

# Hungry for Success:

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A Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland



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# Final Report of the Expert Panel on School Meals

NOVEMBER 2002



# Hungry For Success

A Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland

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## Chairman's Foreword

This is the final report of the Scottish Executive's Expert Panel on School Meals. It sets out our vision for a revitalised school meals service in Scotland and presents a number of far-reaching recommendations connecting school meals with the curriculum as a key aspect of health education and health promotion. For the first time in the UK, national nutrient-based standards for school lunches are proposed and detailed mechanisms for monitoring these standards are set out. The key agents of success in implementing these standards are local authorities working in partnership with catering professionals, schools and the school communities – teachers, parents and pupils themselves. We are therefore setting out a system of National Standards under local, partnership-operated control.

The report is the first step on a journey towards a whole-child, whole-school approach to food in all schools in Scotland. Clearly, this report is aimed at publicly-funded primary, secondary and special schools. However, the approach is one that we hope will also be readily embraced by schools within the independent sector.

Scottish Ministers invited the Panel to convene at the end of January 2002 with a remit to provide costed recommendations and a fully developed implementation strategy to:

- establish standards for school meals
- improve the presentation of school meals to improve general take-up
- eliminate any stigma attached to taking free school meals.

In the space of four months we conducted an audit of current practice, commissioned and considered a review of the evidence base on what influences children's decisions to take school meals, wrote detailed nutrient standards and drafted monitoring procedures for these. We produced guidance for caterers informed by a workshop discussion with local authority caterers and visited schools up and down the country to see first hand what happens at lunchtime. We discussed water provision in schools with Scottish Executive environment policy officials in the context of European Union policy, informed ourselves of school estates policy and relevant aspects of the Modernising Government Fund. We also grappled with the difficult and elusive issue of stigma to come up with practical proposals based on existing good practice and sound evidence. We published our interim report in June 2002. Following a three-month

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consultation period with a wide range of stakeholders we were very heartened not only by the scale of response, but also by the overwhelming support for our recommendations. Both reinforce our view that people recognise the need for, and are ready to embrace, change. This final report is substantially unchanged, but seeks to provide further clarity on aspects of the proposals that respondents were seeking.

Our proposals stem from a number of basic underlying principles on which rests our vision for the provision of food in Scottish schools. Since we want the very best of health, education and social justice for our children, the proposals are challenging and aspirational. However, we have also identified practical mechanisms for putting these into practice so that schools can begin, or in many cases continue, the journey towards providing attractive, nutritionally balanced meals to all children who wish to take them, without fear of stigma, in an environment that is welcoming, comfortable and fun. After all, what good will it do us to provide the healthiest food in Scotland if nobody comes?

*Michael O'Neill*

**Michael O'Neill**

Chairman of the Expert Panel on School Meals

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## UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES, KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDING RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. We recommended the establishment of monitored, nutrient-based standards known as the Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches supported by guidance to caterers with access to food and health training provided at a national

level. We also felt that in order to bring about necessary changes, the school meals service would require a degree of freedom from competitive commercial pressures.

#### Key Recommendations:

- **The Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches should be adopted and education authorities and schools should have them in place in all special schools and primary schools by December 2004 and in all secondary schools by December 2006.** (recommendation 3, paras 3.1-3.23)
- **Monitoring of the implementation of the Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches, and related aspects, should be undertaken using the four levels of monitoring proposed in this report and should involve HM Inspectorate of Education working, as appropriate, with other relevant agencies.** (recommendation 23, paras 5.6-5.26)
- **Local authorities, guided by CoSLA as appropriate, should incorporate strategies for implementing the recommendations of this report into mainstream planning processes that will empower and enable schools and school communities to adopt the recommendations.** (recommendation 21, paras 5.1-5.4)

#### Guiding Recommendations:

- Each education authority should develop a policy for delivering, in partnership with parents and carers, medically prescribed diets and appropriate provision for children with special educational needs. (recommendation 2, paras 3.12-3.17)
- All school catering and dining room supervisory staff should undertake appropriate training, for example the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland Food and Health training course (currently under development) as part of their programme of development. Interested parents, carers and teachers should also be encouraged to undertake training in food and health. (recommendation 22, para 5.5)
- In any Best Value review the role of the school meal service as part of the education and health strategies should be taken into account. It should not be considered simply as a commercial trading activity. (recommendation 1, paras 2.10-2.11)

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2. In addition, the following underlying principles governing the implementation of these standards in practice and supporting our wider remit were established:

- Principle 1: Positive School/Whole Child Ethos
- Principle 2: Partnership Working
- Principle 3: Pupil Consultation
- Principle 4: Eliminating Stigma
- Principle 5: Managing the Process
- Principle 6: Influencing Choice
- Principle 7: Incentives to Improve Uptake of School Lunches

Key recommendations and guiding recommendations were set out in the context of these underlying principles.

**Principle 1: Positive School/  
Whole Child Ethos**

**Principle 2: Partnership Working**

**Principle 3: Pupil Consultation**

3. We considered that a whole-school, whole-child approach was the central and singularly most important aspect of any policy on school meals and should be considered as the core of health promotion in the school. The newly established Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit

should be aware of this report and take it into consideration in developing standards for health promoting schools.

4. The success of a whole-school, whole-child approach is dependent upon effective partnership working and the development of a participative and consultative ethos. Partners or stakeholders may vary depending upon the size, location and remit of individual schools. However, links should be made between the local authority, catering managers, school management, teachers, pupils and parents and with wider stakeholders as relevant to individual schools. The importance of pupil consultation was recognised as a major element.



### Key Recommendations:

- **All schools should review their current practice in establishing links between learning and teaching on healthy eating in the curriculum and food provision in the school.** (recommendation 5, paras 4.9-4.18)
- **Education authorities should promote partnership approaches and schools should develop mechanisms to deliver partnership working.** (recommendation 7, paras 4.19-4.23)

### Guiding Recommendations:

- Schools should consult with pupils on a regular basis on provision of school meals. (recommendation 8, paras 4.24-4.30)
- School meal facilities should not advertise nor promote food or drink with a high fat or sugar content. (recommendation 4, para 3.11)
- The Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit should take the recommendations of the Panel into consideration when developing standards for health promoting schools. (recommendation 6, paras 4.9-4.18)

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## Principle 4: Eliminating Stigma

5. We were of the firm belief that children and young people should not feel stigmatised at school meal times for any reason including:

- awareness by other children of additional financial support required by families/carers for the school midday meal or breakfast or out-of-school clubs
- as a result of dietary or accommodation requirements relating to religion, ethnicity or health
- in connection with additional help required in accessing or eating school meals by children with disabilities.

### Key Recommendation:

- **Processes maximising anonymity for free meal recipients should be explored as a priority in all schools. Primary schools should review their ticket allocation practices to ensure anonymity for free school meals is maximised and education authorities should adopt early introduction of a school meal application for multiple-use cards in particular in secondary schools.** (recommendation 9, paras 4.31-4.42)

### Guiding Recommendation:

- As part of the introduction of card systems, education authorities should ensure there are sufficient card validators in easily accessed areas within the school, not only in the dining room, and that they are easy to use. (recommendation 10, paras 4.37-4.42)

**Principle 5: Managing the Process**

**Principle 6: Influencing Choice**

**Principle 7: Incentives to Improve Uptake of School Lunches**

6. We considered barriers to the take-up of school meals alongside existing good practice where there is a high take-up and proposed a wide range of actions to ensure the acceptability and attractiveness of school meals. Effective management of the dining environment and of the overall dining experience are an essential part of a

successful whole-school, whole-child ethos. For different schools with differing levels of existing facilities and practices, this may require a wide range of actions from reviewing queuing and seating arrangements to re-investment and upgrading of facilities. Opportunities to incentivise success were considered important at the customer and caterer level in order to promote healthy eating and to increase take-up in general and provision of appropriate training to build awareness of food and health and to enhance the presentation of healthier menu options in the dining room.

**Key Recommendations:**

- **Improvements to the dining room to enhance its atmosphere and ambience, and encourage its use as a social area should be considered as a priority by local authorities and should be taken into account in their wider school estate planning. It is desirable, wherever possible, that a separate dining area should be provided.** (recommendation 17, paras 4.61-4.67)
- **Senior management within schools should strongly support and endorse their school meal provision as part of the whole-child approach.** (recommendation 15 paras 4.50-4.51)

**Guiding Recommendations:**

- All schools should examine their seating and queuing arrangements to ensure that the social experience of school meals is maximised. (recommendation 11, paras 4.43-4.46)
- To address queuing difficulties and in any review of the length of the lunch break, the following factors should be considered: (recommendation 12, paras 4.43-4.46)
  - multiple service points
  - more cash points in cash canteens
  - staggered arrivals of diners/separate sittings
  - pre-ordering facility

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- separate counter for collecting pre-ordered meals
  - delivery of pre-ordered meals to lunchtime clubs
  - examining the potential for additional outlets elsewhere in the school
  - the needs of disabled pupils.
- 
- In line with the agreement set out in *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century*, education authorities should consider deploying classroom assistants and dining room assistants to undertake a supervisory role in dining rooms. (recommendation 14, paras 4.50-4.51)
  - When education authorities and schools are examining the structure of the school day, the lunchtime experience should be part of that consideration. (recommendation 13, paras 4.43-4.46)
  - Caterers should consider appropriate means of labelling food and methods of conveying information on content to pupils and parents. Through existing school communication channels, menus should be forwarded to parents at least once a term. Schools and caterers should consider presentation, marketing and pricing structures to incentivise healthier choices. (recommendation 16, paras 4.52-4.60)
  - Furniture design, layout and usage, along with other factors such as décor and background music, should be considered by all schools, with significant pupil input and programmes for change drawn up. (recommendation 18, paras 4.61-4.67)
  - Education authorities should consider the introduction of incentive schemes to promote healthier choices and increase the take-up of school meals. (recommendation 19, paras 4.68 - 4.71)
  - Education authorities should consider the introduction of staff incentive schemes to recognise innovation and celebrate success. (recommendation 20, paras 4.72 - 4.73)

## Other Relevant Factors

7. We recognised that food in schools is not solely about what happens at lunchtime. A whole-school approach promotes consistency with what is taught in the classroom and with the food that is provided in the dining room, in breakfast clubs, out-of-school clubs, in vending machines and tuckshops. While not part of our remit, these matters are important. We discussed a number of additional relevant areas including eligibility for free school meals and our thinking on these has been included in the report with the following recommendation:

- The Scottish Executive should consider what further work needs to be done to take forward the additional important and related issues identified by the Expert Panel. (recommendation 24, paras 6.1-6.21)

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## THE EXPERT PANEL ON SCHOOL MEALS

- Introduction
- Our Remit
- Related Issues
- Methodology
- Context of Our Work
- Our Vision

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# Section 1

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## THE EXPERT PANEL ON SCHOOL MEALS

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## Introduction

**1.1** On 19 November 2001, Nicol Stephen, Deputy Minister for Education and Young People, Susan Deacon, then Minister for Health and Community Care and Jackie Baillie, then Minister for Social Justice, announced plans to improve the provision, presentation and nutritional content of school meals for all Scotland's children as part of the Scottish Executive's drive to improve the health and social wellbeing of children in Scotland.

**1.2** Poor diet is a significant contributor to Scotland's poor health record. Improving children's diet can make a major impact on the health of children with beneficial outcomes for educational attainment and improved health in later life. Scotland's children also suffer one of the worst records of dental decay in the western world with only 45% of 5 year olds free from dental caries (in 1999-2000). Levels of tooth decay are strongly linked to deprivation.

**1.3** The Scottish Executive has made a commitment to eradicate child poverty in a generation and recognises the association between poverty and ill health. Action is focused on closing the opportunity gap by targeting additional support where it is most needed and giving all children the best start in life.

**1.4** The background to the decision to improve school meals lay in the Food in Schools Conference held in May 2001 which was supported jointly by the Scottish Executive,

The Food Standards Agency, the Scottish Consumer Council and the Health Education Board for Scotland. A significant outcome of the conference was agreement on the need for an overarching national strategy for school meals to include nutrient standards and dining facilities.

**1.5** The drive for improvement included the establishment of this short-life Expert Panel to make recommendations that would form the framework of the national strategy. The Panel is chaired by Michael O'Neill, Director of Education, North Lanarkshire Council and includes representatives from a wide range of sectors and stakeholders including the Scottish Food and Health Co-ordinator, education authorities, teachers, school caterers, nutrition experts, the Health Education Board for Scotland, HM Inspectorate of Education, the Scottish Consumer Council, the Food Standards Agency, Children's Agencies and CoSLA. Membership of the Panel is shown at Annex A.

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## Our Remit

**1.6** Our remit was to provide Ministers with costed recommendations, and a fully developed implementation and monitoring strategy to:

- establish standards for the nutritional content of school meals
- improve the presentation of school meals to improve general take-up
- eliminate any stigma attached to taking free school meals.

**1.7** In considering the issues we were concerned primarily with the delivery of the school meals service in primary, secondary and special schools managed by local authorities. However, given the importance of these issues to the health of young people, we concluded that it is important that our findings should impact on the practice of all schools, not just those managed by local authorities. We hope that the independent school sector will also review their policies and practices to take our findings into account.

**1.8** Our remit was to look at school meals. This report is, however, set in the national context of policy and action to improve the Scottish diet which is notoriously high in fat, salt and sugar and low in fruit and vegetables. The Scottish Executive is vigorously taking forward implementation of *Eating for Health, A Diet Action Plan for Scotland*. This is a wide ranging framework for the action needed across all sectors and all age groups. The

need for action to influence diet from a very early age is strongly endorsed.

**1.9** We limited our attention to considering the provision of school lunches within primary, secondary and special schools, covering children aged 5-18 years of age. We considered that for younger children in nursery and other pre-school settings, both the nutrient requirements and the food service issues were sufficiently different to make inclusion of younger children inappropriate.

**1.10** The Health Education Board for Scotland recently produced a document *Nutrition for the Under 5: Evidence into Action* and are working with multi-agency partners to produce new guidance on nutrition, and informal educational activities and training for carers and service providers for the 0-3 age group. This should be produced early in 2003. There is also a great deal of work under way within NHS Trusts and through local Health Plans to increase the daily provision of fruit to the under 5s. Health services, working in partnership with services for young children, are considering the long-term health issues, of which the provision of nutritional meals is a part.

## Related Issues

**1.11** In the course of our work a number of related issues came to our attention that were not part of our remit. These included breakfast clubs, sponsorship activities and tuckshops. We felt it important that our findings and thoughts on these

matters were also recorded. We also felt it important to take a view on the School Meals (Scotland) Bill, a Private Members Bill. Our considerations and conclusions on these related issues are set out in Section 6.

## Methodology

**1.12** We first met on 24 January 2002 and then six times subsequently. We also set up a sub-group to look at that part of our remit relating to the setting of nutrient standards.

**1.13** The provision of a school meal with an appropriate nutrient composition is an important aspect of the school day impacting on a wide range of stakeholders. We were keen to work in an open and consultative manner involving as many of these interests as possible in our considerations.

**1.14** We wrote to over 200 organisations and individuals making them aware of our work and what we were doing and we set up a school meals website with a discussion forum facility. Key papers were posted to the website. ([www.scotland.gov.uk/education/schoolmeals](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/education/schoolmeals))

**1.15** To inform and support our work we:

- carried out an audit of current practice
- commissioned a literature review from the Scottish Council for Research in Education on ways of encouraging children to select healthier food choices. (This report has not been

published but has been posted to the school meals website.) It should be noted that the review was conducted at very short notice and so the breadth of material which was covered was limited

- produced an interim report for Ministers in June 2002
- consulted with key stakeholders
- considered the response to the consultation and produced this final report.

### Audit of Current Practice

**1.16** One of our first tasks was to find out what is currently happening across Scotland. We wrote to all education authorities seeking their help and support in undertaking a general audit of current practice. Despite a very tight timescale we received an excellent response providing us with a good foundation for our work. We would like to record our thanks and appreciation to all Directors of Education and their staff for responding so wholeheartedly.

### Informal Consultations

**1.17** Consultation with others formed a large part of our work. We were keen to seek and take into account the views of as many key stakeholders as possible in the time available. We did this by:

- following up the audit with visits
- running a discussion workshop for caterers.

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## *Visits to Education Authority Areas*

**1.18** Our series of visits to schools allowed us to undertake a more detailed and focused audit to see for ourselves what was happening in schools. On these visits we sought the views of a wide range of people including catering staff, teachers, pupils and their parents. Again we would like to record our appreciation to the authorities and schools who participated in these visits for their time, help and hospitality. The education authorities and schools visited are shown at Annex B.

## *Discussion Workshop*

**1.19** We held a discussion workshop on 22 April with education authority catering representatives to share our emerging findings on the nutrient standards being developed. The event was very well attended with participants appreciating the opportunity to input to this important aspect of our work. Workshop participants are shown at Annex C.

## *Interim Report and Consultation Exercise*

**1.20** In June 2002 we produced an interim report for Ministers setting out our findings and recommendations. Ministers agreed that the Panel should proceed to formal consultation with key stakeholders. To ensure as wide a coverage as possible, our written consultation exercise sought the views of around 400 key stakeholders. We also offered in-depth discussions with a number of

organisations and commissioned consultants to gather the views of pupils.

## *Written Consultation Exercise*

**1.21** During the consultation period of 17 July-11 October, over 200 responses were received and analysed on our behalf by the Scottish Centre for Research in Education. We were extremely pleased by the scale of response and overall support for our recommendations. The analysis of responses has been posted to our website.

## *In-depth Discussions*

**1.22** To supplement our written consultation exercise, a number of key organisations were offered an opportunity to discuss our recommendations in greater detail.

## *Pupil Consultation*

**1.23** Consultants NFO System 3 were commissioned to gather the views of pupils on relevant recommendations within our interim report. The outcome of the discussions with pupils, which has been posted to our website, was also part of our deliberations.

## *Context of Our Work*

**1.24** We recognised the importance of setting our work on school meals in the wider context of other national initiatives such as the Standards in

Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000, the National Priorities for Education, the establishment of the Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit, the developing Schools Estates Strategy and the European Directive on Drinking Water in Public Buildings. It was also encouraging to note that several respondents to our consultation exercise identified links between our work in the context of these initiatives and health and social justice policies. Where appropriate we have rooted our recommendations in this wider context while also taking into consideration those other measures already in place and aimed at improving the health of children, namely:

- the existing school meals service improvements across Scotland
- the whole-school and whole-child approach to improving health
- New Community Schools, which promote good health
- creation of the Food Standards Agency
- the £26m Health Improvement Fund which is prioritising provision of fruit for infants and breakfast clubs and fruit/salad bars in schools
- Scottish Healthy Choices Award Scheme promoting healthy food choices and including school catering services
- the Scottish Community Diet Project Breakfast Club toolkit
- European Network of Health Promoting Schools projects.

## Our Vision

**1.25** We recognise that for school meals to benefit children's health they must be of an appropriate nutrient composition. Our proposed nutrient standards are set out in Section 3. However, nutrient standards alone will not encourage more children to eat school meals. That is why we felt it important to set out a vision for a healthy future for Scotland's pupils.

**1.26** Our vision is of a partnership between children/young people, school, family and the community in offering access to attractively presented food of an appropriate nutrient composition within schools and in developing a wider understanding of food, nutrition and healthy lifestyles which can inform children's choices and eating habits within and outwith school and throughout life. We believe that children/young people should not feel stigmatised at school meal times for any reason including:

- awareness by other children of additional financial support required by families/carers for the school midday meal or breakfast or out-of-school clubs
- as a result of dietary or accommodation requirements relating to religion, ethnicity or health
- additional help that may be required in accessing or eating school meals by young people with disabilities.

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## CONTEXT OF SCHOOL MEALS IN SCOTLAND

- Background
- School Meal Provision
- School Meals and Compulsory Competitive Tendering
- Nutritional Outcomes
- International Context

## Section 2

### CONTEXT OF SCHOOL MEALS IN SCOTLAND

## Background

2.1 When we focus on food provision in schools it becomes evident that some of the elements of the health promoting school, relating to food provision, predate the birth of the health promoting school concept in 1985. When compulsory education was first introduced in Scotland in 1872, one of the devices to encourage young people to attend was the provision of a hot meal in many of the schools. The poor nutritional status and fitness of young men to serve in the Boer War resulted in a Royal Commission in 1902 recommending that meals should be provided in all schools and this was implemented in Scotland in the *Education (Provision of Meals) (Scotland) Act* in 1908. In 1939 the social aspect of school meals was clearly recognised and the value of this described in some detail in a Department of Education report: “If properly provided, school meals, whether given at a school canteen or at a feeding centre outside the school premises can have an educational value for the child as great as the medical. If a properly balanced meal be well cooked and well served under attractive conditions and with a happy discipline, its nutritional value is enhanced, and its educational value incalculable. The elder children learn to wait on others and to serve them first. All learn good table manners, the importance of eating with clean hands, and of unhurried mastication, and become accustomed to a varied and wholesome dinner.”

2.2 Although our society and the nature of the school day have changed dramatically since that was written, it does serve as a reminder that there is a social dimension to the provision of school meals and that this has to be actively managed as an integral part of the school day.

2.3 Currently there are no statutory standards in Scotland which apply specifically and explicitly to school meals. Objective nutrient standards were recommended by the Government during the Second World War, but were allowed to lapse and were formally withdrawn in 1969. A subjective

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standard, that the midday meal should be so planned as to secure variety and a nutritious and balanced diet appropriate to the age of the recipients, remained in place at least until 1976 under Milk and Meals Regulations. These were superseded when the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 consolidated the school meal provisions of earlier legislation.

**2.4** More recently, voluntary and more general guidance was put in place as a result of work on *Eating for Health, A Diet Action Plan for Scotland*. These took the shape of *Model Nutritional Guidelines for Catering Specifications for the Public Sector in Scotland* (Eating for Health) and *Nutrient Standards* (Caroline Walker Trust). Implementation and monitoring of arrangements put in place as a result of these Guidelines is a matter for education authorities. Research suggests that, while some authorities have responded positively to these, much remains to be done.

## School Meal Provision

**2.5** There are just under 3000 state schools in Scotland. The majority of these are primary schools (over 2300). There are around 360 secondary

schools and approximately 230 special schools and special educational needs units. The provision of school meals varies amongst education authorities. Many schools have the ability to prepare and serve hot school meals on the premises, others only have the ability to serve hot meals which are prepared at a central production kitchen. In some education authorities, the majority of schools have the ability to prepare and serve meals whilst in others, less than half have this facility.

**2.6** Around 56.4 million school meals are provided each year. The cost of these school meals per pupil varies between education authorities as does any subsidy provided by them. Funding for school meals is provided to local authorities through Grant Aided Expenditure. This money is not ring-fenced.

**2.7** Scottish Executive data shows that there are 740,000 pupils on school rolls in Scotland. The following table shows the percentage of all pupils entitled to free school meals in Scotland:

	Percentage of all Pupils (2001)	Percentage of all Pupils (2002)
All schools	19.5	18.8
Primary schools	20.8	20.1
Secondary schools	16.7	15.9



**2.8** Once a year the Executive collects school meal data from all schools in Scotland. On school meal census day, just over 665,000 pupils were present (January 2001<sup>1</sup>). Of those pupils, 48.7% took a school meal. This is equivalent to approximately 325,000 pupils, of whom around 103,000 were eating a free school meal. Of those pupils eligible for a free school meal, 71% took a meal. The following table shows the percentage of pupils eating a free school meal on the day of the census:

	Percentage of all Pupils (2001)	Percentage of all Pupils (2002)
All schools	15.5	14.9
Primary schools	17.5	16.9
Secondary schools	11.5	10.9

**2.9** It is difficult to determine the reasons for pupils with free meal entitlement not eating a free meal on the day of the census. A proportion of those pupils with free meal entitlement was not present on census day and some might not be registered with their school as entitled to receive a free school meal. Other pupils may not have taken their free school meal through choice despite being present on the day of the census.

## School Meals and Compulsory Competitive Tendering

**2.10** There is a long-standing statutory requirement on education authorities to provide a free school meal, although the extent of the meal is not well defined. In 1988, local authorities were required to subject the school meal service to competition. Although the service may have benefited from close examination and process improvements, we believe that the principles of compulsory competitive tendering conflicted with the lifestyle strategies which many authorities were

<sup>1</sup> The 2000-01 figures for school meals were the latest available figures at the time the audit of current practice was carried out. To ensure consistency between the school meal figures and the results of the audit of current practice which were also used in the costings, the costings were not updated with the 2001-02 figures for school meals which were released in June 2002. The 2001-02 school meal figures show that free meal entitlement and uptake have fallen slightly, this would result in lower costs to local authorities for providing these meals. However, against this, overall uptake was seen to improve slightly, this would result in a higher subsidy provision for those local authorities which subsidise school meals.

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developing during this period. In essence, caterers were encouraged to reduce cost wherever possible and this may have led to a reduced focus on approaches to health, diet, choice, portions, etc.

**2.11** Our report contains a series of recommendations, many of which are designed to improve the long-term health of the nation. We believe that the school meal service will require a period of stability during which the recommendations will be implemented and evaluated. It is essential, therefore, that the service is allowed such stability, free from the commercial pressures of competition, for a suitable period of time. The current Local Government in Scotland Bill is intended to remove the compulsory competitive tendering legislation which will be replaced by a duty of Best Value, which is continuous improvement in the performance of functions.

**Recommendation 1: In any Best Value review the role of the school meal service as part of the education and health strategies should be taken into account. It should not be considered simply as a commercial trading activity.**

## Nutritional Outcomes

**2.12** There is a broad range of evidence that significant numbers of Scottish children are poorly nourished and many have unhealthy diets. A study of Edinburgh children by Ruxton and Kirk (1996)

showed that poorer children rely more on school meals for nutrition and have less well-balanced diets. Another study, also Edinburgh-based (Ruxton *et al.*, 1996) showed that school meals have deteriorated in nutritional quality, were poor compared to relevant expert guidelines and were poor compared to the quality of home-produced packed lunches. School meals have an important role to play in both supporting the nutrient intakes of vulnerable children at risk of undernutrition, and to promote healthier eating to all Scottish children amongst whom there is a growing prevalence of obesity.

**2.13** The report from the Food in Schools Conference, mentioned previously, quoted the then Health Minister's assertion that "we cannot force-feed our youngsters, make them eat cucumber instead of Crunchies, or chain them to their school dining table to stop them going to the chip shop. What we can do is enable them to make healthy choices". The conference report concluded that what was needed was a single policy framework (including nutrient standards), partnership working and the sharing of good practice.

**2.14** The Scottish Consumer Council/Health Education Board for Scotland report on school meals service in Scotland based on commissioned research (Ridley *et al.*, November 2001), focused on the users of the service (pupils, parents, teachers) and concluded that "across the different school meals service types examined there were consistent factors which appear to influence the

perceptions and take-up of school meals. These relate to issues of cost, choice and information, quality, the appearance and layout of the dining room, time constraints, age and access to alternatives”.

## International Context

**2.15** While it is interesting to consider the provision of school meals in other countries, there is a lack of directly applicable evidence from other countries to inform the debate in Scotland. In Finland and Sweden, there is a long established provision of free school meals to all school students, however, we understand that some authorities in Sweden are considering introducing charges. In Finland and Sweden, there is a more limited choice of food provision than in Scotland and in some cases no choice, but this reflects the practice since pre-school and does not appear to be a problem. Pupils do not seem to expect the wide range of choices currently available to young people in Scotland. Teachers in Sweden report that they sit with the pupils and that they value the social experience of lunch time as part of the “whole-child” approach.

**2.16** In the United States, both federal and state nutritional standards have been widely introduced in relation to school meals. Monitoring of the catering provision can be weak and there is evidence that these standards may be achieved by the use of fortified and functional foods rather than the provision of a wide range of appetising and

attractive food choices for the young people. A whole-school approach to the promotion of healthier eating is often lacking.

**2.17** Not all countries in Europe provide school meals routinely and this is true of some Southern European countries where the rhythm and timing of the school day is totally different from Scotland because of the climate. In many of these Mediterranean countries young people eat extremely healthily, but school meals are not necessarily an important contribution to that pattern.

**2.18** It appears that it is difficult to make meaningful comparisons on the nature and effects of school meal provision in different countries because of the wide range of cultural contexts and also the variations in the nature of education in diverse countries.

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## SCOTTISH NUTRIENT STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LUNCHES

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- Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches

# Section 3

## SCOTTISH NUTRIENT STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LUNCHES

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## Introduction

**3.1 We established a sub-group to consider the setting of nutrient standards for school lunches. The sub-group met on six occasions and also held an informal consultation workshop with representatives of the education authority catering services as their findings were emerging. The Food Standards Agency Scotland took on the further development of the product specifications referred to in Section 3.9.**

**3.2** Diet in childhood plays an essential role in growth and development, current wellbeing, educational performance and avoidance of chronic disease throughout life. Current knowledge on optimal diet for children is set out in the *Dietary Reference Values Report* (1991) and it is this report that forms the scientific basis for the design of the Scottish Nutrient Standards.

**3.3** The proportion of the daily nutrient provision that should be achieved from a single daily lunch has been extensively reviewed by the Caroline Walker Trust Expert Working Group on School Meals (1992), the outcome of which were the *Nutritional Guidelines for School Meals*. These Guidelines cover the nutrients and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) currently of most concern in school children's diets and remain largely appropriate for calculating the nutrient standards for Scottish school children. We therefore adopted these Guidelines as the basis of our recommended nutrient standards. In addition, we took the view that:

- Fruits and vegetables should be considered as part of our nutrient standards, with around 30% being supplied by school lunch (World Health Organization Recommendations on Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic Disease 1990)
- Sodium provision should be no more than 30% of the Dietary Reference Value (Department of Health 1990).

**3.4** It is recognised that the consumption of a diet based on bread, cereals and other starchy foods, fruits and vegetables, and low amounts of fat, sugar and salty foods is a fundamental consideration in catering provision. The provision of food and drink, which meets these nutritional standards, is a key part of achieving a healthy dietary intake, but we recognise that food provides considerably more than biological requirements. To perceive school food only in terms of nutrient delivery would be a missed opportunity for the development of social and life skills and for culinary richness.

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## Eating for Health

**3.5** Nutrient standards can be achieved in a variety of ways which will involve consideration of menu planning (the composition of recipes used, the cooking and serving process), the product specification of individual food items, portion sizes and the frequency with which nutrient-dense foods are served during the school week. *Eating for Health* was developed as a model for healthy eating in Scotland by the Health Education Board for Scotland in 1996. It is nationally recognised and widely used by the food and catering industries as well as by health professionals, teachers and individual consumers, as a guide to the contents of a balanced meal or diet.

**3.6** *Eating for Health* shows the proportion of the overall diet that should come from each of the five food groups in order to provide enough of the important nutrients (such as vitamins, minerals and protein) and fibre without too much fat (especially saturates) and sugar. The five food groups are:

- bread, other cereals and potatoes
- fruit and vegetables
- milk and dairy foods
- meat, fish and alternatives
- foods high in fat, foods and drinks high in sugar.

## Menu Planning by Food Group

**3.7** To meet individual tastes the nutrient standards should be met by a choice of foods. Key

points and menu-planning guidance is provided in Table 1. The descriptions of foods and frequencies served are given as basic guidance for catering practice. What is essential is the achievement of the nutrient standards. A flexible approach building on catering wisdom and experience, skills and local tastes is important in allowing a wide range of food and menu options to be available. It is important that good practice in menu design and food provision which demonstrates the achievement of these standards is shared. The Scottish Executive is commissioning the development of nutritional analysis software that will assist in the self-evaluation of nutrient standards (see 5.18).

## Portion Sizes

**3.8** Portion size guidelines are necessary to assist caterers in planning lunches that meet nutrient standards for energy and other nutrients as well as to satisfy young appetites. Hungry children are more likely to snack on high fat and sugar confectionery. Guidance on portion sizes is provided in Annex D. In many cases schools will find that the portion sizes are substantially different from current practice. Larger portions of starchy food (bread, potatoes, pasta) and larger portions of fruits and vegetables will be required to meet the Scottish Nutrient Standards.

## Product Specifications

**3.9** Product specifications are being developed to help plan menus to meet the Nutrient Standards

and to raise the quality of manufactured products used in school lunches. Our initial focus is upon fat and sodium content. They are being developed by the Food Standards Agency along with the working group referred to at 3.1 above. They will be developed according to a rolling programme covering the relevant food groups listed in Table 1. Consultation, including consulting with the food industry, on the practicality, palatability and affordability of achieving such specifications will be an integral part of developing the specifications.

## Drinking Water

**3.10** It is recognised that children need access to adequate amounts of fluids within the school day. Drinking water, which is free, fresh and chilled, should be provided with drinking cups or glasses within the dining room.

## Food and Drink Choices

**3.11** Promotion of appropriate food and drink choices is the responsibility of the whole school community. Within the dining room context there are specific issues that should be considered, including the following:

- *awareness* of appropriate choices (e.g. poster or other point of sale promotional materials, signposting and other visual cues)
- *access* to appropriate choices (e.g. counter positioning, easy access to promoted choices, less easy access to less favourable choices)

- *availability* of appropriate choices (e.g. ensuring sufficient provision of promoted items, especially such items as non-fried potatoes and salad)
- *acceptability* (e.g. promoted foods should taste good, be well cooked and attractively presented)
- *affordability* (e.g. appropriate pricing policy should be considered).

## Special Diets and Allergies

**3.12** Medically prescribed special dietary requirements should always be accommodated. Catering staff should be appropriately advised of the specific nature of the dietary requirement and children requiring special diets should be made known to the caterer. Diet guidance sheets should be provided by a State Registered Dietitian in the form of detailed diet sheets or meal plans for the child concerned. This will indicate to the caterer the food choices that are suitable or should be excluded. The principle of variety and choice should apply equally where applicable to children on special diets as part of a wider child-centred approach to providing for these children.

### Diabetes

**3.13** All children with diabetes are advised to eat regular meals and snacks. All children with diabetes should have a meal plan, which has been prepared especially for them by a State Registered Dietitian. It is essential that the guidance on the meal plan is strictly adhered to.

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## Allergies

**3.14** Food allergies are estimated to affect up to 2% of the adult population and are more prevalent in infants and children. A number of foods have been linked to food allergy, the most common of which are milk, wheat, peanuts, fish, soya, eggs and shellfish. A wide range of symptoms has been reported which vary in severity from a mild reaction to a very rapid and severe response.

**3.15** Allergy to some foods, such as peanuts, peanut products, other nuts and shellfish can be particularly acute. People suffering from a severe food allergy need to know the exact ingredients in their food, because even a tiny amount of the allergenic food could kill them.

**3.16** All pupils who have been diagnosed as having a food allergy should have a detailed diet sheet/meal plan prepared by a State Registered Dietitian. This will indicate the range of foodstuffs that should be excluded as well as those that are suitable.

## Children and Young People with Special Needs

**3.17** Children and young people with special needs may have particular problems associated with eating. It is important that anyone involved in caring for children and young people with eating difficulties is trained to ensure that they can give

the best and most appropriate assistance. These problems should not be a barrier to enjoyment and participation in meals and food choice or to learning about healthy eating. No additional charge should be passed on to parents.

**Recommendation 2: Each education authority should develop a policy for delivering, in partnership with parents and carers, medically prescribed diets and appropriate provision for children with special educational needs.**

## Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches

**3.18** These standards (Tables 2 and 3) are set for both the provision of food i.e. what the menu offers, and for the consumption of food i.e. what the child actually eats. The first of these, what the menu may offer, can be achieved by the caterer, but to influence the second will take a whole-school approach. Monitoring procedures will be set in place to monitor both the provision of food and the consumption of food by the child. See Section 5. The Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches set out to ensure the provision of a meal that provides largely a third of a child's daily nutritional needs.

**3.19** In Tables 2 and 3 the energy and nutrient requirements for children aged 5-18 years are presented as average values for males and females in three age groups. These guidelines provide figures for the recommended nutrient content of an average school lunch provided for children over one school week. In practical terms this is the amount of food provided, divided by the number of



children eating it, averaged over a week. All the nutrient intakes in the tables are based on the average of the recommended intakes for boys and girls. The child's daily nutritional needs are expressed in terms of:

- dietary reference value (DRV) (or daily requirement)
- the reference nutrient intake (RNI) (the estimated amount of a nutrient that will meet the needs of most of the population)
- estimated average requirement (EAR) (in the tables EAR is used for energy to show the average requirement for energy for boys and girls).

**3.20** It should be noted that current recommendations of energy intakes are based on children achieving a balance between energy intake and energy output allowing for growth and development. It is clear that children who are physically inactive will require less energy to meet physiological requirements and that excess energy will be a major contributor to the development of excess body weight. Both diet and physical activity are part of a holistic approach to maximising children's health.

**3.21** To protect and to promote the health of children three nutrients are considered particularly significant. Calcium is important for bone growth. Iron is important for preventing anaemia, especially in secondary age schoolgirls. Folates are particularly important, again for secondary aged schoolgirls. It is recognised that some nutrients are supplied in high amounts in only a limited range of foods. To assist caterers, guidance on rich sources of folate, calcium and iron are provided in Annex D.

**3.22** We have adopted the higher level of 40% of RNI for iron and folate. In practice, levels have previously proved hard to achieve. It is our view, however, that because of the high health impact of a deficiency, efforts should be re-doubled to ensure adequate intakes.

**3.23** We recognise that these standards will take time to implement. Our consultation suggested that this will be more straightforward to implement in primary schools than in secondary and that schools will need time to incorporate changes into financial and development planning. We expect all schools to make rapid progress, but expect a final implementation date of December 2004 and December 2006 for primary and secondary respectively.

**Recommendation 3: The Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches should be adopted and education authorities and schools should have them in place in all special schools and primary schools by December 2004 and in all secondary schools by December 2006.**

**Recommendation 4: School meal facilities should not advertise nor promote food or drink with a high fat or high sugar content.**

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Table 1: Menu Planning by Food Group

Group 1 (Bread, other Cereals and Potatoes)	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Bread, other Cereals and Potatoes</b>	Every school lunch should contain a portion or portions of food from this group.		Starchy foods are usually inexpensive and provide energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals. Children should be encouraged to fill up on these foods. Portions should be large enough to satisfy young appetites. See separate section on portion sizes (Annex D).
<b>Bread</b>	A variety of extra bread, including brown and wholemeal, should be <b>available daily</b> as a meal accompaniment for all pupils, at no additional charge. Crusty bread, quarters of bread rolls and buns are popular and can be offered in baskets at the counter.  Garlic bread should be served a <b>maximum of twice a week</b> .		Provides for the varying appetites and energy requirements within this wide age group.  Limiting high fat options will help to reduce the total amount of fat in the menu.

Group 1 cont'd	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Bread cont'd</b>	<p>Bread can be provided in a variety of forms to replace fried products including naan, pitta and crusty bread.</p> <p>The maximum sodium content of bread will be specified in the product specifications.</p>		<p>This is to provide variety and alternatives to fried potatoes.</p> <p>Bread contributes significant amounts of sodium to the diet. Setting this sodium restriction will contribute to UK-wide reduction of sodium in bread.</p>
<b>Rice, Pasta and Noodles</b>	<p>Rice and pasta should each be offered a <b>minimum of once a week</b>. Noodles should be <b>offered where appropriate</b>, e.g. with stir-fry or sweet and sour dishes.</p>		<p>This is to provide variety and alternatives to fried potatoes.</p>
<b>Potatoes</b>	<p>The following products should be served a <b>maximum of twice a week</b> in primary (and ideally in secondary) schools: roasts, chips, smiley faces and other shaped products, e.g. Alphabites, croquettes and waffles.</p>	<p>We recognise that chips will continue to be available each day in some secondary schools, but encourage these schools to work towards the primary school standards. However, non-fried alternatives to chips, e.g. mashed, boiled and baked potatoes should be <b>available daily</b> and actively promoted.</p>	<p>Limiting fried and high fat options helps to reduce the total amount of fat in the menu.</p> <p>While trying to influence choice, with the prevalence of the cash cafeteria system in many secondary schools, we recognise that limiting the availability of chips in some secondary schools to twice a week</p>

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Group 1 cont'd	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<p><b>Potatoes cont'd</b></p>	<p>Local Authority Purchasing Officers should be encouraged to buy chips with <b>as low fat content as possible</b>.</p> <p>The maximum fat content of potato products will be specified in the product specifications. If possible, all potato products should be oven baked rather than fried.</p> <p>Where a fried item is offered, a non-fried alternative should also be offered.</p>		<p>may be unrealistic at present.</p> <p>Children selecting fried options from the menu more than twice a week are likely to exceed the nutrient standard for total fat. Menu planners may therefore find fried food, including chips, can appear in the menu no more than twice per week.</p> <p>Providing alternatives to fried potatoes is the first step to achieving the nutrient standard for fat.</p>

Group 2 (Fruits and Vegetables)	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Fresh, Frozen, Canned and Dried Varieties and Fruit Juice</b>	<p><b>Every school lunch</b> whether hot, cold, or a packed lunch should contain two portions of food from this group.</p> <p>The menu as a whole should provide a choice of <b>at least two vegetables and two fruits</b> in addition to fruit juice every day and throughout the lunch service. At least one of these vegetables should be served free of added fat including salad dressings.</p>		<p>Fruit, vegetables and salads provide vitamins, minerals and fibre and experts recommend five portions of fruit and vegetables a day.</p> <p>Habitually low consumption of fruit and vegetables remains one of the most damaging features of the Scottish diet.</p>
<b>Vegetables</b>	<p>Fruit and vegetable choices should be actively promoted and consideration given to providing vegetables inclusively in the price of every meal. They should also be served in an appealing and easy to eat way.</p>		<p>A child may be put off choosing vegetables if they have to pay extra for them.</p> <p>Children often enjoy cold and raw vegetables best and salad and fruit bars are also popular.</p>

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Group 2 cont'd	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Vegetables cont'd</b>	<p>Vegetable-based soup should contain a minimum of one portion of vegetables per serving and can then count as one portion. Maximum sodium content of soup will be specified in product specifications.</p> <p>Baked beans should be served as a vegetable a <b>maximum of twice a week</b>. Canned spaghetti and similar products should not be served in place of a vegetable.</p>		<p>Soup is a good vehicle for vegetables, popular with many children. We found that some schools had prohibited the serving of soup because of concerns about scalding. We recommend that practical solutions to operational issues arising from health and safety concerns should be found so that children are not denied this route to increasing their vegetable intakes.</p> <p>Unlike most vegetables, baked beans do not contain Vitamin C. Processed tomato sauce should not be counted as a vegetable portion.</p>



Group 2 cont'd	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Vegetables cont'd</b>	If beans or pulses form the protein part of a main course, a vegetable that is not beans or pulses should <b>also be available</b> .		This increases the variety for the vegetarian option.
<b>Fruit</b>	Where there is choice, a dessert which provides at least one portion of fruit should be offered every day. Where there is no choice, a fruit-based dessert such as fresh fruit, fruit tinned in juice, fruit salads, fruit crumble, fruit jelly or fruit pie should appear on the menu a <b>minimum of three times a week</b> .  Pies, crumbles and other composite fruit dishes should contain a <b>minimum of one portion</b> of fruit per serving.		This increases the fruit content of the lunch.

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Group 3 (Milk and Milk Products)	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Milk and Milk Products, Yoghurts and Milk-based Desserts</b>	<b>Most school lunches</b> should contain a portion or portions of food from this group.		Milk and milk products are an excellent source of several nutrients including protein, vitamins and calcium, important for good bone development.
<b>Milk</b>	Plain or flavoured drinking milk should be available as an option <b>every day</b> . Semi-skimmed and skimmed milks have the same amount of calcium as whole milk and should be provided for drinking as well as for cooking.		Milk is a good alternative to sugary fizzy drinks and semi-skimmed milk provides less fat. The use of semi-skimmed milk is in line with existing recommendations, e.g. the Scottish Diet Action Plan.
<b>Cheese</b>	Cheese should be served as the main protein item instead of meat or fish a <b>maximum of twice a week</b> .		Where a portion of cheese is served as the main protein item, it also counts as a portion of food from the meat, fish and alternative sources of protein food group, but can be higher in fat than other products in this group.





Group 3 cont'd	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Cheese cont'd</b>	<p>Cheese to be served as cheese and biscuits, as part of a salad or as a filling for sandwiches and baked potatoes should have as low a fat and sodium content as possible. The maximum fat and sodium content of cheese will be specified in the product specifications.</p> <p>Vegetarian alternatives to cheese should be available a <b>minimum of three times a week</b>.</p> <p>Where there is no choice, cheese as a sandwich filler should be offered a <b>maximum of three times a week</b>.</p>		<p>Cheese is a high fat food and the product specification will help to reduce the total amount of fat in the menu.</p> <p>This provides variety for vegetarians.</p> <p>This provides variety and reduces fat intake.</p>

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Group 4 (Meat, Fish and Alternatives)	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Meat, Fish and Alternatives, e.g. Eggs, Peas, Beans and Lentils</b>	<b>Every school lunch</b> should contain a portion or portions of food from this group.		Meat, fish and alternatives such as eggs, beans and pulses are a major source of protein.
<b>Beef, Pork, Lamb and Poultry</b>	<p>Red meat (beef, pork and lamb) based meals should be served a <b>minimum of twice a week</b>.</p> <p>Lean meat should be used in dishes containing meat and this will have a fat content of about 10%. Caterers should take steps to reduce the fat content of their meat dishes as much as possible.</p> <p>The maximum fat and sodium content of stews, casseroles, meatballs and curries will be specified in the product specifications.</p>		<p>Red meat is a good source of iron.</p> <p>This will help to improve the quality of meat used in recipes whilst reducing the overall fat intake.</p> <p>The product specifications will help meet nutritional standards.</p>

Group 4 cont'd	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Processed Meat Products and Pies</b>	<p>Processed meat products, i.e. hot dogs, frankfurters, sausages, beefburgers, meatballs, haggis and shaped poultry products (e.g. nuggets), pastry topped pies and other pastry products (e.g. bridies, sausage rolls, Cornish pasties, Scotch Pies) should be served a <b>maximum of once a week</b>.</p> <p>The vegetable content of composite dishes such as pies should be increased where possible. Potato-topped pies will have a lower fat content and should be encouraged in preference to pastry-topped pies.</p>		<p>Overall, meals should provide no more than 35% total energy from fat therefore inclusion of high fat dishes should be limited.</p> <p>Processed meat products are likely to be high in fat. If manufacturers can produce a suitable range of lower fat products this recommendation may be reviewed as part of the ongoing process of establishing product specifications.</p>
<b>Composite Dishes</b>	<p>The maximum fat and sodium content of lasagne, moussaka, macaroni cheese, spaghetti bolognese, tuna pasta bake, ravioli and other composite dishes will be specified in the product specifications. Vegetable content should be increased where possible.</p>		<p>Product specifications will help meet nutritional standards.</p>

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Group 4 cont'd	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Fish</b>	<p>Fish, in addition to tuna fish, should appear on the menu a <b>minimum of once a week</b>.</p> <p>Oil-rich fish (sild, sardines, kippers, salmon, mackerel and herring) should be served <b>once a week</b>. Mackerel salads and pâtés are often popular.</p>		<p>This will provide variety in the menu.</p> <p>Oil-rich fish contain valuable, protective fatty acids that are deficient in the Scottish diet and their use should be encouraged. Many children are unfamiliar with these foods and should be encouraged to try them through the use of tasters.</p>
<b>Processed Fish Products</b>	<p>The maximum fat and sodium content of fish portions, fish fingers and shaped fish products will be specified in the product specifications. Any fish products that do not meet these specifications should be served a <b>maximum of once a week</b>.</p>		<p>Overall, meals should provide no more than 35% total energy from fat therefore inclusion of high fat dishes should be limited. Fish should be presented in a form that children will eat.</p>

Group 4 cont'd	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Pizza</b>	Maximum fat and sodium content for pizza will be specified in the product specifications and its frequency on the menu determined by its ultimate specification. Vegetable toppings should be encouraged and used wherever possible.		Pizza is often higher in fat than many other composite dishes.
<b>Vegetarian Products</b>	Vegetarian products resembling meat products, e.g. sausages and burgers made from textured vegetable protein (TVP) should have a similar protein content to meat products. Maximum fat and sodium content will be specified in the product specifications.		These products will be the main source of protein for vegetarians and it must therefore be available in a sufficient quantity in any meat replacements. Vegetarian products should meet the same specifications for fat as processed meat products.
<b>Stir-in Sauce</b>	Maximum fat and sodium content will be specified in the product specifications for stir-in sauces for bolognese, stews, curries and other ethnic dishes.		Limiting the fat and sodium content of these products will help in achieving the nutrient standards.

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Group 5 (Foods containing Fat and Foods and Drinks containing Sugar)	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Foods containing Fat and Foods containing Sugar</b>	The use of foods from this group should be <b>limited</b> . There should be no active promotion or advertising of full fat crisps, confectionery or fizzy, sugary soft drinks within the dining room.		Foods from this category are consumed to excess by Scottish children, providing excess fat, sugar and salt in the diet.
<b>Sweetened Soft Drinks</b>	Fizzy, sugary soft drinks <b>should not be served</b> as part of school lunch in primary schools and should not be encouraged in secondary schools. Carbonated water, plain water, milk and fruit juices are considered appropriate drinks. Flavoured waters are popular with children and low sugar versions are acceptable. We note the desirability to gradually wean Scottish children away from a predilection for sweet flavours. There is a popular movement amongst children to drinking plain water and this should be encouraged.	We recognise that sweetened soft drinks will be available each day in some secondary schools. However, they should not be served as part of a combination meal or meal deal or packed lunch. These schools may find that a staged progression from sugary fizzy drinks to diet versions and the promotion of lower sugar squashes and flavoured waters is helpful. The promotion of chilled bottled water as well as the adequate provision of freely available drinking water is considered very important.	To achieve the nutrient standard for sugar and for the protection of dental health, we consider that there is no place for sugary, carbonated (fizzy) drinks as part of school lunches.

Group 5 cont'd	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Confectionery, e.g. Chocolate, Sweets</b>	<p>Where confectionery is still being sold, it should be set away from the food service points.</p> <p>A working distinction is made between manufactured confectionery and home baking.</p>		This will discourage purchase as part of a meal and help to achieve the nutrient standard for sugar and for the protection of dental health.
<b>Puddings, Cakes, Biscuits, Jam, Jelly and Ice Cream</b>	Where there is no choice, all desserts on offer should be fruit and/or milk-based (including yoghurt). Caterers are, however, encouraged to review home-baking recipes to lower fats and sugars and include nutrient-rich, whole-food ingredients.		Desserts and puddings are a useful way of boosting the total energy in children's diets while providing important nutrients. They can also help to increase fruit intake. Specifications will help to lower fat intake.
<b>Butter and Spreads</b>	Only polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats, spreads and oils and low fat spreads should be used.		This will contribute to a reduction in the fat intake in line with the Scottish Diet Action Plan targets. As part of a healthy diet, it is also important to reduce the amount of saturated fats eaten, by replacing them with unsaturated fats (with an emphasis on monounsaturates).

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Group 5 cont'd	Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools	Supplementary Guidance for Secondary Schools	Rationale
<b>Cooking Fats and Oils</b>	Only polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats, spreads and oils should be used.		
<b>Savoury Potato Snacks, Crisps and Corn Snacks</b>	<p>Crisps should be offered as part of a combination meal option/meal deal or packed lunch a <b>maximum of twice a week</b>.</p> <p>We believe that many pack sizes are too large and the fat content per 100g is excessive. The maximum pack size, fat and sodium content will be specified in the product specifications.</p>		Crisps are commonly consumed throughout the day, e.g. at break times and eating multiple packets should not be encouraged.



**Table 2: Nutrient Standards for School Lunches for Pupils in Primary Schools**

			Unit	Infants 5-6 years	Junior 7-10 years
Energy	30% of EAR <sup>1</sup> Mean of girl and boy		MJ/Kcal	2.04 MJ 489 Kcal	2.33 MJ 557 Kcal
Fat	Not more than 35% of food energy	Max	g	19	21.7
Saturated Fatty Acids	Not more than 11% of food energy	Max	g	6	6.8
Carbohydrates	Not less than 50% of food energy	Min	g	65.2	74.3
NME (non-milk extrinsic) Sugars <sup>2</sup>	Not more than 11% of food energy	Max	g	14.3	16.3
Fibre/NSP (non-starch polysaccharides) <sup>3</sup>	Not less than 30% of calculated reference value	Min	g	3.9	4.5
Protein	Not less than 30% of RNI <sup>4</sup>	Min	g	5.9	8.5
Iron	Not less than 40% of RNI	Min	mg	2.4	3.5
Calcium	Not less than 35% of RNI	Min	mg	158	193
Vitamin A (retinol equivalents)	Not less than 30% of RNI	Min	µg	150	150
Folate	Not less than 40% of RNI	Min	µg	40	60
Vitamin C	Not less than 35% of RNI	Min	mg	11	11
<b>Sodium</b>	<b>Not more than 30% of RNI</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>mg</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>655</b>
Fruit and Vegetables	1/3 of five portions per day		Portions	2	2

<sup>1</sup> Estimated average requirement

<sup>2</sup> These are added sugars rather than the sugar that is integrally present in the food (e.g. table sugar, honey, sugar in fruit juice and soft drinks)

<sup>3</sup> Here calculated as 8g per 1,000 kcal

<sup>4</sup> Reference nutrient intake

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**Table 3: Nutrient Standards for School Lunches for Pupils in Secondary Schools**

			Unit	All secondary 11-18 years
Energy	30% of EAR <sup>1</sup> Mean of girl and boy		MJ/Kcal	2.70 MJ 646 Kcal
Fat	Not more than 35% of food energy	Max	g	25.1
Saturated Fatty Acids	Not more than 11% of food energy	Max	g	7.9
Carbohydrates	Not less than 50% of food energy	Min	g	86.1
NME (non-milk extrinsic) Sugars <sup>2</sup>	Not more than 11% of food energy	Max	g	18.0
Fibre/NSP (non-starch polysaccharides) <sup>3</sup>	Not less than 30% of calculated reference value	Min	g	5.2
Protein	Not less than 30% of RNI <sup>4</sup>	Min	g	13.3
Iron	Not less than 40% of RNI	Min	mg	5.9
Calcium	Not less than 35% of RNI	Min	mg	350
Vitamin A (retinol equivalents)	Not less than 30% of RNI	Min	µg	185
Folate	Not less than 40% of RNI	Min	µg	80
Vitamin C	Not less than 35% of RNI	Min	mg	13
Sodium	Not more than 30% of RNI	Max	mg	796
Fruit and Vegetables	1/3 of five portions per day		Portions	2

<sup>1</sup> Estimated average requirement

<sup>2</sup> These are added sugars rather than the sugar that is integrally present in food (e.g. table sugar, honey, sugar in fruit juice and soft drinks)

<sup>3</sup> Here calculated as 8g per 1,000 kcal

<sup>4</sup> Reference nutrient intake



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## ELIMINATING STIGMA AND IMPROVING THE PRESENTATION OF SCHOOL MEALS

- Introduction
- Our Vision and Principles
- Positive School/Whole Child Ethos
- Partnership Working
- Pupil Consultation
- Eliminating Stigma
- Managing the Process
- Influencing Choice
- Incentives to Improve Uptake of School Lunches

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## Section 4

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## ELIMINATING STIGMA AND IMPROVING THE PRESENTATION OF SCHOOL MEALS

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## Introduction

**4.1 We know from the literature review that we commissioned that there are various factors that influence whether children opt for school meals, whether or not they are entitled to free school meals. These are complex and include peer group pressure, quality and choice of food, long queues, overcrowded and unappealing dining rooms and separation from friends who bring packed lunches or buy lunch out of school. Our visits and research pointed to a growing dislike from Primary 6 onwards of the sometimes regimented, hurried, often anti-social and institutionalised nature of school dining facilities as a reason for low uptake. This seems to have more significance than stigma, although it undoubtedly has an influence.**

**4.2** The best practice observed was when the lunchtime break was set in the context of a whole school approach to health promotion. This was reinforced both within the curriculum and over breaks where there was partnership among pupils, staff, parents and the catering services. A happy child and teenager-friendly atmosphere, lack of queues, sociable seating arrangements and well presented healthy food choices led to a marked rise in meals uptake and a welcome increase in healthier choices.

**4.3** It is also impossible to look at school meals in isolation. Scotland's well documented health problems and their primary causes - poverty,

unemployment, poor housing and unhealthy lifestyles – impact on any efforts to dissuade pupils from fashionable fast food outlets in the vicinity of the school which are often places visited by families in non-school time.

**4.4** The challenge is thus twofold. Firstly, to ensure that all pupils entitled to a free meal take up that entitlement. Secondly, to persuade as many pupils as possible who pay for meals to use the school facility. If this is achieved and the nutrient content of the meals on offer meets the new nutrient standards then the health potential of good school provision will be realised.

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**4.5** While we offer suggestions as to how to remove stigma, the more important suggestions relate to “popularising” a healthy school lunch. This section identifies certain principles that underpin our vision of a healthy future for Scotland’s pupils. In order to make these principles a reality our report articulates a practical way forward.

## Our Vision and Principles

**4.6** Our vision is of a partnership between children/young people, school, family and the community in offering access to attractively presented food of an appropriate nutrient composition within schools and in developing a wider understanding of food, nutrition and healthy lifestyles which can inform children’s choices and eating habits within and outwith school and throughout life. We believe that children/young people should not feel stigmatised at school meal times for any reason including:

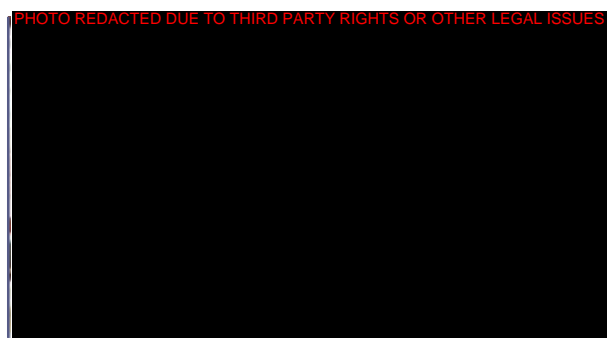
- awareness by other children of additional financial support required by families/carers for the school midday meal or breakfast or out-of-school clubs
- as a result of dietary or accommodation requirements relating to religion, ethnicity or health
- additional help that may be required in accessing or eating school meals by young people with disabilities.

**4.7** We have identified a set of principles we feel are important to underpin our vision and enable it to be achieved. These are:

- positive school/whole child ethos
- partnership working
- importance of pupil consultation
- eliminating stigma
- managing the process
- incentives to improve uptake of school lunches
- influencing choice.

**4.8** However, we recognise that schools are as individual as the pupils within them and schools are at varying stages of development. What works in one area will not necessarily work in another. Therefore the principles offer a variety of ways for schools to achieve positive outcomes.

## Principle 1: Positive School/Whole Child Ethos



**4.9** It is clear from the evidence that the whole experience that young people assimilate in school

is as important as the learning and teaching which occurs in the classroom. This impression was evident during our school visits. It is also identified in the health promoting school literature and in educational research relating to effective schools.

**4.10** Health promotion in schools is viewed as any action that a school takes to improve or protect the health of students and all school users. Therefore health promotion focuses on the social dimension of the school and its community rather than simply having the individualistic focus of traditional health education (Young & Williams 1989). It is possible to distil four key elements underpinning effective schools (Weare 2000). These are:

- supportive relationships
- a high degree of participation by pupils and staff in the life of the school
- the encouragement of autonomy in staff and pupils
- clarity about rules, boundaries and expectations.

**4.11** These qualities do not emerge by accident but are the product of good management and the creation of a positive ethos where everyone can contribute to the life of the school. The World Health Organisation recognises the importance of participation within the health promoting schools movement and places equity and democracy at the top of its list of underpinning principles. (Thessalonki conference 1997).

**4.12** The importance of the health promoting school movement was emphasised in the Government White Paper *Towards a Healthier Scotland* which stated, “The Government recognises the concept of the Health Promoting School as important in ensuring not only that health education is integral to the curriculum, but also that the school ethos, policies, services and extra curricular activities foster mental, physical and social well being and healthy development.” In addition, the World Health Organization (European Office) decreed that, “Every child and young person in Europe has the right and should have the opportunity to be educated in a health promoting school.” (Thessalonki conference 1997)

**4.13** To take this agenda forward, the Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit was launched on 24 May 2002. This Unit was created in partnership between the Scottish Executive, Health Education Board for Scotland, Learning and Teaching Scotland and CoSLA and will facilitate and support the implementation of the health promoting school concept throughout Scotland. The Unit will also consider what needs to be put in place to allow formal recognition of health promoting school status.

**4.14** In a health promoting school, a wide range of aspects relate to food provision. These include:

- the contribution of the curriculum
- breakfast clubs
- school meals

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- the environment and management of the dining room
- water provision
- snacks provision
- vending machines
- school nutrition action group/school based involvement
- alternative supplies of food close to the school.

**4.15** The *Health Education 5-14 National Guidelines* encourage important development work on healthy eating in both the primary school and the early stages of secondary schools. The curriculum contribution is vital and there is evidence of increasing links in Scotland between curriculum initiatives in healthy eating and the provision of food in schools. This occurs in secondary schools mainly through home economics where young people develop knowledge and understanding of healthy eating, but also develop important skills in food handling and preparation. In addition other subjects such as biology and general science make an important contribution to understanding nutrition and aspects of food hygiene. Physical education provides young people with an understanding of the importance of rehydration and energy balance in the context of physical activity. In personal and social education, in social subjects and in religious and moral education, the important roles that food plays in different cultures are explored and discussed.

**4.16** There is in fact evidence of good knowledge levels relating to healthy eating in

schools suggesting that effective learning and teaching are taking place (Young).

**4.17** Our school visits yielded some examples of links between learning and teaching in the classroom and food provision in the dining room. In some cases School Nutrition Action Groups had been the catalyst for this. There is considerable evidence that schools in Scotland fully recognise the importance of the school ethos and the active management of this within the life of the school. This is reflected in the development of the School Ethos Network and the Health Promoting Schools approach in Scotland.

**4.18** Our vision identifies the importance of seeing children within the wider context of their lives. This includes an understanding of their prior experience within pre-school services, the role of families and culture and other services such as out of school, play, sport and holiday activities in developing their understanding of food and their eating habits. This, together with recognition of the full range of children's physical and emotional as well as educational needs constitutes a "whole child" approach which we strongly endorse.

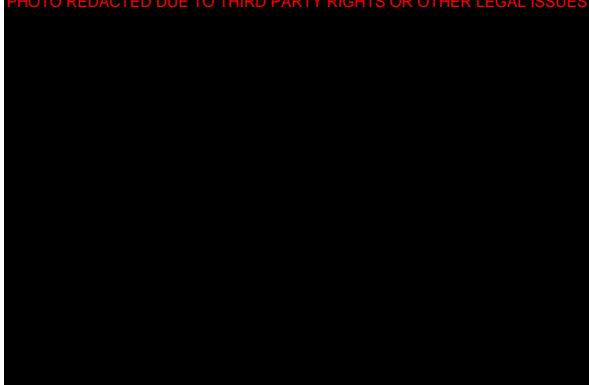
**Recommendation 5: All schools should review their current practice in establishing links between learning and teaching on healthy eating in the curriculum and food provision in the school.**



**Recommendation 6: The Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit should take the recommendations of the Panel into consideration when developing standards for health promoting schools.**

## Principle 2: Partnership Working

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**4.19** Successful initiatives in schools and education authorities are sustained when all of the partners support the school and the school adopts a whole school approach towards healthy eating. A high profile approach is necessary for the successful introduction of any important school development and every member of staff needs to support the healthy eating initiative. This is especially true of the headteacher. In schools where the headteacher and the senior management team have fully supported healthy eating as an important aspect of the Health Promoting School, exciting and successful developments were seen to be working well. Dining

rooms were supervised and orderly with effective and fair queuing systems for pupils and well presented and attractive healthy choices were on the menu. Pupils were consulted regularly about menus and choices and the initiative was supported by teaching staff in secondary curriculum areas such as home economics and personal and social education and by class teachers in primary schools.

**4.20** A successful school partnership approach requires involvement of all teaching staff, support staff, catering staff, pupils and also benefits from input by external agencies such as health promotion workers, dietitians and school nurses. Such partnerships also engage the full support of the School Board, the Parent Teacher Association and parent groups, so that the whole school community can feel involved.

**4.21** Schools may find it useful to set up School Nutrition Action Groups to promote a partnership approach. These are multi-disciplinary groups, involving pupil and catering representatives in addition to parents and school management. They are established within a school to tackle food-related education and health issues. Where schools have been successful in establishing such partnerships and projects have been well supported by the whole school community, they have seen a considerable increase in the uptake of school meals and pupils have become more aware of the importance that healthy food choices have on their health.

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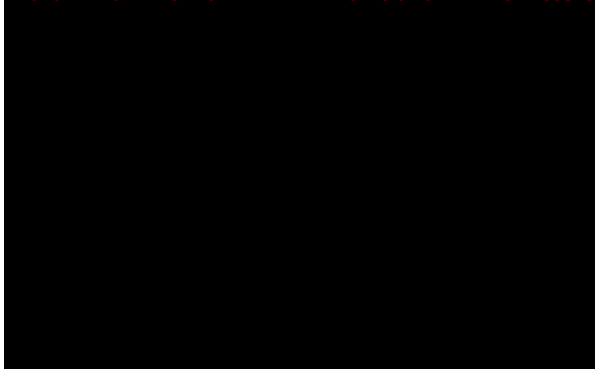
**4.22** School Nutrition Action Groups have been set up in many schools, often bringing together representatives from pre-school provision, after school clubs, community and other local groups and parents to help place the promotion of healthier eating in schools and within the wider context.

**4.23** School catering staff should be consulted so that they feel fully involved and supported from the outset. Catering suppliers and education authority officers involved in school meals supply must also be fully committed to the programme so that schools have strong support from their education authority.

**Recommendation 7: Education authorities should promote partnership approaches and schools should develop mechanisms to deliver partnership working.**

## Principle 3: Pupil Consultation

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**4.24** If Scottish pupils are to support healthier school meals, it is vital that they are given opportunities to be involved in consultation on these changes from the outset. This is particularly important at secondary level where pupils have greater opportunities to opt out of school meals and go out of school. However, experience of both sectors shows that when pupils feel ownership of an initiative they will be much more supportive of it and wish to participate.

**4.25** One problem with healthy eating initiatives in the past has been the difficulty of sustainability, but if pupils are actively involved by the headteacher in a whole school approach, then there is every chance of success. Consultation can be organised through a pupil council or a School Nutrition Action Group or similar group.

**4.26** The headteacher should also ensure effective liaison with the catering supervisor so that there are clear lines of communication among school staff, pupils and catering staff. Some catering supervisors arrange for a suggestion box to be placed in the dining room so that pupils' ideas and suggestions can be canvassed. Pupils can comment on ideas for menu choices and types of sandwich fillings or types of fruit they would prefer.

**4.27** There is no doubt that young people in primary and secondary schools have strong opinions about their food choices. It is sensible and

tactically sound for schools to take account of these and to try to take on board suggestions where these are feasible and fit them into a healthy diet. Pupils are knowledgeable consumers and will contribute suggestions and ideas about the effective presentation and packaging of food for school meals. There is the added benefit that such activity provides excellent practical teaching opportunities for the curriculum.

**4.28** There should also be an opportunity for pupils to comment on school meals and to have a recognised route for complaints or compliments about their meals. As young consumers they have a right to comment on meals and this needs to be managed by the school in order that pupils' opinions and views are both listened to and valued.

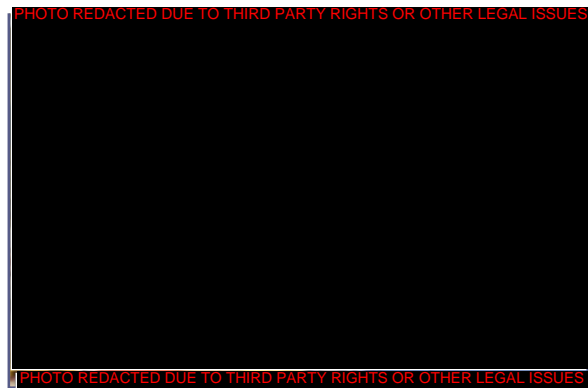
**4.29** One very effective way of achieving this is through the use of questionnaires to audit pupils' views. This can be a good way to achieve pupil involvement as pupils can be organised to prepare and issue questionnaires. Views can be collated and should provide a valuable resource in assisting staff and pupils to suggest improvements.

**4.30** Pupils may also have positive suggestions for the improvement of the ambience of their dining room through the provision of posters, music, better seating and tables and brighter décor. Such suggestions might become part of a school's development plan. They can provide pupils and staff with positive ideas for improving the popularity

of dining rooms and provide schools with an excellent focus for sustaining healthy eating initiatives.

**Recommendation 8: Schools should consult with pupils on a regular basis on provision of school meals.**

## Principle 4: Eliminating Stigma



**4.31** As already discussed, the uptake of free school meals and the implication that it is the stigma attached to receiving a free meal which reduces the uptake are complex and confused areas. Scottish Executive school meal census day data for 2002 shows the uptake of free meals in primary schools running at 16.9% (entitlement 20.1%) nationally. This is reasonably good since there would be a variety of legitimate reasons on any given day as to why a pupil does not take up their entitlement – illness, trips, holidays, exclusion, family matters, dentist, doctor, etc. Take-up of free

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meals is considerably higher than take-up for school meals as a whole.

**4.32** Equally in the secondary sector, where the uptake at 10.9% (entitlement 15.9%) is much poorer, it is in line proportionally with uptake in general, suggesting that for adolescents the lunchtime environment of the school dining room is often unpopular.

**4.33** However, our work has suggested that pupils do not regard stigma as a major reason for not taking free school meals. Much more significant factors included quality and quantity of food, queues, teenage attitudes to the institutional nature of the dining experience etc. Despite often not being reported as a significant problem within the schools visited, we recognise the importance of improving dining room practices to minimise stigma. A school dining room designed and managed to meet the needs of all diners is a crucial prerequisite to eliminating stigma, increasing uptake, encouraging informed choices and improving the diet and health of Scotland's schoolchildren.

**4.34** Local authorities should ensure that children on free school meals are not disadvantaged in terms of the value of their free school meal and that they have full access to the whole range of choice on the menu.

**4.35** Of the schools in the eight authorities we visited, three had introduced an electronic card

system in the secondary sector. All others used a ticket system in the secondary sector and all used tickets at the primary stage i.e. cash cafeteria with pupils entitled to free school meals being issued a ticket. Some authorities indicated that electronic cards were to be introduced in the near future. Where lunch tickets were used, they were issued to pupils in a variety of ways including:

- parents signed and collected from headteacher (primary)
- ticket issued by teacher after registration
- ticket handed out in dining room by member of teaching staff or ancillary staff
- ticket collected by pupil from school office
- ticket handed out in dining room by senior pupils.

**4.36** With a cash cafeteria system there is much more likelihood of pupils having free school meals being identified. The system for the issue of meal tickets can be contentious in the secondary sector especially where pupils are involved in the process. In primary schools this did not present itself as a problem across all the authorities visited. "But at secondary school, other children do know, they get these tickets and you can get bothered as you get older." (Storey and Chamberlin). We believe any child entitled to free school meals should be able to take them without any fear of stigmatization. There is no place in a fair and equal society for stigmatization of children because of their life circumstances.

## Use of Card Systems

**4.37** We came across two different types of cards used as part of the cashless catering system, namely swipe cards and smart cards. The former, which have a magnetic strip with an identification number, have a limited number of uses. They can include a photograph of the holder enabling the card to also be used as a form of identity. Smart cards are much more sophisticated. They are embedded with an integrated circuit chip, giving them the power to perform many different functions as well as a method of payment. These include use as a school registration card, to provide shopping discounts, for entry to leisure facilities, or to accumulate reward points. Smart cards also have the ability to store much more information than magnetic strip cards and can be tailored to suit the needs of individual authorities. This application can also sit alongside a number of other functions on a single, multi-purpose smart card, including the proposed Young Scot application. As smart cards are compatible with existing magnetic strip cards, they could be phased in as required.

**4.38** Where swipe cards were in use, they were initially collected by all pupils from the school office and recorded. Pupils paying for meals topped up cards when necessary at validator machines that were located in convenient sites on school premises. Pupils entitled to free school meals also had the option of topping up their card with cash.

**4.39** Some forms of electronic cards are already a way of life to many young people i.e. top up phone cards, making financial transactions etc. From our discussions it seems clear that pupils see use of cards as the way of the future. This is in line with our own thinking.

**4.40** In the schools visited, the card system appeared to be an efficient, speedy system where large numbers of pupil transactions could be processed with relative ease. The schools where the pupils were served most effectively also had a good supply of till points, reducing length of queues and waiting time. In all schools visited, pupils mentioned the queuing lengths and time. The schools with the card system did not experience such criticism. The efficiency of the card system allows more pupils to take school lunch in a relatively short space of time. We noted that in one Glasgow secondary school the uptake of school meals increased by 25% with the introduction of swipe cards. In addition, when authorities introduced improvements to dining facilities such as increasing the number of till points and serveries, the uptake increased substantially.

**4.41** The card system can offer benefits to parents, pupils, school, caterers and for health promotion. For example, parents can check that money given to pupils for school meals is being used for that purpose. In many schools parents can send in a cheque for the payment of credit on the card not only ensuring the money will be used

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for school lunch, but also preventing potential bullying as a consequence of children carrying large sums of money to school. The card system also enhances anonymity for pupils entitled to free school meals. A study (Clapham and Kynoch 2000) in a central Scotland secondary school found, following the introduction of a swipe card system, that uptake of free school meals increased by 50%. Due to not carrying money on a regular basis, pupils also report that the card prevents some forms of bullying. The school can also use the card for security and registration systems. More pupils may stay in school for lunch, ensuring the children remain in a safe environment. The card may provide the caterer with increased sales, and it removes the need for staff to handle cash in the dining room. The system can also provide detailed information for food management purposes. In health promotion for example, anonymous food purchasing data could be used within the school curriculum, or used to plan and evaluate health promotion programmes. The card could also be used to promote the purchase of certain foods by awarding points on cards, which can be exchanged later for prizes or other incentives.

**4.42** The introduction of a smart card by local authorities will enable them to deliver a number of services, including payment for school meals, by means of the card. In May 2002 the Scottish Executive announced the allocation of £5.4m from the Modernising Government Fund to support a national initiative to improve services to young

people, the 'Dialogue Youth' project. All 32 local authorities are now committed to this project, a major part of which will involve the introduction of a voluntary smart card for all young people aged 12-18 on a Scotland-wide basis. The Scottish Executive has also allocated a further £6m from the Modernising Government Fund to support the wider development of the standardised public sector smart card for other age groups, and on a Scotland wide basis. The priority application for smartcards will be educational, including school meals, and transport related.

**Recommendation 9: Processes maximising anonymity for free meal recipients should be explored as a priority in all schools. Primary schools should review their ticket allocation practices to ensure anonymity for free school meals is maximised and education authorities should adopt early introduction of a school meal application for multiple-use cards, in particular in secondary schools.**

**Recommendation 10: As part of the introduction of card systems, education authorities should ensure there are sufficient validators in easily accessed areas within the school, not only in the dining room, and that they are easy to use.**



## Principle 5: Managing the Process

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**4.43** We have come to a view that the design and management of school meals can sometimes be more at the convenience of the provider rather than the consumer. We have concluded that what is required is an efficient and sensitive operation serving attractive meals to well informed and, where necessary, well supported consumers. We welcome the fact that implementation of Accessibility Strategies and the amended Disability Discrimination Act 1995 should support and improve access to dining halls and other parts of the school.

### Time

**4.44** A key factor that puts many pupils, or any consumer for that matter, off even the most positive dining experience, is not being given enough time. As previously indicated, our visits and

research revealed a growing dislike from Primary 6 onwards of the sometimes regimented and hurried nature of school meals provision.

**4.45** The inadequate size and multiple use of much of the country's school dining facilities is an issue, but in many circumstances the pressure to "eat up and shut up" comes from decisions to shorten lunch hours. However there is also the "catch 22" situation for those whose successful efforts to improve uptake has resulted in even greater pressure on a limited capacity.

### Queuing

**4.46** A factor related to the time available to eat food is the time that is spent queuing for it. Many pupils felt that they would not have to queue so long at outside outlets. Some schools have tried to overcome the queuing issue by offering a pre-ordering service for sandwich meals, which can then just be collected at lunchtime. In Angus, a pilot study was underway in some primary schools where the pupils were issued with a colour-coded card for their pre-ordered lunch. Others have adopted the practice of organising rotas whereby different years take it in turn to go for lunch first so that all pupils do not arrive in the dining room at the same time. While we found some very efficient local practice, queuing was recognised as a key factor in improving the school meal experience. A lack of choice for those at the end of queues was also commented on. We felt that a number of positive approaches we encountered could assist in ensuring the time available was optimised.

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**Recommendation 11: All schools should examine their seating and queuing arrangements to ensure that the social experience of school meals is maximised.**

**Recommendation 12: To address queuing difficulties and in any review of the length of the lunch break, the following factors should be considered:**

- multiple service points
- more cash points in cash cafeterias
- staggered arrivals of diners/separate sittings
- pre-ordering facility
- separate counter for collecting pre-ordered meals
- delivery of pre-ordered meals to lunchtime clubs
- examining the potential for additional outlets elsewhere in the school
- the needs of disabled pupils.

**Recommendation 13: When education authorities and schools are examining the structure of the school day, the lunchtime experience should be part of that consideration.**

## Hygiene

**4.47** Awareness of the importance of basic food hygiene is an aspect of health promotion in schools that might usefully be embraced in the context of school lunch. The *Report of the Task Force on E. coli O157* emphasised the need to promote personal hygiene and in particular handwashing. The Scottish Executive and the Food Standards Agency are working with the Health Education Board for Scotland and the Health and Safety Executive to prepare appropriate promotional material. In addition, the Food Standards Agency Food Hygiene Campaign will cover this issue. Handwashing is one of the four key messages in the campaign, which targets the catering sector and the general public. Schools should be aware of these issues and the arrangements for managing the school lunch break should ensure, particularly for primary school children, that appropriate arrangements are in place to promote routine handwashing prior to the meal.

## Minority Ethnic Communities and Special Religious Dietary Requirements

**4.48** “Traditional foods and eating patterns of black and ethnic minority communities are part of the reality of the multiethnic and multicultural nature of British society today. Food is one of the most noticeable aspects of an individual's cultural identity and is closely linked with religious, social and economic circumstances. All over the world, societies have developed traditional eating patterns



over centuries. They are based on foods available locally and influenced by cultural and religious beliefs. To produce a detailed and accurate profile of the food habits of each ethnic group in Britain is a very lengthy process and even then it would be unlikely to include all groups and variations within and between them.” (Hill 1994). This statement is equally true for other faith communities.

**4.49** What is required is an ongoing development of knowledge and awareness around the needs of pupils from minority ethnic and religious communities. One important way to achieve this is through the partnership approaches previously discussed. Schools and caterers need to have access to suitable information, support and resources to ensure these needs are met in a sensitive, informed and appropriate manner.

### Supervision

**4.50** We were impressed by schools where there were supportive supervision arrangements. Primary schools in particular often had supervisory staff promoting healthy choices and encouraging consumption. Catering staff also regularly played a vital role in encouraging positive choices as well as monitoring the choices of those with food allergies.

**4.51** We felt supervision merited major investment and matched the objectives outlined by *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* about the use of non-teaching staff for non-teaching activities. At the same time as recognising the need

to take a burden off teachers, we also observed the practical and symbolic benefit that came from the presence in the dining room of school staff and senior management. We recognise, however, that senior management teams can vary enormously in size from a large secondary to a small primary.

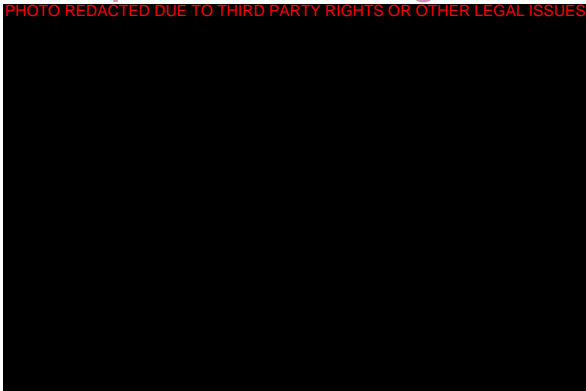
**Recommendation 14:** In line with the agreement set out in *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century*, education authorities should consider deploying classroom assistants and dining room assistants to undertake a supervisory role in dining rooms.

**Recommendation 15:** Senior management within schools should strongly support and endorse their school meal provision as part of the whole-child approach.

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## Principle 6: Influencing Choice



**4.52** To enable children to develop a wider understanding of food, nutrition and healthy lifestyles, and therefore make more informed choices about their eating habits, they need guidance on a number of fronts. A whole school approach is a good basis to ensuring this happens. During our visits we saw varied examples of practice in terms of:

- presentation of food
- labelling
- pricing
- effective marketing.

### Presentation of Food

**4.53** How food is presented is critical to uptake. Well-presented dishes will always sell better than those that are poorly garnished and displayed. Irrespective of whether a particular dish is a healthier choice, if it looks unattractive, children are

unlikely to choose it. Counter position is an important factor influencing children's choices. Healthier options should be placed first in the servery, at the front and beside the till point. Where meals were of good quality and the food was well presented, the uptake of meals was generally high.

### Labelling

**4.54** Labelling is not just about influencing choice. For some pupils, such as vegetarians or those with a medical condition, it can also help identify whether certain foods are appropriate to select. In smaller schools, catering and/or teaching staff may be aware of the special dietary requirements of their pupils, but this is not universal, especially in large secondary schools. Discussions with secondary pupils and parents showed that many parents would like more information about the nutritional value of meals on offer at lunchtime. The introduction of nutrient standards will reassure parents of the quality of meals being served. The introduction of labelling would, however, also be welcomed.

**4.55** The extent to which foods are labelled may be affected by the type of food, by the packaging of the food and by the style of counter on which the food is displayed. We acknowledge that it may be difficult to label foods displayed on a hot counter where space is limited. We also acknowledge that the time taken to read the information on labels might increase queuing times,

especially in primary schools. However, there are several ways this can be addressed including use of:

- informative menu boards in dining room
- heat-protected “tent” cards in front of products on hot serveries
- colour coding for packaged foods
- a pre-ordering service.

### Pricing

**4.56** Additional costs resulting from implementation of the nutrient standards and increased portion sizes should not be passed on as price increases to the pupils as consumers. This will be monitored as part of the monitoring process. Prices vary between authorities and between schools. Some primary schools charge a set price for school meals, whereas the charge others make is dependent upon the food chosen by the pupil. With the latter, taking time to add up prices can increase queuing times.

**4.57** It is for local authorities to determine pricing tariffs and the value of the free school meal. Free school meals should enable pupils entitled to them to have full access to the whole range of choice on the menu and should be of sufficient value to provide at least two courses including any main course.

**4.58** All authorities should employ pricing incentives to encourage healthier eating. Obviously there are budget constraints within which the catering contractor has to operate. However, price sensitivity among pupils is extremely high and this can be the most effective way of encouraging healthier eating.

### Effective Marketing

**4.59** All marketing activity should be geared towards encouraging healthy choices. There should be no active marketing of high fat and high sugar products such as confectionery and crisps. Examples of good practice include:

- classroom activities relating to healthy eating and complementing menus and choices available in the dining room
- classroom learning about particular foods with free samples
- competitions and leaflets that educate while also providing a fun activity
- use of health promotions such as tasting sessions
- healthy option incentives/reward systems – considered in further detail below
- promotional posters to identify food groups in dining room and classroom
- provision of information for parents on nutrient standards
- availability of forward menus for pupils to take home.

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**4.60** We feel it is important to make menus available to parents to inform them of the choices available. This would not only help to reassure parents who have concerns about what is being offered, but allow them to discuss their children's diet and what their child should eat at school. We saw good practice where catering managers attend parents' evenings to talk to parents and display examples of foods served to pupils.

**Recommendation 16:** Caterers should consider appropriate means of labelling food and methods of conveying information on content to pupils and parents. Through existing school communication channels, menus should be forwarded to parents at least once a term. Schools and caterers should consider presentation, marketing and pricing structures to incentivise healthier choices.

## Principle 7: Incentives to Improve Uptake of School Lunches

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**4.61** Improvement in nutrient standards of meals will only lead to improvement in children's eating habits and health if there is increased uptake of the meals. It is important that, not only are the pupils encouraged into the dining room, but also that they are encouraged to make nutritionally "healthy choices". One way to encourage this is through the use of incentives.

**4.62** From research and in the course of our visits, we saw much good and innovative practice in relation to incentives, which we feel could be shared across Scotland.

### Incentives to Encourage Uptake

**4.63** Incentives to influence uptake have to impact on parents and children. The message that the school meal is valued and is worth staying in school for comes initially from home. Parents have to feel comfortable that the pupils will receive value for money and will be served with a meal of an appropriate nutrient composition. As has already been discussed, this can come from menus being available to parents on a regular basis, by providing information about the school meals service to parents when children start school, or by consulting with and keeping Parent Teacher Associations or School Board representatives fully informed of school meals provision.

**4.64** While parents may want their children to stay in school for meals, the pupils themselves

make the ultimate decision as to what they will eat and even whether they will stay in school at all, particularly when they reach secondary school age. Peer pressure was found to be a significant issue in determining where pupils will eat. However, pupils can be encouraged to eat as a group in the dining room rather than go elsewhere.

**4.65** Pupils themselves identified one of the greatest influences to be the atmosphere and ambience of the dining room. Where facilities had been upgraded, pupils felt more positive about their dining environment. Improvements did not always need to be sophisticated or expensive to make a difference to how pupils felt about the dining room. Colourful canopies over serveries, bright, colourful furniture of different sizes, cheerful posters on the wall and bright uniforms for catering staff all made a difference.

**4.66** The design of dining rooms in new build schools is an important consideration for local authorities, especially where such accommodation is to have a multi-function use. We fully recognise that it may be easier to improve the environment in dedicated dining rooms. However, innovative practice such as removable decorative features, bright stow-away picnic-style tables and benches and even equipping several smaller areas for eating in addition to the main dining facility have been introduced in some schools.

**4.67** Social aspects of lunchtime are also important to pupils and can be developed to encourage pupils to stay in school to eat. Pupils want to be able to sit with their friends, even if their friends take packed lunches. The level of noise in the dining room is an issue in some schools, particularly in secondary schools where there is far more pressure on the space available. In some schools, background music is played in the dining room either during or following the meal service. Pupils were sometimes consulted on the music to be played,

**Recommendation 17: Improvements to the dining room to enhance its atmosphere and ambience, and encourage its use as a social area should be considered as a priority by local authorities and should be taken into account in their wider school estate planning. It is desirable, wherever possible, that a separate dining area should be provided.**

**Recommendation 18: Furniture design, layout and usage, along with other factors such as décor and background music, should be considered by all schools, with significant pupil input and programmes for change drawn up.**

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## Incentives for Making Healthy Choices

**4.68** Several schools across Scotland have introduced incentives to promote healthy eating. These can range from price incentives such as “meal deals” or provision of free vegetables or salad with a main course, visibility and presentation of the healthy options and unavailability of confectionery or vending machines at lunchtime to schemes offering rewards for consistent healthy eaters.

**4.69** Organised incentive schemes do not seem to be widely prevalent, but are used in some education authority areas to try to encourage better eating. They work mainly by pupils building up points on their swipe/smart cards when they choose healthy options. The points are then either exchanged for rewards, or the top healthy eaters in the school are awarded a prize at the end of each term. In schools where swipe cards are not used, scratch cards, which give a chance of winning prizes, are given with healthy choices. Rewards vary among education authority areas and range from healthy products to free passes to local swimming pools or sports centres or even tickets for major concerts.

**4.70** Incentives for healthy eaters in primary schools are much simpler. Some areas award stickers daily to pupils who make healthy choices and then give rewards for collecting a certain number of these. Where reward prizes are

available, these are on a much smaller scale than in secondary schools.

**4.71** We view the use of these incentives as acceptable, as long as the prizes are of an appropriate nature, such as for swimming pools, sports facilities or films/concerts. These can provide a link between diet and exercise and can support and emphasise the importance of the holistic approach underlying health promoting schools.

**Recommendation 19: Education authorities should consider the introduction of incentive schemes to promote healthier choices and increase the take-up of school meals.**

## Incentive Schemes for Catering Staff

**4.72** Catering staff also have a vital influencing role in encouraging uptake of meals and choices made. Pupils spoke highly of cheerful staff who showed concern for them.

**4.73** Offering incentives to catering staff is one way of recognising their role in encouraging the promotion of healthy eating. One of the education authorities visited had introduced a scheme to award gold stars for increasing uptake of school meals. Award of a certain number of stars leads to prizes such as cookery books and kitchen equipment. Prizes are also offered for individuals' innovative ideas to improve the service and uptake

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of meals. Catering staff appeared to appreciate these initiatives, helping them to develop a sense of ownership of the service, and they were becoming keen to hear of the latest developments.

**Recommendation 20: Education authorities should consider the introduction of staff incentive schemes to recognise innovation and celebrate success.**

# Hungry For Success

A Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland

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## IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING STRATEGY

Implementation  
Monitoring

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# Section 5

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## IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING STRATEGY

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## Implementation

**5.1** Continued commitment and effort on the part of local authorities is central to the successful implementation of our recommendations. CoSLA is currently working with local authorities as they move to become public health organisations and is therefore in a key position to assist them to take forward and manage the implementation of recommendations which transect conventional boundaries between health, education and social justice. Improving school meals should not, therefore, be seen as an additional task for education authorities and schools. Rather it should be seen within the context of *Our National Health A plan for action, A plan for change* and the *National Priorities for Education* set by the Scottish Executive and approved by the Scottish Parliament in December 2000. The National Priorities are set out in Annex E. They are:

- Achievement and Attainment
- Framework for Learning
- Inclusion and Equality
- Values and Citizenship
- Learning for Life.

**5.2** Responses from catering representatives and education directorate staff of local authorities, as well as from staff in schools visited during the course of our work, indicated considerable support for improving school meals provision. Successful implementation of the recommendations within this report will be vital in securing improvements.

Education authorities will have a key role to play in ensuring that the nutrient standards, and related recommendations, are implemented within the proposed timescale.

**5.3** The Scottish Executive and CoSLA are working together towards the achievement of sustainable investment and demonstrable improvements in the school estate, including buildings and other facilities. This work will provide opportunities to make improvements to dining rooms as described in this report.

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**5.4** The proposed timescale for implementation takes account of the fact that education authorities are currently at varying stages in improving school meals provision. Some authorities have undertaken considerable work in this area, while others will need more time to implement the proposed nutrient standards and related recommendations. We have already recommended in Section 3 that The Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches should be in place in all special and primary schools by December 2004 and in all secondary schools by December 2006. A detailed implementation plan is set out in Annex F.

**Recommendation 21: Local authorities, guided by CoSLA as appropriate, should incorporate strategies for implementing the recommendations of this report into mainstream planning processes that will empower and enable schools and school communities to adopt the recommendations.**

## Training

**5.5** Training is a key element of effective implementation. We recommend that all school catering and dining room supervisory staff should undertake appropriate training to ensure effective management of the school lunch service. For example the Scottish Executive, in partnership with the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland is developing an elementary Food and Health training course.

**Recommendation 22: All school catering and dining room supervisory staff should undertake appropriate training, for example the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland Food and Health training course (currently under development) as part of their programme of development. Interested parents, carers and teachers should also be encouraged to undertake training in food and health.**

## Monitoring

**5.6** The main mechanism for monitoring delivery of the National Priorities for Education is through the School Improvement Framework which will come into effect from academic year 2002-2003. The National Priorities are broad, reflecting Ministers' vision for education. They encompass specific topics such as school meals provision. Within the Framework, progress will be measured using attainment and other statistics, school and authority self-evaluation and evidence from HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE).

## Background

**5.7** The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000 (the 2000 Act) created a statutory framework for schools education that requires education authorities and schools to plan, monitor and report on improvement in education – an improvement framework.

**5.8** In practice, most authorities and schools have been planning in this general way for some time. The 2000 Act provides a way to give more coherence to that planning process at national and local level. The National Priorities have been designed to give emphasis and direction to the whole range of monitoring on progress, undertaken by education authorities and their schools as well as by the Scottish Executive. The Scottish Executive will produce a detailed report on progress against National Priorities every three years, starting with a baseline report in 2002.

**5.9** Advice in *Guidance to Education Authorities on Implementing the National Priorities* recommends that education authorities should keep planning and monitoring arrangements simple and focused. Our recommendations have been prepared to reflect this advice.

**5.10** Within the broad requirements to address the National Priorities in Improvement Plans, Ministers have identified key policy themes, which all education authorities are asked to refer to specifically in their Improvement Plans. These include health promotion (including personal development of pupils, physical activity strategy and school meals provision).

**5.11** The Scottish Executive has translated each Priority into outcomes and has produced related performance measures and quality indicators. For National Priorities 2 and 3, which provide a vehicle for monitoring the implementation of improvements in school lunches, these are as follows:

### *National Priority 2*

Outcome: enhanced school environments which are more conducive to teaching and learning.

Performance measures and quality indicators include, for education authorities, number and percentage of schools with Health Promoting School status (primary and secondary schools separately).

Note: the actual requirements to receive Health Promoting School status have yet to be defined. A Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit has been established and a defined strategy plan is being developed. Providing an up-to-date policy statement on the Health Promoting School concept and what it involves is an early focus of the work of the Unit. The Unit will also consider the appropriate means of accreditation and monitoring of the Health Promoting School status. Ministers have set as an objective that all schools should become Health Promoting Schools by 2007.

### *National Priority 3*

Outcome: every pupil benefits equally from education.

Performance measures and quality indicators include, for education authorities, percentage of pupils (primary and secondary schools separately) who are entitled to free school meals and percentage who take them up.

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**5.12** The performance measures identified above are both quantitative. For some of the National Priority outcomes, use of quality indicators has been suggested, to capture a fuller picture than can be got from statistics alone. The quality indicators suggested have been drawn from the *How good is our school?* indicators developed by HMIE for schools to use in their self-evaluation. These indicators are also used by HMIE when inspecting schools.

**5.13** Particular quality indicators for schools to use when evaluating the quality of their school meals provision are suggested in Annex G.

## Approaches to Monitoring

**5.14** Encouragement should be given to promote self-evaluation by schools and education authorities to complement monitoring by the Scottish Executive. A workable and powerful system could be created which combines external evaluation with self-evaluation by schools (reporting to parents and the local community) and quality assurance by education authorities. Self-evaluation of a school's approaches to health promotion, for example, has been encouraged already through the publication of *A Route to Health Promotion: self-evaluation using performance indicators* that was produced jointly by Aberdeen City Council, Health Education Board for Scotland and HMIE Audit Unit. This publication, which builds on the approach to self-evaluation used in *How good is our school?*, includes references to school meals.

**5.15** We propose four different levels of monitoring. These range from annual monitoring of key data from all education authorities to more detailed monitoring of practice in a sample of schools and education authorities and independent research. Using such an approach to monitoring should help to maintain a focus on improvements in school meal provision and uptake from the start of the implementation of nutrient standards. It should also enable the publication, possibly in 2006, of a more detailed report by HMIE on progress in implementation.

### *Level 1 Monitoring (for every school and education authority each year, starting from 2003)*

**5.16** As part of annual reporting on National Priorities, the following should be monitored:

- for each education authority, the number and percentage of schools with Health Promoting School status
- for each education authority, percentage of pupils (primary and secondary sector separately) who are entitled to free school meals and percentage who take them up.

**5.17** By December 2004, education authorities should be required to report on how they have reduced the stigma attached to taking free school meals and how they have improved general uptake of school meals in primary and special schools. By

December 2006, they should be required to report on how they have reduced the stigma attached to taking free school meals and how they have improved general uptake of school meals in secondary schools.

**5.18** Implementation of nutrient standards should be monitored through the use of nutritional analysis software, development of which should be commissioned by the Scottish Executive. Such software could be used for self-evaluation of nutrient standards as well as for external monitoring of nutrient standards. Formal arrangements should be developed with local NHS Boards and Trusts to secure dietetic advice and help with making changes and improvements.

***Level 2 Monitoring (as part of HMIE programme of school inspections, starting from August 2003)***

**5.19** In every inspection within the six/seven year inspection cycle, include data on free meal entitlement, uptake of free meals and uptake of meals generally, identifying trends over time and include reference to dining room facilities within evaluation of accommodation and facilities (quality indicators 6.1 and 6.3).

**5.20** In a sample of inspections (which could include focus on Social Inclusion Partnership areas) take account of:

- arrangements for consulting pupils on school meals, when evaluating the quality of climate and relationships (quality indicator 5.1)
- school meal provision for pupils from varying ethnic backgrounds, when evaluating equality and fairness (quality indicator 5.3)
- include comment on the promotion of healthy eating habits, when evaluating the quality of pastoral care (quality indicator 4.1).

**5.21** In a sample of inspections, including some inspections of New Community Schools, work with personnel from external agencies (who would act as specialist Associate Assessors) to carry out a more detailed evaluation of school meals provision including, for example, pupils' access to socially inclusive arrangements, provision of special diets and the overall health promoting environment.

**5.22** The information and evaluations gathered from all the above inspections could be used to publish, possibly biennially, examples of good practice relating to school meals within the context of the health promoting school.

**5.23** As part of its inspections of the education functions of education authorities, HMIE might be asked to include aspects of school meals provision.

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## Level 3 Monitoring

**5.24** The Scottish Executive should commission HMIE to work with specialist Associate Assessors to undertake a more detailed evaluation of school meals provision and produce a report for publication. Such a task could be planned to monitor progress towards the proposed 2006 target date for implementation of nutrient standards and/or the full implementation of these standards.

**5.25** HMIE has previously produced such reports on aspects of health education. Two examples are *Drug and Nutrition Education: A Study of Provision in Schools and Community Education* (HM Inspectors of Schools, February 1999) and *Health Promotion: Issues for Councils and Schools* (HM Inspectors of Schools, November 1999).

## Level 4 Monitoring

**5.26** The Scottish Executive should commission independent research in 2007 to assess the implementation and impact of the recommendations.

**Recommendation 23: Monitoring of the implementation of the Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches, and related aspects, should be undertaken using the four levels of monitoring proposed in this report, and should involve HM Inspectorate of Education working, as appropriate, with other relevant agencies.**



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## OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS

Introduction

Food Provision in Schools

Other Significant Issues

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# Section 6

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## OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS

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## Introduction

**6.1 Our remit was to establish standards for the nutrient content of school meals, to eliminate any stigma attached to taking free school meals and to improve school lunch uptake. However, we recognise that food in schools is not just about what happens at lunchtime. A whole school approach, which promotes consistency across what is taught in the classroom with what is provided in school dining rooms, breakfast clubs, tuckshops, vending machines and after-school clubs is required.**

**6.2** While these issues were not part of our remit, they are important. We consider it essential that appropriate guidance is developed for the future. The evidence on which our recommendations are based has highlighted the importance of addressing whole school issues.

educational performance at school. It is important that a healthy breakfast is offered in keeping with a whole school approach. Research in Scotland suggests that breakfast clubs are more sustainable when the social aspects are well developed and integrated with food provision.

## Food Provision in Schools

### Breakfast Clubs

**6.3** The importance of a healthy breakfast for children is recognised by educational and health professionals. Breakfast clubs exist in many schools and community venues throughout Scotland. They are set up for a variety of reasons, the main one being to ensure that children start the day with a healthy breakfast. As well as benefiting children's health, breakfast clubs are also helping to improve children's attendance, punctuality and

**6.4** Good practice guidelines for breakfast clubs have been produced based on the experience of breakfast clubs around the country. *Breakfast Clubs A Head Start* (Scottish Community Diet Project 2001) is a step by step guide to the ups and downs of setting up and running a Breakfast club and includes Healthy Breakfast guidelines. Street and Kenway (1999) in their report provide further discussion on the barriers to the development and sustainability of breakfast clubs, and review the strengths and weaknesses of the various ways of running breakfast clubs.

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**6.5** Breakfast clubs are currently funded in a variety of ways. Traditionally, funding has been granted by education authorities and Health Boards to support programmes, mainly in Social Inclusion Partnership areas. In November 2001, the Scottish Executive launched a new strategic approach to breakfast service provision in Scotland. The Scottish Executive has provided £250,000 for a new Breakfast Service Grant to expand services targeted on vulnerable children most in need of a breakfast service.

## OUR FINDINGS

**We took the view that the future development of breakfast clubs should ensure that nutritional and health benefits are maximised.**

## Tuckshops

**6.6** Tuckshop policy is currently a matter for individual schools. We are aware that the vast majority of schools who run tuckshops do so to raise money to finance the purchase of 'extras' for their pupils rather than to provide nutritious snacks to support a healthy diet. However, our audit of current practice highlighted a growing prevalence for healthy tuckshops and vending machines.

**6.7** Influencing what is available in the tuckshop so that the food sold links to what is being taught in the curriculum is very important in reinforcing a whole school approach. It is therefore vital that

competitively-priced, healthy food is available and promoted in school tuckshops. Many schools have recognised this and have developed a partnership with their catering provider. This encourages a more integrated approach whilst generating necessary income for the schools.

## Vending Machines

**6.8** Vending machines are often criticised for selling only unhealthy snacks and soft drinks. It is important, therefore, to address this issue. When a school is promoting healthy eating within the classroom and elsewhere, the availability of vending machines with unhealthy stock serves to undermine efforts of the whole school approach.

**6.9** It would be unrealistic for many schools to remove vending machines. However, steps should be taken to make healthier choices more readily available and to ensure that any advertising contained on the casing of vending machines is in line with the whole school approach. Recent moves by a number of education authorities to replace the traditionally strong soft drinks branding with less sensitive pictures and products are seen as positive strategies.

**6.10** There are examples of good practice in vending, specifically a healthy vending programme developed by one education authority. We recognise that vending is a necessary source of income and an excellent method of reducing queues by offering an additional sales outlet.

**6.11** The national body representing vending machine suppliers is the Automatic Vending Association of Britain (AVAB). AVAB has an agreed code of practice that acknowledges health as a criterion in the delivery of food.

#### OUR FINDINGS

We took the view that inappropriate options provided by tuckshops and vending machines have the potential to hinder the successful implementation of the findings of our report. We therefore highlight the need for national guidance in these areas with the objective of promoting healthier choices and improved diet.

#### Milk in Schools

**6.12** The Scottish Executive currently subsidises the cost of milk which is provided to schools and nurseries under the control of local authorities in response to local needs. The Scottish Executive policy on the provision of milk is informed by expert medical and dental advice. We took the view that the current arrangements for the provision of milk in schools are adequate.

#### Fruit in Schools

**6.13** Throughout Scotland there have been many successful projects which have resulted in an increase in fruit consumption by children. These

have tended to be targeted at Social Inclusion Partnership areas and have been time limited in funding. Recently, Glasgow City Council, in association with NHS Greater Glasgow, developed “Fruit Plus”. The programme is aimed at all 3-12 year olds, who are provided with fruit three times a week. Fruit is used as a learning tool in order to increase children’s awareness and the popularity of fruit products. Forth Valley NHS Board have been piloting the Bangor University’s “Food Dude” programme to promote fruit and vegetable consumption. These types of strategy are likely to have a positive impact on long term health.

#### OUR FINDINGS

We took the view that each education authority and NHS Board should explore further ways to increase the popularity of fruit amongst school age and pre-school age children.

#### After-School Clubs

**6.14** We recognised the important role that after school clubs can play both in promoting healthy eating in any food that they provide and also in helping children and young people understand the important role of a healthy diet and lifestyle.

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## Other Significant Issues

### The Role of Sponsorship

**6.15** Sponsorship of school meals provision has been the subject of much criticism in the past and the Scottish Consumer Council, the Health Education Board for Scotland and the Public Health Institute of Scotland believe it can give the wrong message to schools, pupils and parents.

**6.16** Sponsorship has been used by caterers to assist in the funding of improvement projects and to capitalise on the brand loyalty which permeates from the high street. School caterers have a difficult role in promoting healthy eating, competing with external outlets in providing an environment that is seen as 'trendy' and uninstitutionalised.

Commercial sponsorship, mainly from existing suppliers, has allowed caterers to compete and invest, but it is important that we do not encourage the over branding which exists in some schools.

**6.17** Some education authorities have managed to fund reinvestment in facilities and to de-brand their services. This has resulted in a modern, popular service, which has no obvious commercial branding. This is seen as good practice and a strategy which should be encouraged.

**6.18** We feel that education authorities who have managed to improve their facilities and popularise their service without inappropriate commercial branding deserve particular praise.

### Entitlement to Free School Meals

**6.19** Entitlement to free school meals is set out in section 53 of the Education Act (Scotland) 1980. Parents and guardians entitled to free school meals may find out about eligibility through a variety of sources, such as, the Department of Work and Pensions and local authorities. The new tax credits will have an impact on current arrangements and this will have to be considered. Our concern is to ensure people are made aware of any entitlement to free school meals that they may have and that no one falls through the net. One way of doing this might be by providing relevant information about eligibility criteria within school handbooks or other material issued to parents.

#### OUR FINDINGS

**We took the view that the Scottish Executive should examine how families are informed about eligibility to free school meals and also the eligibility criteria to ensure that families and young people do not fall through a gap. The Scottish Executive should reassure themselves that the criteria for eligibility remain appropriate.**

### School Meals (Scotland) Bill

**6.20** We considered that this Bill and subsequent Debate were very helpful in raising issues that need to be addressed and endorsed the need for nutrient standards and access to free

water. There was not a consensus view on the merits of the Bill but the majority view was that the Bill proposals were inappropriate and did not tackle the main issues involved. Furthermore, we believe that blanket provision is not the best way to ensure that deprived and vulnerable children take school meals. Instead resources should be targeted where they are most needed. It was also not clear that stigma was the main reason for the gap in free school meals uptake. The way to secure an improvement in take up overall is to improve the quality of the service. Also we questioned whether the Bill would eliminate stigma as parents who could afford to do so might still provide their children with money to eat elsewhere. This could result in a larger group of children with the stigma of having to take free school meals. While we recognise that genuine problems exist for some children, our majority view was to reject the Bill in favour of our own more comprehensive approach to improving the health of Scotland's children.

### European Council Drinking Water Directive

**6.21** As part of our considerations we were informed by the Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland about the expected effect of the *European Council Drinking Water Directive* which comes into force in 2004 and about the consultation exercise covering regulations about water supplies in public buildings. While we have recommended that free, fresh, chilled drinking water should be available within the dining room

itself, we also consider that children should have access to good quality tap drinking water throughout the school day. This view has been conveyed within our response (Annex H) to the consultation.

**Recommendation 24: The Scottish Executive should consider what further work needs to be done to take forward the additional important and related issues identified by the Expert Panel.**

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A Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland

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## Annex A

# Panel Membership

### Chairman:

Michael O'Neill, Director of Education, North Lanarkshire Council, also representing the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland

### Members:

Annie S Anderson*	Professor of Food Choice, University of Dundee
Fergus Chambers*	Director of Direct and Care Services, Glasgow City Council
Michael Clapham*	Lecturer in Nutrition, Queen Margaret University College
Bronwen Cohen	Chief Executive, Children in Scotland
Bill Gray	Scottish Consumer Council
Donna Heaney	Scottish Consumer Council
Grace Irvine*	Chair, Association of Service Solutions Scotland (ASSIST), East Dunbartonshire Council
Roo Kharbanda	CoSLA
Gillian Kynoch*	Scottish Food and Health Co-ordinator
Joseph Leiper	Headteacher, Oldmachar Academy, Aberdeen
Hugh MacKintosh	Director, Barnardo's Scotland
Maureen McGarrity	Headteacher, St Kenneth's Primary School, Inverclyde
Monica Merson	School Programme Manager, Health Education Board for Scotland (from November 2002)
Pamela Reid*	Food Standards Agency Scotland
Marjory Robertson	HM Inspectorate of Education
Nancy Wilson	Principal Teacher of Home Economics, Dalziel High School
Ian Young*	Director of Schools Programme, Health Education Board for Scotland (until November 2002)

\* Denotes nutrient standards sub-group member – chair Gillian Kynoch

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## Key Scottish Executive Officials:

Maureen Bruce	Health Improvement Strategy, Health Department
Hazel Dewart	Pupil Support and Inclusion, Education Department
Joan Fraser	Pupil Support and Inclusion, Education Department
Kathryn Lynch	Social Inclusion, Development Department
Clodagh Memery	Social Inclusion, Development Department
Lorraine Wilson	Information, Analysis and Communication, Education Department
Moir Wilson	Pupil Support and Inclusion, Education Department
Fabian Zuleeg	Information, Analysis and Communication, Education Department

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## Annex B

# Education Authority Visits

Schools and education authorities visited by Expert Panel:

Aberdeen	Middleton Park Primary Oldmachar Academy
Angus	Andover Primary School Webster High School
Dumfries and Galloway	Newington Primary School Kirkcudbright Academy
Dundee	Fintry Primary School Lawside R.C. Academy
Glasgow	Eastbank Primary School All Saints Secondary School
Highland	Hilton Primary School Inverness Royal Academy
Inverclyde	Ravenscraig Primary School St Stephen's High School
Midlothian	Gorebridge Primary School Newbattle Community High School



## Annex C

# Discussion Workshop

### Participants:

Anderson, Annie*	Professor of Food Choice, University of Dundee
Baxter, Beth	Catering Support Manager, North Lanarkshire Council
Breasley, Keith	Team Leader, Catering Division, Fife Council
Campbell, Lexi	Catering Manager, Midlothian Council
Catto, Norman	Business Manager, Midlothian Council
Chambers, Fergus*	Director of Direct Care Services, Glasgow City Council
Clapham, Michael*	Lecturer in Nutrition, Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh
Clark, Graham	Catering Services Manager, Scottish Borders Council
Davidson, Bob	Section Head Catering & Cleaning, West Dunbartonshire Council
Dewart, Hazel	Expert Panel Secretariat, Scottish Executive
Downton, Keith	Principle Officer, Client Services, City of Edinburgh Council
Finlay, Alex	Catering Manager, East Lothian Council
Gilmore, Margaret	Operations Manager, Stirling Council
Gourlay, Robin	Contracts Manager, East Ayrshire Council
Hall, Val	Catering Services Manager, Shetland Islands Council
Hearndon, Mike	Catering Services Manager, Aberdeenshire Council
Hill, Scott	Head of Facilities Management, South Lanarkshire Council
Irvine, Grace*	Chair of Association of Service Solutions (ASSIST)
Kennedy, Bill	Catering Services Manager, Tayside Contracts
Kynoch, Gillian*	Scottish Food and Health Co-ordinator, Scottish Executive
Leckie, Dilys	Operations Manager, Argyll and Bute Council
MacMillan, Pearl	West Dunbartonshire Council
McDougall, Shona	Head of Commercial Operations, Renfrewshire Council
Nelson, Catherine	Head of Catering & Cleaning Services, North Ayrshire Council
Reid, Pamela*	Head of Diet & Nutrition, Food Standards Agency

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Rough, Charles	Building Services Manager, Falkirk Council
Sinclair, Jill	Catering Services Manager, South Ayrshire Council
Strickland, Esther	Area Manager, Argyll and Bute Council
Tierney, Elspeth	Catering Services Manager, Inverclyde Council
Tulloch, Sheila	Head of Service, East Renfrewshire Council
Wark, Liz	Domestic Services Manager, West Lothian Council
White, Ian	Divisional Manager, Dumfries and Galloway Council
White, Louise	Expert Panel Secretariat, Scottish Executive
Williams, Donalda	Catering Manager, Highland Council
Wilson, Kenneth	Head of Cleaning Related Services, North Lanarkshire Council
Wilson, Lorraine	Economist, Scottish Executive
Young, Ian*	Schools Programme Manager, Health Education Board for Scotland

\* Denotes Expert Panel Members



## Annex D

# Practical Guidance for Schools and Caterers

## Eating for Health

1. *Eating for Health* was developed as a model for healthy eating in Scotland by the Health Education Board for Scotland in 1996. It is nationally recognised and widely used by the food and catering industries as well as by health professionals, teachers and individual consumers, as a guide to the contents of a balanced meal or diet. In England the equivalent model, the *Balance of Good Health*, was developed in 1994 by the Health Local authority, Department of Health and Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

2. *Eating for Health* shows the proportion of the overall diet that should come from each of the five food groups in order to provide enough of the important nutrients (such as vitamins, minerals and protein) and fibre without too much fat (especially saturates) and sugar. The five food groups are:

- bread, other cereals and potatoes
- fruit and vegetables
- milk and dairy foods
- meat, fish and alternatives
- foods high in fat, foods and drinks high in sugar.

3. Foods in each group provide a similar range of nutrients. For most people:

- a third of total food intake should be made up of starchy foods (e.g. bread, pasta, rice and potatoes). These foods should make up a main part of a meal
- a further third should be made up from fruit and vegetables. People should aim to eat at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables each day
- meat, fish and alternatives (e.g. eggs, nuts, pulses, soya products) and milk and dairy foods provide concentrated sources of essential nutrients. So, only moderate amounts need to be eaten
- foods containing a large amount of fat or sugar should make up a relatively small proportion of the total food and drink consumed.

4. The model applies to catering for most people over the age of 5 years, including those who are overweight, vegetarians and people of all ethnic groups. Children under 5 years of age need to learn to eat healthily, but too much emphasis on cutting down fat intake and increasing the amount

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of fibre eaten is inappropriate for this age group - it can result in a bulky diet and children may not be able to eat sufficient amounts of food to meet their energy and nutrient needs. By around 5 years of age children should be progressing towards a diet based on the principles of *Eating for Health*.

5. Recent research indicates that currently children in Britain are eating less than half the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables each day, too many foods high in saturates, sugar and salt, too few foods containing fibre and are not doing enough physical activity (National Diet and Nutrition Survey: young people aged 4-18 years (2000)).

## What Does This Mean for Caterers?

6. *Eating for Health* is a useful tool for caterers in menu planning as it shows the overall balance that should be aimed for in the lunches served. Dishes or meals usually contain foods from more than one of the five food groups. *Eating for Health* can be applied by identifying the main food items or ingredients in the composite dish or meal and thinking about how these fit in with the proportions suggested and by altering the proportions, e.g. serving slightly smaller portions of the main dishes with extra fruit, vegetables or bread. Whatever the type of catering provided, the principles of balance and variety apply.

7. Healthier catering for children means:

- offering child-size portions of a variety of meals, not just a range of fried favourites
- offering foods from the food groups
  - fruit and vegetables
  - meat, fish and alternatives
  - bread, cereals and potatoes
  - milk and dairy foods
- limiting fat-rich foods such as sausages, burgers, pies, crisps, chips or other fried food
- for young children, offering small fruits and yoghurts which are usually popular
- not offering too many sugar rich foods and drinks
- offering milk, unsweetened fruit juice and water
- limiting the amount of salt added to foods.

## Choosing Healthier Ingredients

8. The choice of commodities can have a significant effect on the nutritional content and the balance of meals and foodstuffs. Many suppliers have responded to the increasing demand for healthier ingredients, which are now easier to find. Pre-prepared products are available that can be cooked by one of three methods – oven bake, grill, shallow/deep fry. Labels should be checked on pre-prepared dishes to look for lower fat and salt varieties.



## Reducing the Fat Content

9. Whilst the choice of ingredients is very important, several cooking methods and preparation techniques can be used to reduce the fat content of dishes.

10. Easy ways to cut down on fat in food preparation include:

- trimming visible fat from meat
- removing the skin and fat from poultry before cooking or serving (except for roasts)
- preparing lower fat vinaigrette dressings.

11. “Healthier” cooking practices to reduce fat include:

- routinely grilling, steaming, stir-frying or oven baking rather than frying or roasting with added fat
- using spray oils
- dry frying or dry roasting spices
- skimming fat from the surfaces of liquids, including gravy, before serving
- sweating onions in cling film (microwaveable) in a microwave instead of sautéing them in oil
- avoid letting food sit in fat when roasting or oven cooking by roasting on a rack or trivet and grilling on a rack rather than a flat oven tray
- creating soups and sauces from puréed vegetables or reductions instead of roux thickenings
- not enriching with butter
- using a thin batter for fish or oven baking pre-coated products

- using a whisked sponge method or mix for puddings instead of the creamed method
- not tossing items (e.g. pasta) in butter but use a small amount of oil to prevent bulk quantities from sticking.

12. In summary, the key to healthier catering is to:

- make small but significant changes to best selling items
- increase the amount of starchy foods
- increase the amount of fruit and vegetables
- increase the fibre content of dishes where practical and acceptable
- reduce fat in traditional recipes
- change the type of fat used
- select healthier ways to prepare dishes
- be moderate in the use of sugar and salt.

13. Key actions to achieve these goals are to:

- make starchy foods (e.g. rice, pasta, bread, potatoes) a main part of most meals
- offer a good selection of fruit and incorporate it into dishes, where practical and acceptable
- offer fibre-rich varieties of bread and cereals
- include plenty of pulses and vegetables in dishes
- use lower fat cooking methods and ingredients
- reduce the amount and alter the types of fat used in food preparation
- use fewer fats that contain a high proportion of saturates by substituting these with fats and oils

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with a high content of unsaturates, where possible

- use salt and salty foods in moderation
- use added sugar in moderation.

(Adapted from *Catering for Health* produced by the Food Standards Agency Scotland and the Scottish Executive Health Department.)

## Recommended Portion Sizes

14. This section provides guidance on the appropriate portion sizes necessary to assist caterers in planning meals, which meet nutrient standards for energy and other nutrients as well as to satisfy young appetites. Hungry children are more likely to snack on high fat and sugar confectionery.

Group 1 (Bread, other Cereals and Potatoes)	Recommended Portion Size (grams/mls) for 5-11 year olds	Recommended Portion Size (grams/mls) for 12-18 year olds
Rice (cooked weight)	80-120	180
Pasta (cooked weight)	80-120	180
Pasta canned in sauce	90-140	200
Mashed potatoes, boiled potatoes, potato croquettes	90-130	190
Jacket potatoes	120-170	250
Chips, roast potatoes, other potato cooked in fat, e.g. potato wedges, and other processed potato products cooked in fat, such as waffles, smiles, spirals	70-100	150
Bread: sliced, rolls, French stick (served instead of rice, pasta or potatoes)	45-65	100

Group 2 (Fruit and Vegetables)	Recommended Portion Size (grams/mls) for 5-11 year olds	Recommended Portion Size (grams/mls) for 12-18 year olds
Cooked vegetables including peas, green beans, sweetcorn, carrots, mixed vegetables, cauliflower, broccoli, swede, turnip, leek, brussel sprouts, cabbage, spinach, spring greens	40-60	80
Raw vegetables or mixed salad	40-60	80
Baked beans in tomato sauce	70-100	140
Coleslaw (served together with a mixed salad)	30-40	60
Vegetable-based soup	170-220	300
Medium-size fruit, e.g. apples, pears, bananas, peaches, oranges	Half to one fruit (50-100 g)	One fruit (100 g)
Small-size fruit, e.g. satsumas, tangerines, plums, apricots, kiwis	One-two fruits (50-100 g)	Two fruits (100 g)
Very small fruits, e.g. grapes, cherries, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries	Half to one cupful (50-100 g)	One cupful (100 g)
Dried fruit, e.g. raisins, sultanas, apricots	Half to one tablespoonful (10-20 g)	One tablespoonful (20 g)
Fruit salad, fruit tinned in juice and stewed fruit (at least 80% of the weight should come from fruit)	65-130	130
Fruit juice	150	150

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Group 3 (Milk and Milk Products)	Recommended Portion Size (grams/mls) for 5-11 year olds	Recommended Portion Size (grams/mls) for 12-18 year olds
Drinking milk	200	300
Milk puddings and whips made with milk	150-200	240
Custard (served with fruit for example)	100	140
Yoghurts	100-125	125-150
Cheese (served in a salad, baked potato, sandwich or with biscuits)	30-40	50
Macaroni cheese	150-215	300
Cheese sauce for use with composite dishes	70-95	120
Group 4 (Meat, Fish and Alternatives)	Recommended Portion Size (grams/mls) for 5-11 year olds	Recommended Portion Size (grams/mls) for 12-18 year olds
All dishes containing meat which are allowed at any time (e.g. stew, casserole, curry, tikka, sweet and sour) will have a minimum raw meat content of (this weight may be reduced proportionately in composite dishes if adding another protein based food such as beans/TVP/cheese/milk)	50-60	80
Sausages: beef, lamb, pork, Lorne (raw weight)	60-80	120
Haggis	60-80	120
Scotch pies, bridies, sausage rolls, Cornish pasty, encased meat pastry pies, quiche, cold pork pie (e.g. Melton Mowbray)	80	110



Group 4 cont'd	Recommended Portion Size (grams/mls) for 5-11 year olds	Recommended Portion Size (grams/mls) for 12-18 year olds
Lasagne, ravioli, cannelloni	150-215	300
Breaded or battered shaped chicken and turkey products, e.g. nuggets, goujons, burgers	60-80	120
Meat-based soup	170-220	300
Pizza	80-120	160
All dishes containing fish and shellfish which are allowed at any time (e.g. pie with potato topping, casserole, curry, sweet and sour) will have a minimum raw fish content of (this weight may be reduced proportionately in composite dishes if adding another protein-based food such as beans/cheese/milk)	50-60	80
Breaded or battered fish portions or products, e.g. fish cakes, fish fingers, fish goujons, fish shapes	60-80	120
Fish or shellfish such as tuna, salmon, mackerel and prawns, served in a salad, baked potato or sandwich	30-40	50
Egg served in a salad, baked potato or sandwich	1 egg	1-2 eggs
Vegetarian sausages, burger, nut cutlets	60-80	120
Vegetarian stew, curry, tikka, sweet and sour	50-60	80

**Note:** Composite dishes using the caterer's own recipes, such as home-made pies, pasta bakes, lasagne, spaghetti bolognese, stew, should supply the equivalent amount of meat, poultry, fish or vegetarian alternative per portion.

The initials TVP refer to the meat substitute, texturised vegetable protein.

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Group 5 (Foods containing Fat and Foods and Drinks containing Sugar)	Recommended Maximum Portion Size (grams/mls) for 5-11 year olds	Recommended Maximum Portion Size (grams/mls) for 12-18 year olds
Crisps or corn snacks	25	25
Fruit pies, sponge puddings or crumbles	90-130	145
Cakes, muffins, sponges, fairy cakes, scones, sponge puddings, doughnuts, cookies, tray-bakes	40-50	65
Ice cream	60-80	100

### Sources of Calcium, Folate and Iron

CALCIUM Good sources of calcium	Provides some calcium
Milk and yoghurt	Broccoli, dark green leafy vegetables, turnip, carrots, cabbage, peas
Hard cheeses, cheese spread, soya cheese	Dates, sultanas, raisins, ready to eat or stewed apricots
Canned sardines or salmon, drained and mashed up with the bones, served perhaps as a sandwich filling, fish paste and pâtés	Baked squash, sweet potato
Ice cream	Wholemeal bread
Egg yolk mayonnaises	
Bread, (except wholemeal), crumpets, muffins, plain and cheese scones	
Beans, lentils, chickpeas	
Ready to eat or stewed figs	
Tofu (soya bean) steamed or spread	
Soya mince	
Soya drink with added calcium	

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<b>FOLATE</b> Rich sources of folate/folic acid	Other good sources of folate/folic acid
Fresh, raw or cooked brussel sprouts, cooked black-eye beans  Breakfast cereals (fortified with folic acid)  Liver	Fresh, raw, frozen and cooked broccoli, spring greens, cabbage, green beans, cauliflower, peas, bean sprouts, cooked soya beans, iceberg lettuce, parsnips, chick peas  Kidneys, yeast and beef extracts
<b>IRON</b> Good sources of iron which are well absorbed	Other sources of iron. (If you add sources of vitamin C or meat or fish to the following foods it will help the iron to be absorbed.)
Lean beef, lamb, pork: roast, mince, burgers, liver  Chicken or turkey: especially dark meat, liver  Canned sardines, pilchards, mackerel, tuna, shrimps, crab  Sausages  Fish paste and pâtés	Breakfast cereals with added iron  Breads  Red kidney beans, haricot beans, pinto beans, lentils, chickpeas: boiled or canned  Baked beans, peas: raw, cooked, frozen or canned  Apricots, prunes, figs, peaches: ready to eat or stewed  Raisins, sultanas  Cauliflower, spring greens, broccoli, mixed vegetables

## Annex E

# National Priorities for Education

The five national Priorities for Education set by the Scottish Executive and approved by the Scottish Parliament in December 2000 are:

### National Priority 1: Achievement and Attainment

To raise standards of educational attainment for all in schools, especially the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results.

### National Priority 2: Framework for Learning

To support and develop the skills of teachers, the self-discipline of pupils and to enhance school environments so that they are conducive to teaching and learning.

### National Priority 3: Inclusion and Equality

To promote equality and help every pupil benefit from education, with particular regard paid to pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, and to Gaelic and other lesser used languages.

### National Priority 4: Values and Citizenship

To work with parents to teach pupils respect for self and one another and their interdependence with other members of their neighbourhood and society and to teach them the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society.

### National Priority 5: Learning for Life

To equip pupils with the foundation skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society and to encourage creativity and ambition.

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## Annex F

# Implementation Plan

1. The implementation and monitoring strategy is described in section 5. We offer this more detailed implementation plan to support those responsible for taking it forward. The table in Section 1 below maps out the players who will have a key role to play in implementing these recommendations. Section 2 identifies the lead organisation with responsibility for taking the recommendations forward and the action necessary to effect the change.

## Section 1: Players who will have a key role to play in implementing the recommendations

Recommendation	Scottish Executive	Local Authority	School	Caterer	Pupils	FSA Scotland	HMIE	SHPSU	CoSLA
1. In any Best Value review the role of the school meal service as part of the education and health strategies should be taken into account. It should not be considered simply as a commercial trading activity.		●		●					
2. Each education authority should develop a policy for delivering, in partnership with parents and carers, medically prescribed diets and appropriate provision for children with special educational needs.		●		●					
3. The Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches should be adopted and education authorities and schools should have them in place in all special schools and primary schools by December 2004 and in all secondary schools by December 2006.	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
4. School meal facilities should not advertise nor promote food or drink with a high fat or high sugar content.			●	●	●				



Recommendation	Scottish Executive	Local Authority	School	Caterer	Pupils	FSA Scotland	HMIE	SHPSU	CoSLA
5. All schools should review their current practice in establishing links between learning and teaching on healthy eating in the curriculum and food provision in the school.		●	●	●			●		
6. The Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit should take the recommendations of the Panel into consideration when developing standards for health promoting schools.								●	
7. Education authorities should promote partnership approaches and schools should develop mechanisms to deliver partnership working.		●	●						
8. Schools should consult with pupils on a regular basis on provision of school meals.			●	●	●				
9. Processes maximising anonymity for free meal recipients should be explored as a priority in all schools. Primary schools should review their ticket allocation practices to ensure anonymity for free school meals is maximised and education authorities should adopt early introduction of a school meal application for multiple use cards, in particular in secondary schools.	●	●	●	●	●				
10. As part of the introduction of card systems, education authorities should ensure there are sufficient validators in easily accessed areas within the school not only in the dining room, and that they are easy to use.		●	●		●				
11. All schools should examine their seating and queuing arrangements to ensure that the social experience of school meals is maximised.			●	●	●				

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Recommendation	Scottish Executive	Local Authority	School	Caterer	Pupils	FSA Scotland	HMIE	SHPSU	CoSLA
<p>12. To address queuing difficulties and in any review of the length of the lunch break, the following factors should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• multiple service points</li> <li>• more cash points in cash cafeterias</li> <li>• staggered arrivals of diners/separate sittings</li> <li>• pre-ordering facility</li> <li>• separate counter for collecting pre-ordered meals</li> <li>• delivery of pre-ordered meals to lunchtime clubs</li> <li>• examining the potential for additional outlets elsewhere in the school</li> <li>• the needs of disabled pupils.</li> </ul>		●	●	●	●				
<p>13. When education authorities and schools are examining the structure of the school day, the lunchtime experience should be part of that consideration.</p>		●	●		●				
<p>14. In line with the agreement set out in <i>A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century</i>, education authorities should consider deploying classroom assistants and dining room assistants to undertake a supervisory role in dining rooms.</p>		●		●					
<p>15. Senior management within schools should strongly support and endorse their school meal provision as part of the whole child approach.</p>			●						



Recommendation	Scottish Executive	Local Authority	School	Caterer	Pupils	FSA Scotland	HMIE	SHPSU	CoSLA
16. Caterers should consider appropriate means of labelling food and methods of conveying information on content to pupils and parents. Through existing school communication channels, menus should be forwarded to parents at least once a term. Schools and caterers should consider presentation, marketing and pricing structures to incentivise healthier choices.			●	●	●	●			
17. Improvements to the dining room to enhance its atmosphere and ambience, and encourage its use as a social area should be considered as a priority by local authorities and should be taken into account in their wider school estate planning. It is desirable, wherever possible, that a separate dining area should be provided.	●	●							
18. Furniture design, layout and usage, along with other factors such as décor and background music, should be considered by all schools, with significant pupil input and programmes for change drawn up.		●	●		●				
19. Education authorities should consider the introduction of incentive schemes to promote healthier choices and increase the take-up of school meals.		●	●	●	●	●			
20. Education authorities should consider the introduction of staff incentive schemes to recognise innovation and celebrate success.		●	●	●					
21. Local authorities, guided by CoSLA as appropriate, should incorporate strategies for implementing the recommendations of this report into mainstream planning processes that will empower and enable schools and school communities to adopt the recommendations.		●				●			●

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Recommendation	Scottish Executive	Local Authority	School	Caterer	Pupils	FSA Scotland	HMIE	SHPSU	CoSLA
22. All school catering and dining room supervisory staff should undertake appropriate training, for example, the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland Food and Health training course (currently under development) as part of their programme of development. Interested parents, carers and teachers should also be encouraged to undertake training in food and health.			●	●		●			
23. Monitoring of the implementation of the Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches, and related aspects, should be undertaken using the four levels of monitoring proposed in this report, and should involve HM Inspectorate of Education working, as appropriate, with other relevant agencies.	●	●	●	●		●	●		
24. The Scottish Executive should consider what further work needs to be done to take forward the additional important and related issues identified by the Expert Panel.	●								

## Section 2: Lead organisation with responsibility for taking the recommendations forward and the action necessary to effect the change

### The Scottish Executive

- Develop practical guidance that enables local authorities to develop strategies for implementing the recommendations of this report into mainstream planning processes that will empower and enable schools and school communities to adopt the recommendations
- Take steps to ensure that the Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit takes account of the recommendations when developing standards for health promoting schools and establish the mechanisms to exchange good practice
- Commission the development of nutritional analysis software for monitoring nutrient standards
- Commission HMIE to work with Associate Assessors as appropriate to undertake level 2 and 3 monitoring
- Commission research to assess the implementation and impact of the recommendations
- Give further consideration to related issues identified in Section 6

### Education Authorities

- Take account of the role of the school meals service as part of the education and health strategies in any Best Value Review
- Develop a policy for delivering, in partnership with parents and carers, medically prescribed diets and appropriate provision for children with special educational needs
- Using Scottish Executive guidance, and guided by CoSLA, develop strategies and policies for implementing the recommendations of this report into mainstream planning processes that will empower and enable schools and school communities to adopt the recommendations and have nutrient standards in place in primary and secondary schools by December 2004 and 2006 respectively
- Adopt early introduction of a school meal application for multiple use cards, in particular in secondary schools
- Ensure adequate provision of smart card facilities in schools ensuring there are sufficient validators in easily accessed areas within the school, not only in the dining room, that are easy to use
- Include consideration of the lunchtime experience when examining the structure of the school day
- Support and work with schools and others to develop knowledge and awareness of dietary needs of pupils from minority ethnic and religious cultures

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- Promote, facilitate and support partnership working practices in schools
- Consider deploying classroom assistants and dining room assistants for supervisory roles in the dining rooms
- Consider dining room refurbishment as a priority in school estate review taking into consideration furniture design, layout and usage along with other factors such as décor and background music
- Consider the introduction of incentive schemes to recognise innovation and celebrate success in promoting nutritious choices and increasing take-up of school meals
- Review catering contracts at appropriate points to ensure there are no barriers to meeting the standards for school meals
- Develop formal arrangements with local NHS Boards and Trusts to secure dietetic advice and help in meeting nutrient standards
- Put in place arrangements for level 1 monitoring starting 2003
- Develop and implement partnership working practices as required to help implement the recommendations including consulting with pupils on a regular basis on the provision of school meals
- Review free school meal ticket allocation practices to ensure anonymity for free school meals is maximised
- Taking account of the guidance in recommendation 12 in the table in Section 1 above, examine seating and queuing arrangements to ensure the social experience of school meals is maximised
- Train key staff in running, and pupils in using, the smart card system
- Ensure all relevant staff are appropriately trained in line with the recommendations
- Undertake level 1 monitoring

## Schools

- Work towards implementation of the recommendations in this report in line with local authority guidance within required timescale
- Support and endorse school meal provision as part of whole child approach
- Review current practice in establishing links between learning and teaching on healthy eating in the curriculum and food provision in the school

## Caterers

- Comply with guidance to provide school lunches that meet the nutrient standards
- Ensure that arrangements are in place to meet the requirement that school meal facilities do not advertise nor promote food or drink with a high fat or high sugar content
- Cater for pupils with special dietary requirements ensuring variety and choice
- Put in place staff development training programme arrangements

- 
- Work with schools to develop and implement:
    - appropriate means of labelling food and conveying information on this and meals to parents and pupils
    - ways of incentivising healthier choices on presentation, marketing and pricing structures of food
  - Monitor compliance with nutrient standards using nutritional analysis software

#### Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit

- Take recommendations of Panel into consideration when developing standards for health promoting schools

#### Food Standards Agency Scotland

- Develop a range of product specifications for food served in school meals

#### HM Inspectorate of Education

- Incorporate level 2 monitoring arrangements into the programme of school inspections
- Working with specialist Associate Assessors, undertake a detailed evaluation of school meals provision and produce a report for publication on progress towards the proposed 2006 target date for implementation and/or the full implementation of the standards

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## Annex G

# Quality Indicators

As discussed in Section 5 of this report, the use of quality indicators can be used to supplement statistical information. The following quality indicators might be of use when schools are evaluating the quality of their school meal provision.

## Quality Indicator 4.1 Pastoral Care

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- arrangements for ensuring the care, welfare and protection of pupils
- provision for meeting the emotional, physical and social needs of individual pupils.

Monitoring could include:

- the promotion of healthy eating habits
- provision for pupils who have special dietary requirements.

## Quality Indicator 4.8 Links with Education Authority (or other managing body, other schools, agencies and employers)

This quality indicator is concerned with the range, purpose and effectiveness of:

- links with the education authority or other managing body
- links with other educational establishments
- links with voluntary organisations, the wider community and employers
- links with statutory organisations.

Monitoring could include:

- links between school staff (e.g. senior managers, home economics staff) and catering staff
- links with staff from external agencies (e.g. community dietitians).

## Quality Indicator 5.1 Climate and Relationships

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- sense of identity and pride in the school
- reception and atmosphere
- pupil and staff morale
- pupil/staff relationships
- pupils' behaviour and discipline.

Monitoring could include:

- reception and atmosphere in dining room
- arrangements to consult pupils on school meals
- pupil/staff relationships in dining room.

## Quality Indicator 5.3 Equality and Fairness

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- sense of equality and fairness
- ensuring equality and fairness.

Monitoring could include:

- school meal provision for pupils from varying ethnic backgrounds.

## Quality Indicator 5.4 Partnership with Parents, the School Board and the Community

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- encouragement to parents to be involved in their child's learning and the life of the school
- procedures for communicating with parents
- information given to parents about the work of the school
- links between the school and School Board
- the school's role in the local community.

Monitoring could include:

- arrangements to consult parents about school meals
- information given to parents on school meals
- arrangements to consult the School Board on school meals.

## Quality Indicator 6.1 Accommodation and Facilities

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- sufficiency and appropriateness
- arrangements to ensure health and safety.

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Monitoring could include:

- the appropriateness of the dining room, e.g. in terms of size, attractiveness, seating arrangements, access for pupils with disabilities
- the appropriateness of kitchen and servery facilities for the hygienic preparation and serving of food.

## Quality Indicator 6.3 Organisation and Use of Resources and Space

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- organisation and accessibility
- use of resources
- display and presentation of items of interest.

Monitoring could include:

- the extent to which the school encourages pupils to access healthy options, e.g. in breakfast bars and tuckshops as well as at school lunches
- the way in which the school makes use of available accommodation, e.g. rota to reduce queuing, allowing pupils to sit with their friends
- use of display to promote attendance at school meals and selection of healthy choices.



## Annex H

# Response to Consultation: Water Supplies in Public Buildings

As discussed in Section 6 of this report we considered that the implications of the *European Council Drinking Water Directive* were of particular importance to schools and took the opportunity to submit a formal response to the consultation exercise. The essence of our response, which was submitted by our Chairman, is shown below:

“Thank you for inviting the Expert Panel on School Meals to respond to your consultation document.

Included within the definition of *Scottish Nutrient Standards for School Lunches*, the Panel is recommending that fresh, chilled drinking water should be freely available within the dining room. The Panel is also of the firm belief that children should have access to drinking water throughout the school day. We are aware that many schools may currently fail to comply with the EU Directive and we would be concerned if education

authorities detecting compliance failures in schools took steps to disconnect supplies. We therefore propose that the regulations contain a requirement for all schools to provide an adequate supply of easily accessible drinking water for pupils and staff.”

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## Annex I

# Costing of Recommendations

## Background

1. We were charged with providing fully costed recommendations. This annex provides details of the estimated costs of implementing the recommendations. Costs in this annex should be seen as indicative of the scale of funding.
2. The annex will first set out the data and methodology used and will then detail the cost calculations which have been made to estimate the impact of our recommendations. It then provides indicative follow-on costs of our recommendations, which arise from increased uptake of school meals and increased uptake of free school meals.
3. The costs in this annex represent the best estimate we can make on current available information. It should, however, be noted that uncertainty remains over the exact scale of costs, especially in relation to future uptake where an assumption of a 6-percentage point increase has been made. While the audit of current practice

provided useful indications of the current situation, not all relevant information could be obtained. However, we have attempted to validate the costings from other sources where possible. The following costs are the best estimates we can provide.

## Available Data and Main Results

4. This section describes the main data used in the analysis. It is divided into the three main data sources:
  - School meal statistics 2000-01 (Scottish Executive National Statistical publication)
  - Audit of current practice
  - Expert Panel's expertise.

### School Meals Statistical Publication

5. This statistical publication<sup>1</sup> provided the majority of the background information on school meal uptake in Scotland. This background data showed that there were 740,000 pupils on school rolls in Scotland. Just over 665,000 pupils were present on the school meal census day. Of those present on census day, 48.7% took a school meal - this is equivalent to approximately 324,000 pupils.

6. 19.5% of all pupils are recorded as being entitled to free school meals – this is equivalent to about 144,000 pupils. In primary schools, 20.8% are recorded as having free meal entitlement whilst 16.7% of secondary pupils are entitled to free school meals. School meal entitlement is measured against the total number of pupils enrolled in Scottish schools. We do not have data to determine how many of these pupils were present in school on the day of the school meal census.

7. On the day of the school meal census, 15.5% of pupils ate a free school meal – this is equivalent to 103,000 pupils. In primary schools, 17.5% took a free school meal and 11.5% of secondary school pupils also took a free meal on census day. It is unknown whether the pupils entitled to a free school meal were present in school on the day and whether they were registered as eligible.

### Audit of Current Practice

8. Our audit of current practice was used to determine the level of provision of school meals and associated costs as well as the likely costs in upgrading these services.

### Expertise of the Expert Panel

9. For any information relating to the costs of specific school meal services not covered by the data described above, our own expertise was used to provide an estimate of the likely costs of the recommendations.

### Methodology

10. The impact of the recommendations on costs has been examined with a view to determine the additional costs to public expenditure rather than attempting to estimate the true economic costs. Where appropriate, capital costs have been listed and resource costs (calculated by using the Green Book discount rate of 6%) have also been included. These capital costs are generally shown per school rather than by education authority as any programme of improvement might be phased in over time and might be taken forward within a wider context of school estate improvements.

<sup>1</sup> The 2000-01 figures for school meals were the latest available figures at the time the audit of current practice was carried out. To ensure consistency between the school meal figures and the results of the audit of current practice which were also used in the costings, the costings were not updated with the 2001-02 figures for school meals which were released in June 2002. The 2001-02 school meal figures show that free meal entitlement and uptake have fallen slightly, this would result in lower costs to local authorities for providing these meals. However, against this, overall uptake was seen to improve slightly, this would result in a higher subsidy provision for those local authorities which subsidise school meals.

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## Costed Recommendations

11. Costs have been grouped into general themes to provide a better overview of overall costings. The following paragraphs detail the costings in each broad area.

### Staff & Training

#### *Supervision by Classroom Assistants*

12. To supervise dining areas, the recommendation proposes to increasingly use classroom assistants rather than teaching staff. These classroom assistants are provided under the National Agreement on Teachers' Pay and Conditions to relieve teachers of non-teaching duties. Using them for dining room supervision is consistent with this principle. This entails staff costs but in economic terms this frees teachers from non-teaching duties and, in terms of additional public expenditure, these classroom assistants are financed under the National Agreement so no additional public expenditure arises.

#### *Training for Catering Staff and Additional Catering Staff*

13. To encourage healthy eating, catering staff will be asked to encourage healthy choices, avoid situations where pupils are stigmatised and to present and cook the food in an attractive way. To

achieve this objective will require additional training. A course is currently being designed to address these issues. It is estimated that the course will be a full day course, charging an administration cost of £40-£70 per person depending on uptake. There will also be travelling and subsistence costs associated with the course, as well as staff costs. We have based the estimate on training catering staff across Scotland. Better dining services and higher uptake will also require additional catering staff to cut queues and to provide additional services. This will be especially important for large secondary schools. We have estimated additional staff costs on the basis of providing an additional part-time catering assistant for all secondary schools.

**Additional training for catering staff in all schools and staff costs for additional part-time catering staff for all secondary schools will create an additional public expenditure of around £2.2m.**

### Monitoring and Implementation Costs

14. To effectively implement the new Scottish Nutrient Standards and other improvements to the school meal service will require effective monitoring and evaluation, as well as dissemination of good practice. The monitoring and implementation plan sets out additional requirements for a number of different agencies, including schools, local authorities, HM Inspectorate of Education and the

Scottish Executive. Additional costs are likely to arise to monitor nutrient standards and to disseminate good practice, as well as additional inspection costs for HM Inspectorate of Education, additional analysis and data management, annual research and progress monitoring and evaluation.

**Additional monitoring, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of good practice are estimated to create an additional public expenditure in the region of £1.0m.**

### Scottish Nutrient Standards

15. Each school day, about 50% of pupils in school eat a school meal, translating to roughly around 324,000 pupils (roughly equivalent to 56.4 million meals a year). Indications from some education authorities (which have already achieved higher nutrient standards) are that implementing the new Scottish Nutrient Standards will cost around 5% additionally. For the costings we have used a range from 5%-15% in additional costs per meal to enable all education authorities to improve standards sufficiently. A higher price for paying pupils would translate into lower uptake, so the cost is assumed to fall fully onto the public sector. This means an additional subsidy of £4.8m to £14.5m.

**Improved nutrient standards are estimated to create an additional public expenditure in the region of £9.6m.**

### Encouraging Healthy Eating

#### *Labelling, Promotion/Subsidies/Incentives of Healthy Options, Incentives for Catering Staff*

16. For the costings we have used a range from 5p-10p in additional costs per meal to cover any incentive schemes aimed at improving uptake of healthier options, as well as providing water, fruit and bread where appropriate. As previously, a higher price for paying pupils would translate into lower uptake. The cost is thus assumed to fall fully onto subsidies. This means an additional subsidy of £2.8m to £5.6m to cover all pupils currently having a meal.

**Incentivising healthier options is estimated to create an additional public expenditure in the region of £4.2m.**

### Investment into Uptake

#### *Card Systems*

17. Installation of swipe cards is estimated to cost on average around £16,000, with associated resource costs of about £1,000. However, costs are likely to differ according to the size of a school for example through the number of validators required. In addition, smart card systems are likely to be more expensive than simple swipe cards. If installation proceeds on the basis of smart cards for all secondary schools, costs are likely to be

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higher than these estimates. Average running costs are between £800 and £1,500 (again possibly reflecting the difference between swipe cards and smart cards), averaging at about £1,100. At the moment only 4% of schools have this technology, but among secondary schools the rate is as high as 30%. Smart card technology has much wider uses than just in the dining hall. Exploiting the potential of the technology for a range of uses, which could include improving data management, security and administration, is part of the Modernising Government Agenda. Funding for a smart card project would cover part of the costs of smart cards in schools.

## Dining Areas

18. Improving dining areas is estimated to require average installation costs of around £24,000 with associated resource costs of around £1,500 per annum. Around 20% of schools have recently improved their dining rooms. About 25% of schools currently have no facilities to prepare school meals on the premises and additional uptake might also put additional pressure on existing facilities. Improving school estates is part of the developing estates strategy and funding for this strategy is expected to be covered by Public Private Partnership projects and by other Scottish Executive funding for estate improvements. It is important to emphasise that funding for improved dining facilities is vital to increase uptake of school meals. Funding through the above mentioned

funding streams needs to be sufficient to make a real difference to a large number of dining facilities which require upgrading and thought needs to be given to ensure that all schools which require funding are taken into consideration. Funding in this area should be one of the priorities considered in the school estates strategy.

## Indicative Cost Impact of Additional Uptake

19. A number of our recommendations are aimed at increasing uptake of school meals. As an indication of costs, an increase in uptake by 6% would raise overall uptake to almost 55% and the percentage of children taking a free school meal on the day would rise to about 17.5%. This would result in the provision of an additional 7 million meals. This increase in uptake would result in an additional cost of £5.4m for free meals and for subsidies for paid meals. For the costings of nutrient standards we have used a range from 5%-15% in additional costs per meal. This translates into an additional subsidy of £1.2m. To promote the healthy option adds additional subsidies of about £500,000. This cost should be seen as a variable cost as it depends on future numbers of children eating a school meal.

An indicative improved uptake of 6 percentage points is estimated to create an additional public expenditure in the region of £7.1m.

## Summary

20. The following table shows all of our costed recommendations.

Summary Table: Additional Public Sector Cost per Annum

Recommendation	Cost	Comment
Additional supervision by non-teaching staff	–	No additional costs – funded under the National Agreement
Additional training and staff costs	£2.2m	Based on additional part-time catering staff for each secondary school and training for catering staff in each school
Monitoring, implementation, evaluation, etc.	£1.0m	Includes school, Local Authority and Scotland level costs
Improving nutrient standards	£9.6m	Based on increased food costs of 5%-15%
Encouraging healthy eating	£4.2m	Based on an additional 5p-10p per meal
Swipe cards	–	Funded under Modernising Government
Dining areas	–	Funded under Public Private Partnership and school estates
Indicative increased take-up of school meals/free school meals	£7.1m	Based on 6% point increase, includes increased nutrient standards
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£24.1m</b>	

The implementation of our recommendations (with smart/swipe card and building estate costs being taken forward through separate funding streams) is estimated to cost in the region of £24m per annum.

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## Annex J

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