to promote healthy eating had little positive influence on pupil choices. The British Nutrition Foundation reported that when food is made available at school for pupils' consumption, the type of service and range of food available should reinforce concepts learnt in the formal curriculum and enable pupils to make informed, healthy decisions⁶⁰.

20. The Sodexo Survey also revealed that young people often prefer to purchase food, usually unhealthy snacks, from local shops or vending machines to eat at lunchtime or in their breaks, rather than have a school meal. Reasons for this could be factors outlined above, concerning food choice, cost or quality, or it could be due to other reasons, such as an overcrowded and unpleasant dining environment, or not wanting to spend the majority of their lunchtime in dinner queues.

21. In addition, a recent small-scale survey of children's school lunchboxes found that the lunches were high in saturated fats, sugars and in particular sodium, and there was a low inclusion of fruit and vegetables.

Fruit Tuck Shops

22. The Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes (WNHSS) encourages the development of fruit tuck shops in schools⁶¹. A randomised controlled trial (unrelated to the WNHSS) investigating whether fruit tuck shops in primary schools are effective in increasing pupils' fruit consumption was conducted by Cardiff University, on behalf of the Food Standards Agency^{62, 63}. Twenty-three intervention schools set up fruit tuck shops successfully. Schools were generally positive about the fruit tuck shops and many identified various benefits for the curriculum, social benefits, reduced litter and community benefits as a result. Schools found that although fruit sales were high initially, sales declined to varying degrees

over the intervention year. Results from computerised questionnaires indicated that there was no significant difference between pupils in the intervention and control schools in their intake of fruit and other snacks. However, significant differences were observed in the proportion of pupils reporting that they would use a tuck shop at their school and that they eat fruit as a snack at school 'often' or 'sometimes'. It was concluded that fruit tuck shops on their own did not have a substantial impact on the fruit intake of pupils. Nonetheless, they are likely to be a valuable component of any co-ordinated plan, for example part of a whole school approach, to increase children's fruit consumption. Within schools, a comprehensive school policy on snacks brought to school supplemented by a school fruit tuck shop may achieve a more substantial impact⁶⁴.

Other school-based evidence

23. Recent reviews have shown that a 'whole school' multi-faceted approach to promoting healthy eating can be effective for children and young people^{65, 66, 67}; young women are particularly receptive to these interventions⁶⁸. Successful interventions, with children aged 4 to 10 years in particular, often targeted parents and/or involved them in the intervention delivery alongside teachers/health promotion practitioners, and often combined learning about the health benefits with 'hands-on' experience (for example, in the form of food preparation and taste testing). Targeted interventions, for example with a focus on fruit & vegetables, rather than looking at lots of forms of healthy eating, were found to be more effective - particularly if they were part of a whole school approach to nutrition. For example, the 'food dudes' programme demonstrated that a peer-modelling and rewards-based intervention was successful in increasing children's consumption of, and liking for, fruit and vegetables both in school and at home^{69, 70}. Another recent example of a targeted intervention is a school based education programme in which children were discouraged from consuming 'fizzy' drinks, with a positive affirmation of a balanced diet, produced a modest reduction in the number of carbonated drinks consumed over a year, which was associated with a reduction in the number of overweight and obese children⁷¹.

24. Process evaluations have found that promoting healthy eating can be an integral and acceptable component of the school curriculum, although effective implementation in schools requires skills, time and support from a wide range of people. Furthermore, despite the low status of teachers and peers as sources of nutritional information, several soundly evaluated studies have shown that they can be employed effectively to deliver nutrition interventions. At least two sound outcome evaluations have demonstrated the effectiveness of increasing the availability of healthy foods in the school canteen, particularly if these are complemented by classroom-based activities to promote information on nutrition (e.g. small group discussions, peer-led activities). In addition, schoolchildren often do not see messages about future health as being personally relevant or credible to them - a factor that needs to be addressed when developing new health promotion interventions; contradictions between what is promoted in theory and what adults provide in practice is also an important factor that needs

to be addressed in school settings. As mentioned above, a clear relationship was also found between what children and young people say is important and intervention effectiveness. Currently, interventions evaluated by good quality research do not always target what young people themselves see as the main barriers to healthy eating and do not always build upon what they see as the main facilitators.

25. The British Medical Journal has published a review of school-based schemes that aim to improve child health⁷². This concluded that most school based intervention programmes increase knowledge about nutrition, but they rarely produce significant changes in behaviour or favourable short to intermediate term health outcomes. Evidence suggests that the most cost-effective action would be to target higher risk children and devote resources to more intensive treatment programmes. However, this may be problematic as individual-based programmes for children have the potential to stigmatise individuals and can even trigger other health problems such as eating disorders.

26. To conclude, evidence suggests that interventions can raise awareness of issues relating to nutrition; specific interventions may have significant beneficial effects; some groups are more receptive to interventions than others; when designing new interventions the target group must be taken into consideration and consulted accordingly; and ultimately changes in behaviour can be very difficult to achieve, especially in the longer term. At present there appears to be insufficient good quality research evaluating the effectiveness of interventions to promote healthy eating, particularly in the UK.

What is happening in Wales?

27. The following Assembly Government school-based evaluations have either recently been undertaken or are ongoing in schools across Wales.

Free Breakfast for Primary School Children

28. The broad purpose of the evaluation of the Primary School Free breakfast initiative is to examine the: impact of providing free breakfasts in schools; processes employed by schools; potential impact on pupils' eating habits; and impact of breakfast on concentration and behaviour in school. The evaluation combines a cluster randomised trial with comprehensive process evaluation and economic evaluation. The research is being undertaken by Cardiff Institute of Society, Health and Ethics, Cardiff University and managed by researchers in Public Health Improvement Division. To date, preliminary work with the 46 schools that started providing breakfast during the Autumn Term 2004 has been completed and 58 schools from Communities First areas across 9 LEAs have been recruited for the first phase of the cluster randomised trial, 29 intervention and 29 control schools. The intervention schools started breakfast provision during the spring term 2005 and the 29 control schools will not provide breakfast until some time during the Spring term 2006 at the earliest. Baseline data collection has been completed and follow-up measurements

have been taken 4 months and 12 months later. Fifty-three schools from non-Communities First schools across the 9 LEAs have now been recruited into the second phase of the cluster randomised trial, 26 intervention and 27 control schools. The intervention schools will start breakfast provision during the second half of the Spring term 2006 and the control schools will not provide breakfast until Spring term 2007 at the earliest. Baseline data collection in this phase has been completed and follow-up measurements will be taken at 4 months and 12 months later.

29. Outcome data being collected through the trial with year 5/6 pupils include:

- Diet e.g. proportion of pupils eating breakfast, types of food eaten, total diet, with particular focus on fruit and vegetables, snacks high in sugar, salt or fat;
- Concentration and behaviour e.g. group administration of tests measuring different aspects of memory/attention, computerised tests and teacher assessment;
- Attitudes and norms towards eating breakfast;
- School attendance;
- Uptake figures reported to the Assembly Government for intervention schools.

30. The process evaluation is focusing on procedures and processes for implementing the initiative. The information gathered will facilitate the interpretation of findings by adding context to the outcomes. Telephone interviews with school breakfast co-ordinators are being used for data collection. In addition, eight case studies which will allow further exploration of issues raised in the interviews have been carried out in Communities First schools, with the research team interviewing the school co-ordinator, teachers, parents and pupils. Case studies will also be carried out in up to 8 non-Communities First schools. The evaluation will also be looking at non-participating pupils; those identified by teachers who could have benefited from participating.

31. A preliminary report on the work carried out with the first pilot schools has been received. Positive feedback was received on issues such as: flexibility within the pilot phase to experiment with the details of the scheme; provision of detailed guidelines and the approach of officials to consultation with stakeholders; support received at a national and a local level to implement the initiative; schools feel that they are attracting at least some of the pupils that are really in need; the provision of free breakfast is not seen as a stand alone initiative, but one that supports other school based health promoting activities; and staff perceive benefits for children attending the free breakfast scheme, such as improved behaviour, ability to concentrate and healthier diet.

32. Concerns were expressed by some individuals in schools and LEAs on funding and workload. Some respondents challenged the policy intent of the free breakfast initiative as being the best use of money to improve the

nutritional health of young people and raised resource issues relating to the funding for the initiative (e.g. food and staffing). The potential impact on staff involved in delivering the initiative, particularly head teachers and school staff, was also raised.

33. The first report containing preliminary outcome data is due to be received by the Assembly Government summer 2006. This report will contain preliminary outcome data only, as some schools may not have been providing breakfast for very long. The final report, containing all outcome and process evaluation data, is due summer 2007.

School Meals

34. Although much research has been carried out on school meal provision in recent years, there has been little emphasis on exploring the factors that influence food choice. This is likely to be a vital factor in terms of positive behaviour change. Public Health Improvement Division, Pupil Support Division and Food Standards Agency (Wales) have recently co-funded and commissioned research into school meal provision in maintained primary and secondary schools across Wales to gain an insight into why the majority of pupils fail to make healthy choices and what influences their choice(s). The contract commenced early June 2005 and will end in March 2006.

35. The main objectives of the research were to investigate:

- why primary and secondary school pupils make the food choices they do and what influences their choice(s);
- what stops pupils from choosing healthier food if it is available;
- what food(s) would primary and secondary school pupils like to have on offer;
- other factors influencing food choice (such as, food quality, selection of foods on offer, cost, queues and the dining environment).

36. The research consisted of four main elements:

- Observation - reporting on issues such as the dining room environment, food choice/cost/availability/quality/presentation and the presence/content of vending machines in the dining area;
- Pupil Interview - two classes were selected from different years in each school from which a number of pupils were randomly selected from the dinner queue to be interviewed later in the afternoon on issues such as why they chose their meal, if they ate everything, if it is the same sort of meal that they usually choose, what foods they would like to see available and whether they ate anything else at lunchtime;
- Pupil Questionnaire - all children in either 3 or 4 of the school years were selected in each school to complete a brief questionnaire, covering issues such as lunchtime arrangements, why they do/do not have school meals and opinions of school meals.
- Interview with Head Cook/school meal provider - this interview will include issues such as staff training (such as nutrition, cooking skills),

policies on healthy eating/promotion of healthier foods and their perception of pupils' food choices.

- 37.** The sample included 18 primary and 18 secondary schools across Wales, stratifying in terms of geography, affluence, participation in the Welsh Network Of Healthy School Schemes, Welsh language, ethnic minority groups, LEA/school control of meal provision and the presence of a reward scheme. There will be further stratification within schools according to age and gender.
- 38.** Observations and interviews with Head teachers were carried out in all schools. Questionnaires were completed by 619 primary and 1,291 secondary pupils. Twenty-one group interviews, involving 122 of the youngest pupils were conducted. One hundred and one primary and 100 secondary pupils were interviewed in triad interviews. Fifteen primary and 14 secondary head cooks/caterers were also interviewed.
- 39.** It was found that few schools had written food policies although most had made decisions regarding food. For example, limiting out of school purchasing to older pupils and banning or limiting the content of vending machines in secondary schools, and water provision in both primary and secondary schools. In addition, several primary and secondary schools had healthy eating schemes in place, including breakfast clubs, fruit schemes and milk schemes. Aspects of healthy eating were covered in most schools through Personal Social Education, Science or Physical Education.
- 40.** School cooks were employed by a catering organisation and were responsible for ordering food, budgeting and cooking. Primary school cooks sometimes made changes to the menu in order to give the children food that they liked and would eat.
- 41.** Menus were produced at the regional level and did not always follow the guidelines relating to daily vegetables (for example, spaghetti hoops included as a vegetable) in primary schools and minimal use of frying/cooking with fat in both primary and secondary schools. There was limited, if any, communication between catering organisations and head teachers, children and school cooks.
- 42.** Queuing for school dinners was often a problem with space being limited in both primary and secondary schools. Approximately a quarter of primary and secondary children never have school dinners, while over half of primary and over two-fifths of secondary children have school dinners every day.
- 43.** The cost of school dinners ranged between £1.20 and £1.65 in primary schools and £1.60 and £1.80 for a set meal (main meal and dessert) in secondary schools. The cost of specific food items ranged by secondary school; for example, from 80p to £1.10 for chips, 32p to 70p for vegetables and 20p to 75p for fruit. Many children chose food to fit within their budget and many would choose special offers that cost less.

44. There is some limited choice in primary schools with the choice in secondary schools being much greater. Having food that was good for you, tasted good and was filling were important factors for primary and secondary children when choosing their school dinner. Choosing food that was not fattening and was what their parents thought that they should have were also important to primary children.

45. Pupils' views about school dinners were mixed with over one third of secondary (only 4% of primary) disliking school dinners. One third of primary and three quarters of secondary children disliked queuing. Only half of primary and one third of secondary children liked the way that food was served and looked, while half of primary and secondary children thought that food tasted good and the choice was good. Only 42% of secondary children thought that the quality of food was good. One fifth of primary children stated that they were given too little food at lunch-time. Observations reported negative comments about vegetables for one third of primary and most secondary schools.

46. Most children in primary and secondary schools stated that they would choose something else instead if foods such as chips, burgers, cakes and soft/fizzy drinks were taken off the menu, most seeing this as a positive step. In secondary schools, many children indicated that they would eat more fruit and vegetables if the quality and variety were improved. Over half of secondary children stated that having healthy option information (e.g. food labelling) would make them more likely to choose these 'healthy' foods.

47. Pupils' suggestions for changes to school dinners included: a wider selection of fresh fruit, vegetables and salad; better quality meat; and primary children in particular wanting more choice on the menu.

48. Eleven of the eighteen secondary schools had vending machines, most containing drinks, sweets, crisps and sandwiches. Having healthier items as well as alternatives appears to be as important to pupils as having healthier items only.

49. Recommendations from the research included the following:

- Ensuring that information is exchanged between schools, catering organisations and local authorities to spread best practice;
- Reviewing the process of menu development at regional and school level and providing a mechanism to consult with children and young people, parents, head teachers and school cooks and catering organisations;
- Identify training needs of school cooks and develop national or local strategies to meet those needs;
- Investigate methods to ensure implementation of guidelines;
- Labelling of healthy options and other food clearly and reviewing the price of healthy items compared to other options;
- Developing local strategies to reduce queuing times;

- Consider the feasibility of using unprocessed meat and fish in primary and secondary schools;
- Assessing the implications of changes to school meals in terms of preparation time and meal content;
- Investigating the effect of school cooks changing the regionally set menu in primary school.

Water Coolers

50. This study was carried out in 2004 and examined the impact of installing water coolers in schools, the processes employed by schools and the potential impact on pupils' drinking habits. Pre and post installation data collection was carried out at both the school and individual pupil level. There was also a more detailed process evaluation. A postal questionnaire was sent to 165 Primary and 23 Secondary schools at baseline and follow-up, with pupil data collection being undertaken in a randomly selected mixed ability class from each school year in eight primary and eight secondary schools. The process evaluation involved all 16 schools participating in pupil data collection, with depth interviews being carried out with a small number of teachers from each school at both baseline and follow-up. In addition, there were four post-installation focus groups.

51. Through the focus groups and interviews, staff involved in primary and secondary schools reported more water being drunk and improvements in concentration and behaviour. Findings from the school level questionnaire and pupil study are currently being analysed.

Healthy Vending Machines

52. Data from the 2004 HBSC school policy survey shows that 73% of secondary schools report having a vending machine on the school premises, 58% of which stock 'unhealthy' options such as chocolate and crisps. A small pilot project involving three secondary schools in Pembrokeshire was undertaken recently, covering refrigerated food and drink vending controlled by the school and managed by the school caterers, rather than the use of commercial vending machines.

53. Sales data showed that of the three machines, two made a sound profit and the other a loss. Wastage was a factor in the participating schools and better planning could have reduced the losses. It was concluded that while healthy vending could offer great benefits to caterer and pupils alike, it requires careful planning and good management and must be seen as a single component in a whole school approach to nutrition.

What next?

54. The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey will continue on a 4-yearly basis, collecting cross-national and national data from a national sample of 11 to 16 year olds (years 7-11), to help monitor and track aspects of adolescent health and health-related behaviours and their developmental and social contexts⁷³. In Wales, approximately

1,500 respondents in each age group take part in the survey, which covers a wide range of topics such as eating habits, physical activity and sedentary behaviour, obesity and substance use. The data, collected via self-administered questionnaire, provide a unique opportunity to develop evidence for policy and practice. The HBSC study contributes to particular areas of adolescent health highlighted in, for example, the children and young people's action plan⁷⁴, and Food and Well Being⁷⁵.

55. School policy surveys will continue to be conducted by Public Health Improvement Division on an ad hoc basis in primary and secondary schools across Wales to monitor change in health-related policy and curriculum content⁷⁶. A secondary school survey took place in 2004 and it is anticipated that a primary school equivalent will be undertaken in 2006/07.

56. The evaluation of the Primary School Free Breakfast Initiative will continue in both Communities First and non-Communities First schools with an interim report containing preliminary outcome data being submitted summer 2006 and the final report being submitted summer 2007.

57. The forthcoming research on school meal provision and food choice will play an important part in informing new developments and policies regarding school meals.

58. A research project investigating a whole school day approach to nutrition is currently being considered.

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February 2006

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Welsh Assembly Government School meal visits summary

Officials from three Welsh Assembly Government departments made visits to a sample of schools across Wales to discover what formed general practice.

Two schools were visited in the majority of regions, the exceptions being Newport, Monmouthshire and Denbighshire where only one school was visited, and Wrexham and Flintshire where no schools were visited due to coincidental visits by trading standards, which might place a burden upon the schools. Schools in Wrexham were also visited during the design of the questionnaire that was used during the visits.

A mixture of primary and secondary schools were visited. A total of 32 schools were visited between September 2005 and March 2006: 19 primary and 13 secondary.

Primary schools Pages 76 - 84

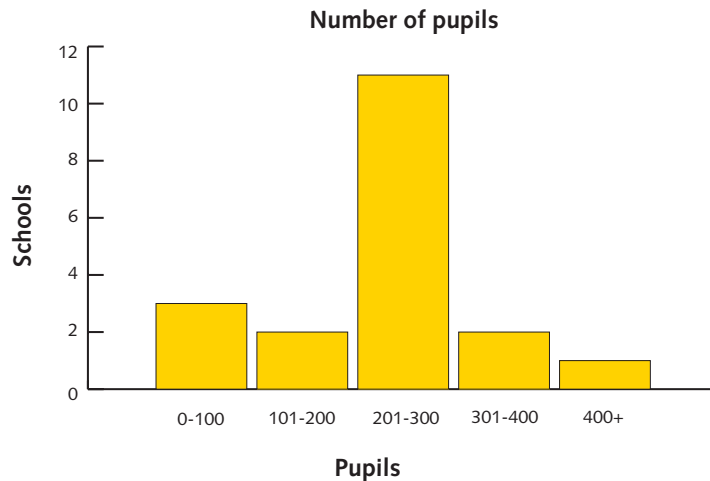
Secondary schools Pages 85 - 93

Primary schools

General school information

School pupil numbers

The primary schools visited ranged in terms of pupil numbers from 28 to 405. The average number of pupils across the 19 schools was 226.



Free school meal entitlement

The number of pupils in these schools entitled to free school meals ranged from 0 to 136. The percentage of pupils in any school with this entitlement ranged from 0% to 49.6%

The average percentage entitled to free school meals in the schools visited was 19.8%. An average of 17.5% of pupils in schools took up this entitlement, equivalent to 88.4% of those entitled to.

Is the school a member of the Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme (WNHSS)?

One school visited was not a member

- the schools that were members ranged from having been in the scheme between 1 year to 4 years

Do pupils leave the school site at lunchtime?

The majority of primary schools do not allow pupils to leave the school premises at lunchtime

- One school stated that a handful of pupils go home at lunch
- Several indicated that they do allow pupils to leave at lunch if it is requested in writing by parents
- One school allows one pupil with a disability to go home during lunch

Who provides the catering service?

All primary schools visited had school meals provided through the local county catering service

Preparation of food

Are meals prepared on site?

17 of the 19 schools visited prepared meals on their own site

- 1 school's meals were prepared offsite at another local school
- 1 school prepared their own meals on site three days of the week had them delivered from another school in the local area the other two days

Methods of cooking used

The vast majority of meals in schools were oven cooked, with vegetables generally steamed or boiled

- In all schools chips were the only food that was fried and a number indicated that these were only served one day per week
- A number of schools also indicated that they cooked a roast dinner on one day every week
- Only 2 schools had facility to grill food and 5 stated that they use a hot plate

Any special requirements catered for?

All schools indicated that they would be able to cater for special requirements and they would do so on an individual basis

- Currently a number of schools have no such requirement
- Most currently only need to cater for medical requirements e.g. diabetes, nut allergies, coeliac, wheat intolerance, dairy-free, gluten-free etc.
- 1 school indicated that in these cases they work closely with a local hospital to check the severity of allergies and only after that do they begin to tailor menus to the pupil's specific requirements
- Only 2 schools stated that there is currently a requirement to cater for pupils with a religious special requirement. 1 of these schools had children from a Muslim background and treated them as vegetarian

Vegetarian options? Separate preparation area?

All schools provided a vegetarian option on a daily basis - typical options being meals such as pasta, vegetable burgers, pasties, curries, lasagne etc.

Only 2 schools indicated that they had the facility for a separate preparation area for vegetarian options, although a number used specially designated implements e.g. chopping boards.

Length of time for preparation

Head cooks generally start work between 8:00 - 9:00 am. This gives preparation time of between 3 and 4 hours. In the majority of cases an assistant cook also starts work at a similar time, with the remainder of kitchen staff arriving 10:30 - 11:30 am to assist with any remaining preparation and with the serving of meals.

In the school that did not prepare any of its own meals the cooks arrived for work at 12:45. Their role consisted of taking the temperature of the food on its arrival and heating components as necessary prior to serving.

Training received by kitchen staff

- Cooks in a number of schools had NVQ Level 1 & 2 qualifications
 - The majority of staff in primary schools had received training in food hygiene
 - A number had been trained in health and safety and first aid
 - A minority had received healthy eating training
- One school indicated a need for staff to receive some form of basic cooking training

Menu

Fast food?

14 schools sold no fast food

- A number of schools had a 'snack' or fast food meal one day per week e.g. box meals on a Friday or pizza/fish & chips one day a week

Salad bar?

13 schools indicated that they had no separate salad choice

- However, a number stated that salad or vegetables were available everyday as an accompaniment to the main choice of meals

- Several schools indicated that salad was available to children but not all displayed it on a separate counter
- A problem was noted with one school visited that salad was available and well-presented in bowls, however the height of the counter was such that the majority of pupils would not be able to see what was available

Sandwiches/packed lunches available to buy?

10 schools visited provided sandwiches or packed lunches to pupils if requested

- Several schools made pitta breads etc. with a filling as an alternative to a cooked meal
- A number of schools only prepared packed lunches if children were going on an external trip that day
- A couple of schools which did not provide packed lunches also indicated that they discouraged parents and children from bringing in their own packed lunches as they felt that school meals were the best way to ensure children ate healthily

Healthy options cheaper to buy?

No schools indicated that healthy options were cheaper to buy. In the majority of cases there was a set price for a meal, which was not dependent upon what was ordered. This is likely to be down to the age of pupils and the fact that the system operated through parents paying a set amount of money per week.

Is menu clearly displayed?

In the majority of cases the menu is on a 4-weekly cycle and is sent home regularly to parents (once a term). In some cases the menu is also on the wall next to where the children queue.

- Several local areas also published menu information on the Internet and one is hoping to implement a system whereby parents could even pay for their child's meal online sometime in the future
- In two cases the menu did not appear to be available to pupils as they queued before the counter, however standard practice is that menus are regularly sent home to parents

Certain foods limited to particular days?

16 out of 19 schools indicated that they only served chips one day per week. Another school currently offered them twice a week but were going to cut this to one day in the near future. 3 schools also served 'box meals', MacDonalds 'Happy Meal' style fast food, one day a week. The reason

given was to try to promote the service and encourage a greater take-up of school meals throughout the entire week.

Payment methods

All primary schools visited currently operate a cash system

- In the majority, parents pay weekly, monthly or every term
- Several use a till system where children pay and have not reported any problems

Serving

Number of serveries

- 16 primary schools visited simply had one serving area
- 1 school had separate serveries for infants and juniors
- 2 schools had two serveries, one for main meals and one that served as a sandwich/salad bar. In both of these the hot meal counter was the main servery

Queuing

- The majority of schools separated pupils into infants and juniors with infants generally queuing first, although this was rotated in several schools
- A number of schools sit pupils down first and then bring them up to the counter one table at a time
- One school stated that they take all children to wash their hands before lunch
- Because of the staggered system used in primary schools the queues themselves are kept to a minimum and would generally not be longer than 10 pupils at a time

Advertising or branding?

No schools had commercial branding visible. A number had posters promoting healthy food and wellbeing such as 'Balance of Good Health' and '5 a Day'.

Vending machines

No primary school visited had vending machines.

Water coolers

The majority of schools made water available to pupils throughout the school day and 11 had water coolers

- Of the schools that did not have coolers 3 stated that there were drinking water taps in classrooms which children could use
- 2 schools without coolers made jugs of water available on tables in classrooms
- A couple of schools stated that water was only available at lunch, however one of these will be providing water bottles from April 2006
- One school had trialled a water bottles on desks scheme but had decided not to continue with the scheme

Seating

Number of pupils at any one time

This ranged from 26 in the smallest school to 200 in the largest

- Most schools had one area, which seated both pupils eating school meals and those with packed lunches
- One school had one room for infants and the other for juniors

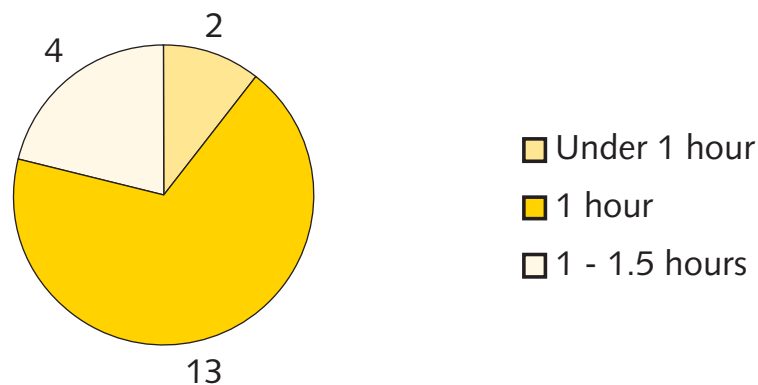
Number of sittings per mealtime

- Most schools had two sittings - the majority of these split them between infants and juniors, although a couple had one sitting for hot meals and one sitting for packed lunches
- 4 schools only operated one sitting
- A handful of schools needed to operate 3 or 4 sittings, largely because of the capacity of the dining area
- Of those with more than one sitting, all except 2 schools rotated them

Length of lunch break

- Most schools have an hour for lunch, but as most are divided into two sittings only half of this is spent in the dining area itself
- Two schools have 1 hour 15 minutes for younger pupils
- One had 1 hour 15 minutes for all pupils
- One school had a 25 minute lunch

Length of lunch



Condition of dining area

Most dining areas were in multi-purpose school halls, also used for other things such as assemblies, school events and P.E.

Selection of comments:

- Very good, tables currently in the process of being replaced
- Bright, cheerful, inviting
- Pictures of children's work and food served
- Extremely poor considering it is only used for lunch - no posters, cold, dull, crammed in
- Pleasant, light and airy, well ventilated
- Fairly small and can get crowded
- Children sit on stools - no back support
- Clean, modern, spacious
- Children's birthdays along wall

Do teachers eat with children?

In most schools, although a number of teachers eat a school meal, the majority do so in the staff room. This is sometimes down to space issues in the dining hall. All schools have one or two teachers available to supervise lunches, often the Head and Deputy Head.

- It was noted in one school that supervisors and teachers ensured that children's trays were turned so that their main course was facing them first and not their dessert. This ensured that they did not simply eat the dessert and leave the main course

Additional questions/other comments

Any recent healthy-eating related developments in school?

Comments included:

- Fruit tuck shop (x7)
- Wrote to parents regarding improving packed lunches (x3)
- Only water and milk as drinks (x2)
- Water coolers (x2)
- Only fruit at break time (x2)
- Recently joined Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes
- Classes allowed to cook healthy food in school kitchen as part of PSE
- Additive free food (as a result of a study on concentration and behaviour) - county-wide initiative in Conwy
- Ensuring there is a emphasis on health throughout curriculum

Tasting sessions available?

- The majority of schools offered tasting sessions to the new intake at the start of every school year to encourage uptake of school meals
- A number of schools regularly run tasting sessions for fruit and vegetables
- One school features a different vegetable as a taster on most days
- 3 schools indicated that they do not

Links with curriculum

The majority of schools indicated that they do link healthy eating into the curriculum where it is relevant

- This is mainly done via the PSE curriculum, for example through healthy food projects where children design a meal and the winner prepares their food with the cook in the school kitchen before serving it to pupils
- Schools in Neath Port Talbot are visited by the local Community Dental Service 3 times a year to explain healthy food and drink and the associated impact upon teeth
- In Blaenau Gwent, local caterers produced a CD for use in PSE

Feedback from pupils

- All schools indicated that pupils are very vocal and let the staff know what they do and do not like
- Some schools also seek more formal feedback through the school council

- The cooks in a couple of schools stated that when, in particular, vegetables were unpopular she often presented them in a different way in the future e.g. in pastry
- Some counties run focus groups where parents can voice opinions on the menu or send out questionnaires asking for feedback

Jamie Oliver effect

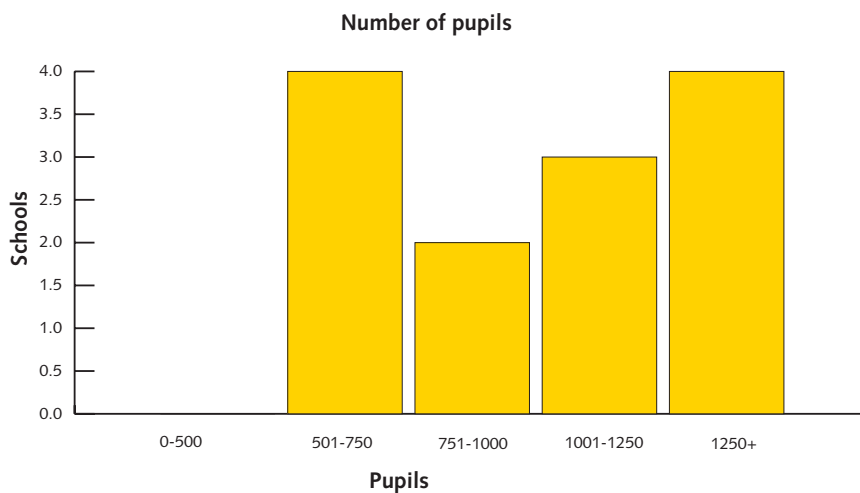
- 10 schools reported no effect at all
- Parents were concerned in some schools and asked questions on standards - most were reassured following a conversation with the school
- Several schools stated that numbers had dropped as a result
- One school stated that the E.coli outbreak in late 2005 had been more of a issue
- A couple of schools stated that they did feel an effect but that numbers have recovered again now
- One school noted that the morale of the catering staff had been affected
- One school believed that the standard of fruit and vegetables they receive from suppliers improved

Secondary schools

General school information

School pupil numbers

The secondary schools visited ranged in terms of pupil numbers from 547 to 1452. The average number of pupils across the 13 secondary schools was 1020.



Free school meal entitlement

The number of pupils in these schools entitled to free school meals ranged from 56 to 225. The percentage of pupils in any school with this entitlement ranged from 5.1% to 22.7%.

The average percentage entitled to free school meals in the schools visited was 12.8%. An average of 9.8% of pupils in schools took up this entitlement, equivalent to 76.1% of those entitled to.

Split site?

3 schools visited had split sites

- The sites of one school were 2 miles apart. The school prepared meals for both in one site and also did the catering for a local primary school.

Membership of the Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme (WNHSS)?

3 schools were not members; one was on a waiting list to join

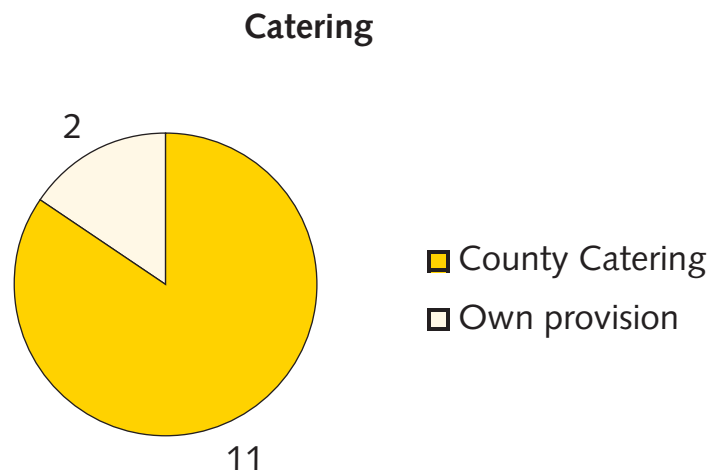
- Schools that were members ranged from having been in the scheme for 1 year to the full 4 year accreditation

Do pupils leave the school site at lunchtime?

- The majority of schools enabled pupils to leave the school site during lunch
- 1 school visited did not allow pupils offsite (mainly due to its fairly isolated location and very busy road directly outside)
- Several schools prevented lower years from leaving the school site
- 2 schools only allowed children offsite with written consent from parents
- 1 school stated that it had to allow pupils to leave due to space constraints

Who provides the catering service?

2 schools visited had opted out of local county school meal provision and run their own catering.



Preparation of food

Are meals prepared on site?

All 13 schools visited prepared their own main meals onsite.

Methods of cooking used

The vast majority of meals in all schools were oven cooked, with vegetables steamed or boiled

- In all schools only chips were fried
- 1 school had facility to grill and oven bake if required

Any special requirements catered for?

All schools indicated that they would be able to cater for special requirements and they would do so on an individual basis.

Currently a number of schools have no such requirement

- All schools visited currently only need to cater for medical requirements. Requirements noted were diabetes, nut allergy, coeliac, wheat intolerance, dairy-free and gluten-free
- No schools currently have a requirement to cater for pupils with a religion-related special dietary requirement

Vegetarian options? Separate preparation area?

All schools provided a vegetarian option on a daily basis however none visited had facility for a separate preparation area

- Several schools indicated that they used colour-coded chopping boards for separate types of food

Length of time for preparation

Head cooks generally start work between 8:00 - 9:00 am. This gives a preparation time of between 3 and 4 hours. In the majority of cases an assistant cook also starts work at a similar time, with the remainder of kitchen staff arriving 10:30 - 11:30 am to help with any remaining preparation and with serving meals.

Training received by kitchen staff

- Cooks in a number of schools had NVQ Level 1 & 2 qualifications
- The majority of staff in secondary schools had received training in food hygiene
- A number had been trained in health and safety, first aid
- A minority had received healthy eating training

Menu

Fast food?

All schools had some form of fast food available, however a majority indicated that they had cut down the amount in the past couple of years

- Options generally available were chips, burgers, hotdogs and pizza
- One school only prepared a small amount everyday and a burger & chips would cost more than the total amount of money allowed per day on

the smart card pupils use to pay for meals - this was to encourage more pupils to choose the main cooked meal

- One school made the burgers they sold onsite from fresh meat

Salad bar?

Only 1 school visited did not have a salad bar. Several had separate serving areas for salad, baguettes etc.

- One school commented that the salad bar was mainly used by the teachers

Sandwiches/packed lunches available to buy?

All schools visited had baguettes, sandwiches, pitta breads etc. available

- One school provided packed lunches for those pupils entitled to Free School Meals - consisting of a sandwich, apple and a drink.

Healthy options cheaper to buy?

Not in general

- 1 school frequently ran 'meal deal' type promotions, where a healthy main meal, salad and a healthy drink were £1.80
- 1 school actively used the pricing structure to encourage healthy eating by selling very appetising bags of fruit in vending machines for 35p and keeping other healthy options the same price while other snacks have increased in price

Is menu clearly displayed?

In most cases the menu was not clearly visible prior to the counter, but as options for main meal change everyday this would be difficult. Items available everyday are displayed along with price on board above counter.

Certain foods limited to particular days?

The majority of secondary schools did not limit foods to particular days

- 2 schools only provide chips once a week (1 as a fish and chips option on a Friday)
- Most schools have a roast once a week. In a number of cases this was the only day that chips were not available

Payment methods

- 11 of 13 schools visited used a cash system
- 2 schools had installed a smart card system (the same schools that run their own catering provision), which had proved extremely successful.

One of these schools was interested in the idea of using the system for other purposes such as monitoring what children were eating

- Several schools indicated that they were interested in the possibility of installing a smart card system, but would have problems funding the initial financial outlay. They would almost certainly introduce the system if grants were available

Serving

Number of serveries

- All schools had at least two serving areas: one for hot meals and one for snacks/baguettes
- One school had 5 serveries: two tradition main serveries, a salad bar, a sandwich/baguette area, and one serving jacket potatoes and soup

Queuing

- There were separate queues for different serveries in all schools and queuing time was generally no longer than 10 minutes
- Several schools noted that almost as many pupils purchase food at break time as at lunch - this helps with the length of queues
- One school reported long queues caused by fact the lunch break is 45 minutes long and that canteen/severy is in the main school thoroughfare

Advertising or branding?

No schools had commercial branding visible. A couple had posters promoting healthy food and wellbeing such as The White Stuff

Vending machines

5 of the schools visited **did not** have vending machines

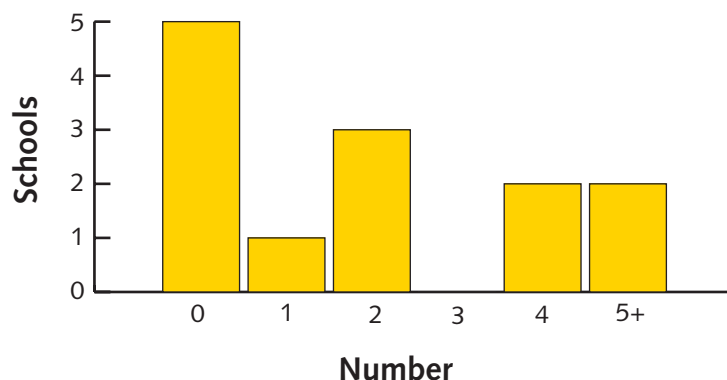
- One had removed it due to litter and bad behaviour that was attributed to the amount of fizzy drinks being consumed
- One stated that although they did not have any vending machines, the leisure centre next door did have one
- Several schools indicated that they would be interested in healthy vending machines if they were available

8 schools visited **did** have vending machines

- A couple only had drinks machines e.g. coffee/hot drinks, water, cans
- One was an example of how healthy vending could be done - had gradually phased out chocolate and crisps and not only had one row of each. The rest of the items in the machine were fruit, smoothies, cereal bars etc.

- One school had 9 vending machines: 2 water, 3 other drinks, 2 healthy machines, 2 chocolate machines

Vending machines



Water coolers

- 10 schools had water coolers installed, ranging in number from 1 to 3
- One school only had water available with lunch
- One school had no water available free throughout the school - it had to be purchased at the canteen
- One school reported problems with children damaging the cooler
- The majority of schools indicated that water was permitted and encouraged in class, although this was down to the discretion of teachers

Seating

How many pupils at any one time?

This was generally between 100 and 300. All schools had a number of seating areas, usually at different serveries. A number of schools allowed pupils to eat lunches in their form rooms.

Number of sittings per mealtime

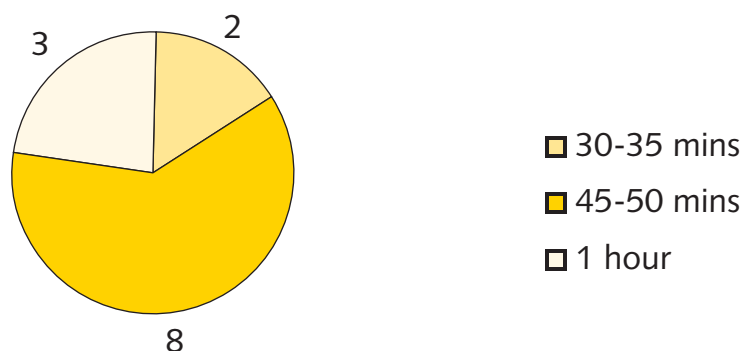
The majority of schools had one sitting but several staggered the time that pupils could go to lunch by year group, which was then rotated. Pupils were generally allowed to buy food at break times also, which helped with queues and overcrowding at lunch.

Length of lunch break

- Majority had 50 minutes - 1 hour
- 4 had 45 minutes
- 2 had 30 - 35 minutes - this had been introduced to improve behaviour as it was found that trouble started in the second half of the lunch break when pupils had nothing to do

- It was also stated by one school that cutting lunch to 35 minutes had meant that that lessons could end by 2:55, which allowed children to pick up younger brothers and sisters from primary school.

Length of lunch



Condition of dining area

Most dining areas were in multi-purpose school halls, also used for other things such as assemblies, school events and P.E.

Selection of comments:

- Old-fashioned, not very inviting
- Inviting, not particularly crowded
- MTV on television in dining area
- Amount of rubbish on the floor after lunch was staggering
- Tables were old but in good condition
- Crowded
- Fairly new, very light and brightly decorated
- Modern, clean, kept to a high standard
- Cold, crowded, no structure - un-conducive to a pleasant meal time break. In main school thoroughfare with a number of corridors off it

Do teachers eat with children?

In all schools some teachers ate with pupils or purchased school meals to take to staff room, but this was the choice of individual teachers.

Any shops/fast food takeaways etc. nearby?

The majority of schools had some kind of food provision nearby

- Some schools were near centre of town and so pupils had a full choice of alternative food

- One school also had a leisure centre onsite which served a variety of fast-food options
- A number are near cafes, fish and chip shops, pizza shops etc.
- Some cafes and fish and chip shops are known to run lunch time deals for school children.

Additional questions/other comments

Any healthy-eating related recent developments in school?

Comments included:

- County in the process of upgrading kitchens in all schools in area
- Sandwich bar built in the past year
- Pre-packed salad recently introduced
- One school stated that their kitchen was in dire need of expansion. LEA contact, cook and Head all stated that this was holding them back in the implementation of healthier food.

Tasting sessions available?

The majority of schools did not offer tasting sessions

- One school prepared tasters for new intake every September
- Two schools stated that they offered tasters every time the menu was changed
- One school ran menu design competitions - the best meals from which are served in the canteen if feasible

Links with curriculum

No schools had specific links, however most stated that they incorporated healthy eating into PSE curriculum

- Several indicated that they would like to see cooking included in the curriculum more generally

Feedback from pupils

All schools indicated that pupils are very vocal and let the staff know what they do and don't like

- Some schools also seek more formal feedback through the school council
- Some counties run focus groups where parents can voice opinions on the menu or send out questionnaires asking for feedback

Jamie Oliver effect

Very little effect indicated - has had much smaller effect on secondary schools than on primary schools because parents, who mainly watched the programme and who would in general be more concerned, have much less say on what pupils eat at this age. The majority of comments that resulted revolved around how pupils perceived their school meals as being much better than those featured on the programme.

Provisional Timetable for Key Activities

Key Event	Estimated date
Launch of "Appetite for Life" for consultation	June 29 2006
Consultation period	June - October 2006
"Appetite for Life Action Plan" published	Summer 2007
Begin to develop strategies for implementation at authority & school level	Summer - Autumn terms 2007
School consultative & development groups to begin developing their food policies	Autumn 2007 - Spring 2008 terms
Local Authorities to conduct audit need of buildings, equipment etc.	By December 2007
Audit dining room & kitchen provision for facilities which are fit for purpose	By December 2007
Caterers to audit school catering skills conducting needs analysis & training all staff	By December 2007
School Food Policies to be in place	End Summer term 2008
Banned foods to be removed & not allowed on premises	End Summer term 2008
Food standards to be implemented by	September 2008
Other school food & drink	September 2008
Nutrient Standards implementation period	Primary Schools 2008-2009 Secondary Schools 2008-2010

NOTE: Following consultation, a more detailed timetable will be incorporated as part of the **Appetite for Life Action Plan**

Appetite for Life - Schools consulted

- 1 Ysgol Gynradd Amlwch
- 2 Ysgol Gymuned Garreglefn, Amlwch
- 3 Ysgol Gynradd Llangoed, Beaumaris
- 4 Ysgol Ty Mawr, Llangefni
- 5 Ysgol Corn Hir, Llangefni
- 6 Ysgol Y Parch Thomas Ellis, Holyhead
- 7 Ysgol Bronyfoel, Caernarfon
- 8 Ysgol Bro Plennydd, Pwllheli
- 9 Ysgol Llidiardau, Pwllheli
- 10 Ysgol Eifion Wyn, Porthmadog
- 11 Ysgol Gynradd Bontnewydd, Caernarfon
- 12 Ysgol Gynradd Brithdir, Dolgellau
- 13 Ysgol Gynradd Llanbedr, Llanbedr
- 14 Ysgol Cefn Coch, Penrhyndeudraeth
- 15 Ysgol Ffridd Y Llyn, Bala
- 16 Ysgol Gynradd Llandwrog, Caernarfon
- 17 Ysgol Glanwydden, Llandudno
- 18 Ysgol Gynradd Tal-Y-Bont, Conwy
- 19 Ysgol Craig Y Don, Llandudno
- 20 Llangwm C.P. School, Corwen
- 21 Ysgol Pencae, Penmaenmawr
- 22 Blessed William Davies, Llandudno
- 23 Ysgol Llywelyn, Rhyl
- 24 Ysgol Frongoch, Denbigh
- 25 Ysgol Cyffylliog, Ruthin
- 26 Ysgol Bro Fammau, Llanaman - Yn - Lal
- 27 Borthyn V.C. Primary School, Ruthin
- 28 Westwood Community Primary School, Buckley
- 29 Ysgol Y Fron C.P. School, Hollywell
- 30 Sealand C.P. School, Sealand
- 31 Sandycroft C.P. School, Mancot
- 32 Saltney Ferry C.P. School, Saltney Ferry
- 33 Ysgol Derwenfa, Leeswood
- 34 St Mary's R.C. Primary School, Pen Goch
- 35 Pentrobin Primary School, Penymynydd
- 36 Garth C.P. School, Llangollen
- 37 Ysgol Y Ponciau, Ponciau
- 38 Park Junior School, Llay
- 39 Gwenfro Junior C.P. School, Wrexham
- 40 Barker's Lane C.P. School, Wrexham
- 41 Ysgol Y Rhos, Wrexham
- 42 Hanmer Primary School, Whitchurch
- 43 Ysgol Gynradd Carno, Carno
- 44 Machynlleth C.P. School, Machynlleth

- 45 Llanidloes C.P. School, Llanidloes
- 46 Maesyrrhandir C.P. School, Newtown
- 47 Crossgates C.P. School, Llandrindod Wells
- 48 Ysgol Cynlais, Ystradgynlais
- 49 Cradoc C.P. School, Brecon
- 50 Gungrog C.I.W. Infant School, Welshpool
- 51 Ffynnon Gynydd Church in Wales School, Glasbury-On-Wye
- 52 Llansantffraid C.I.W.A., Llansantffraid
- 53 Ysgol Gynradd Aberaeron, Aberaeron
- 54 Ysgol Gynradd Llanarth, Ceredigion
- 55 Capel Seion Primary School, Aberystwyth
- 56 Ysgol Gynradd Penllwyn, Aberystwyth
- 57 Ysgol Babanod Aberteifi, Aberteifi
- 58 Y.G. Glynarthen, Llandysul
- 59 Y.G. Llanddewi Brefi, Tregaron
- 60 Ysgol Craig Yr Wylfa, Borth
- 61 Ysgol Gynradd Brynconin, Llandysilio
- 62 Hakin C.P. Junior Mixed School, Hakin
- 63 Wolfcastle C.P. School, Wolfcastle
- 64 Tavernspite C.P. School, Whitland
- 65 Neyland C.P. Infant & Nursery, Neyland
- 66 Angle V.C. School, Pembroke
- 67 Tenby Infants V.C. School, Tenby
- 68 St Teilos V.R.C. School, Tenby
- 69 Llechyfedach C.P. School, Llanelli
- 70 Gwynfryn CP School, Llanelli
- 71 Ysgol Gynradd Saron, Rhydaman
- 72 Ysgol Gynradd Llanedy, Pontardulais
- 73 Llangadog C.P. School, Carmarthenshire
- 74 Ysgol Gynradd Brynsaron, Llandysul
- 75 Ysgol Gynradd Bynea, Llanelli
- 76 Furnace C.P. School, Llanelli
- 77 Ysgol Gymraeg Brynsierfel, Llanelli
- 78 Pembrey C.P. School, Pembrey
- 79 Halfway C.P. School, Llanelli
- 80 Stebonheath C.P. School, Llanelli
- 81 Cadle Primary School, Swansea
- 82 Graig Infants School, Swansea
- 83 Morrision Primary School, Swansea
- 84 Terrace Road Primary School, Swansea
- 85 Arfryn Primary School, Swansea
- 86 Y.G.G. Bryn-Y-Mor, Swansea
- 87 Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Garnswllt, Ammanford
- 88 Penyrheol Primary School, Swansea
- 89 Pontybrenin Primary School, Swansea
- 90 St Josephs Cathedral Junior School, Swansea
- 91 Abergwynfi Junior School, Port Talbot
- 92 Ysgol GGD Cwmllynfell, Swansea
- 93 Godre'rgraig Primary School, Swansea
- 94 Pontrhydyfen Primary School, Pontrhydyfen

- 95 Llangiwg Primary School, Pontardawe
- 96 Y.G.G. Blaendulais, Neath
- 97 Melin Infant School, Neath
- 98 Alderman Davies C.I.W. School, Neath
- 99 Bryntirion Infants School, Bridgend
- 100 Litchard Junior School, Bridgend
- 101 Oldcastle Infants School, Bridgend
- 102 Tynyrheol Primary School, Bridgend
- 103 Afon-Y-Felin Primary School, Bridgend
- 104 Llancarfan C.P. School, Barry
- 105 St Athan Primary School, Barry
- 106 Ysgol Gynradd Gwaun Y Nant, Gibbonsdown
- 107 Cadoxton Community Primary, Barry
- 108 Wick Marcross C.I.W. Primary, Cowbridge
- 109 Cilfynydd Primary School, Pontypridd
- 110 Cwmclydach Junior School, Tonypany
- 111 Cymmer Infants School, Porth
- 112 Comin Infants School, Aberdare
- 113 Llwyncelyn Infants School, Porth
- 114 Pontyclun Primary School, Pontyclun
- 115 Llwydcoed Primary, Aberdare
- 116 Ynysboeth Infant School, Mountain Ash
- 117 Glenboi Primary School, Mountain Ash
- 118 Tylorstown Primary School, Rhondda
- 119 Ysgol Gymraeg Abercynon, Abercynon
- 120 Gwaunmeisgyn Primary School, Pontypridd
- 121 Our Ladys R.C. Primary School, Mountain Ash
- 122 Pantysgallog Primary School, Merthyr Tydfil
- 123 Goetre Junior School, Merthyr Tydfil
- 124 Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd-Y-Grug, Merthyr Tydfil
- 125 Pontllanfraith Primary School, Blackwood
- 126 Fochriw Primary School, Bargoed
- 127 St Gwladys Junior School, Bargoed
- 128 Ystrad Mynach Junior School, Hengoed
- 129 Plasyfelin Junior School, Caerphilly
- 130 Ysgol Gymraeg Trelyn, Blackwood
- 131 Machen Primary School, Newport
- 132 Y.G. Cwm Gwyddon, Newport
- 133 Ysgol Bro Sannan, Bargoed
- 134 St Helen's Catholic Primary School, Caerphilly
- 135 Abertillery Primary School, Abertillery
- 136 St Illtyd's, Abertillery
- 137 Penygarn Infant School, Pontypool
- 138 Pontnewydd Primary School, Cwmbran
- 139 New Inn Infants School, Pontypool
- 140 St David's R.C. Jnr. & Inf., Cwmbran
- 141 Clydach C.P. School, Abergavenny
- 142 Rogiet C.P. School, Newport
- 143 Durand Primary School, Caldicot
- 144 Cross Ash C.P. School, Abergavenny

- 145 Magor V.A. Primary School, Newport
- 146 Maindee C.P. School, Newport
- 147 Millbrook Infant School, Newport
- 148 Duffryn Junior School, Newport
- 149 Alway Primary, Newport
- 150 St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School, Newport
- 151 Baden Powell Primary School, Cardiff
- 152 Roath Park Primary School, Cardiff
- 153 Bryn Hafod Primary School, Cardiff
- 154 Eglwys Wen Primary School, Cardiff
- 155 Glyncoed Junior School, Cardiff
- 156 Ysgol-Y-Wern, Cardiff
- 157 Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, Cardiff
- 158 St Joseph's R.C. Primary School, Cardiff
- 159 Christ The King R.C. Primary School, Cardiff
- 160 Ysgol Ardudwy, Harlech
- 161 Ysgol Glan Y Mor, Pwllheli
- 162 Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy, Llanrwst
- 163 Mold Alun School, Mold
- 164 Ysgol-Y-Grango, Wrexham
- 165 Sir Thomas Picton School, Haverfordwest
- 166 Ysgol Gyfun Y Strade, Llanelli
- 167 St John Lloyd R C School, Llanelli
- 168 Bishopston Comprehensive School, Swansea
- 169 Cwmtawe Comprehensive School, Swansea
- 170 Porthcawl Comprehensive School, Bridgend
- 171 Barry Comprehensive School, Barry
- 172 Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Pontypridd
- 173 Ferndale Community School, Ferndale
- 174 Oakdale Comprehensive School, Blackwood
- 175 Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni, Blackwood
- 176 Ebbw Vale Comprehensive School, Ebbw Vale
- 177 Trevethin Community School, Pontypool
- 178 Bassaleg School, Newport
- 179 Llanishen High School, Cardiff
- 180 Michaelston Community College, Cardiff

Assessment of Relevance: The Screening Process Report

Assessor's name:	Ruth Conway
Department:	Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
Policy/function assessed:	Food and nutritional standards in schools
Date:	May 2006
Outcome of the screening process:	A full impact assessment is not required
Counter signature by line manager/team or leader/head of department agreeing with outcome decision	Alan Lansdown

1. Identifying the main aims of the policy

1.1 What is the purpose of the proposed policy? What evidence is there for the need for the policy?

To improve the quality and nutritional standards of school meals, and to further develop a consistent and coherent approach to driving forward improvements in food and nutrition in our schools.

Building the Evidence Annex C of Appetite for Life reviews some of the key evidence in this area and addresses the work on nutrition in schools that is currently being undertaken by the Welsh Assembly Government. Responses to the consultation exercise on the Food & Fitness Action Plan for Children & Young People also supported the need to do more work on food and nutrition in our schools.

1.2 What are you trying to achieve through the proposed policy, and why?

To deliver a reduction in pupils' consumption of saturated fats, salt and sugar and an increase in the consumption of fruit, vegetables and other foods containing essential nutrients during the school day.

In addition to the obvious health benefits, increasing evidence suggests that pupils who eat healthy balanced meals and who have access to drinking water display better concentration, improved attention spans, are less likely to be hyperactive, and are calmer and more alert in class.

1.3 Who is intended to benefit from the proposed policy, and how?

Who? - All children and young people attending registered maintained schools in Wales.

How? - By helping children and young people to achieve a healthy lifestyle through educating them to eat and enjoy a healthy well balanced diet and also by raising school performance.

1.4 Is responsibility for the proposed policy shared with another organisation? *NB: If a partnership is involved in delivering the policy and you are only one of several bodies in its membership, you will still need to consider it's relevance but should involve all members of the partnership in the process.*

Responsibility for developing and delivering the policy is shared across the membership of the Food in Schools Working Group. However the Welsh Assembly Government will be in the lead in driving through any changes to this policy area. Coordinator.

2. Collecting information

2.1 What up to date and reliable information (census, research, survey or monitoring data for instance) is available in respect of the issues and the beneficiaries your policy affects?

Building the Evidence Annex C of Appetite for Life reviews some of the key evidence in this area and addresses the work on nutrition in schools that is currently being undertaken by the Welsh Assembly Government. In addition, Welsh Assembly Government officials visited a sample of schools across Wales to gain an insight into what forms general practice regarding the provision of school meals. This includes reference to the responses to the consultation exercise on the Food & Fitness Action Plan for Children & Young People also supported the need to do more work on food and nutrition in our schools. All our children and young people need to receive consistent and clear messages regarding dietary advice.

2.2 Can you examine data derived from ethnic monitoring conducted by your own organisation? If so, what is the quality of this data (e.g. how effective are response rates in ethnic monitoring systems? how recent is it? what coverage and relevance does it have?) and what steps are being taken to improve it?

The Welsh Assembly Government has access to a number of data sources relating to take up of school meals and derived (at least in part) from ethnic monitoring including:
Annual School Census and HBSC Survey (every four years).
The data available is relevant but it is not comprehensive. A more robust framework for the evaluation of this policy is proposed which over time should improve the data available and facilitate better focused interventions.

2.3 If no relevant data is currently available are you able to draw on the experience of similar organisations implementing similar policies?
If so, specify.

In addition to data referred to in 2.1 we have also drawn on experience of Scotland in developing Hungry for Success and England in developing Turning the Tables. The Food in Schools Working Group, as a result of its membership consisting of a wide range of organisations, were able to draw on a range of skills and experience relevant to this policy area.

<p>2.4 If no relevant data is available, is it practicable to carry out a study, survey or simple consultation exercise to fill in the gap? <i>If so, what plans might you develop for these?</i></p>
<p>Proposal 3 of Appetite for Life recommends that further urgent work should be undertaken to investigate how the dietary needs of minority ethnic groups in relation to the proposed nutrient and food based standards can effectively be met.</p>
<p>2.5 If you consider at this stage that the policy is relevant to race equality but you cannot find adequate sources of data to guide even an initial screening process, what recommendations are you making to colleagues to accelerate the establishment of an effective information base, beyond those already set out in your organisation's race equality schemes and action plans?</p>
<p>As this policy is targeted at all children and young people attending maintained schools in Wales we are reviewing all the data currently collected.</p>
<p>3. Deciding if the policy is relevant in respect of the any of the strands of the duty to promote race equality</p>
<p>3.1 Will the proposed policy involve or have consequences for the people your organisation serves and/or employs? <i>If so, what are these?</i></p>
<p>Yes - it will impact on the food and drink provided for all children and young people at school. All children and young people need to receive consistent messages regarding healthy eating.</p>
<p>3.2 Could these consequences differ according to people's racial group, for instance because they have different needs or different ability to access a service? <i>If so, set out how.</i></p>
<p>No - all food and drink (including that provided for those who have special dietary requirements) provided will be required to meet the same nutrient and food based standards set out in Appetite for Life.</p>
<p>3.3 Will any aspect of the proposed policy discriminate indirectly against people from some racial groups? <i>If so, on what grounds can the policy be justified as a proportionate means to achieve a justifiable objective?</i></p>
<p>There is the possibility that choice may continue to be limited on some occasions for those with special dietary requirements. The practicalities of delivering the school meals service need to be fully considered in looking at ways of addressing the needs of this group. Proposal 3 of Appetite for Life recognises the need to undertake further work in this area.</p>
<p>3.4 In what ways may the proposed policy affect relations between certain racial groups, for example because it may be seen as favouring a particular group or denying opportunities to others?</p>
<p>None.</p>

<p>3.5 Is the proposed policy likely to damage relations between any particular racial group(s) and your organisation? <i>If so, in what ways?</i></p>
No.
4. Recording the decision on relevance
<p>4.1 If the answers to the questions in section 3 is 'No' and you consider that the policy is not relevant to race equality this decision should be noted and approved by line managers. If the decision is that relevance is 'low' then a full impact assessment is not required.</p>
<p>4.2 If the answers to any of the questions are 'Yes' in respect of any or all of the three strands, then the policy is relevant to your organisation's responsibilities under its race equality duty. You need to record whether or not you consider this relevance to be low, medium or high and briefly explain your choice.</p>
Low - for the reasons outlined in 3.1 and 3.3.
<p>4.3 If you have assessed relevance as 'High' then you should proceed to a full impact assessment.</p>
n/a
<p>4.4 If you have assessed relevance as medium, you should consider whether a full assessment is practical and proportionate at this stage.</p>
n/a
<p>4.5 If you decide for clear practical reasons that an impact assessment is necessary but cannot be conducted in full at this stage, you need to set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gaps in the information available which need to be filled. • The timetable against which a better impact assessment should be delivered in the future. <p>And ensure that all recommendations are specifically approved by line managers.</p>
n/a

Policy Gateway Summary

The results below represent the agreed outcomes of **Appetite for Life** being tested against the Assembly's Integration Tool that involved representatives from **DELLS, OCMO, DEIN, DPSP and DEPC and external**. *Those representatives agree this is an accurate overview of their collective comments.*

Key: **U** - Undermining; **P** - Poor; **N** - Neutral; **F** - Fair; **G** - Good; **E** - Excellent

Wales: A Better Country Commitment	Overall Contribution					Explanation	
	U	P	N	F	G	E	
1. Promoting the Economy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The consensus of opinion was that this policy would over time have a positive impact on goods and services procured locally. There would also be the opportunity for businesses in Wales to develop new products in response to the changes proposed. Longer term it should also contribute to improving the health of the workforce.
2. Action on social justice for communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A key element of this policy is that the free meal benefit should be of the same quality and quantity for all families, regardless of where they live and that local authorities should work to achieve full take up of free school meal entitlement.

Policy Gateway Summary (continued)

Key: **U** - Undermining; **P** - Poor; **N** - Neutral; **F** - Fair; **G** - Good; **E** - Excellent

Wales: A Better Country Commitment	Overall Contribution					Explanation
3. Action in our built and natural environment	U <input type="checkbox"/>	P <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	Although overall it was recognised that this policy could to a degree have a positive impact on recycling, waste management and local production these were not the primary policy aims of the activities outlined in the report.
4. Strengthening Wales' cultural identity	U <input type="checkbox"/>	P <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	Again, it was recognised that although food is an important part of Welsh Culture, this policy was not particularly aimed at strengthening Wales identity.
5. Ensuring better prospects in life for future generations	U <input type="checkbox"/>	P <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	This is largely based on increasing evidence that suggests that pupils who eat a healthy balanced diet are able to perform better at school and also that eating habits formed early in life are likely to follow into adulthood. It should provide children and young people with skills for life that they in turn can pass on to their children.

Policy Gateway Summary (continued)

Key: U - Undermining; P - Poor; N - Neutral; F - Fair; G - Good; E - Excellent

Wales: A Better Country Commitment	Overall Contribution					Explanation	
	U <input type="checkbox"/>	P <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Supporting healthy independent lives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Again, this is based on the evidence of the importance of a healthy balanced diet to children and young people's health and wellbeing. This policy is primarily aimed at children and young people however it also has the potential to be much wider in effect.
7. Promoting openness, partnership & participation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The development and delivery of this policy is very much focused on a partnership approach drawing on the skills and expertise of relevant stakeholders. There is also recognition of the importance of engaging with children and young people particularly through school council engagement.

Summary Comments:

This is an overall summary of how the policy set out in Appetite for Life will contribute to the key objectives set out in Wales: A Better Country.

Signed..... *Date:*