Better Eating, Better Learning

A New Context for School Food



COSLA

The Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba



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The Scottish Government, Edinburgh 2014

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Ministerial and COSLA Foreword

National and local government are united in our commitment to improving the wellbeing of our children and young people to give them the best possible start in life. Huge benefits accrue from investing in children and young people from an early stage. The short-term dividends we reap include happier and healthier children and young people ready to learn and able to play a positive role in their schools and communities. The longer term rewards are in the health, wellbeing, and economic prosperity of Scotland. What our children and young people eat and, importantly, their understanding of how it arrives on their plate and the impact it has on their health are an important part of this.

So food in school matters – *both* what children and young people eat and what they learn about. It impacts upon their health, on their education, and on the environment and economy. That is why national and local government have invested so heavily in school food over the past decade. Since the launch of *Hungry for Success* in 2003, food served in schools has had to meet significantly higher standards. These standards are enacted in legislation which makes health promotion a central purpose of schooling. And with the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, we have made great strides in providing children and young people with the knowledge and skills they need to help them make better lifestyle choices. We want to build on this progress so that food in schools is properly recognised and understood as a substantial financial and ethical investment which supports young people into adulthood.

So why 'A New Context'?

- The health and wellbeing of our young people is a responsibility we all share. A decade on from *Hungry for Success* we need the renewed commitment of teachers, parents, children and young people, caterers and suppliers, working in partnership, at national and local level, to ensure that Scotland's children and young people enjoy a healthier, thriving, sustainable and resilient food future.
- With the environmental challenges we face in the coming years, it is clear that transformational change is essential if we are to become a sustainable food nation. Food production methods and what we eat are central to achieving this.
- Health challenges persist. It is crucially important that we develop a nation of knowledgeable consumers who, through making the right food choices, will reap benefits for their own health while supporting our goal to become a sustainable nation.
- School food and food education present significant opportunities to rise to these health, environmental and educational challenges, but these opportunities are not always obvious. *Better Eating, Better Learning* sets school food in a strategic context and by doing so shows how everyone involved in school food can have an impact.

At a local and national level, we need to face the challenges and grasp the opportunities by:

- **using school food as part of a whole school approach to support learning as an integral part of the curriculum;**
- **serving school food that drives dietary behaviour change and supports our health and environmental goals;**
- **championing fresh, seasonal, local and sustainable produce;**
- **celebrating provenance and ethical sourcing;**
- **inspiring future generations who are proud of, and contribute to, Scotland's ambition as the 'Land of Food and Drink';**
- **ensuring that school food provides affordable access to good nutrition for all children and young people and optimising the uptake of school meals, in particular for those children and young people receiving free meals; and**
- **supporting children and young people, their parents, teaching and catering staff, to enjoy and value school food for its quality, provenance and appeal and in doing so to enable them to understand the relationship between school food, culture, health and the environment.**

This document sets the agenda for the coming decade to help drive further improvements to school food and children and young people's learning about food and its contribution to their overall health and wellbeing. Let us ensure that school food takes its place at the forefront of a revolution in Scotland's food culture.



Michael Russell
Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning



Richard Lochhead
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Environment



Douglas Chapman
Children and Young People Spokesperson, COSLA

Foreword – Sir Harry Burns, Chief Medical Officer for Scotland

Mary Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With silver bells, and cockle shells,
And pretty maids all in a row.

Our children are growing up in Scotland in the 21st century and like many in this traditional 18th century poem, and as many a parent can testify, they are still contrary and fickle, particularly in their eating habits and preferences. Poor nutrition and a limited palate in early childhood are factors in the continuing health problems presented by obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

However we should pause and congratulate the work all those involved with schools have undertaken since *Hungry for Success* was first published. The Academies of Medical Royal Colleges in their unprecedented report *Measuring Up – the medical profession's prescription to the obesity crisis*[1], praised Scotland's approach of mandatory food and nutrition-based standards applied to all schools and rightly noted that these standards are a powerful success story in changing children's eating habits.

School can play a fundamental part in developing a child's relationship with food, not only in understanding where it comes from and its health benefits but also in providing the opportunity to experiment and to taste. This becomes of paramount importance in less advantaged households where concern over waste, hunger and expense can have such a limiting effect.

At this present moment in time school represents one of the best opportunities to educate children in healthy lifestyles and change behaviour in a positive, meaningful way. We need to acknowledge that this presents a challenge to councillors and local authorities as they fund and plan such services, to all the school staff whether they teach or support the provision of education and life in their school community, but most of all to parents to investigate, understand, and support the provision of these services.

On this issue, rather like that other childhood chore of brushing your teeth, once learned we cannot say it has been achieved and leave it, we have to continue because it is good for all of us – a doctor told you so!



Sir Harry Burns
Chief Medical Officer for Scotland

1 http://www.aomrc.org.uk/about-us/news/item/doctors-unite-to-deliver-prescription-for-uk-obesity-epidemic.html



Section 2
Introduction

The Working Group's aim

As a Working Group, we share a vision to improve the life chances of our children and young people through the food choices they make now and in the future.



There is a good story to tell about school food and drink, and food education in Scotland and we recognise that there is significant activity aimed at providing our children with the best start in life. However success is not always recognised and is not consistent across Scotland, and there are still many misconceptions which hold back progress. We need to do much more if we are to give all our children and young people the start they deserve and to build on the progress we have worked hard to achieve.

The policy landscape has changed significantly over the last 10 years, which brings challenges, but also considerable opportunities. To help those involved in school food and drink provision or food education rise to these challenges and opportunities, this document offers inspiration and support by sharing ideas and encouraging action. It applies across the whole of the school day, and even beyond. It necessarily has a teaching and school catering focus but will also be of interest to others who can support teachers and caterers in their task. This includes children and young people, parents and carers, local authorities, health boards, food producers, and industry. It encourages a joint approach to improve the effectiveness of school food delivery. Although more relevant to primary, secondary and special schools, it will also be useful for those with responsibilities for teaching and feeding children in early years settings.[2]

This document will help you step back and consider **the new context for school food**. It will help you challenge what you already do, discuss how you can make it better and then work with others to drive change forward. It poses reflective questions throughout, is accompanied by a self-evaluation tool[3] intended for repeated use, and will lead you to an on-line 'resource page' which includes additional support and information.

By using the document and tool to support a review of your current practice we want you to see the value of school food and food education and how this extends well beyond children and young people in school, and to identify and recognise effective practice as well as where further improvements can be made. We believe that **better eating** and **better learning** now will bring lasting consequences for Scotland's future prosperity.

The policy and legislative context

Hungry for Success

Sir Harry Burns set out in his foreword that the origins of the school food revolution in Scotland lie in a report published in 2003, *Hungry for Success – A Whole School Approach to School Meals*.[4] This report set out a number of recommendations designed to revolutionise school lunches and improve health and wellbeing at school in general. Over the following years local authorities and schools embraced the challenges they collectively faced and worked hard to implement the recommendations.

2 http://www.healthscotland.com/documents/21130.aspx

3 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/bettereatingtool

4 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2003/02/16273/17566

The Act

Building on the significant achievements of *Hungry for Success*, the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007[5] was unanimously approved by the Scottish Parliament. This Act made health promotion a central purpose of schooling and set out a number of duties, which included:

- a duty on Scottish Ministers, education authorities and managers of grant-aided schools to endeavour to ensure that schools are health-promoting;
- a duty for education authorities and managers of grant-aided schools to ensure that all food and drink provided in schools complies with nutritional requirements specified by Scottish Ministers in regulations;
- a duty on education authorities to promote school lunches and, in particular, free school lunches;
- a duty on education authorities to protect the identity of those receiving free school lunches; and
- a duty on education authorities and managers of grant-aided schools to have regard to any guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers on the application of the principles of sustainable development when providing food or drink or catering services in schools.

The legislation emphasises the valuable role of schools in improving the nutritional quality of children's diets. By promoting consistent messages about food and nutrition within a health-promoting school environment, the contribution of the school food service is recognised in terms of health and education outcomes.

The Regulations

The Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2008[6] followed the Act, and aligned the nutritional standards for all food and drink in schools with the Scottish Government's dietary goals for the population. The duties under the Act and the standards in the Regulations are monitored by Education Scotland Health and Nutrition Inspectors as part of the national programme of school inspections.

Curriculum for Excellence

Curriculum for Excellence,[7] implemented across Scotland in 2010, aims to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they need to flourish in life, learning and work – it ultimately aims to improve young people's achievements, attainment and life chances. It encourages links across all aspects of the curriculum to provide breadth and depth to learning.

Health and wellbeing, alongside numeracy and literacy, is one of the three core areas that are the 'responsibility of all', as well as being one of the eight curricular areas of the broad general education to which all children and young people are entitled.

5 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/05/08160456/0

6 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/09/12090355/0

7 http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/index.asp

One of the topics under health and wellbeing is 'food and health', where learners will develop their understanding of a healthy diet and acquire knowledge and skills to make healthy food choices and help to establish lifelong healthy eating habits.

Recipe for Success: Scotland's National Food and Drink Policy

Scotland's first national food and drink policy, published in 2009,[8] aims to promote Scotland's sustainable economic growth in relation to food and drink. It focuses attention on the need for the Scottish Government and the food and drink industry to address issues of quality, health and wellbeing and environmental sustainability while recognising the necessity to promote affordability and access to good food and nutrition.

Procurement Reform Bill/Act

The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Bill[9] was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 3 October 2013 and will place a duty on relevant contracting authorities to comply with sustainable procurement. The proposed aim of the Bill is to establish a national legislative framework for sustainable public procurement that supports Scotland's economic growth. It will do this by delivering social and environmental benefits including community benefits, supporting innovation and promoting public procurement processes and systems which are transparent, streamlined, standardised, proportionate, fair and business-friendly.

Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreements

The Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) is an explicit and binding 'plan for place' agreed with the Scottish Government. It must include clear and formally agreed outcomes, indicators and targets, for which all partners are jointly accountable in line with their respective contributions. The Community Planning Partnerships (CPP) must ensure that the SOA is resourced: partners must contribute appropriately and will be held to account for those contributions by the CPP through a strong role for local elected members, and by the Scottish Government. There are six priorities including: safer and stronger communities and reducing offending; health inequalities and physical activity; and economic recovery and growth.

If it is recognised corporately as a key service, school food is able to contribute significantly to achieving the commitments which the local authority has set out in its Single Outcome Agreement and Community Plan.

8 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/06/25133322/0

9 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Procurement/policy/ProcurementReform

To strengthen the school food agenda it is vital that local authority managers and decision-makers take account of developments such as:

- The Single Outcome Agreement
- Curriculum for Excellence
- The Public Duties Climate Change Guidance 2011
- Obesity Route Map Action Plan
- Scottish Dietary Goals
- Community Planning duties
- The Sustainable Procurement Action Plan 2007 and the Procurement Reform Bill
- The National Food and Drink Policy 2008
- The Christie Commission Report on the Future Delivery of Public Service

A comprehensive description demonstrating how school food can deliver for a range of policies for local authorities and Scotland as a whole, is available on the resource page.[10] It shows why and how these should be taken into account in service planning by local authority school meals services and education. See Annex B for a diagram which illustrates the context for school food in Scotland.

Building on success

Much has been achieved as a result of legislation and policy developments and there is some inspiring work in schools engaging with children and young people through the context of school food. Our model of school food and drink provision and food education has been admired internationally.

We see encouraging trends in the take-up of school meals[11] and increased investment creating valuable food learning experiences for children and young people.[12] In some cases school food and drink is already regarded as an integral part of education and is valued for providing good nutrition for young people while delivering multiple benefits for society.

We want this document to make a real difference. The future challenges around food are recognised in the need to reduce overweight and obesity in the population, to deal effectively with climate change and to build Scotland's resilience as global competition for food increases. We believe that investing in school food now will improve Scotland's health and save money in the longer term. If its central role in health and wellbeing is recognised and it is given the strategic importance it deserves, school food can contribute substantially to our national and local educational, social, economic and environmental objectives.

The benefits of investing in, and recognising the strategic importance of, school food and food education, include:

- children and young people will access better food and have an increased understanding of the importance of food for their physical and mental wellbeing;

10 http://scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/HLivi/schoolmeals/Resources See Annex C for further information about the resource page

11 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/06/7503/6

12 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/Food-Industry/national-strategy/education

- service delivery will improve and dietary and sustainability messages will be developed in the community;
- the food industry will better understand the ethos and drive for health and sustainability through school food;
- Curriculum for Excellence health and wellbeing priorities will be better integrated with the school food service;
- headteachers will be clearer on the role of the school food service within the whole school context;
- those delivering school food will have an improved clarity of purpose, with the service realigned and updated to current policies and legislation allowing better service planning and prioritisation of what matters; and
- school food and food education will contribute more effectively to local government priorities, Scottish policy and legislation.

Approach taken by the Working Group

In producing this document the Working Group engaged widely with the stakeholders to gain a full understanding of the issues and challenges faced. They sought input from children and young people through research by Children in Scotland[13] which drew on a small but representative cross-section of schools in Scotland. The research shows that children and young people are being given the knowledge, skills and experience to ensure that they are able to make the best choices for a long, productive and healthy life. However, it also showed that children do not always put their learning into practice and that schools could pay more attention to children and young people's preferences and also involve them in improvements.

The document is broken down into seven key areas for action:

- Food and Health;
- Food and Learning;
- School Food and Drink Provision;
- The Dining Experience;
- Sustainability through Food;
- Training and Support; and
- Communication and Engagement.

The main document is supported by a self-evaluation tool structured around the seven key areas.

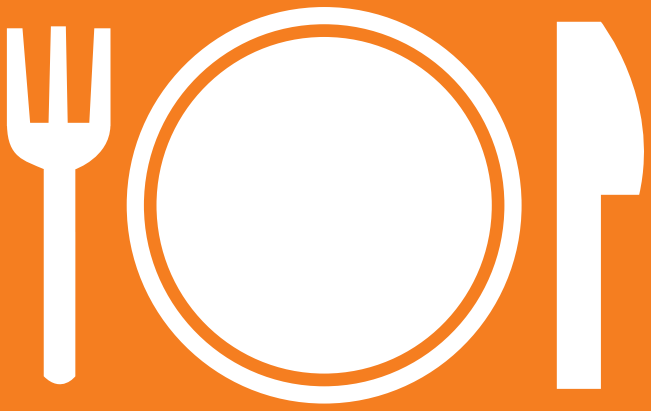
Unsurprisingly there is a lot of overlap between the sections. Readers are encouraged to look at the whole document. A teacher has a role to play in food and drink provision, just as a cook has a role in promoting food education, and a parent has a role to play in both. For reasons of brevity, the term 'parents' is used to refer to parents and carers, and 'school' covers schools and learning centres.

The working group have produced this document and self-evaluation tool to encourage reflection and honest self-evaluation and to inspire action which will bring about improvements to school food and food education.

13 http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk/html/pub_tshow.php?ref=PUB0442

Section 3
Food and Health

THE CHALLENGE: To use school food and drink and food education to drive dietary change and therefore improve the diets of children and young people. To ensure that school food is an exemplar for healthy eating, and that food education supports children and young people to make the right food choices.



Did you know … soft drinks contribute the most added sugar to the diets of children and young people?

Why this matters

Despite huge strides forward in food education and school food provision over the past few years, particularly the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 and the Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2008, the diet of children and young people living in Scotland still falls short of the recommendations for a healthy balanced diet.[14] The eatwell plate[15] shows the types and proportions of foods that make up a healthy, balanced diet.



Schools in Scotland have a duty to ensure that they are health-promoting, and that they adopt a whole school approach by integrating health promotion in every aspect of school life. They are ideally placed to make a positive influence on the dietary choices and health of children and young people. By serving exemplary food and drink across the whole school day, and by extending food education to include the wider community, they can play a central role in achieving the Scottish Dietary Goals.[16] In doing so they can help reduce the unsustainable burden of obesity and serious diet-related conditions like diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers.

Schools can help address health inequalities. Children and young people from low income communities are particularly vulnerable and in Scotland, the prevalence of obesity and overweight is significantly associated with deprivation.[17] Research shows that children and young people living in the most deprived areas of Scotland eat less fruit and vegetables and consume more sugary foods and drinks than those in the least deprived areas.[18]

14 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/scottish-health-survey/Publications
15 http://www.food.gov.uk/scotland/scotnut/eatwellplate/
16 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00421385.pdf
17 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0040/00402627.pdf
18 http://www.foodbase.org.uk//admintools/reportdocuments/777-1-1329_FS424019_FINAL_Pt1.pdf

Did you know ... children aged two to 15 consumed an average of 2.7 portions of fruit and vegetables per day in 2012, compared to the recommended five portions?

Accessing healthy, affordable food can be a real challenge. For some children and young people, especially those entitled to free school meals, a meal provided in school may be their only nutritious meal of the day.

KEY POINTS

Meeting the standards

The Regulations covering the nutritional requirements for food and drink in schools in Scotland, as well as associated guidance, are clearly and helpfully set out in *Healthy Eating in Schools*.[19] This details the food and nutrient standards and provides additional guidance for achieving the standards for school meal provision. It covers the provision outwith the school meal period, including breakfast services, tuck shops, morning and afternoon break services, vending, community cafes and after school clubs.

The Regulations and guidance, which are based on science and evidence, are set with the overall aim of improving the diet of Scotland's children and young people. By following the Regulations and guidance for all school food and drink, schools reduce the amount of high fat, high sugar and salty foods consumed on school premises and encourage consumption of food such as fruits, vegetables, oily fish and whole grain foods required for a healthy, balanced diet as illustrated by the eatwell plate.

What training is in place to support all staff's understanding of relevant aspects of food and health, including the requirements of the Schools Health Promotion and Nutrition Act?

Provision of drinking water and drink standards

The importance of hydration should not be overlooked. Access to free drinking water is important and the Act requires 'that drinking water is made available for every pupil, free of charge'. Consumption of water should be encouraged. It is interesting that research showed that more than 60 percent of children and young people buying lunch outwith school chose water as their lunchtime drink, most days or every day.[20]

Drinks standards, which restrict the provision of sugary drinks for example, are clearly set out in *Healthy Eating in Schools*. Sugar intake amongst children and young people is of particular concern with consumption of soft drinks and confectionary contributing 16 percent to a child's recommended daily intake of sugar.[21]

19 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/09/12090355/0

20 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/beyondgate (available April 2014)

21 http://www.foodbase.org.uk//admintools/reportdocuments/777-1-1329_FS424019_FINAL_Pt1.pdf

Did you know … oily fish must be served in schools at least once every three weeks?

Helping children and young people to make the best food and drink choices

The Regulations allow for a healthy diet and while certain foods and drinks are restricted, children and young people still need to make their own choices from the food and drink on offer. They need to develop an understanding of the importance of healthy food choices – this becomes even more important when they buy lunch outside of school. Curriculum for Excellence provides many opportunities for children and young people to learn about food and health in a wide variety of interesting and cross-curricular ways and is central to developing an understanding about food and health. See Section 4: Food and Learning for some inspiring examples.

Providing food that meets the Regulations and ensuring that children and young people have a sound understanding of the importance of making good dietary choices can only go so far to changing their behaviour. In order to compete with the high street, schools need to consistently offer food that is attractive, tasty and good value, and a dining experience which meets their expectations. Section 5: School Food and Drink Provision and Section 6: The Dining Experience cover these issues in more detail.

This document is supported by a number of other measures aimed at improving the food choices made by children and young people, and therefore improving their health. These include work to support partners to positively influence the wider food environment *Beyond the School Gate* and a framework for voluntary action to support healthy choices.

What steps have you taken to encourage children and young people to try more healthy, fresh and in-season foods, in and out of school?

Partnership working

Health improvement is a key aim of the Scottish Government and continues to provide challenges when it comes to changing behaviour of the wider Scottish population. It is clear that a range of organisations and partners have an interest in improving health, such as the NHS, local authorities, community and third sector partners, although the connections are not always clear as services can be structured differently and responsibilities shared across organisations. It is important for schools and catering services, and others interested in promoting health improvement, to find such connections within their local area, to consider how they can contribute jointly to the shared aims expressed in this document. Public health, GP surgeries, hospital services, leisure and cultural services, environmental health and licencing services and planning, roads and transport departments in local authorities can all support schools and catering services improve the experiences and opportunities for children to promote healthier choices in school.

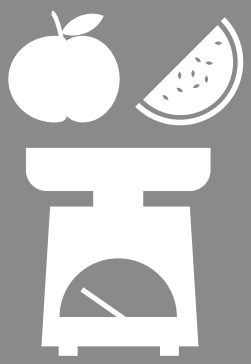
Did you know ... it is advisable to limit fruit juice to mealtimes? When fruit is juiced or blended, sugars are released from the cells of the fruit which can cause damage to teeth.

One local authority's partnership approach to a school based healthy weight programme: High 5 Health & Wellbeing Programme

High 5 is an innovative and flexible health & wellbeing programme, delivered over 8 sessions, by primary school teachers. It was developed through a partnership approach between Education Service teachers and NHS health improvement staff. It contributes to national targets for 'Child healthy weight interventions' but involves the whole class.

High 5 contributes to food literacy, physical literacy and emotional literacy. As such, it changes not only what pupils know about nutrition, but how they feel about food. It also helps to develop critical consumer skills so that pupils are more resilient to the potentially harmful influences of the media, such as food marketing and the fashion industry. Teachers receive CPD sessions in how to run the programme, facilitated by local health improvement specialists. The programme involves school cooks in classroom learning through food tasting sessions linked to specific lesson plans; discussions between the cook and pupils; and a meal evaluation tool called 'Rising Stars' that allows pupils to compare and contrast the nutritional value of school meals with packed lunches.

By March 2014, 9,900 children will have participated in the High 5 programme which will be embedded as part of schools' planning within Curriculum for Excellence to ensure that it continues to impact positively on pupils' health and wellbeing.

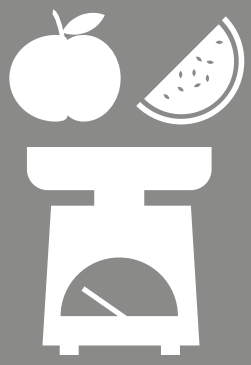


Did you know ... pupils must have easy access at all times to free, fresh drinking water?

How is responsibility and accountability for food and health in school shared between relevant parties?

Food education and partnership working across a community

One primary school is working to create a café driven by sustainable, healthy choices that will operate as a fully functioning business owned and managed by the children, and open to all classes and parent groups. The project is aiming to: develop knowledge of sustainable food choices; encourage lasting changes to lifestyle; ensure parental involvement; and establish partnership links with, for example, the Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET), community education partners and a local college. By firmly embedding food and education and health and wellbeing links across the curriculum using interdisciplinary learning in a meaningful contextualised environment, the café, and its kitchen, will aim to equip children with skills for learning, life and work. By demonstrating how the café could be sustained beyond the funding period, the project received support from the Food for Thought: Education Fund, a partnership between Scottish Government, Education Scotland and Scottish Business in the Community.



Section 4
Food and Learning

THE CHALLENGE: To develop the breadth and depth of children and young people's knowledge, skills and attitudes related to food: where it comes from; how it is produced; what influences food choices and preferences; and the impact that food has on health and wellbeing and the environment.



Did you know … 360,000 people are employed in the food and drink industry in Scotland?

Why this matters

The inclusion of food and health as one of the six areas that make up health and wellbeing within Curriculum for Excellence provides a real opportunity to drive forward food education in Scotland. Learning in this area has a highly significant role to play in supporting dietary improvement and the establishment of lifelong habits which better support health and wellbeing, with the potential to increase attainment and reduce inequality.

When learning is planned and delivered well children and young people are better informed and develop the skills necessary to take responsibility for making appropriate food choices. They become more aware of the many factors which influence their choices and attitudes to food and also develop a better understanding of the economic and environmental impact of food production and processing. As a result of well-planned learning children and young people should develop a better understanding about the link between diet and mental, emotional and social wellbeing as well as the role of food choice on their ability to learn.

'This (school) term sees us needing to harvest our crops at school. The courgettes have turned into marrows and the broad beans are huge. The potatoes this year didn't make it and weeds took over. However, the children are learning and we might not have courgette soup but we can certainly learn to bake the marrows! Curriculum for Excellence sometimes has to be about exploring and discovering and all this through a few seeds in a school garden.'
Primary School Headteacher



Did you know … that the *Food for Thought* poster provides a snapshot of ideas around learning about food? See http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/FoodforThoughtposter_tcm4-723969.pdf

KEY POINTS

Making food part of the curriculum

'Health and wellbeing is central to our curriculum, without this children in our schools would not be in the right place to learn, so outdoor education, health and wellbeing, sustainability and food education are all stepping stones to our learners achieving in other core curricular areas.'
Primary School Headteacher

All schools already include learning in food and health in their programmes and courses for health and wellbeing. Where this works well teachers are skilled in making logical connections across curricular areas and different contexts to consistently reinforce messages around food and health. Teachers can work with a diverse range of partners, including the catering service, to plan and deliver learning which is creative, motivating and engaging. Within schools, partnership working can also support mutually beneficial outcomes for learners. For example putting oily fish on the school menu at the same time as home economics lessons include tastings of oily fish can improve its popularity significantly.



Did you know ... girls were eating less confectionery in 2010 compared with 2006?

Partnerships between schools and industry

The Scottish Food and Drink Federation partners schools and industry to develop approaches that use food and drink as the context for learning utilising the expertise of industry to support teachers to deliver realistic experiences in the classroom. In one example high school students worked on a product development challenge, extending their skills in marketing, finance, packaging, scientific analysis and food tasting. Another school worked with a local business to develop a new baby food project which enabled the young people to understand the needs of infants and the type of jobs available in the food and drink industry.

One secondary school teacher said 'From a teacher's perspective, I have found that having a link with a food company made the course more relevant for the pupils as I could relate it to 'real life'.'

Interdisciplinary learning can lead to creative, innovative, inspiring and connected learning which prevents the narrow view of food education as being only about 'healthy eating'. These experiences highlight the importance of food in Scottish culture, health and business. Integral to the planning of these learning experiences must be how these will develop the critical thinking skills to support independence and progress in learning. Visit the resource page[22] for further information and inspiration.

Consider the extent to which children and young people:

- explore food culture, history and traditions in examining attitudes and values to food and drink;
- investigate the impact of science and technological developments on the food and drink industry;
- analyse environmental and sustainability aspects of food production;
- consider the politics of food through, for example, Scotland's national policy for food and drink, or food imports and exports, or global challenges for the food system;
- learn about the impact of food and drink choices on health and wellbeing, on the economy, on the health service, or on the school food service;
- share and apply what they learn by leading food and drink activities in their school, centre or community; and
- learn about the needs of different groups in society.

22 http://scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/HLivi/schoolmeals/Resources
See Annex C for further information about the resource page

Did you know … that Curriculum for Excellence health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes include 'By taking part in practical food activities and taking account of current healthy eating advice, I can prepare healthy foods to meet identified needs'? HWB 3-30a

Curriculum for Excellence
Experiences and Outcomes provide opportunities for children and young people to explore and appreciate the diverse needs of peope through food.

'I am developing my understanding of the nutritional needs of people who have different conditions and requirements.'
HWB 3-31a, Curriculum for Excellence

'Through explanation and discussion, I can understand that food practices and preferences are influenced by factors such as food sources, finance,culture and religion.'
HWB 2-34a, Curriculum for Excellence

The view from the classroom

School inspection evidence indicates that children and young people understand public health messages. The Children in Scotland research shows that they talk confidently about food and its relationship with wider health and wellbeing.

'You would have more energy'….. if you eat a balanced diet.'

'You would be fit'…….. if you lead a healthy lifestyle.'

'You could become ill'…….. if you don't take a holistic approach to your health.'

'We get the point about healthy eating.'

'You need fruit and veg so your body gets all the vitamins it needs.'

'If you didn't (eat healthily) you wouldn't have strong bones.'

Did you know … that starchy foods are an important part of a healthy diet, and every school lunch should contain at least one serving of starchy food?

But in the research children asked for some more specific information.

'Tell us what is in junk food.'
'Show me the consequences of my eating habits.'

Practitioners need to engage with children and young people to ensure that learning reflects the lives they lead and meets their needs. The Children in Scotland research confirms that children and young people want to understand more about the nutritional regulations applied to school food and why school food is intentionally different from food on the high street, as well as to have more of a say about school food. A strong message from children and young people here is:

'Trust us to help, we are capable.'
'Let us become part of the service we use.'

Involving children and young people in the process of exploring, analysing, researching and resolving issues around food and choices can help develop a range of important skills. This approach encourages a degree of ownership and pride in the catering service and responsibility for their dietary choices.

How do learning experiences offer children and young people exciting and challenging opportunities for them to explore current food and health issues which interest them?



Did you know ... only 40% of children consume oily fish at least once a month?

Participation in International School Meals Day[23] gives teaching and catering staff a chance to work together on a common project, providing an opportunity for learning and development involving parents and the wider community, and perhaps even other countries.

Raising the profile of healthy eating using a cross-curricular project

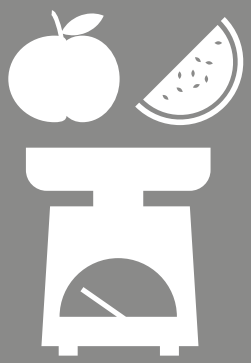
A popular health and wellbeing project was designed to raise the profile of healthy eating in a secondary school through S3 pupils working with school catering staff.

Young people:

- Completed a certificated Basic Food Hygiene Course
- Undertook a school survey using 'survey monkey' to seek views on favourite foods
- Planned menus and assessed nutritional content
- Trained alongside catering staff in the kitchen
- Organised over a 5-week period to plan, publicise, prepare, cook and serve the menus to the whole school

'Overall, it was a hugely popular and successful initiative for the young people and for the whole school. It certainly raised the profile of healthy eating and the canteen, and promoted the value of good food.'

Secondary School Headteacher



23 http://www.internationalschoolmealsday.com/

Did you know ... the Scottish Government funded Food Education Programme has supported 1,240 school projects?

Day-to-day practices in schools – such as coming together at snack time, tasting and trying new foods or enjoying a meal – can support children and young people to develop a positive attitude towards, and a good relationship with, food.

Working together to support learning

Many schools, in pursuit of a whole school approach, have worked with school catering services to strengthen connections between learning, food and health, lunchtime food provision and the choices children and young people make. The school kitchen and dining room are valuable resources for learning and teaching and along with catering staff represent a considerable investment by the local authority. They can make significant contributions to curricular activity. For example; the skills and expertise of catering staff, or the data generated by school meals, can make a positive contribution to learning around literacy and numeracy; the school kitchen can support home economics, food technology or hospitality courses or host work placements for young people; skilled catering staff can join children in classes to share their expertise about school food and health; and the produce from a school garden can be prepared and cooked by catering staff for children to taste. School kitchens and gardens are safe places to work and learn and with goodwill and some adjustment they can become a great teaching resource for active learning.

MYTH
School kitchens, dining rooms and gardens present too many obstacles to be used as learning resources.

MYTH BUSTER
Through a creative, proactive and collaborative approach which identifies and controls risks, obstacles can be overcome.

How do you make use of the dining experience as a context for learning?

Did you know ... the Scottish Government funded Food Education Programme has delivered more than 135,000 individual opportunities for pupils to learn through food education projects?

Practical learning opportunities

Within Curriculum for Excellence the development of practical food skills is a key area of learning for children and young people. The quality of the experiences and opportunities for practical food work varies greatly and will depend on the facilities available, the capacity of staff to deliver and the time available. Creative approaches can overcome these and other barriers.

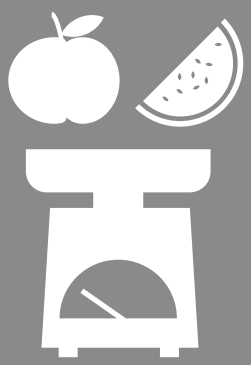
In the early stages many children learn basic skills in food hygiene and the safe use of knives. Close liaison with secondary school Home Economics departments, and a cluster approach to sharing resources between schools have been effective in ensuring a consistent approach through early, primary and secondary stages.

Practical kitchen work experience in primary schools

'We run a programme for primary pupils to carry out work experience in the school kitchen. We initially tried it in one school with four primary 7 pupils assisting in the kitchen one day per week for 5 weeks. The initiative was so successful that we now give all the children the opportunity to assist and we are rolling it out to other schools.

'There are certainly issues with using kitchens and dining rooms as learning resources, particularly around health and safety issues, however, there are ways to effectively control risks. Our programme did not commence until it had full support from parents and also our Health and Safety and Environmental Health colleagues.'

Catering Manager



Did you know ... the Scottish Government funded Food Education Programme has seen over 8,000 primary and secondary school pupils visit food and drink industry related premises?

With careful planning, outdoor settings can be accessible to all and are being used effectively to teach children and young people how to plant and grow food, cook over open fires and produce meals from seasonal foods sourced locally.

Many schools report a range of benefits gained as a result of involvement in practical food growing projects including enhanced community relations and creating partnerships between schools and food businesses. For further details on how your school can contact organisations keen to partner schools visit the resource page.[24]

Involving parents and families

The involvement of parents and families in supporting activity around food and health is essential. By working with them, schools can develop approaches to food education which are inclusive and reflect the diversity of the school community. By engaging parent and family support for food and health activity and involving them in decisions about school food across the school day (including lunches, snacks, tuck shops) learning can be reinforced at home.

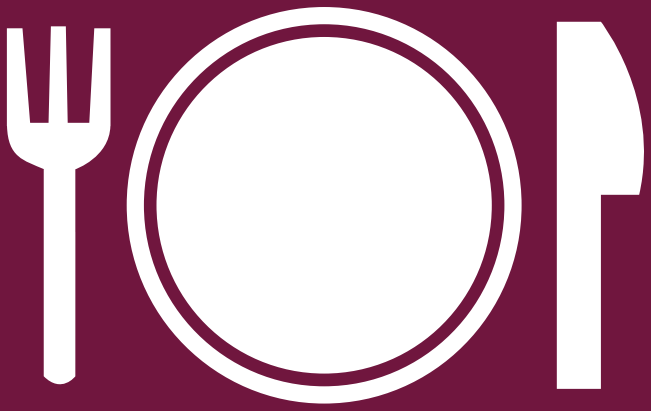
'The parents were naturally a part of the collegiate consultation process when we were developing our whole school approach to health and wellbeing and to food education.'
Primary School Headteacher

Who is involved in planning, delivering and evaluating the impact of food education in your school or centre?

24 http://scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/HLivi/schoolmeals/Resources
See Annex C for further information about the resource page

Section 5
School Food and Drink Provision

THE CHALLENGE: To ensure that everyone involved in school food provision understands the need for inspiring menus which take into account nutrition, health and environmental impacts. School food and drink provision should reinforce children and young people's learning, enabling them to make good food choices that will continue into adulthood.



Did you know … In 2011/12 local authorities in Scotland spent more than £150 million on the provision of school meals?

Why this matters

Healthy Eating in Schools[25] **sets out the standards for all food and drink provided by the school and local authority. The standards are based on scientific evidence and cover breakfast clubs, break times, lunch, tuck shops, vending machines and community cafes on the school campus or adjoining facilities such as a sports amenity. Education Scotland inspections show that compliance with the Regulations and the 2007 Health Promotion Act is high. There is, though, variability across the country and scope for further improvement in complying with the specific nutritional requirements, where these are prescribed, as well as in supporting the spirit of the Act whenever school food is provided.**

However, the extent of the diet related health challenges facing Scotland requires school food and drink provision that not only delivers the statutory food and nutrition standards, but changes food behaviours. School food is about influencing food behaviours for future generations. As part of the 'whole school approach', school food provision can educate children and young people about the importance of healthy food and sustainable living. By refocusing its purpose in these terms the school food service is reset in a new and more ambitious context capable of encouraging behaviour change. Although school food provision must operate to tight commercial disciplines, it should first and foremost be regarded as an education and health service.



25 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/09/12090355/0

Did you know ... that in 2012/13 local authorities spent £66.1 million on food purchasing, and around 90% of that was school food expenditure?

If school food is recognised corporately for what it can deliver, it is able to contribute significantly to achieving the priorities which the local authority has set out in its Community Planning and Single Outcome Agreement.

KEY POINTS

Inspire a positive food culture

As quotes from the Children in Scotland research show, young people as consumers form opinions about the school food service based on the taste, eye appeal and affordability of the food as well as the overall dining experience (see Section 6: The Dining Experience). An enjoyable and satisfying school meals service which inspires young people toward a healthy appreciation of food and therefore a more positive food culture in Scotland has to be at the core of what drives school food and drink provision.

Inspiring a positive food culture requires a fundamental change in diet and menu design. Creative, well-presented menus need to excite, challenge and nourish children and offer an appealing variety of colour, texture and taste. They also need to increase children's 'vocabulary of food' and widen their knowledge and appreciation of different foods and tastes. In creating new menus, caterers need be clear about this objective and take time to think about how it can be achieved. It might be tempting to create menus which offer 'more of the same' based on dishes which are known to be popular, but this needs to be balanced with introducing new tastes, promoting health, connecting to food cultures and purchasing sustainably produced food. The Children in Scotland research, for example, highlighted a desire for more varied and interesting vegetarian options indicating that plant-based foods, grains and pulses are increasingly acceptable and in demand by children and young people.

How do you ensure that food and menus appeal to children and young people but also meet the nutritional standards and health and environmental goals?

Did you know … boys are more likely than girls to eat meat products at least twice a week?



Demonstrating values and a whole school approach to school food

Perceptions about the service directly affect its uptake and viability. Its success depends on the approval of children and young people, parents and teachers. To market school food successfully, good food on the plate needs to be supported by a strong narrative which allows everyone to understand the values that each local authority has adopted for the school food service. This should also explain why school food is intentionally different from the worst excesses of fat, sugar and salt on the high street. The narrative needs to clearly express, at local authority level, the overarching aims, objectives and values for school food in relation to for example, learning about food provenance, dietary health and environmental stewardship.

Above all food needs to be appealing. Displays need to showcase the quality of food used and the care taken in its preparation, and menus should provide information about the range of food on offer. Menus can also educate customers about how school catering deals with sustainability and food safety, the provenance of food, and the priority placed on nutrition, staff training and the environment.

So the food and drink served needs to be part of a whole school approach for health promotion and sustainability. Food on the plate should be promoted in line with learning across the curriculum and there should be a clear connection between the choices on the menu and the values around education and health. This can be achieved through:

- menus which educate young people by providing information about the provenance of food on the school menu and describe the characteristics and flavour of the recipe;
- menus which, through the produce featured, indicate the values of the catering service, e.g. fish from sustainable stocks; and
- menus which make reference to: authority standards (such as fair-trade), the avoidance of genetically modified ingredients, or the healthier cooking methods used.

Did you know … that a choice of at least two types of vegetable and two types of fruit must be provided every day as part of the school lunch?

In leading the whole school, headteachers have a crucial role in creating a mutually supportive relationship with the school's caterer, and finding opportunities to actively endorse the service to parents and children and young people. Overt support and encouragement from teaching staff can be the difference between a poorly perceived school food service and an excellent one.

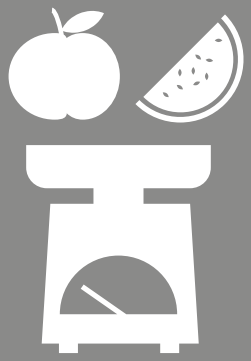
'Our Catering Service see parents' evenings as an important opportunity to provide information, engage directly with parents and promote the benefits to children from having a school meal at lunchtime. Information provided covers all aspects of school meals including menus, special diets, payment methods and eligibility for free school meals. Where the kitchen facilities in the school allow, they also provide school meal tasters. All Cooks in Charge are encouraged to attend, along with our Area Catering Officers, demonstrating a whole school approach to school food.'
Catering Services Manager



Did you know ... that no savoury snacks can be provided as part of the school lunch except for savoury crackers, oatcakes and breaksticks?

Promoting school food in the community

One local authority ran a campaign which featured children whose parents supplied local schools with fresh meat, milk, cheese, fruit and vegetables. This was designed to explain to children and young people, parents and the wider community, through local radio adverts and menu information, why food used in their schools was of great quality and highlighted the care taken to produce the food. Doing this showcased the ethos and credentials that the authority had attached to its school meals service. The campaign raised the perceptions of school food in the area and won the confidence of parents, teachers and children and young people.



Break times, other school food, packed lunches and beyond the school gate

Snacks at break and other times, should be consistent with the spirit of the Act and the health-promoting school. Creative approaches to providing and promoting fruit, vegetables and starchy foods are needed in place of providing cakes, biscuits and fatty and salty products. This is about influencing a change in culture, creating expectations of better health in children and young people, and putting children and young people at the centre of decision making.

The standards for food outwith the school lunch are set out in detail in Section 6 of *Healthy Eating in Schools*.[26]

This does not describe every food that it is possible to provide and what is important is that school caterers adhere to the spirit and intention of the Act as embodied in the health-promoting duty. Only foods which fully reflect the ethos of the health-promoting school should be provided outwith lunch no matter how commercially attractive it might seem to offer less healthy alternatives.

'The cooks have developed a routine where they cook for the children fresh, healthy snacks on a daily basis and the children think it is fantastic. This discourages sweets and the easy pack of crisps. Now break times look and smell wonderful too!'
Primary School Headteacher

26 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/09/12090355/0

Did you know … that fish should be on the menu at least once a week in schools? This should be in addition to canned tuna.

The school has a key role in explaining the positive advantages of school food menus compared to some of the food available beyond the school gate. Complementary guidance *Beyond the School Gate*[27] has been issued for local authorities and other partners on how they can influence the food environment around schools to better support children and young people to make healthier food choices.

In their endeavour to be health-promoting, schools should think about how they can encourage healthy choices for packed lunches whilst being mindful of the impact of rigorous policies which could disadvantage some groups of children. Guidance on packed lunches can be accessed through the resource page.[28]

MYTH
Schools can't influence the food brought into schools by children and young people.

MYTH BUSTER
You can have a school policy that aims to limit less healthy products being brought into school. Involving children and young people and parents in developing and implementing a policy is important to ensure their commitment.

How well do school-based and school-operated food activities demonstrate health promotion in line with the Schools Health Promotion Act?

Balancing food expenditure and quality

School food expenditure also has a powerful contribution to make in maintaining a secure and resilient supply chain of healthy food in Scotland, and given the right information it can make young people proud of Scotland's outstanding larder at the same time as contributing to the economy.

Against a background of rising food costs the caterer needs to maintain the quality of food through innovative procurement and innovative menu development in order to manage the peaks and troughs of cost volatility without resorting to the easy option of compromising quality. This is even more important during challenging economic times. There is a strong link between food and drink provision and the social, economic and environmental pillars of sustainability which is covered more fully in Section 7: Sustainability through Food.

27 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/beyondgate (available April 2014)
28 http://scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/HLivi/schoolmeals/Resources See Annex C for further information about the resource page

Did you know ... that local authorities in Scotland served over 53 million school meals in 2011/12, and around 36% of these were free school meals?

In addition to meeting the requirements of the Health Promotion and Nutrition Act and maintaining nutrient and food-based standards, it is important to consider the quality of produce used, how it has been produced and how it contributes to the wider policy agenda. Procurement decisions should therefore be based on much more than price. For example caterers should explore:

- using fresh and regional food in season, selecting produce when it is at its best quality and therefore least expensive;
- considering how to increase the range of interesting plant-based dishes, seafood, grains and pulses which can have a positive impact environmentally;
- preparing dishes predominantly from fresh ingredients allows caterers to control ingredients, the amount and type of fat, sugar and salt used and avoid unnecessary additives; and
- using a good specification for lean fresh or frozen meat, poultry and dairy that is equivalent to Scottish Standards used by Quality Meat Scotland and other EU accredited industry standards to ensure authenticity and traceability, consumer confidence and a quality which can provide a higher yield with less wastage.

The impact of school food procurement decisions have been assessed in one local authority, using a Social Return on Investment (SROI) approach, as providing wider value in terms of health, social benefit and environmental outcomes.[29] The study commissioned by East Ayrshire Council on primary schools working with the Food for Life Catering Mark suggested that, using a set of assumptions, the SROI index was at least 1:3 meaning that every £1 invested returned £3 in social, economic and environmental value. The research also recognised that behavioural change, at a collective and individual level is key to delivering long-term social, economic and environmental benefits.

Special menus

Nutrition for children and young people with additional support needs should be a priority. In 2011 the Scottish Government produced supplementary guidance on diet and nutrition for children and young people with additional support needs.[30] By striking a balance between providing for individual dietary assessments for medical reasons and creating a menu which ensures food choices are inclusive, menus can help promote equality and offer a healthier life to those who are most vulnerable if diets are poor. Whilst the need for this sort of menu planning is perhaps greater in special schools, all schools should have a documented process in place for dealing with special dietary requirements.

29 http://www.fhascot.org.uk/Resource/the-social-return-on-investment-of-food-for-life-school-meals-in-east-ayrshire

30 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/345779/0115096.pdf

Did you know … that Scotland still has one of the highest rates of obesity in the world – around 31% of children aged two to 15 are overweight or obese?

Menus that embrace different dietary needs and take account of specific guidance about food for religious faiths and beliefs[31] will also widen the range of experience and appreciation of different foods and tastes for all children. Schools that have cultural and ethnic diversity have a wonderful opportunity to reflect this is the food served. In some schools the dining room has become the cultural heart of the school.

How are the dietary needs of all met?

Menus that fit the service style

There is impressive innovation and variety across Scotland in how services are delivered to suit local authority and school needs. School food and drink is provided in schools including onsite kitchens, offsite production kitchens and cook chill/freeze methods. However, school food that is transported requires appropriate delivery systems and menus that specifically take account of time and temperature both of which are critical to maintain quality, nutritional quality and presentation. If food is transported it should therefore be from a managed system and with a menu specifically designed to ensure its nutritional quality and appearance.

Although cash cafeteria remains the predominant style of service, providing a variety of pre-order options can help ensure children receive their preferred choice and improve menu efficiency. Smaller schools may wish to have a more intimate and planned menu more attuned with family dining or restaurant-style options with some limitations on menu choice.

Therefore, no matter the circumstances, caterers can consider different methods of food preparation, distribution and

31 www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/09/12090355/12

Did you know ... that eating habits are the second major cause of poor health, after smoking? A poor diet can lead to cancer, coronary heart disease and diabetes.

menu choice to optimise the service particularly for efficiency, quality and food safety. Changes should always be reviewed in conjunction with children and young people and school management with appropriate assurances given to parents.

MYTH

There is a set portion size for all primary school meals and another for secondary schools.

MYTH BUSTER

The nutritional standards for school lunches are set around the average requirements for children and young people but it is recognised that there will be a wide range of nutritional needs and appetites within a school. There is flexibility to take account of the needs of children providing appropriately sized portions and this should be reflected in the caterer's portion management controls. Some local authorities encourage children and young people to take additional soup, fruit and vegetables to satisfy their appetite and promote the uptake of the additional bread which must be provided every day as a meal accompaniment.

Quality and feedback

Schools and catering staff need to work together to ensure that the food and catering service is monitored and quality assessed and that quality issues are addressed. Usually the expertise to evaluate the technical aspects of delivering a quality catering service sits with the organisation employing the school caterer but the results and action plans should be shared with the school's headteacher. This document is accompanied by a self-evaluation tool to help all parties reflect on school food and drink provision.

Other third party accreditation schemes can be significant in measuring performance of the catering service and the whole school approach for health promotion and nutrition, and help build the confidence of parents, children and young people and teachers in the service provided.

Schools and caterers should work together to encourage feedback on the service to determine areas for improvement and new ideas. See Section 9: Communication and Engagement for more about this.

Did you know ... that The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 places a duty on education authorities to promote school lunches and, in particular, free school lunches?

Messages from the Children in Scotland research:

- *The need for better quality of produce, particularly fruit*
- *The need for greater choice*
- *Food should be labelled more clearly*
- *'We would like to be told where the food comes from'*
- *Improvements in the presentation of canteen food*
- *Better quality for better price*
- *More vegetarian options*
- *More say on the menus*
- *Food tastings*
- *Bigger portions for older pupils*
- *Some young people said it would encourage them to eat school meals if more local and seasonal produce was used*

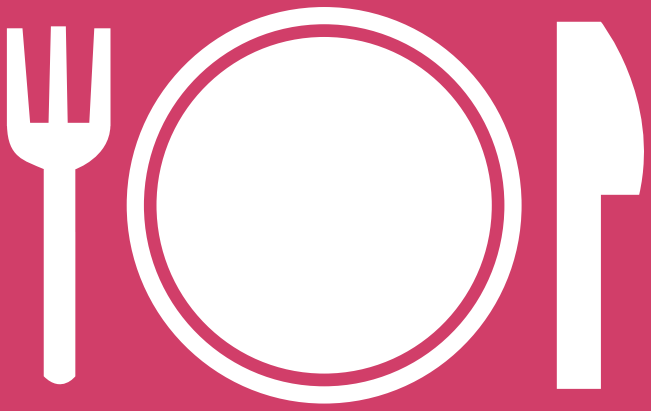






Section 6
The Dining Experience

THE CHALLENGE: To create an experience that encourages positive social interaction in an environment that children and young people choose to use, enjoy and look forward to.



Did you know … more than 97,000 children in Scotland are served a free school lunch on a typical day?

Why this matters

Children and young people, whether they take a school meal or a packed lunch, can benefit from sharing a positive dining experience. A positive dining experience supports children and young people to make healthy food choices which enhance their learning around food and health. It provides them with the opportunity to socialise with friends and to build relationships across the school community and teaches them to value and enjoy their lunchtime experience. Children and young people benefit from an appealing variety of food choices which support a healthy lifestyle - particularly important where a school lunch is, as is the case for some, the only nutritious meal of the day.

Whatever their lunch choice in school, children and young people are entitled to have an equally good dining experience. This should be in a safe, welcoming and nurturing environment which is conducive to dining and learning. In short, the dining experience should support a positive attitude towards food and education and demonstrate a whole school, whole child approach.

KEY POINTS

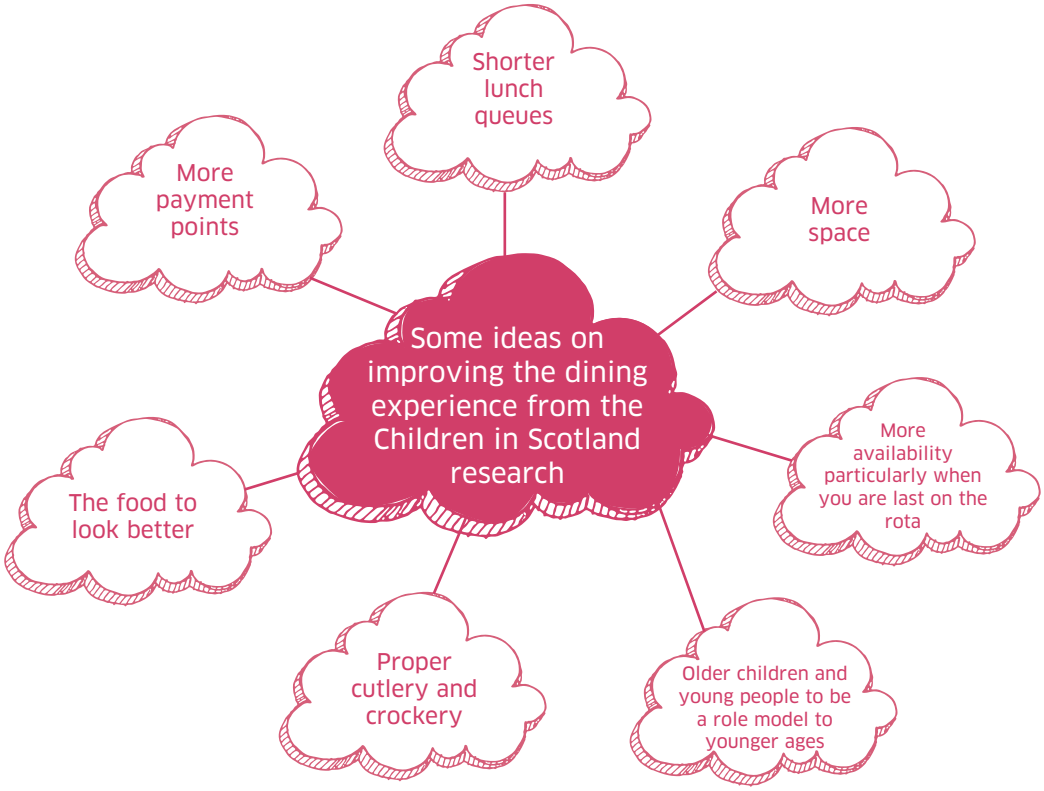
What children and young people want

The dining experience is about more than just the food and drink served. It is about the atmosphere, the queuing times and conditions, the seating, the plates, the cutlery, the interaction with those serving, taking payment, supervising and supporting, the location of the serving hatches or tables, and more. Children and young people can be experienced consumers with prior expectations, perhaps based on word of mouth, opinions of peers, parental perception, and marketing, advertising and branding inside and outside school. Every day these expectations will influence decisions around where to spend lunchtime.

'Our canteens are friendly places with colourful wall displays. The atmosphere and ethos encourages social interaction and the catering service is provided by people who understand the children's needs at lunchtime.'
Primary School Headteacher

Did you know ... boys are more likely than girls to buy their lunch outside school?





Did you know … 4% of 15 year-olds don't eat lunch at all on school days?





'As this is something that matters to children and young people, their voices need to be heard and their views solicited if future changes are going to be effective and meaningful.' Children in Scotland research, key messages and conclusions

It is important to listen to the opinions of children and young people, parents and the whole school about the dining experience. Surveys can be a good way to gather views and information. Also, school working groups can play a useful role in supporting the school meal service and encouraging children and young people to use their school dining hall and to reinforce messages given in class (see Section 4: Food and Learning) about food and health.



How well does the physical environment of the dining area meet the needs of all children and young people?

Social interaction



'Probably the most common reasons given by young people for choosing to eat outside of school at lunchtime was freedom and the wish to socialise.' Children in Scotland research, key messages and conclusions



'Children want to eat, talk to their friends and then get on with the main business of playing and having fun.' Children in Scotland research, key messages and conclusions

A key message from the Children in Scotland, and other, research is that freedom and the wish to socialise is a significant reason for leaving the school at lunchtime. A good school dining experience provides children and young people with opportunities to socialise, for example by allowing those having packed and school lunches to mix. The dining experience provides children and young people across the school with a chance to come together and support each other. It can also be a good opportunity to explore and celebrate cultural diversity.

Did you know ... girls are more likely than boys to eat a school lunch?

How does the school ensure that the dining area provides a positive, inclusive social environment for all?

Management of lunchtimes – queues, length of lunch break, supervision and other things

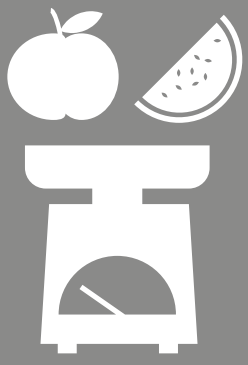
Improving the lunchtime experience in one primary school

'Lunchtime is short, it is noisy in the canteen and children want to rush their food and go out to play. Just some of the moans from our Primary 7s last term. All agreed that the cooks worked really hard and that our lunch menu was 'cool'. How on earth do you manage to serve so many school dinners to so many children in 45 minutes or an hour? Ask the children! We sought their suggestions and solutions using a class by class approach. And while the children were busy mind-mapping in classes the parents were also asked for their ideas by way of questionnaires.

'The solution? Stagger the lunch hours. Infants at 12.15, the mid area at 12.30 and upper at 12.45. The children get to go out first and then a bell brings them back in. Queues are shorter and there is less noise in the canteen.

Socially, the children love their lunch break and by easing congestion, we were also letting children sit for slightly longer in the lunch hall. The children are pleased with the new arrangements and the staff notice a difference in the noise level. We've also made changes to our payment and food service systems and queuing has reduced.'

Primary School Headteacher



Did you know ... that more than 305,000 children in Scotland take a school lunch on a typical day?

Many schools have found creative ways to improve management of lunchtimes and in doing so remove barriers to using the school meals service. Some schools use existing space such as unused classrooms or common areas as additional dining space; others reduce queuing by staggering lunchtimes or allow children to take a seat and be called for lunch; and others offer an optional pre-order system where coloured wrist bands indicate what food option has been ordered. Issues around payment systems were raised in the Children in Scotland research and some local authorities have seen improvements when implementing on-line payment systems. Overcoming barriers to using the schools meals service can be particularly important for children with disabilities or additional support needs.

The length of time available for lunch is an important consideration. There is a fine balance to be reached as the break needs to be long enough to feed children and give them a chance to pause in a busy school day, but not too long that lunchtime drags. School timetabling should place high importance on allowing time for children and young people to eat their food in an unhurried, healthy, sociable and enjoyable way.

When well-managed, the routines of lunchtime – including queuing, clearing up, and interacting with catering and other staff – are opportunities for children and young people to develop or practice respect, patience, and good manners and develop social and life skills. Lunchtime provides the chance to demonstrate the ethos and culture of the school and its high expectations and in doing so help children and young people learn to take responsibility for themselves and their actions. For example, work to achieve or maintain an Eco Schools Scotland award provides a perfect opportunity for a school to address levels of litter in the school grounds, including dining areas.

'The eco-committee interviewed the catering manager about reducing waste in the dining hall. Children now choose their meal option in the morning so less food is wasted. We're now working on our next steps for monitoring packed lunch waste with a view to creating a policy.'
Primary School Teacher

Did you know ... that additional bread must be provided every day as a meal accompaniment?



And lunchtime can be used to support children to develop good eating habits and life skills. For example, lunchtime supervisory assistants can work closely with the school's catering staff to encourage the less adventurous to try different foods, and to monitor food choices and waste. Supervisors can also assist children and young people to cut up food and teach the basics of using cutlery.

Learning from others

In order to attract more children and young people some services have studied which food businesses children and young people use outside of school. As a result café-style outlets that closely resemble the high street have been introduced in many schools with great success. Other schools have introduced 'stay-on-site' policies with great success. The *Beyond the School Gate* guidance[32] explains more about these approaches. Fundamentally, a pleasant dining space which offers quality food in an educational context is understood as sound investment.

The Scottish Futures Trust has reported some 'lessons learned'[33] around what makes a good dining area in secondary schools in Scotland. Although based on experiences from new-build schools, its findings may be relevant to schools planning improvements to existing dining spaces. The Children in Scotland research also offers some good insights into what children and young people want from their dining space.



How do you gather and use feedback on the dining experience?

The dining hall meets the classroom

The experience in the dining hall should reinforce messages in the classroom. For example, many schools link classrooms to the dining hall using themed days – children may be learning about international customs, history, music and language in the classroom, and then eating complementary food at lunchtime. International School Meals Day which takes place every March is an excellent opportunity to run this sort of project.

It can be mutually beneficial for catering staff to work closely with teachers to plan how the dining experience can help overcome resistance to unfamiliar foods or low take up of fruit and vegetables or less popular food. For more information see Section 4: Food and Learning.

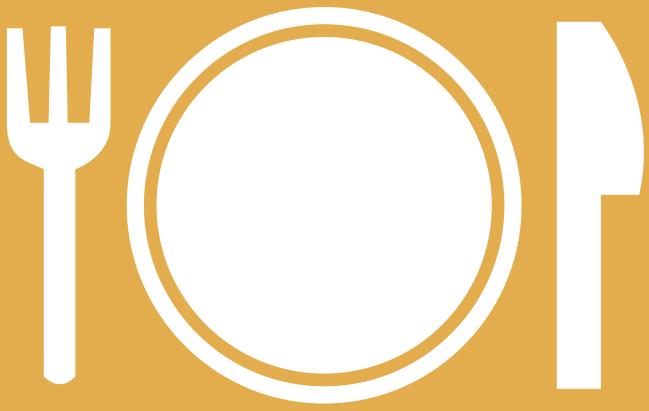
32 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/beyondgate (available April 2014)

33 http://www.scottishfuturestrust.org.uk/files/publications/Lessons_Learnt.pdf



Section 7
Sustainability through Food

THE CHALLENGE: To find practical ways to supply the school meal service with healthy, fresh, seasonal, and sustainably grown food. To use school food as an entry point for young people to learn about the impact of food choices on individual health and the environment, and to understand their role in the conservation of natural resources, food waste and recycling.



Did you know … every year in the UK about 15 million tonnes of food is thrown away, and each person throws away an average of 120kg of food?

Why this matters

Local authorities working with their community planning partners are in a position to make a significant contribution to support Scotland's transition to a sustainable food system. Sustainable food is about being creative to secure the best value for money while simultaneously pursuing Scotland's wider social, economic and environmental needs. This is crucial because expenditure on school food has, by giving all young people access to good nutrition, the potential to unlock benefits for community wellbeing. This can impact on health and social inequality, as well as stimulate employment and training opportunities in all parts of Scotland.

Food is an excellent topic for schools to use to develop understanding about sustainability, lending itself well to a whole school approach across the curriculum. Working with the catering service, school food can be used to explore a range of issues around sustainability, and empower children and young people to then share their learning with the wider community.

Food, from production through to consumption and waste, is a significant source of the greenhouse gases in Scotland and the EU that are the cause of global warming. The types of raw materials used to produce food have a significant impact not only on the total climate emissions but also on biodiversity. As food can differ widely in terms of production methods and climatic impact, local authorities have great potential to reduce harm to the environment through the school food procurement decisions they take.

By collaborating early in the tender process, caterers and procurement specialists can put in place affordable contracts which meet the nutritional requirements for school food while maximising the contribution school food expenditure makes to a thriving, Scottish food and drink industry.

Did you know ... a 5% reduction in food waste by the end of 2015 has the potential to save the UK hospitality and food service sector £250 million over two years?

KEY POINTS

Understanding sustainable food

Sustainable food means food that, through its production, processing, distribution and consumption, does not harm people or the environment but provides a range of benefits such as:

- providing social benefits, such as good quality, safe food, good nutrition, and educational opportunities;
- protecting the diversity of both plants and animals, and avoid damaging natural resources and contributing to climate change; and
- contributing to thriving local economies and sustainable livelihoods in Scotland and in the case of imported products, in producer countries.

In practice this focuses on three areas of sustainable procurement:

- foods produced to higher sustainability standards – covering issues such as higher environmental standards, fish from sustainable sources, in-season fresh food,[34] animal welfare and ethical trading considerations;
- foods procured and served to higher nutritional standards – to reduce salt, saturated fat and sugar and increase consumption of lean meat, fibre, fish and fruit and vegetables; and
- catering services operating to higher sustainability standards for equipment, waste and energy management.

Sustainable fish and meat produce have third party assurances attached to them such as MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) or QMS (Quality Meat Scotland) for higher standards. The term 'in-season food' is produce that is outdoor-grown or produced during the natural growing or production period for the country or region where it is produced, whether from Scotland, UK or overseas. All food, whether sourced from Scotland or other countries, should always be sourced sustainably and fairly.



34 'Fresh food' refers to food that has not been processed in any way and can include frozen food when frozen soon after harvest

Did you know … schools and further and higher education establishments account for 13% of the total waste in the the UK hospitality and food service sector?

Learning for Sustainability, the report of the One Planet Schools Working Group, defined Learning for Sustainability as a whole school approach that enables the school and its wider community to build the values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and confidence needed to develop practices and take decisions which are compatible with a sustainable and equitable society.

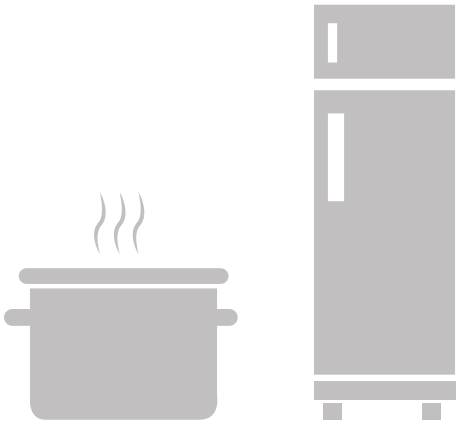
Further information can be accessed here: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/curriculum/ACE/OnePlanetSchools

Local authorities, caterers and procurement specialists can make change happen

The challenge for the caterer providing food in schools is to work with businesses to demand new, healthy, resource efficient types of products and delivery arrangements. Creating the demand for these products is an opportunity not a barrier for local authority caterers. This requires more innovative catering menus and procurement which use the flexibility in procurement legislation to help school food secure social, economic and environmental wins for the relevant area. It requires tangible action and ambition from local authorities through caterers and innovative procurement officers who understand the scale of change needed and how to achieve this.

How legislation and policy support sustainable school food

The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 places a duty on education authorities, and managers of grant aided schools, to 'have regard to any guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers on the application of the principles of sustainable development when providing food or drink or catering services in schools'.



Did you know … that during the next 40 years the world's population is projected to reach more than nine billion people? Demand for food is expected to increase by 60%.

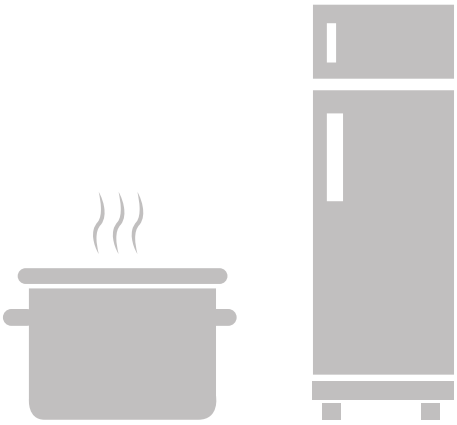
Recognising the role that public sector catering can play in promoting sustainable development, the Scottish Government produced guidance in *Catering for Change – Buying food sustainably in the public sector*.[35]

The Guidance explains the opportunity to work with legislation:

- to raise production and process standards;
- increase tenders from small and local producers and increase capacity of small and local suppliers;
- increase consumption of healthy and nutritious food; and
- reduce adverse environmental impacts of production and supply.

The Scottish Model of Procurement is an integral part of policy and service delivery. It is a simple concept – business friendly and socially responsible – which focusses on outcomes not outputs, and uses the power of public spend to deliver genuine public value beyond simply cost/quality in purchasing. At its heart is the concept of value for money through procurement whereby public authorities are expected, through an informed balance between cost, quality and sustainability, to procure food and catering services that:

- contribute towards the achievement of the Scottish Dietary Goals and health improvement strategies;[36]
- create the conditions to support and encourage a thriving and competitive food industry;
- promote high standards of food safety, traceability, authenticity, higher animal welfare standards, provenance and quality; and
- deliver positive environmental outcomes throughout the lifecycle of the product or service.



35 www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/01/12154555/0

36 www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00421385.pdf

Did you know ... that it is estimated that 31% of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions were associated with the food system?

MYTH
Procurement Regulation is a barrier to buying sustainable food

MYTH BUSTER
Public bodies have significant opportunities and flexibility to influence sustainability through their food contracts. For example local authorities are able to:

- Use the flexibility in procurement regulations relating to the performance of a public contract to make clear that the conditions shall, in particular concern, social, economic and environmental considerations by clearly indicating this in the contract notice or contract documents;
- Specify produce that has Protected Designated Origin (PDO) or Protected Geographical Indication (PDI) or equivalent status including Scotch beef and Scotch lamb;
- Specify free range and organic food;
- Specify requirements based on menu plans that are based on freshness, high nutritional value using food in-season and flexible and frequent delivery times;
- Base specifications on nutritional content and use technical specifications;
- Specify non-GM, take account of the use of carbon based fuel, and consider the impact of palm oil and phosphorous based fertilisers;
- Include fair and ethically traded options;
- Work with the successful supplier on a voluntary basis once the contract is awarded to increase the quantity of local produce supplied;
- Require the supplier to use reusable containers, provide a take back service and deliver in bulk units, and/or recyclable packaging;
- Direct suppliers to minimise waste packaging and to provide flexible and frequent delivery schedules and consider all stages of the life-cycle including sourcing, manufacturing and production, transportation, service delivery, reuse, recycling and disposal; and
- Divide contracts into small product lots and geographic areas to encourage the active participation of local businesses where it is proportionate to do so.

Did you know … that the Fairtrade Foundation can help your school become a Fairtrade School? See http://www.sftf.org.uk/schools/become-a-fairtrade-school/

There are increasing numbers of good examples of how food is being sustainably purchased and showcased on menus. These examples show that local authorities are able to prioritise sustainable food which can then lead to changing patterns of thinking and eating in schools and communities and help create new sustainable supply chains.

The UK Guidance on *Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services*[37] is a helpful resource.

How well does food provision throughout the school reflect the aims of sustainability?

Sustainable School Meals in Practice

A growing number of Councils have achieved independent endorsement that the food they serve uses fresh ingredients that meet high standards of provenance and traceability, providing reassurance to teachers, parents and young people that their school meals are freshly prepared using environmentally-sustainable and seasonal ingredients. They have been able to demonstrate sustainable processes for food they buy through local and national contracts. The Soil Association's Food for Life Catering Mark criteria awards caterers at bronze, silver and gold levels. At bronze level, 75 percent of dishes must be freshly prepared and all meat must meet Scottish/UK farm-assured standards. Silver and gold awards recognise the use of: sustainable food, such as Marine Stewardship Certified Fish; ethical food, such as higher animal welfare and fair-trade products; local food; and organic ingredients.

To what extent is sustainability taken into account, for example through waste and energy management, within kitchen and dining area practices?

37 http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/buying/products/food/

Did you know … that Scottish fishermen land more than 60% of the UK's seafood and the top five species are mackerel, prawns, haddock, cod and monkfish?

Learning opportunities from sustainable practices

'The fact that pupils are actively involved in the whole process of preparing the land, planting the seeds, caring for the crops, harvesting and finally preparing and eating them, undeniably instils in them appreciation of healthy food and the natural growth cycle, including the importance of compost, mini beasts, sun and rain. As this is a regular experience throughout their school days, education for sustainability is part of their growing up and we might see a new generation of people with a deep sense of appreciation and responsibility for our planet.'
Primary School Teacher

School food can be a way to help children and young people learn about sustainability. To begin with, the food purchased for schools needs to be an exemplar for socially and environmentally responsible menus which demonstrate a whole school approach to health promotion and sustainability. Practical and classroom teaching, in the school, community or further afield, can build understanding around what is produced and grown locally and in Scotland. Planned opportunities such as those provided by Eco-Schools,[38] the Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET)[39] or the Dumfries House Food Education Programme[40] allow children to explore a range of sustainability issues. In addition children can learn about sustainability through the practices schools employ such as growing projects in school, and waste management projects in the school kitchen and dining room.

38 http://www.keepscotlandbeautiful.org/sustainable-development-education/eco-schools
39 http://www.rhet.org.uk/
40 http://www.dumfries-house.org.uk/

Did you know … that there is currently enough food in the world to feed everyone yet not everyone has enough food?

‘Our school gardens have been developed with lottery money. We have a sustainable vegetable garden and fruit trees and bushes and broad bean days and tattie days are part of our normal school year. The cooks are happy to support the school and bake our home grown vegetables for the children to taste – taster days are always popular with the children and parents. We have learnt so much trying to grow vegetables and fruit in our sustainable garden, including the influence of bad weather on crops.’
Primary School Headteacher

The priority to reduce waste

Management of Food Waste is now a national and international priority in Scotland. Zero Waste Scotland is involved in a range of projects aimed at reducing food and related packaging waste.[41]

Zero Waste Scotland has developed the Scottish Carbon Metric with the Scottish Government which is designed to measure and reduce the whole life carbon impact of waste in Scotland that can be used by local authorities. The Carbon Metric includes the impacts from production, as well as disposal.

Resource Efficient Scotland[42] helps organisations including local authorities and schools to save energy, water and money, increase recycling and use fewer resources, including cutting food waste. It does that through technical support, sharing best practice and guidance on communications, and showing organisations where to get funding to help.

How effectively does the school promote the social, educational and nutritional benefits of school food across the school and school community?

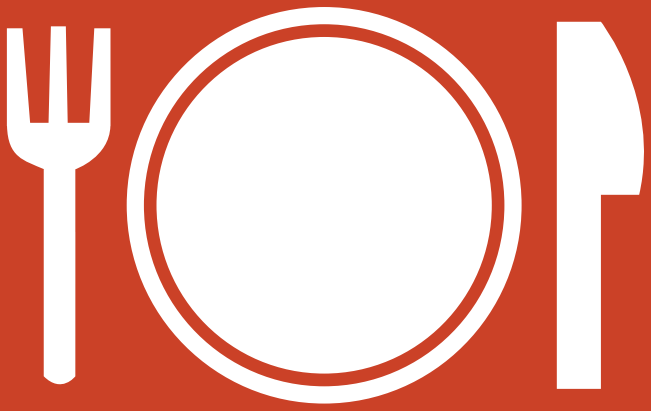
41 http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/content/hospitality-and-food-service-our-work-0
42 http://www.resourceefficientscotland.com/





Section 8
Training and Support

THE CHALLENGE: To provide all teaching and catering staff involved in school food provision and food education with the support and opportunity to undertake professional training which enables and motivates them to maximise opportunities to teach children and young people about the relationship between food, health, and the environment.



Did you know … that Education Scotland has a wealth of resources which support using food as a context for interdisciplinary learning? See http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/f/foodidl.asp

Why this matters

Successful school food provision and creating the best dining and learning experience possible depends on building the confidence, knowledge and skills of the people involved. Everyone concerned – teaching and catering staff and other staff and stakeholders – needs to be consistent in their approach. This includes understanding and advocating the whole school approach to health promotion, demonstrating consistency in teaching safe and hygienic food preparation techniques, and sharing an understanding of the Act and Regulations. To bring about the transformational change that is required, there needs to be a strategic approach to training and support which embraces the whole school approach and brings teaching, catering and other staff or stakeholders together on this journey.

Commitment and performance appear to be higher in schools where the catering staff are well trained, where they have a good understanding of the reasons behind decisions made about the food service and where they understand how they play a part the process. Likewise, the quality of food education is likely to be better where all teachers are knowledgeable and confident around food and its impact on health and wellbeing, and understand the wider context for food education. Teaching and catering staff that are supported and understand how they fit into the bigger picture are better placed to actively support the school curriculum and wider local authority and national objectives. Given the statutory basis for school food and health-promoting schools, catering and teaching staff are entitled to understand the context within which they are working, particularly their role in integrating health promotion in school.

Access to up-to-date resources, training and research evidence in food education will ensure that those working in schools are appropriately equipped to competently deliver learning in this area.

Did you know ... the Scottish Government funded Food Education Programme in Scotland has provided for nearly 2,500 teachers to attend training events?

KEY POINTS

Support, training and qualifications for catering staff

It can sometimes be difficult to find the time or resources required to develop staff but it is essential that barriers to training and support are overcome. The new context for school food requires caterers who are capable of viewing the service as not just a commercial activity, but one that requires knowledge and experience in a range of administrative, food hygiene and safety, food craft and other skills. Staff need to be equipped to cook and serve appealing and appetising food as a priority. It should be common practice that all staff have a personal training plan which offers craft, serving and customer service skills to support a more sustainable school food service that might involve more scratch cooking.

At the practical level there are many qualifications available to catering staff. Certificates in Food Hygiene and Vocational Qualifications in food preparation develop core skills that enable cooking staff to produce good food with confidence. Food business operators are required by law to ensure that food handlers receive appropriate supervision and instruction/training in food hygiene in line with their work activity which enables them to handle food safely. The person responsible for developing and maintaining the business's food safety management procedures must have received adequate training to enable them to do this. The necessary skills may be obtained through on-the-job training, self-study or relevant prior experience. As schools and local authorities have responsibilities around health promotion, employee development for all school catering and dining room supervisory staff should include appropriate training around food and health. Relevant qualifications are available through a range of providers including the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).



Did you know … that what happens during early years (starting in the womb) has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and wellbeing – from obesity, heart disease and mental health, to educational achievement and economic status?

‘We now produce handy wallet sized information cards relating to policies or services – for example we are about to produce one for the Soil Association’s ‘Food for Life programme’. This allows staff to have easy access to the key facts which helps with their learning.’
Head of Catering

‘We provide knife skills training for all staff, which includes a live session at our induction training. Recently we worked with our training department to develop a knife skills training DVD, starring our SVQ assessors who are known to the staff. This has been shown at overview training sessions (local briefing sessions), monthly team meetings, or in work units.’
Facilities Services Manager

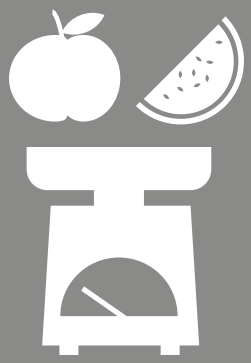
Catering staff can benefit significantly from customer service training which, along with improved knowledge of food and health, will provide them with the skills and confidence to positively influence young people in food choices. They will further benefit from training in the characteristics of sustainable food and how this is reflected in school menus, good resource management, waste reduction, effective marketing, as well as the core skills of food preparation, presentation and hygiene.



Did you know … that the statutory nutrient standards for school lunches have been calculated to ensure that the school lunch provides a third of the daily nutritional requirements of primary and secondary school pupils?

Developing a relevant training facility

'Like every local authority we know it is challenging to be able to release staff from their positions for training and that in order to be effective, any training we offer must be relevant and interesting. We have considered this in developing our training academy. It allows eight staff to participate in a practical training session, and includes a spacious training room for theory-based learning. Feedback has been good – all our staff know about the academy and look forward to attending training, we are seeing a growing demand for practical sessions and hear that staff are seeing the benefit of leaving their kitchens for the day. They also have a greater understanding of the importance of children eating fresh, quality food, which helps them support the changes we have made to help us reach that goal, and we see their enthusiasm and knowledge passed on to other, frontline staff.'
Facilities Services Manager



Training and support for teaching practitioners

Access to good quality training opportunities offers practitioners the support to develop confidence to use food in their teaching, as well as to enhance their own understanding of food and nutrition and health. Education Scotland has developed a resource and support materials for teachers which focuses on health and wellbeing, in particular the Food and Health and Technologies experiences and outcomes.[43] Some local authorities have also developed their own guidance documents around food and health which, for example, show cross-curricular links, resources available and partnership working opportunities.

School and local authority catering staff and/or catering partners will have a wealth of expertise which can help increase the knowledge and confidence

43 http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/f/foodidl.asp

Did you know ... that giving every child the best start in life is crucial to reducing health inequalities across the life course?

of practitioners and improve partnership working. Also, working with industry partners on food education projects can provide Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) opportunities for practitioners as can working with other partners – see the example of a health and wellbeing partnership in Section 3: Food and Health, and the example below. Further information is available on the resource page.[44]

Continuing Professional Development: Using the Healthier Scotland Cooking Bus to build teacher confidence

'Our school is in an area of high social deprivation and some children had never been to the countryside. After running a farm visit, I wanted children, and their families, to learn how to prepare healthy recipes using local, seasonal produce, so we applied for The Cooking Bus. Over the four-day visit over 100 children were taught new life skills and teachers and others learnt a lot too.

'The Continuing Professional Development sessions were excellent in bringing together teachers from our own Area Schools Group alongside other professionals and parents and carers. We left these sessions with a greater understanding of food, nutrition and health to be embedded in our curriculum planning and school development policies. It helped us all to have a more 'can do' approach to teaching health and wellbeing through healthy eating.'

'After the Bus left the staff reflected on our experiences – it was all so positive. We have since worked with pupils on projects, for example about food waste and farm shops, seen children bring in food that they had prepared at home with family members, and I have plans to start up a cooking 'after school' club. The experience has inspired and given real confidence to staff to build cooking into their curriculum planning as they see the benefits to our children, particularly the most vulnerable.'
Primary School Headteacher

http://www.focusonfood.org/cooking_buses

44 http://scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/HLivi/schoolmeals/Resources
See Annex C for further information about the resource page

Did you know … that additional salt must not be provided in schools?

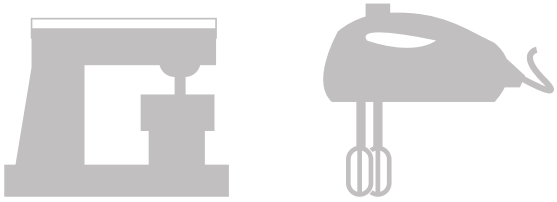
How are CPD opportunities planned to best meet the needs of staff in designing and delivering food-related experiences?

When bringing people together for training, it is important not to exclude groups of staff or partners unintentionally. A training event or meeting at lunchtime might suit teaching staff but would preclude most catering staff from attending.

Sharing skills and knowledge

Whilst there has been much success in bringing the provision of school food together with learning around food and health there is further scope to bring the two together to improve the quality of learning provided. School health and wellbeing policies need to exemplify how the experience and skills within school communities can best be shared and show how the inter-relationship between the education, health and social policies impact on health and wellbeing.

Bringing teachers and caterers together to learn and develop can help forge partnerships, increase understanding of each other's roles and build staff confidence.



Did you know … that there are 16 National Outcomes which describe what the Government wants to achieve? See Annex D.





To what extent do catering staff and teachers understand and utilise the knowledge and skills each brings to food education?

Part of a bigger picture

The policy context for school food and drink and the opportunities this presents have changed significantly with the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence. It is therefore essential that schools and their local authorities carry out a 'stocktake', if they haven't recently done so, of their activities around school food and its contribution to health and wellbeing and how these activities link to both local policies and national objectives.[45]

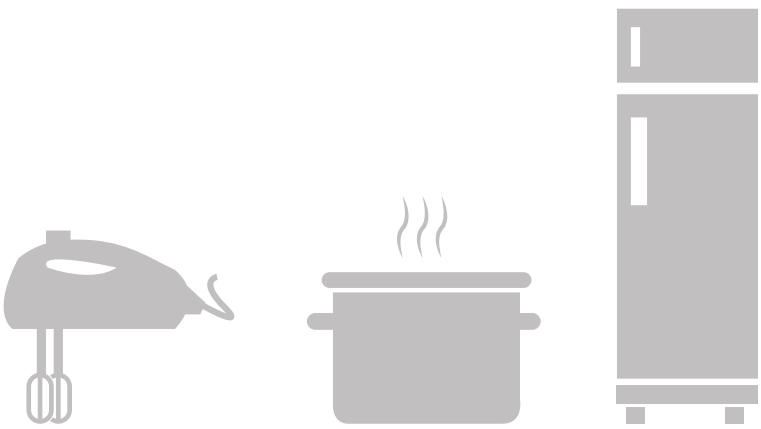
It is important too for everyone to understand how their role contributes to local and national policies and to receive the training and support they need to perform their role effectively. Often staff will be contributing to a range of outcomes without knowing it – 'just doing my job' – and they may not see how they personally impact on the health and wellbeing of children and young people. Specific development opportunities and needs will depend on a multitude of factors, including local needs and circumstances, but the key point is that schools and local authorities look afresh at their approach to development and how it supports the delivery of good school food and food education to children and young people. This will include providing staff with relevant diversity and equality training to equip them to interact with the diverse range of children and young people they meet in the course of their work.

45 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/scotPerforms/outcomes

Did you know ... The 2013 Healthy Living Survey showed an increase in school meal uptake for the fourth year in a row, with 49.5% of pupils across Scotland taking school meals?

Catering staff – from cooks and counter staff, to those responsible for the strategic direction of the service – require a fuller understanding of the new context that has emerged for school food and how this is a determinant for the success of a range of national outcomes and local authority objectives. They need to understand that school food, while necessarily operating to tight commercial targets, is foremost a health and education service, and supported to deliver this. Curriculum for Excellence, and national policies related to health improvement, the wellbeing of communities, and sustainable development, show how school food is directly relevant to delivering a better Scotland.

To what extent are school and catering staff supported to ensure they have a shared understanding of the relationship between food and health?



Did you know ... the Chefs@School initiative, run by the Federation of Chefs Scotland, matches professional chefs and cooks with schools?

Improving the school food service through investment in people

'Well-trained staff will help us to achieve our overall aim of improving uptake of school meals. But four years ago a self-assessment showed that a lack of investment in staff had resulted in disaffected and disillusioned staff that was impacting the school food service. We had to do something. We introduced an appraisal system and then arranged for one of the catering management team to incorporate the role of training officer in their duties. Combining these initiatives allowed us to develop a training plan through a collaborative approach with the local college.

'We went on to identify the key business objectives that would enable us to become a sustainable and continually improving service. After a full business analysis we developed a plan. It's updated annually and incorporates staff appraisal, training and welfare as well as other areas such as finances and investment. Our efforts have led to:

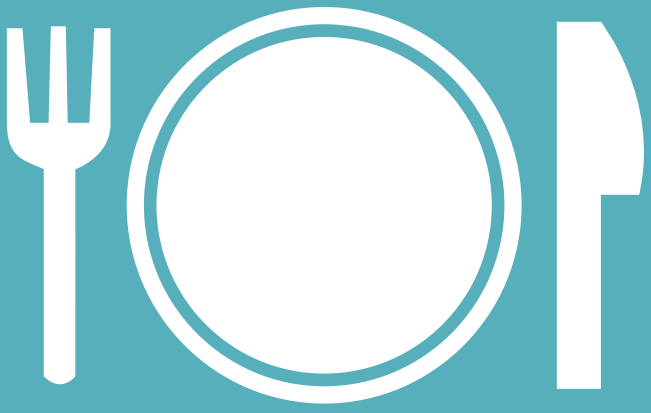
- improved school meal uptake in both Primary and High school sectors for the past five years;
- a sustainable business model that has allowed continual investment into both the infrastructure and staff;
- 381 qualifications passed ranging from elementary hygiene to full degrees in business management;
- our appraisal system adopted by the wider council; and
- our business plan identified as a model of good practice.

'Although we have seen considerable success we still believe in regular self-assessment. We continually look to improve our service by working with others, sharing good practice, collaborative approaches and respect for all.'

Head of Catering

Section 9
Communication and Engagement

THE CHALLENGE: For schools and local authorities to successfully promote exemplar school food provision and food education to all of their stakeholders. To promote the benefits of healthy choices to encourage support from parents, carers, children and young people, teachers, caterers, health professionals and other stakeholders.



Did you know … International School Meals Day takes place on the first Thursday of March each year?

Why this matters

Different people – children, parents, carers, and whole communities – have their own perceptions of school food and drink. Sometimes these perceptions are good, but unfortunately sometimes they are not. These perceptions may be based on misunderstanding or misinformation. In some cases these important partners may have had little say in decision-making about food in schools, and may have no idea of the quality of food and drink or food education in their local school.

On top of this, there may be limited understanding of the value of the school food and drink service and how it can contribute to the school and wider community, and a lack of understanding of how food education supports children to learn about healthy eating specifically and health and wellbeing generally. Stakeholders may not know how to get involved, or schools may not know how to involve them. By proactively engaging and communicating with children and young people, parents, and other stakeholders they can be encouraged to support the school food service and food education and learn to recognise their stake in it. Their 'buy-in' can be secured, and they can be encouraged to actively participate in improvements through a partnership approach.

KEY POINTS

'So when we consult, self-evaluate or work on self-improvement, we always consult our stakeholders, firstly the children, then the staff and parents. The wider community can be involved too, depending on the issues.'
Primary School Headteacher

Did you know ... that there is a Scottish school meals website? http://www.scottishschoolmeals.co.uk/

Effective communication and engagement

There are lots of routes to effective communication and engagement and it is likely that a combination of approaches, adapted to the audience, will yield the best results. Communication and engagement is a two-way street – it is as important that stakeholders can feed into food education and school food provision, as it is that they are given information about what happens currently. Partners also need to have a clear understanding of what the school wants to achieve through food, understand how they can contribute and see the benefits of getting involved. Local authorities and schools need to be particularly careful to ensure that their strategies reach different groups of people, for example by providing information in different formats or languages, or using a variety of methods which means that everyone can give feedback.

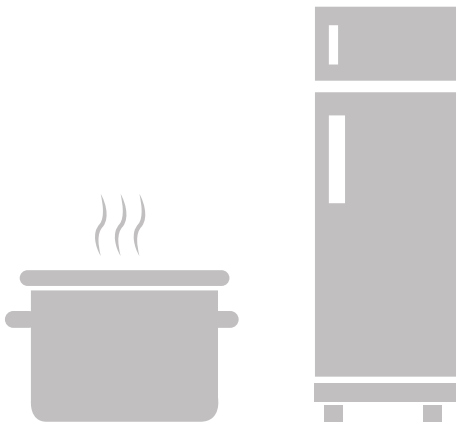
Put simply, communication and engagement will need to consider:

How do we listen and learn?

How do we get people involved?

How do we best let people know what we are doing as a result?

How do you ensure that everyone understands this new, wider context for school food?



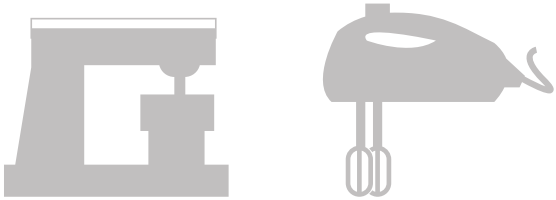
Did you know ... that The National Parent Forum of Scotland supports parent councils and parents from all 32 local authority areas?

Communicating with children and young people

Obviously children and young people, particularly those of secondary age, are consumers in their own right. They have their own views on value for money and are up to speed on branding and promotions. Local authorities and schools increasingly have to compete for business with packed lunches, the high street, supermarkets, local retailers, fast food outlets and meal deals. Branding, promotions and access methods (such as outside vans) are being used by schools to compete with outside brands and create a sense of familiarity with children and young people. Advertising is being used in various ways from leaflets, menu displays, tasting sessions and even radio adverts to reach children and young people, and their parents, to influence where they choose to eat. Adopting this kind of open approach will help dispel myths about school food and show how the school food service compares to alternative lunch options.

Both the Children in Scotland research and Young Scot research[46] provide insights into effective marketing practices and how children and young people want to be engaged. Section 4 on Food and Learning includes examples of communication at a classroom level.

The Children in Scotland research also shows that children and young people want to input into improvements to school food. Involving children and young people in the early stages of menu development will raise their awareness of the challenges, values and constraints in which scho ol food operates and help instil a sense of ownership for the final menu produced.



46 http://www.youngscot.net/healthyeating

Did you know ... 'Engage for Education' includes a school food section where you can join in the discussion about school food in Scotland? See http://www.engageforeducation.org/category/food-in-schools/

Learning from other schools and local authorities

How one local authority engages children and young people in menu planning

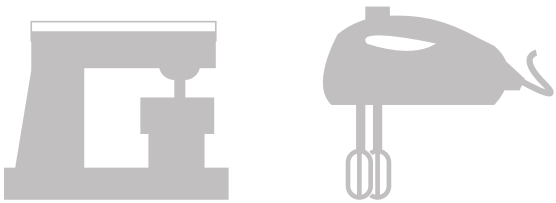
'We carry out at least eight Pupil Focus Groups per menu change. This ranges from meeting with a whole school, a class or combination of classes or meeting with the pupil council. In preparation for the groups, many will have carried out surveys to get the views of other pupils in the school. We also meet with parent groups and invite an NHS dietitian to attend at least one group per term.

'From these groups, I get lists of favourite meals, the dislikes and also new ideas. This has resulted in new dishes being added to the menu (smoked salmon pasta, crackers and cheese) and also some old favourites appearing again. We draft a menu which is put to another Focus Group to review, perhaps several times over. I review the finished menu looking at costs and nutritional information.

'These groups have such a positive impact on the pupils, it is great to get direct customer feedback and a chance to discuss the 'whys' and 'why nots' with them.' They get more of an understanding of what menu planning entails, as does the Teacher/ Headteacher. We also encourage the work done in the Focus Groups to be continued in the classroom.'

Food and Nutrition Officer

What opportunities are there for *all* partners, including children and young people, to contribute to discussions around improvements in food provision and education?



Did you know ... that the views of children and young people were sought when developing this guidance? See http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk/html/pub_tshow.php?ref=PUB0442

How one school involved parents in implementing a 'stay-on-site' lunchtime policy

'To test out a new approach of encouraging pupils to eat healthily at lunchtime, eight secondary schools in one local authority took part in a pilot project. S1 pupils were encouraged to stay on school premises for lunch rather than leaving school. Each school, with help from partners, offered S1 pupils a package of incentives to stay in school. In our school these included a range of activity clubs for S1 pupils e.g. a Drama Club, a Games Club, a Film Club and a range of sporting activities.

'The stay on site policy was proactively promoted.

- secondary school staff (Headteacher and Depute Headteacher) visited Primary 7 pupils to outline the initiative;
- letters and other promotional materials for families;
- taster sessions for young people and their parents;
- rewards in the canteen for using the diner; and
- parents were invited in to discuss the project, and encouraged to support the initiative.

'An accompanying evaluation explored the views of pupils, parents and school staff regarding the pilot as well as assessing impact on healthy eating amongst pupils. School meal uptake by year group was monitored and compared with the previous academic year. We saw an increase of over 25 percent of school meals uptake by S1 pupils which meant that 90 percent of this year group took school meals in the pilot year!

'Following the pilot, the school remains committed, with the support of parents, to the policy that all S1 pupils stay in at lunchtime, despite the challenges including peer pressure and stiff competition from local retailers.'

Secondary School Headteacher

Did you know ... The Scottish Food and Drink Federation brings Scotland's schools and food and drink manufacturers together? http://www.sfdf.org.uk

Other schools and local authorities have found the following approaches to be effective.

Reaching children and young people:

- providing children and young people with a forum to raise issues about school food and suggest ideas for improvements;
- actively seeking children's views on the school food service. By better understanding their experience and concerns, schools can focus efforts to improve on those areas which will have the greatest customer impact; and
- using a 'You said – we did' board to show that views are taken seriously and acted on. These boards can encourage children to feedback their experience, and gain buy-in for changes. They can also encourage managers to look critically at the service being provided.

Reaching parents and carers:

- using a school or local authority website creatively to spread positive messages about school food, and include, for example, information on food provenance or case studies about the suppliers used. One school has developed a dedicated website with links to twitter and Facebook to spread the message;
- interactive on-line menu for primary schools that allows parents, and children and young people, to access a range of information including allergen advice and recipes;
- inviting parent and carers into the school to sample school food and the dining experience for themselves; and
- encouraging children and young people to share their learning with family. This might help them influence what food they eat at home, or improve the nutritional value of their packed lunch.

Reaching the wider community:

- establishing a forum for communication at which the school and community members/representatives can discuss local needs and issues, challenges and opportunities, and how they might work together;
- drawing upon specialist expertise of parents or others in the community. Providing learning in meaningful contexts can bring lessons to life and help develop lasting links with the community and potential employers;
- children and young people organising and managing a weekly community café enterprise – linking food, health and learning in a practical way that encourages ownership and participation and engages the community;
- involving children and parents, perhaps even local shops, in writing school or local authority food and drink policies; and
- working with media to develop and run a local marketing and promotional campaign targeting children and young people, and their parents, perhaps others.

Did you know … Small tasters are a very good way of helping children to accept 'new' or 'unfamiliar dishes?

Reaching suppliers and industry partners:

- Curriculum for Excellence states 'Creating strong partnerships with a range of organisations helps to deliver a more personalised learning experience for every child and young person' and lots of schools have engaged with industry partners to achieve this. The Scottish Government continues to support this approach.

Keeping partners informed about school food: The ASSIST school meals website

The website is a fully interactive online experience. It includes sections on nutrition, food waste and obesity and health.

The aim of the website is to provide a one stop shop for parents and carers, children and young people and other stakeholders to find out more about the school food and drink services offered in various local authorities.

The website was created because:

- the public get most of their information online;
- there is a need to be more proactive at communicating the success of the school meals service across Scotland; and
- there is a need to encourage more engagement with partners and suppliers in order to build support and participation.

The website includes blogs and articles about school food and drink. It ties in with the Scottish Government and organisations such as The Soil Association and Eco Schools, and links to a Facebook page.

www.scottishschoolmeals.co.uk

What steps do you take to ensure that the school meal service is effectively promoted to children, young people and parents?

Annexes



Annex A

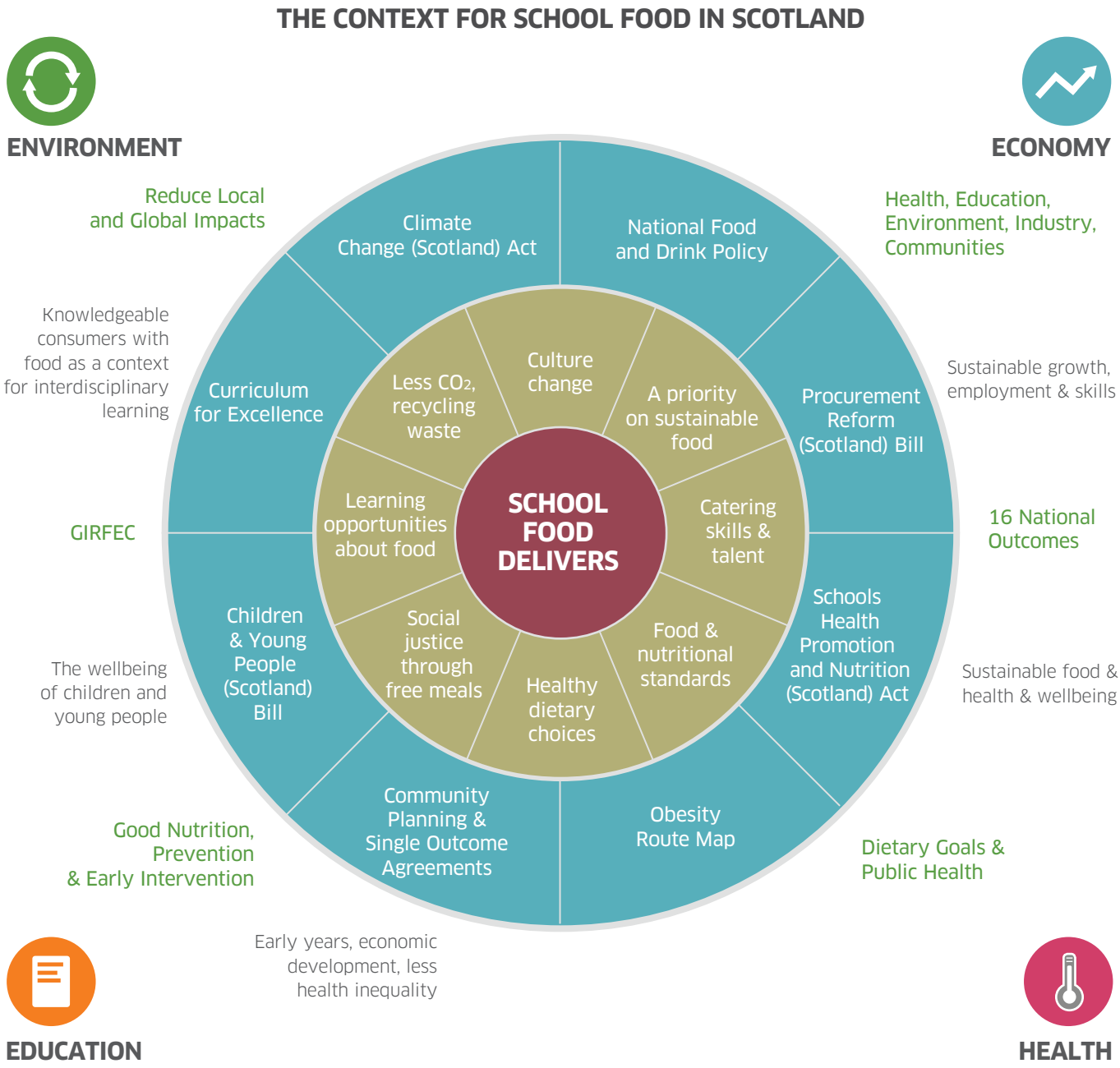
Membership of the 'Still Hungry for Success' School Food and Food Education Working Group

Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES)	Hugh Fraser (Chair of Working Group) (Highland Council)
ASSIST	Bill Kennedy
Children in Scotland	Jackie Brock
Food Standards Agency in Scotland	Heather Peace
Association for Public Service Excellence Scotland	Andrew Kennedy
Cordia	Julia McCreadie
Glasgow City Council (Secondary Headteacher)	Lisa Pierotti
Education Scotland	Shirley Beattie/Lesley Kirkwood
Highland Council (Primary Headteacher)	Tania Mackie
COSLA	Kathy Cameron
Scotland Food and Drink	James Withers
NHS Health Scotland	Claire Hislop
Scottish Government Procurement Policy	Jo Mitchell
Scotland Excel	Hugh Carr
National Parent Forum of Scotland	Iain Ellis

SECRETARIAT

Scottish Government (Learning)	Bill Scott-Watson
Scottish Government (Learning)	Lyndsey Fogg/Lynne Carter
Scottish Government (Food and Drink)	Robin Gourlay

Annex B
The Context for School Food in Scotland



Annex C

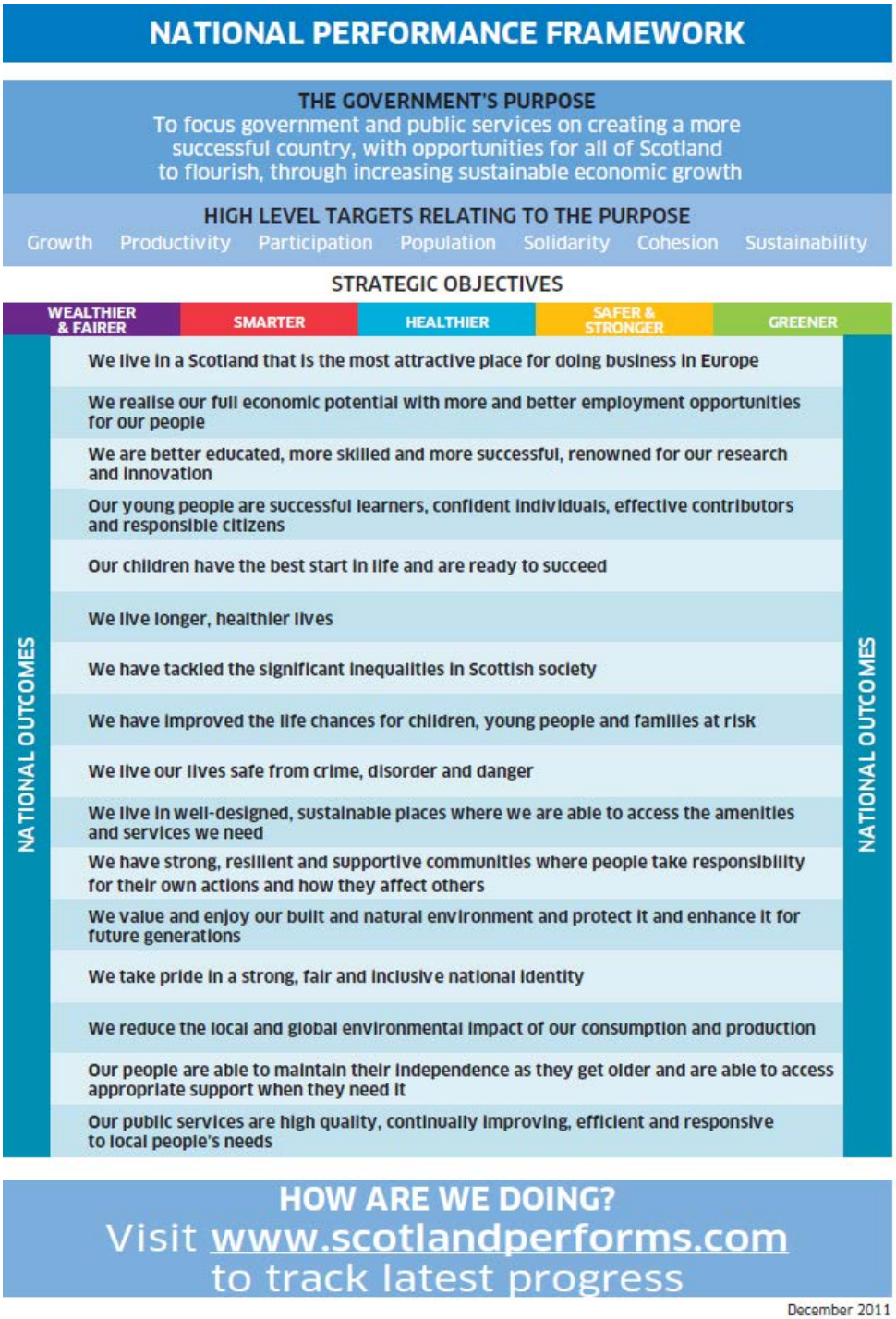
Resource Page – Access to Further Information

http://scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/HLivi/schoolmeals/Resources

This link will take you to some web pages which will help you access a wealth of resources about school food and food education. The web pages will be updated regularly to ensure that you get access to current and relevant information. They will help you access:

- useful publications, including the most up-to-date version of the 'Better Eating, Better Learning' self-evaluation tool;
- examples of good practice in schools across Scotland, through 'Engage for Education' blogs and school meals websites;
- Education Scotland resources which help deliver learning around food, including 'Food for Thought: Exploring food and drink through Curriculum for Excellence';
- information about the 'New Context for School Food' and the history of school food in Scotland;
- information about procurement, including a Catering for Sustainable Procurement Checklist and the National Public Procurement Model;
- information about partners who can support school food and food education and current food programmes and grants; and
- statistics and research.

Annex D
Scottish Government National Outcomes



Annex E
Food Calendar

WHAT TASTES BEST THIS MONTH?

WINTER JANUARY	Beetroot, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Celeriac, Chard, Jerusalem Artichoke, Kale, Leeks, Mushrooms, Onions, Parsnips, Potatoes, Radish, Rocket, Shallots, Spinach, Spring Onions, Swede, Turnips, Winter Squash	Apples, Pears	Beef, Chicken, Duck, Goose, Lamb, Pheasant, Pork, Rabbit, Venison, Woodpigeon	Clams, Cockles, Cod, Crab, Farmed Halibut, Farmed Rainbow Trout, Farmed Salmon, Haddock, Hake, Langoustine, Lemon Sole, Ling, Lobster, Mackerel, Monkfish, Mussels, Oysters, Plaice, Pollack, Razor Clams, Scallops, Winkles, Whelks, Whiting
WINTER FEBRUARY	Beetroot, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Celeriac, Chard, Horseradish, Jerusalem Artichoke, Kale, Leeks, Onions, Parsnips, Potatoes, Radish, Rocket, Shallots, Spinach, Spring Onion, Swede, Turnips, Winter Squash	Apples, Pears	Beef, Chicken, Duck, Goose, Guinea Fowl, Pork, Rabbit, Venison, Woodpigeon	Clams, Cockles, Crab, Farmed Halibut, Farmed Rainbow Trout, Farmed Salmon, Haddock, Hake, Langoustine, Lemon Sole, Ling, Lobster, Mackerel, Monkfish, Mussels, Oysters, Pollack, Razor Clams, Scallops, Wild Salmon, Winkles, Whiting
SPRING MARCH	Beetroot, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Celeriac, Chard, Horseradish, Jerusalem Artichoke, Kale, Leeks, Onions, Parsnip, Potatoes, Radish, Rocket, Spinach, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Winter Squash	Rhubarb	Beef, Chicken, Pork, Rabbit, Venison, Woodpigeon	Clams, Cockles, Crab, Farmed Halibut, Farmed Rainbow Trout, Farmed Salmon, Hake, Langoustine, Ling, Lobster, Oysters, Pollack, Razor Clams, Scallops, Wild Salmon, Winkles, Whiting
SPRING APRIL	Broccoli, Carrots, Chard, Horseradish, Kale, Leeks, Potatoes, Spinach, Spring Greens, Spring Onions	Rhubarb	Beef, Chicken, Pork, Rabbit, Venison, Woodpigeon	Cockles, Coley, Crab, Farmed Halibut, Farmed Rainbow Trout, Farmed Salmon, Hake, Langoustine, Ling, Lobster, Oysters, Plaice, Pollack, Razor Clams, Scallops, Wild Salmon, Winkles, Whiting
SPRING MAY	Asparagus, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Chard, Chicory, Chillies, Cucumber, Lettuce, New Potatoes, Pak Choi, Potatoes, Radish, Rocket, Spinach, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Summer Squash	Rhubarb, Strawberries, Tomatoes	Beef, Chicken, Pork, Rabbit, Venison, Woodpigeon	Cockles, Cod, Coley, Crab, Farmed Halibut, Farmed Rainbow Trout, Farmed Salmon, Hake, Langoustine, Ling, Lobster, Oysters, Plaice, Pollack, Razor Clams, Scallops, Squid, Turbot, Wild Salmon, Winkles, Whiting
SUMMER JUNE	Asparagus, Beetroot, Broad Beans, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Chard, Chillies, Courgettes, Cucumber, Kale, Lettuce, New Potatoes, Mangetout, Onions, Peas (shell), Radish, Runner Beans, Summer Squash, Swiss Chard	Blackcurrants, Cherries, Gooseberries, Raspberries, Redcurrants, Rhubarb, Strawberries, Tayberries, Tomatoes	Beef, Chicken, Pork, Rabbit, Venison, Woodpigeon	Cockles, Cod, Coley, Crab, Farmed Halibut, Farmed Rainbow Trout, Farmed Salmon, Haddock, Hake, Herring, Lemon Sole, Ling, Lobster, Mackerel, Mussels, Plaice, Pollack, Razor Clams, Scallops, Sea Bass, Sea Trout, Squid, Turbot, Wild Salmon, Winkles, Whiting
SUMMER JULY	Beetroot, Broad Beans, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Celery, Chillies, Courgettes, Cucumber, Kale, Lettuce, Mangetout, New Potatoes, Onions, Peas (shell & sugar snap), Radish, Runner Beans, Summer Squash, Swiss Chard, Turnips	Blackcurrants, Blueberries, Gooseberries, Plums, Raspberries, Redcurrants, Rhubarb, Strawberries, Tayberries, Tomatoes	Beef, Chicken, Pork, Rabbit, Venison, Woodpigeon	Clams, Cockles, Cod, Coley, Crab, Farmed Halibut, Farmed Rainbow Trout, Farmed Salmon, Haddock, Hake, Herring, Lemon Sole, Ling, Lobster, Mackerel, Monkfish, Mussels, Plaice, Pollack, Razor Clams, Scallops, Sea Bass, Sea Trout, Squid, Turbot, Wild Salmon, Winkles, Whiting
SUMMER AUGUST	Beetroot, Broad Beans, Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Celery, Chillies, Courgettes, Cucumber, Leeks, Lettuce, Onions, Peas (shell and sugar snap), Radish, Runner Beans, Summer Squash, Swiss Chard, Turnips	Apples, Blackcurrants, Blueberries, Gooseberries, Pears, Plums, Raspberries, Redcurrants, Strawberries, Tayberries, Tomatoes	Beef, Chicken, Lamb, Pork, Rabbit, Venison, Woodpigeon	Cockles, Cod, Coley, Crab, Farmed Halibut, Farmed Rainbow Trout, Farmed Salmon, Haddock, Hake, Herring, Lemon Sole, Ling, Lobster, Mackerel, Monkfish, Mussels, Plaice, Pollack, Razor Clams, Scallops, Sea Bass, Sea Trout, Skate, Squid, Turbot, Wild Salmon, Winkles, Whiting
AUTUMN SEPTEMBER	Baby Leeks, Beetroot, Broad Beans, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Celery, Chicory, Chillies, Courgettes, Cucumber, Jerusalem Artichoke, Kale, Lettuce, Onions, Parsnips, Pumpkin, Radish, Runner Beans, Squash, Swede, Turnips	Apples, Blueberries, Damsons, Gooseberries, Pears, Plums, Raspberries, Strawberries, Tomatoes	Beef, Chicken, Duck, Lamb, Pheasant, Pork, Rabbit, Venison, Woodpigeon	Cockles, Cod, Coley, Crab, Farmed Halibut, Farmed Rainbow Trout, Farmed Salmon, Haddock, Hake, Herring, Langoustine, Lemon Sole, Ling, Lobster, Mackerel, Monkfish, Mussels, Oysters, Plaice, Pollack, Razor Clams, Scallops, Sea Bass, Sea Trout, Squid, Winkles, Whiting
AUTUMN OCTOBER	Beetroot, Broad Beans, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Celery, Chillies, Courgettes, Cucumber, Horseradish, Jerusalem Artichoke, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Onions, Pak Choi, Parsnips, Pumpkin, Radish, Runner Beans, Shallots, Swede, Swiss Chard, Turnips, Winter Squash	Apples, Pears, Raspberries	Beef, Chicken, Duck, Goose, Lamb, Pheasant, Pork, Rabbit, Venison, Woodpigeon	Cockles, Cod, Coley, Crab, Farmed Halibut, Farmed Rainbow Trout, Farmed Salmon, Haddock, Hake, Langoustine, Lemon Sole, Ling, Lobster, Mackerel, Monkfish, Mussels, Oysters, Plaice, Pollack, Razor Clams, Scallops, Squid, Winkles, Whiting
AUTUMN NOVEMBER	Beetroot, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Celeriac, Celery, Chicory, Horseradish, Jerusalem Artichoke, Kale, Onions, Parsnips, Pumpkin, Radish, Runner beans, Salsify, Shallots, Swede, Swiss Chard, Turnips, Winter Squash	Apples, Pears	Beef, Chicken, Duck, Goose, Lamb, Pheasant, Pork, Rabbit, Venison, Woodpigeon	Cockles, Cod, Coley, Crab, Farmed Halibut, Farmed Rainbow Trout, Farmed Salmon, Haddock, Hake, Langoustine, Lemon Sole, Ling, Lobster, Mackerel, Monkfish, Mussels, Oysters, Plaice, Pollack, Razor Clams, Scallops, Sprats, Winkles, Whiting
WINTER DECEMBER	Beetroot, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Celeriac, Celery, Jerusalem Artichoke, Kale, Horseradish, Leeks, Onions, Parsnips, Radish, Shallots, Swede, Turnips, Winter Squash	Apples, Pears	Beef, Chicken, Duck, Goose, Lamb, Pheasant, Pork, Rabbit, Venison, Woodpigeon	Cockles, Cod, Coley, Crab, Farmed Halibut, Farmed Rainbow Trout, Farmed Salmon, Haddock, Langoustine, Lemon Sole, Ling, Lobster, Monkfish, Mussels, Oysters, Plaice, Pollack, Razor Clams, Scallops, Sprats, Winkles, Whiting

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SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT


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